



CHILD
ADVOCACY
CENTRE
of Kelowna

BUILDING HOPE

A CASE FOR SUPPORT

HELP SHAPE A BETTER FUTURE FOR OUR MOST VULNERABLE CHILDREN AND FAMILIES

THE VISION

We are building a child friendly Centre of Excellence that will provide a collaborative response to child abuse in our community. The Centre will improve access, efficiency and effectiveness of care. The Centre will create a safe space for children and their families, and help to prevent future child abuse through support and community education.

The development of the Child Advocacy Centre of Kelowna is inspired by the belief that every child affected by abuse deserves:

- Access to a safe and secure space to tell their story
- To be protected from their abuser
- To only have to tell their story once
- To be heard and believed
- To be surrounded by support when they are most vulnerable
- To be guided carefully through the criminal justice process
- To feel they have the opportunity to move beyond their abuse
- To feel hopeful about their future



“ Every community has a responsibility to give the gift of a Child Advocacy Centre to the vulnerable children of their community. ”

Barb Spencer, Former CEO, Zebra Child Protection Centre

THE CAMPAIGN IN BRIEF

- Kelowna Foundation for Hope & Social Innovation has embarked on a \$6 million campaign to build and operate a Child Advocacy Centre (CAC) in Kelowna, BC.
- The CAC will house all of the services required to respond collaboratively to a child victimized by abuse.
- The CAC will respond to the needs of children from birth up to the age of nineteen minus a day and their non-offending family members.
- The CAC will surround victimized children with all of the support and services required to move beyond the abuse to a healthier, more productive future.
- The campaign has already raised an initial \$1 million from individuals, foundations and corporations dedicated to delivering a better solution for child victims of emotional, sexual, physical abuse and neglect.



A SAFE PLACE TO TELL

Imagine a child, a young vulnerable child who has been abused at the hands of a stranger, or worse by someone they know and trust.

Now imagine the bravery it takes for that child to tell their secret, to speak out loud their traumatic truth. Imagine that this truth is spoken to a complete stranger in the back of a police car or in the cold, sterile environment of a police interview room. And then imagine this child having to find that same strength over and over again as they repeat their devastating story as many as a dozen times to the various agencies involved in responding to cases of child abuse.

Each time this child is forced to speak these words out loud they are traumatized all over again. Every time they are required to remember the painful details of their abuse they are one step further away from moving forward into a brighter future where hope and healing await.

What if there is a better way? What if when that child found their voice they could instead walk through the comforting doors of the Child Advocacy Centre of Kelowna? A safe and integrated Centre designed specifically to meet the physical and emotional needs of these children and their families.

Imagine that a friendly face is waiting for them on the other side of these doors, the face of someone specifically trained to understand the unique needs of these children. Now imagine that by coming to the Child Advocacy Centre this child will only need to tell their story one time because everyone who needs to understand it is waiting for them within that same comforting space. Imagine the difference it makes to that child and their family, the burden that it lifts and the power that it gives them to take a step forward into a healthy and productive future.



CHILD ADVOCACY CENTRE OF KELOWNA

Currently the most vulnerable children of our community are not being served in a way that is efficient or effective. In order to protect these children and improve long-term outcomes, we believe we must fundamentally disrupt the current system.

Research shows an overwhelming need for a Child Advocacy Centre in Kelowna, BC. The concept of Child Advocacy Centres arose from growing recognition of the long-term impacts that abuse, neglect and/or witnessing violence have on a child's development. Several British Columbia communities have adopted the CAC principle of care, while in Kelowna we still have not taken this necessary step for the children in our community.

The current statistics for child abuse in British Columbia identify 1 in 3 children as having experienced significant and/or severe abuse of varying frequency throughout their childhood. The repercussions of this abuse are immediate and life altering as victims often carry the emotional and/or physical trauma into adulthood.

The Child Advocacy Centre of Kelowna will serve to disrupt the current system of response and address its limitations through a collaborative integrated model of care.



IT TAKES A VILLAGE

WORKING TOGETHER TO MAKE A DIFFERENCE

They say it takes a village to raise a child. Never were these words more true than when speaking of a child who has been hurt by some form of abuse.

The moment a child comes forward a number of wheels are set in motion. There are the child's immediate physical needs, emotional support for the child and their family, the question of criminal investigation and measures to be taken to secure the child's safety to name just a few.

The challenge today is that each of these critical services operate in physical separation from one another. By bringing these services into one Centre of care the child can be surrounded by support instead of being shuttled between services.

The CAC will create an environment where critical and relevant information sharing occurs on an everyday basis between the partner organizations. By working together, the multi-disciplinary team will provide a coordinated, consistent and timely response for children and families who have been affected by severe and complex cases of child abuse.

AN OUTLINE OF SERVICES

FORENSIC CHILD
INTERVIEWS

MEDICAL EVALUATION

ADVOCACY AND SUPPORT

COURT PREPARATION

CASE COORDINATION
AND REVIEW

THERAPY & COUNSELLING
SERVICES

COMMUNITY EDUCATION

PROFESSIONAL TRAINING FOR
SOCIAL WORKERS, MEDICAL
STAFF AND POLICE



“

As RCMP we see firsthand the devastating impact that violence, abuse, and extreme neglect has on the most vulnerable members of our community, our children. This has to stop and we, the professionals working on the front line, need your help to change the story.

The Child Advocacy Centre of Kelowna will create an integrated solution with a focus on building the resiliency that these families need to move past the abuse and lead a better, fuller life. It is my hope that our community will rally around this cause to make the CAC a reality for the betterment of all victims of abuse.

”

Superintendent Brent Mundle, Officer in Charge
Kelowna Regional Detachment

1 IN 3



1 IN 3 CHILDREN IN CANADA SUFFER TRAUMA RELATED TO FORMS OF ABUSE

PEOPLE WHO HAVE BEEN ABUSED ARE...

30% 
LESS LIKELY
TO GRADUATE
HIGH SCHOOL

3-4 TIMES  
MORE LIKELY TO HAVE MENTAL
HEALTH AND ADDICTION ISSUES



26 TIMES MORE LIKELY TO
EXPERIENCE HOMELESSNESS



45

TIMES MORE
LIKELY TO
PERPETRATE
DATING
VIOLENCE AS
ADOLESCENTS

CHILD ABUSE COSTS CANADA \$21.5 BILLION EVERY YEAR 

“

Sometimes all you need is someone who will believe your story, and that's all it took for me. When I entered the Child Advocacy Centre, I was immediately surrounded by helpful hands, advocates ready to listen. Throughout my life I've heard many people deny that abuse has happened.

Sometimes we shrug off things that our body or mind can't handle or process. However, abuse does happen and it is real. I was sexually abused by my father when I was just a little girl. I was brainwashed for a long time into thinking nothing would come of it if I told anyone. I was told that no one would believe me, and that I'd be in trouble. However, my life was forever changed when I met a child advocate who told me the exact words that I needed to hear, "It's not your fault" and "Everything will be okay." They sat me down in a room and explained the interview process to me. There was not one moment during that time that I didn't feel safe. The advocate was so kind and

so sweet. I just knew that day was going to be the day they would help me, and I was right. I was no longer alone, and I no longer had a big secret I needed to hold in anymore. I had someone who believed my story, and didn't once tell me that she didn't believe me. She took the time to hear my every word, and supported me throughout the whole interview. The Child Advocacy Centre uses trained professionals who make children feel safe and important. They give children a chance to tell their story and feel comfortable in doing so. They changed one little girl's life forever, and I know they have and will do the same for many other children."

”

Melissa



ADVOCACY AT WORK

CHANGING LIVES ONE CHILD AT A TIME

Child abuse and neglect are very difficult subjects to talk about in any context. The unfortunate reality is that it is happening and we need to build a better, more responsive solution to serve the needs of those affected. We need a better model to support not only the victims, but the community of individuals that is linked to those survivors: The mothers and father, siblings, grandparents, teachers and friends. The devastating effects of abuse don't stop with the victim but ripple quietly throughout communities.

The community needs to stand together to sustainably support the creation of a Child Advocacy Centre in Kelowna as it marks an important step forward in the support and protection of our most vulnerable citizens.

- **Your gift will build a safe and secure place for children to tell their story.**
- **Your gift will aid in breaking the cycle of abuse one child at a time.**
- **Your gift will support not only victims but families and communities.**
- **Your gift will empower child abuse survivors to step forward beyond their story of abuse.**
- **Your gift will change the way that service agencies work to protect our vulnerable children.**

These children deserve more, we invite you to be part of the journey to deliver a better outcome.

OUR PARTNERS



BUILDING HOPE



CHILD
ADVOCACY
CENTRE
of Kelowna



778.760.0719

120 -1815 Kirschner Rd. Kelowna, BC V1Y 4N7



info@KelownaFoundation.com

CACkelowna.com