



Program Delivery  
Partner

## *The Children's Advocacy Center of Sexual Assault Services*

36 West Manchester

Battle Creek, MI 49037

269-245-3836 or 269-245-3837



NATIONAL  
CHILDREN'S  
ALLIANCE

## **FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS ABOUT THERAPY**

### **Why should my child go to therapy?**

Your child has gone through a difficult time. Therapy, or counseling, can help your child work through this traumatic experience, as well as help you gain a better understanding of what your child is going through.

Depending on the severity of and number of traumas experienced, sexual abuse can have wide-reaching and long lasting effects on your child's physical and mental health. There is increasing evidence that, with support from a caring adult and high quality treatment, many children and parents effectively recover and may even feel stronger and closer as a family in the aftermath of a traumatic experience.

### **What is therapy?**

Play therapy is the mode of counseling that is often used for young children. Play therapy to children is what counseling is to adults. Play therapy uses play, children's natural way of expression, to help them express their feelings more easily through toys instead of words.

For older children and teenagers, therapy can be a place where they can express themselves in a safe place. Through therapy, they can feel accepted and understood, and gain a sense of control or understanding of difficult situations.

### **How long does a child receive therapy?**

The length of time a child is seen in therapy varies from child to child. It depends upon the severity of the trauma, the child's personality, and how the child perceived the trauma. Your child's therapist can best explain this to you after a thorough assessment of your child's needs.

### **Where can I get help for myself?**

It's also very helpful for the caregiver to have support from a mental health professional. You can also benefit from talking to a therapist who can assist you in overcoming the distress naturally associated with discovering that your child has been abused.

Talk with your Family Advocate at the CAC about where you can get help for yourself. Your child's therapist can also speak to you about where you can go for additional help and support. This could include individual counseling and/or family counseling. Therapeutic or educational groups can also be a huge source of support through this difficult time.

### **What about support groups?**

Support groups are a place where children and caregivers can go to gain support and understanding from others who have gone through the same experience. Groups can often help people feel that they are not the only ones experiencing this trauma.

The Children's Advocacy Center of SAS offers two educational support groups; Finding Peace in the Eye of the Storm & Helping to Heal Trauma with Yoga. These groups generally run in the Spring and the Fall for six weeks each session and it is recommended that you attend all of the sessions to receive the maximum benefit. Each session is broken down into a

child group and a caregiver group. The children and caregivers then get together as one big group at the end to practice skills they have learned and to celebrate completion of the group.

Both the Finding Peace and the HTWY groups help families understand the common reactions to stress and trauma, learn new relaxation and problem solving skills, gain positive behavior management skills, offer children & their parents/caregivers the opportunity to learn and practice new skills, as well as to understand that they are not alone.

For more information on Finding Peace & HTWY groups, call Maria Markos at 269-245-3837.

**What do I do now?**

Your Family Advocate will give you a counseling resources handout before you leave the Center. You should call a counseling agency on the sheet your Advocate has given you as soon as possible to set up an initial appointment so that your child can begin receiving services. If you have any questions after you leave, or if you have difficulty reaching the counseling agency, call your Family Advocate at 269-245-3836 for assistance. We are here to help.