



Michael's House

A Child Advocacy Center

Michael's House offers comprehensive services and a range of support to children and non-offending caregivers that have been affected by abuse. This may include immediate response and prompt collaborations with an extended network of law enforcement, prosecution, victim advocacy, counseling, and medical services. Michael's House is an accredited member of the National Children's Alliance. Michael's House is an accredited member of the National Children's Alliance (NCA)



— Fall 2024 —

MANGER'S MINUTE

Thank you for joining our newsletter community. As an agency dedicated to serving and supporting child abuse victims, we are honored to have you alongside us in this critical mission. Your interest and involvement help us raise awareness, offer resources, and drive meaningful change for children and families who have experienced trauma.

Through this newsletter, we will keep you informed about latest updates, meet members of our multidisciplinary team, as well as committed community members, provide information regarding educational resources, and ways you can get involved to make a difference. Together, we can help create a safer, more supportive world for children who need us most.

Thank you for being a part of the journey and for being a champion to the children we serve.



YESTERDAY TO TODAY

Michael's House was dedicated in December of 2008 in Greene County/Fairborn, OH. This child advocacy center is named in honor of Michael Mercurio. Michael, son of Bill and Elaine Mercurio, passed away unexpectedly at the age of 37. He was a loving father, an accomplished endodontist, a friend to many, and displayed unconditional love to

disadvantaged children by providing complementary professional dental care.

To honor Michael's spirit to serve children, the drive of his philanthropic parents, and with the commitment and generosity of the community, the mission of Michael's House was born.

Since its infancy, Michael's House is guided by a mission driven purpose of protecting children, supporting their non-offending family members, holding offenders accountable and educating the community to properly respond to prevent child abuse. Today, individuals, community members and organizations carry Michael's legacy forward by deliberately improving the delivery of evidence-based programming and coordinated services to area children. The multi-disciplinary approach aspires to ensure children are not further victimized by the systems intended to protect them.

The child friendly location in Fairborn, OH reflects a compassionate, caring and respect for all those that enter. The facility is intentionally designed, furnished, and staffed to promote physical, emotional, and mental healing. The generous funding of various organization and community members allows Michael's House to grow the mission and vision of a healing place for children that have been severely mistreated.

A LOOK AT THE NUMBERS

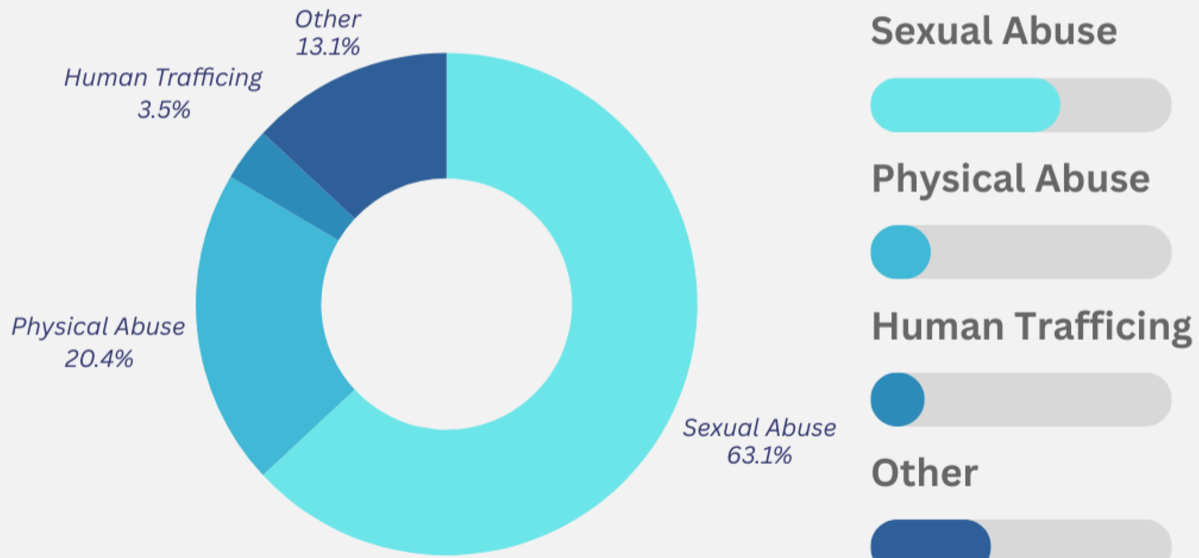
National and Local Statistics

In 2023, the Children's Advocacy Centers nationwide served 381,364 children. ([National Children's Alliance](#))

In 2024, Michael's House has served nearly 300 children of Greene County.

CHILD ABUSE GREENE COUNTY

2024



REPORTING TIPS

Reporting child abuse and neglect is everyone's responsibility. Children are counting on adults to protect them. If a child expresses that they have been abused, stay calm and listen with compassion. Collect minimum facts, it is not your role to investigate.

Where to report:

Greene County Children's Services 937-562-6600

If a child is in immediate danger, call 911

MULTI-DICIPLINARY TEAM SPOTLIGHT

MDT's

primary goal

is to reduce the number
of times a child will
need to talk with
different professionals.

HOW THE MULTIDISCIPLINARY TEAM RESPONDS TO CHILD ABUSE



The Multidisciplinary Team (MDT) is a collaborative effort between the Children Services, Law Enforcement, Prosecutor's Office, Victim Advocacy, Mental Health, Medical staff and the CAC staff to coordinate services for a child and their family while a child's allegation of abuse is under investigation. The MDT's primary goal is to reduce the number of times a child will need to talk with different professionals. The MDT is designed to respond to questions quickly and sensitively during the investigation.

RESOURCE CORNER



Education & Training

Education and training are key to prevention. Research shows that children need higher quality prevention programs that include parent and adult education, interactive programming, and programming that is ongoing. We use Stewards of Children, MBF Child Safety Matters, and Teen Safety Matters curriculum to educate adults and children. If you would like to know more about training please contact Archer Thomas, Awareness and Outreach Specialist at 937-641-5671 or thomasa7@childrensdayton.org

[read more](#)

Therapist Thought...

Military Message

Wright Patterson Air Force Base (WPAFB) is situated between Greene and Montgomery counties, with its perimeter extending into both. These are the two counties served by CARE House (Montgomery) and Michael's House (Greene). Both CARE House and Michael's House had collaborated informally with WPAFB, until a few years ago when the centers began receiving a military partnership grant through the National Children's Alliance (NCA).

This has allowed the centers more opportunity to create a formal collaboration, such as monthly meetings

When children and adolescents present to the Child Advocacy Center for a forensic interview, they may feel overwhelmed by the process and vulnerable due to the life events that brought them to the center. As a part of the multidisciplinary approach, mental health services are provided by licensed professionals at the center. However, with all the information provided to families during their first visit to a CAC, they may not take in everything that is shared about mental health services, and what these services include or look like. In this section, the therapists of Michael's House, Greene County's CAC, will share information related to our roles and function as members of the MDT.

First, as licensed providers, we are trained and certified in evidenced-based treatments for trauma. This means that the mental health services we offer and provide are based on modalities that have been shown through research to be effective in reducing trauma symptoms for children and adolescents. The main treatment modality used by the CAC therapists is Trauma-Focused Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (TF-CBT), but the providers are also trained in other evidence-based therapies such as Eye Movement Desensitization and Reprocessing (EMDR), Child and Family Traumatic Stress Intervention (CFTSI), and Alternatives for Families Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (AF-CBT). All of these therapies address trauma concerns, and the modality is chosen based on family and child needs. Therapy as an intervention focuses on supporting the child and family as they navigate life stressors and process events that they have experienced, both related to the forensic interview and trauma, and not. It is a chance for the child to have an outside person they can go to in order to discuss concerns, receive support for trauma and symptoms, and gain skills to manage life stressors and concerns to assist in returning to pre-trauma functioning levels and living what they identify to be their most healthy and adaptive life.

Michael's House Therapist

Team

between the CACs and WPAFB investigative representatives, as well as hire a Military Liaison. As Ohio's largest single-site employer, WPAFB has a workforce of over 31,000, including active-duty military, non-military personnel, and civilian contractors. Because of this large number of military affiliated families in the region, the centers have just started to scratch the surface of the military affiliated families that are being served.

If you have any questions about this partnership, do not hesitate to reach out to the Military Liaison, Kristin Fleck, at FleckK@childrensdayton.org or 937-641-5689.

Prevention Tip...

Support for children and parents can be the best way to prevent child abuse. After-school activities, parent education classes, mentoring programs, and respite care are some of the many ways to keep children safe from harm. Be a voice in support of these efforts in your community.

Encourage leaders in the community to be supportive of children and families. Ask employers to provide family-friendly work environments. Ask your local and national lawmakers to support legislation to better protect our children and to improve their lives.

COMMUNITY SPOTLIGHT

Elaine Mercurio

Elaine Mercurio, alongside her late husband, Bill Mercurio are co-founders of Michael's House and have been local philanthropists and distinguished community members in the Dayton region for decades. Elaine has been a champion of children for nearly 40 years. Her



determination, resiliency, and commitment to improve the lives of others has extended over most of her lifetime. Elaine is being recognized as Michael's House first community spotlight for her diligent dedication to the children and families of Greene County. She is a remarkable agent of change with a solution orientated mindset that has positively enhanced all those she encounters.

With Elaine's knowledge, relationship building, and a relentless drive to improve the social conditions of children, she created a path forward for the inception of Michael's Houses. Through Elaine's trailblazing efforts, her spark ignited community members to unite and bring light to lives of children in Greene County.

Elaine is a proud mother of 4 children and 12 grandchildren. In 2007, with the devastating loss and unexpected passing of her 37 year old son, Michael Mercurio, Elaine wanted to honor her son's legacy of caring for children while also addressing the need for a child advocacy center in Greene County. Michael was an accomplished endodontist and a loving father of 2 children, often described as a "strong and gentle soul". Michael carried forward his parent's emphasis on giving back, and would generously give and provide complementary dental services to children less fortunate.

Prior to the establishment of Michael's House. Elaine's involvement in the community was both broad and deep. After raising her 4 children, Elaine began her new career as an educator, teaching at a local school district, where she began to understand the need to protect and enhance the lives of children. Elaine and her family moved to Greene County, where Elaine gradually became a full time and active participant in the growth, development, and overall improvement of child and family services in the county.

Elaine has generously dedicated her time to various organizations including the Beavercreek Popcorn Festival, St Luke's Parish, Beavercreek Park Board, Greene Community Health Foundation Auxiliary, Family Violence Prevention Center, Beavercreek Women's League, Dayton Children's Hospital, and Greene County Juvenile Court as a court-appointed special advocate (CASA). She has received numerous awards for her service including the Civic Award by the Beavercreek Chamber of Commerce, Volunteer of the Year by the Family Violence Prevention Center, the Paul Harris Fellowship Award by the Beavercreek Rotary. She was inducted into the Greene County Women's Hall of Fame in 2003. Together, Elaine and Bill Mercurio, received the prestigious E.J. Nutter Award, in 2016 recognizing the outstanding citizenship and community impact their efforts had on the entire region.

In addition, Elaine became a member on the board of the Ohio Network of Children's Advocacy Centers (ONCAC) in hopes to continue making a larger impact and improve the trajectory for child advocacy on a state level.

With her previous experience and participation in child advocacy, the passing of her son prompted the urgency to build a place where children could seek refuge and justice. Elaine took a tragedy and transformed it into something positive and meaningful. Land was donated, grants were written, plans were designed, donors were secured and in less than 18 months, the doors of Michael's House were opened. Elaine, Bill, along with numerous community leaders, came together and the vision for Michael's House was actualized. With Elaine and a minimal staff, the team devised and executed a plan which has now grown into a coordinated partnerships with Dayton Children's Hospital, Greene County Prosecutor's Office, Police Departments, Greene County Sheriff's Office, Department of Job and Family Services, and the Mental Health Recovery Board.

The impact of Micheal's House has grown tremendously and yielded national recognition with Elaine's invaluable efforts, establishing connections, and the passion to nurture the foundation of its mission. Elaine wishes to "thank her family, friends, community members, and staff through the years for all they have done to fight and protect children and help make Michael's House what it is today."

Currently, Elaine continues to support Michael's House as a board chair/advisory committee, planning events, fundraising efforts, planting pinwheel gardens, and of course, making quilts for all the children to warm their bodies, minds and spirits.

The entire Miami Valley region is better because of Elaine, and Michael's House is blessed to be a recipient of Elaine's vision, contributions, experience, and generous spirit. With a gift for bringing people together, her family legacy continues with her children and grandchildren supporting their time, talent, and treasures to Michael's House. She is a true inspiration to see the silver lining, make lemonade from lemons, and to dance in the rain, rather than waiting for the storm to pass.

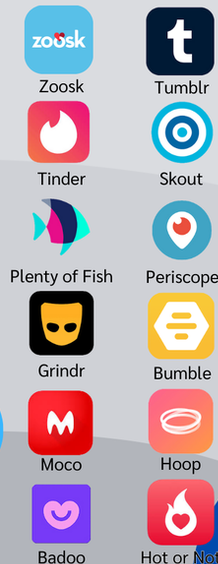
Through the dedication of Elaine, along with the collaboration of many others, Michael's House has become a beacon of light. A light that one day Elaine hopes is "so bright that there will no longer be darkness for any child."

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

Navigating Apps: The Caregiver's List of Apps

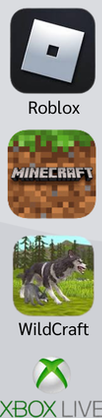
Dating Apps

A dating app is meant to connect adults, but can be risky for children/teens due to exposure to inappropriate content and potential predators, who might seek to exploit or harm them.



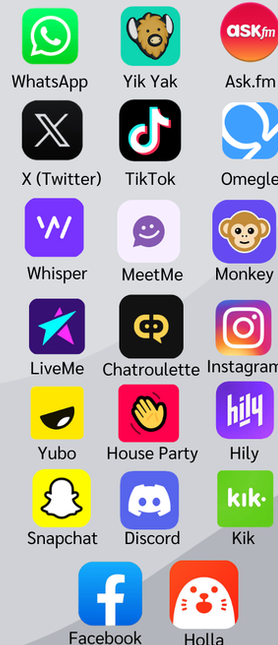
Gaming Apps

A mobile gaming app lets users play games on their devices, but for kids, it can be risky due to potential in-game purchases, inappropriate content, and interactions with strangers.



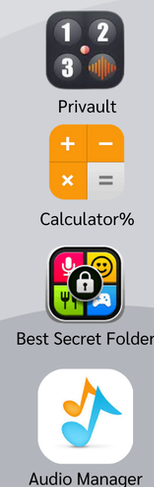
Chat Apps

A chat app allows users to communicate through text, voice, or video messages. For kids, it can be dangerous due to risks like exposure to inappropriate content and interactions with strangers who may have harmful intentions.



Secret Apps

A secret app disguises itself to hide private information or activities. For kids, it's risky because it can conceal unsafe behavior and limit parental oversight.



This list is not all-inclusive, new apps are constantly emerging and evolving. Be aware that these and similar apps can potentially be exploited by online predators. (Updated 9/2024)

HOW TO HELP

YOU can make a difference for the kids and families at Michael's House.
We could not do what we do without our generous volunteers and donors.

SUPPORT OUR MISSION

CLICK HERE
michaelshousecac.org/how-to-help/ →



There are many ways in which you can get involved with Michael's House. We hope you will take the opportunity to learn more about how to help.



Michael's House

A Child Advocacy Center

The Child Advocacy Center (CAC) is a child-friendly facility that provides a safe place for children to speak and be heard. Child Advocacy Centers exist to provide every service needed for victims of sexual abuse to find safety, justice, and healing. Michael's House is part of the National Children's Alliance (NCA). The NCA is the national association and accrediting body for a network of 961 (and counting!) Children's Advocacy Centers.



NATIONAL
CHILDREN'S
ALLIANCE®



Michael's House

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937-641-5670

For more information, please visit our website <https://michaelshousecac.org/>



Michael's House complies with applicable Federal civil rights laws and does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, age, disability or sex. For more information, see link on our home page at <https://www.childrensdayton.org>

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