



The Children's Assessment Center

A Message from The Children's Assessment Center's Executive Director, Kerry McCracken

Dear Friends and Advocates,

First and foremost, let me express my hope that as we all pull together during these challenging times, you and your loved ones are healthy and safe.



Parents and caregivers are enduring unusual and stressful circumstances. Between school closings, social distancing, job expectations, and the need to provide for our families, it is an uncertain time. What we do know is that it will continue to shift as our leaders navigate this ongoing pandemic. Please take a moment to consider the resources found on our website, [**CAC Resources**](#), in an effort to keep our children and community members healthy, safe, and supported.

Events in recent years are evidence that the Houston and Harris County communities are no strangers to crisis. **Unfortunately, it is in times of crisis that our children become more vulnerable.** A number of studies indicate that the presence of stressful life events: limited resources, loss of income or job, and displacement, are all factors that can contribute to child abuse.

Now, with children out of school, many families are having to consider alternative measures of child care, and kids may be staying with a new neighbor, a family friend, or a relative. Other children or adults may also be in these spaces, and some of these individuals may not be familiar with your child. Unfortunately, this is when we see higher incidents of abuse.



What can you do?

First, we must talk to our children about any inappropriate touch or conversation that makes them feel uncomfortable – **let your child know that they can always talk to you.**

Secondly, when dropping your child off - go over the day's agenda and activities, let your child know they can call or text you at any time, and furthermore, **let everyone in the home know you are in constant communication with your child.**

Additional information that pertains to choosing child care may be found **here**. For more information about free upcoming trainings at The Children's Assessment Center, or for questions about prevention education, please contact CACTraining@cac.hctx.net.

Protecting our children is an adult's responsibility, and one that our entire community must take seriously. Please take this time to stay informed. Nothing can strengthen a community more than safeguarding this most valuable and vulnerable population.

Kerry McCracken
Executive Director

Child Sexual Abuse Facts & Resources

Tips for Protecting Your Children

