



*Supporting CACs, communities, and agencies investigating and prosecuting child abuse*

## Do You Have the Courage to Speak Out and Protect a Child?

If a child made an outcry to you about being sexually abused, would you have the courage to listen to that child and believe what they had to say? Would you have the courage to report the abuse? Thankfully most of us will never have to answer these questions, but that doesn't mean that the reality of child sexual abuse should be something we are not willing to talk openly about and acknowledge its existence.

Child sexual abuse is not bound by race, class, religion, economic circumstances or familial ties. It happens across all strata of our society. Unfortunately, though, it is a difficult topic to discuss and many people prefer to pretend it doesn't exist in their communities, homes, and families. It is a crime of secrecy that sadly breeds within our society precisely because it is so difficult to talk about.

This August CACTX unveiled a new public awareness campaign—“One With Courage”—that challenges adults to acknowledge the

Of the total number of children served by CACs last year **74%** were involved in sexual abuse cases, **98%** knew their perpetrator and **27%** were not old enough to attend kindergarten.

reality of child sexual abuse. Kicking-off this statewide initiative, Joy Rauls, Executive Director of CACTX, issued a challenge to the people of Texas—“Child sexual abuse is a difficult issue, but our message is a hopeful one. We *can* put an end to this epidemic by uniting together to collectively take the seemingly small steps—acknowledge this issue, learn the signs of abuse, spread the word within your community. Through “One With Courage”,

we aim to inspire and empower adults to begin taking those steps.”

Every day at the 64 children's advocacy centers across our state we see child victims summon the immense courage it takes to come forward and disclose what has happened to them. You can help these children and protect others from becoming victims. Are you one with courage? Go to [www.onewithcourage.org](http://www.onewithcourage.org) to learn what you can do to stop child sexual abuse.



State Senator Florence Shapiro kicks off the campaign at a Plano press event.

One  
with courage



Attorney General Greg Abbott and Dr. Michelle Lyn, former CACTX board member, address the crowd at the Houston press conference.

Go to <http://www.oag.state.tx.us/> to see a video of the event.

# Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Texas—A Company with Courage

Thanks to a \$25,000 sponsorship from Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Texas (BCBSTX), the state's largest health insurer, the "One With Courage" message will reach even more Texans. With this generous gift, CACTX will be able to roll out additional public service announcements during the campaign.

We are pleased to have the support of this Texas-born company. BCBSTX is dedicated to working alongside local organizations to improve the well-being of disadvantaged children. This commitment has been an important part of the company's heritage since the very beginning and a cornerstone of their business—from employee volunteers who participate in the Blue Corps team—to financial



support/sponsorship of successful health initiatives in the communities where Texans live, work and do business.

In announcing BCBSTX's sponsorship, Darren Rodgers, President, Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Texas, remarked that "Since our founding more than 80 years ago as the only statewide customer-owned health insurer, we have sought to remain a vital part of Texas communities. We are committed to partnering with local organizations to improve the well-being of the communities where we live and work, and we are honored to support your efforts." CACTX is honored to have their support as well as we work together to protect the children of Texas.

## More Corporate Partners with Courage

CACTX gratefully acknowledges the support of the following companies that have joined Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Texas as sponsors of the "One With Courage" campaign:



## Legislative Excellence Awards Honorees Announced



State Senator  
Chris Harris



State Representative  
John Otto

Senator Chris Harris and Representative John Otto have been announced as the recipients of the 2010 CACTX Legislative Excellence Awards. The Legislative Excellence Awards Luncheon will be held in Austin, Wednesday, October 27<sup>th</sup> at the Omni Hotel Downtown.

In announcing the selection of Senator Harris and Representative Otto CACTX Board President Diana Browning noted that "Children's advocacy centers (CACs) throughout Texas are fortunate to have a number of friends and supporters working on behalf of child abuse victims in the legislature. Among those, these two legislators stand out and we are very pleased to recognize their commitment to our cause."

Senator Harris' district is served by the Children's Advocacy Center for Denton County, Dallas Children's Advocacy Center and Alliance for Children serving Tarrant County.

CACs in Representative Otto's district include Bridgehaven Children's Advocacy Center (Dayton), Childrenz HAVEN (Livingston) and The Children's Safe Harbor/Montgomery County CAC (Conroe).

For ticket and sponsorship information contact Amarilis Castillo at [acastillo@cactx.org](mailto:acastillo@cactx.org).

## Save the Date

### Children's Advocacy Centers of Texas Annual Conference:

*Celebrating 15 Years, Partners in Courage*

Make plans now to join child protection professionals and community volunteers from across the state for the annual conference of Texas CACs. The 15<sup>th</sup> annual conference will be held October 25<sup>th</sup>–27<sup>th</sup> at the Omni Hotel Downtown Austin. Social Work and LPC continuing education credits as well as law enforcement TCLEOSE credits will be offered. To learn more about conference speakers and events or to register go to [www.cactx.org](http://www.cactx.org).



are you the

One?

[onewithcourage.org](http://onewithcourage.org)

A campaign of



**One with Courage** is Children's Advocacy Centers of Texas, Inc.'s statewide initiative centered around the courage it takes to talk about child sexual abuse. As the nation's leading membership association of Children's Advocacy Centers, our goal each and every day is to change the way Texas responds to child abuse. You can help—learn the signs, share this information, and be the One with Courage to make a difference.

# S I G N S

## of child abuse

Below are indicators of child abuse that can include but are not limited to these signs. Some signs that a child is experiencing violence or abuse are more obvious than others. Trust your instincts. Suspected abuse is enough of a reason to contact the authorities. You do not need proof.

- 1 **Unexplained injuries.** Visible signs of physical abuse may include unexplained burns or bruises in the shape of objects. You may also hear unconvincing explanations of a child's injuries.
- 2 **Changes in behavior.** Abuse can lead to many changes in a child's behavior. Abused children often appear scared, anxious, depressed, withdrawn or more aggressive.
- 3 **Returning to earlier behaviors.** Abused children may display behaviors shown at earlier ages, such as thumb-sucking, bed-wetting, fear of the dark or strangers. For some children, even loss of acquired language or memory problems may be an issue.
- 4 **Fear of going home.** Abused children may express apprehension or anxiety about leaving school or about going places with the person who is abusing them.
- 5 **Changes in eating.** The stress, fear and anxiety caused by abuse can lead to changes in a child's eating behaviors, which may result in weight gain or weight loss.
- 6 **Changes in sleeping.** Abused children may have frequent nightmares or have difficulty falling asleep, and as a result may appear tired or fatigued.
- 7 **Changes in school performance and attendance.** Abused children may have difficulty concentrating in school or have excessive absences, sometimes due to adults trying to hide the children's injuries from authorities.
- 8 **Lack of personal care or hygiene.** Abused and neglected children may appear uncared for. They may present as consistently dirty and have severe body odor, or they may lack sufficient clothing for the weather.
- 9 **Risk-taking behaviors.** Young people who are being abused may engage in high-risk activities such as using drugs or alcohol or carrying a weapon.
- 10 **Inappropriate sexual behaviors.** Children who have been sexually abused may exhibit overly sexualized behavior or use explicit sexual language.

WWW.ONEWITHCOURAGE.ORG

In Texas there are

**64** children's advocacy centers that reach

**93%** of the state's population.

To find a children's advocacy center in your area go to [www.cactx.org](http://www.cactx.org).



### If a child outcries:

#### DO:

- Remain calm.
- Believe the child.
- Allow the child to talk.
- Show interest and concern.
- Reassure and support the child.
- Take action. It could save a child's life.

#### DON'T:

- Panic or overreact.
- Press the child to talk.
- Promise anything you can't control.
- Confront the offender.
- Blame or minimize the child's feelings.
- Overwhelm the child with questions.

Statewide sponsor:



**BlueCross BlueShield of Texas**

*Experience. Wellness. Everywhere.™*

([www.bcbstx.com](http://www.bcbstx.com))

**Remember, you are obligated by law to report suspected child abuse.**

If you suspect a child is in immediate danger, call **911**. In Texas, call the abuse and neglect hotline at **800.252.5400**. Outside of Texas, visit [www.onewithcourage.org](http://www.onewithcourage.org) for a list of resources.

# Cookin' Up FUNds and Growing Support

In the eight years that the members of the University of Texas chapter of Sigma Alpha Epsilon (SAE) Fraternity have held the *Cookin' for Kids* event—a day-long cook-off with teams drawn from their own chapter membership and from other SAE chapters at colleges and universities in the state—they have raised more than \$60,000 to support the services that CACTX in Texas provide for abused children. CACTX is honored to partner with this outstanding group of young men and encourages them to continue their support of the CACTX mission—“to restore the lives of abused children”—by becoming involved with the children’s advocacy center in the communities where they will live, work and raise their families.



SAE Philanthropy Chairman Taylor Massey presents proceeds check from *Cookin' for Kids* event at CACTX Board meeting

## Stay Connected!

Sign up now for the CACTX E-Newsletter: Email [acastillo@cactx.org](mailto:acastillo@cactx.org) and let us know you want to receive the e-newsletter with timely updates on advocacy issues and developments throughout the state. You can also follow CACTX online on Facebook, Twitter and YouTube. Check it out and let us know what you think.

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We wish to thank the following companies and individuals who have made gifts to support Children’s Advocacy Centers of Texas from February 1, 2010–July 31, 2010.

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1 in 4 girls  
and one in six boys  
will be sexually  
abused before  
their 18th birthday.  
before 18