

# Annual Report 2020

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## Children's Safe Harbor

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a children's advocacy center





## Our Mission

To achieve justice and healing for every abused child  
and engage our community in that mission

## Our Vision

Engaging our community to prevent child abuse and  
achieve justice and healing for every abused child

## Our Goal

With a team of community and professional agencies  
united, we are committed to counsel the minds and heal  
the bodies of brave children and prosecute offenders of the  
youngest and most vulnerable victims of our society

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Serving Children and Families in  
Montgomery, San Jacinto & Walker Counties

Children's Safe Harbor cares for children between the ages  
of 2 and 17 who have suffered sexual abuse, severe physical abuse and  
trauma. Since we opened our doors on August 31, 1998, we have provided  
a safe place for over 21,000 children to be heard, helped and healed.

# A Letter from the Executive Director

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Dear Children's Safe Harbor Partners and Supporters:

On August 31, 2021, our children's advocacy center passed its **23rd year of service** to our communities across Montgomery, San Jacinto and Walker Counties.

***We continued to serve abused children during a pandemic.***

With each year of service, our data suggest a steady increase, on average by 18%. And while this Annual Report shares our collaborative work in 2020 – the year that the unprecedented coronavirus pandemic impacted the world and our local communities – **our services still served an incredible number of children and their families**. By March 23, 2020, Children's Safe Harbor was deemed an essential service to work alongside law enforcement and children's protective services caseworkers. **Our doors never closed.**

The leadership and staff of Children's Safe Harbor had to adjust our facilities to follow the CDC guidelines for safety and protection while we charted a new course of service delivery **without** our most important partners who report annually over 55% of child abuse cases statewide ... **our school teachers**.

As our children were home embedded in families that were struggling to adapt to a worldwide shutdown, we saw a **steady increase in violence and complexity** across all cases that were referred to our children's advocacy center by our partnerships and law enforcement, which include children's protective services caseworkers.

As we continue to navigate the Delta variant of the coronavirus into fall 2021, **our children are still suffering intense violence and multifaceted levels of complex trauma**. Our communities are continuing to navigate unprecedented demands and shortages of resources attributed to the pandemic. The ongoing consequences of public health initiatives, unemployment and ongoing ambiguity and uncertainty have continued to highlight the critical importance of the work of our children's advocacy center.

***Not all homes are safe.***

The unfortunate reality is, not all children are blessed by parents and caregivers who can demonstrate a model of love and compassion for them and their siblings. We all need to **open our hearts and minds** to be that voice for all of our children.



*Juggling decreased funding, which is leading to an unsustainable model.*

As you read through our 2020 Annual Report, you will continue to see the depth and breadth of our children's advocacy center model. You will also note the impact of the pandemic on the diversification of our funding. It was predicted that many nonprofits would struggle financially during this past year, and Children's Safe Harbor has followed that same pattern. Never before in our 23 years of excellent service to our communities have we experienced such a **dramatic cut** in not only donations from individuals and local businesses, but we have also received federal and local funding reductions. **And this reduction in financial stability comes alongside our continued increases in service statistics that represent the lives of our children and the lasting health of our communities.**

*We need your help. We need you to give.*

One of the bright sides of this global pandemic has been the deeper understanding of our interconnectedness. We are the safety net for our **children who hold our futures in their hands**. This year, I am asking you to visit our new website and after educating yourself on our incredible work on behalf of restoration and justice for our children and families, please review our Donation Page and see how you might continue our work with your investment. And I ask you to be an ambassador among your network of contacts to help support our mission ... **a mission that must succeed.**

*A sense of urgency.*

These are turbulent times indeed, and no doubt the forecast is uncertain, particularly given the complexity of what we are providing without adequate financial support. In point, we **must raise \$75,000 by end of fiscal year 2021** to stay on track with our services and capital campaign goal to continue our plans for a new, expanded building. Simply put, **we are dependent more than ever before on your help.**

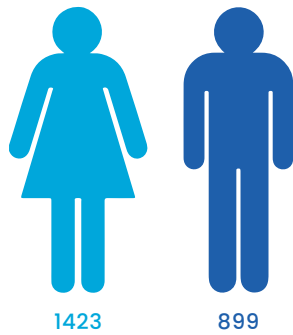
I thank you from the depth of my heart for your ongoing support and belief in the incredible model of Children's Safe Harbor — the only one of its kind in our communities.



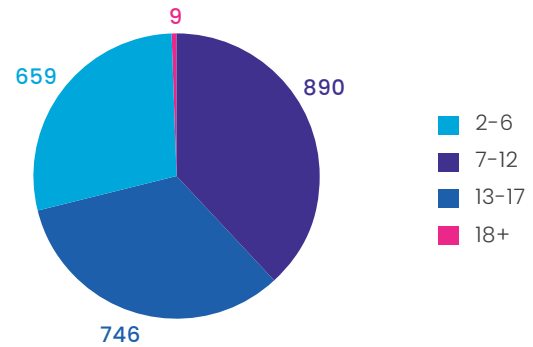
**Warm regards,**  
Victoria J. Constance, PhD  
Executive Director

# Our Clients

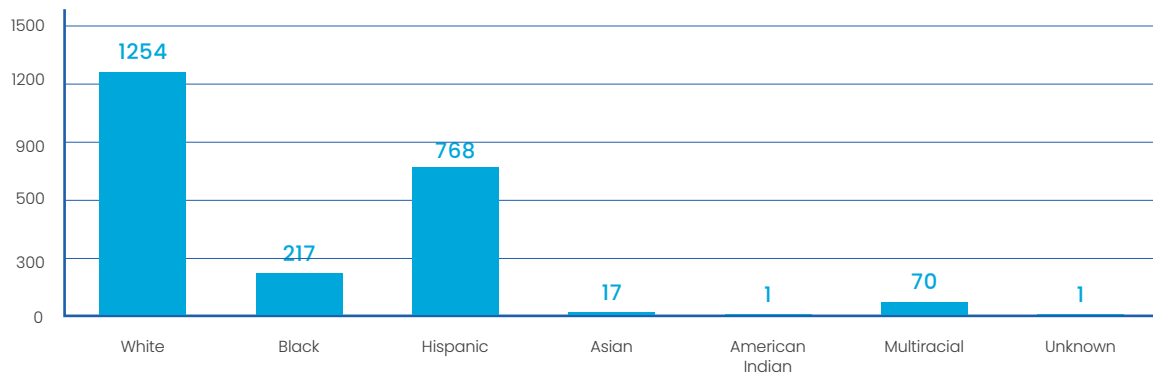
Gender of Child



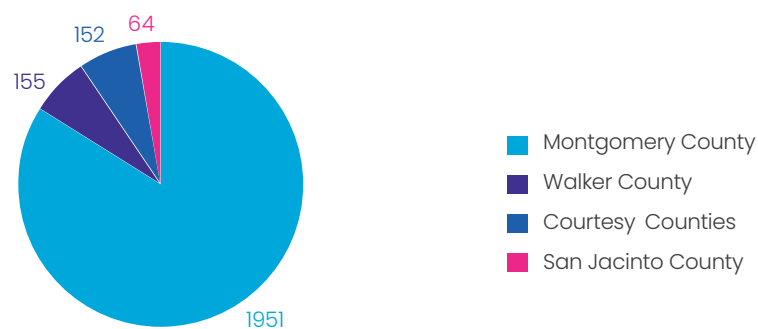
Age of Child



Race/Ethnicity



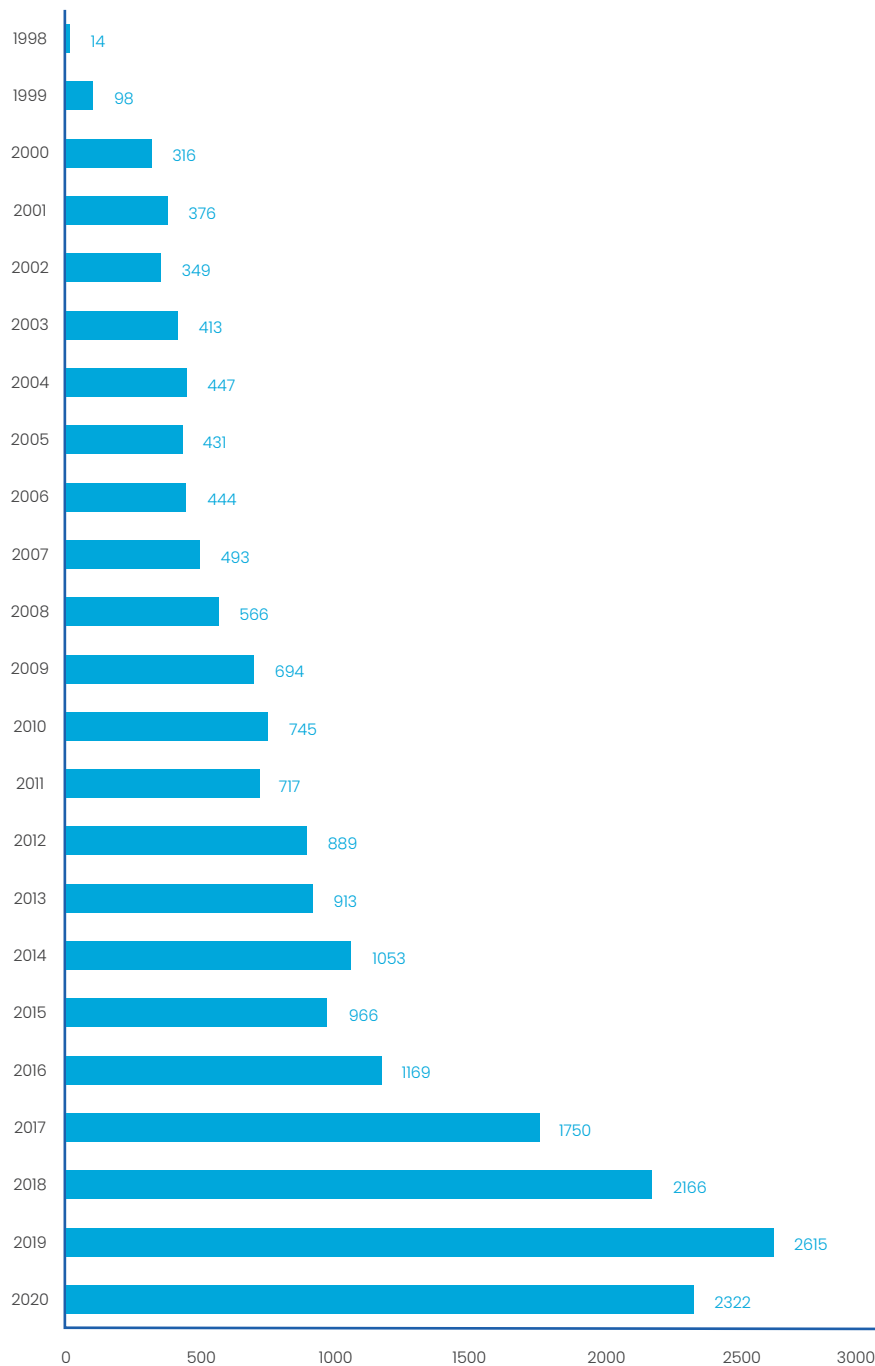
County Where Case Originated



# Forensic Interviews

Forensic Interviews are typically the first service provided for our families. A forensic interview is a neutral, fact finding interview conducted by someone who is specifically trained according to Texas standards.

**Forensic Interviews 1998–2020**



# 2020 At A Glance

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## HELP

- Number of intakes received and reviewed: 6,498
  - Received and reported for Montgomery: 5,482
  - Received and reported for Walker: 599
  - Received and reported for San Jacinto: 379
  - Received and reported for other counties: 38
- Forensic Interviews: 2,322
- Families that received advocacy services: 1,484

- Law Enforcement Dispositions
  - Charges filed: 703
- Prosecution Disposition Results
  - Accepted for prosecution: 68
  - Convictions: 0
- Pleas: 3
- Acquittals: 0



## JUSTICE



## HEALING

- Medical exams conducted: 159
- Individuals who received counseling: 443



# Multi-Disciplinary Team

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Children's Safe Harbor has two sets of customers: multi-disciplinary team partners (law enforcement and the Department of Family and Protective Services) and the children and families they bring as part of a criminal investigation of child abuse. The multi-disciplinary team is the core feature of this model of healing and justice.

The Federal Bureau of Investigation and the Bureau of Crime Statistics continue to estimate that **one in four girls and one in six boys are sexually abused before their 18th birthday** in the US. Of children who are sexually abused, 20% are abused before the age of 8, and 60% of child victims never tell anyone<sup>1</sup>. **Sexual abuse can happen to anyone.** While these figures may seem astounding – unbelievable even – they are true. Sexual abuse of children is real, and it's happening everywhere. In every walk of life.

Due to the continued waves of the coronavirus pandemic, **Children's Safe Harbor is seeing an increase in violence and complexity across all cases** referred to our center. As a nationally accredited children's advocacy center, Children's Safe Harbor provides specialized services to child victims of sexual assault, physical abuse, child sex trafficking and trauma, along with their families. To reduce the trauma and re-victimization of children who have been sexually and/or severely physically abused and/or assaulted, Children's Safe Harbor's service delivery structure is provided within the framework of a multi-disciplinary team approach. Bringing the team of services all together in one co-located building to serve child victims minimizes the need for children to have to endure retelling their traumatic experiences over and over to multiple agencies while facilitating investigation, prosecution, justice and healing.

**At our centralized campus, Children's Safe Harbor co-houses with representatives from law enforcement, prosecution and the Texas Department of Family and Protective Services (DFPS).**

This multi-disciplinary team approach focuses on child-centered strategies and the necessity of coordination of civil and criminal investigations, treatment and prosecution of child abuse cases.

The multi-disciplinary team at Children's Safe Harbor also reviews all incoming reports of child abuse for the counties we serve to ensure communication and collaboration across our partner agencies. This specialized staff reviewed these **6,498 Department of Family and Protective Services intake reports** for local law enforcement in Montgomery County.

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<sup>1</sup> National Crime Victimization Survey, Statistic calculated by staff at Crimes against Children Research Center. 2002.



# Multi-Disciplinary Partner Agencies

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- Conroe Police Department —
- Cut and Shoot Police Department —
- Magnolia Police Department —
- Montgomery County Sheriff's Office —
- Montgomery County Police Department —
  - Oak Ridge Police Department —
  - Panorama Police Department —
  - Patton Village Police Department —
  - Roman Forest Police Department —
  - Shenandoah Police Department —
  - Splendora Police Department —
  - Stagecoach Police Department —
  - Willis Police Department —
- Conroe ISD Police Department —
- Montgomery ISD Police Department —
- New Caney ISD Police Department —
- Splendora ISD Police Department —
  - Montgomery County Precinct 1 —
  - Montgomery County Precinct 2 —
  - Montgomery County Precinct 3 —
  - Montgomery County Precinct 4 —
  - Montgomery County Precinct 5 —
- Montgomery County County Attorney's Office —
- Montgomery County District Attorney's Office —
  - Montgomery County Juvenile Probation —
  - San Jacinto County Sheriff's Office —
  - Coldspring ISD Police Department —
  - San Jacinto County DA's Office —
  - Huntsville Police Department —
  - Walker County Sheriff's Office —
  - Walker County DA's Office —
- Texas Department of Family and Protective Services —
  - Texas Children's Hospital (Jan. 1 – Sept. 30) —
- Texas Forensic Nurse Examiners (Oct. 1 – Dec. 31) —

# Child Sex Trafficking

According to the National Human Trafficking Hotline, 1,080 human trafficking cases were reported in Texas in 2019. Children's Safe Harbor serves as the Care Coordinator for **Commercially Sexually Exploited Youth (CSEY)** in Montgomery County. Our role is to facilitate long-term, trauma-informed care for CSEY survivors via an inter-agency, multi-disciplinary Care Coordination Team. The guidelines for the Montgomery County Care Coordination Team have been developed with the Office of the Governor's Child Sex Trafficking Team.

The Montgomery County CSEY Care Coordination Team has developed guidelines and collaborations that will ensure the response to the survivor will be child-centered, trauma-responsive and coordinated for maximum effect and support for the child.

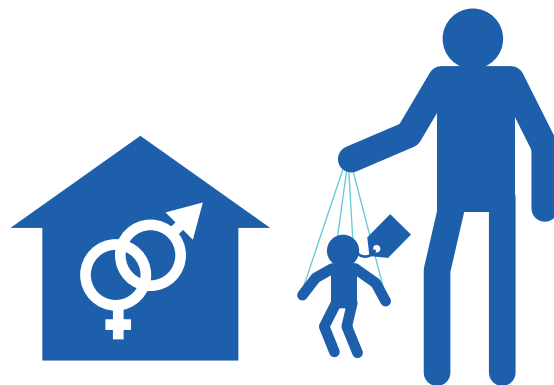
The mission of Care Coordination is to honor each child's right to a future free of exploitation with proactive, expedient and collaborative trauma responsive interventions.

**The impact of the Care Coordination Team reaches the entire community.** Through our tracking and reporting of CSEY cases, we expand the community's knowledge of child sex trafficking and ensure that every victim is seen and heard. The Governor's Office has built a robust system for tracking in which all cases are properly logged and analyzed.

In 2020, Children's Safe Harbor provided assistance and services to **61 CSEY victims** in our children's advocacy center. Another 42 children were considered high risk for CSEY.

Here are some of the many agencies that participate in Care Coordination:

- Children's Safe Harbor
- Office of the Governor's Child Sex Trafficking Team
- Montgomery County District Attorney
- Montgomery County County Attorney
- Montgomery County Juvenile Probation
- Texas Department of Family and Protective Services
- While all law enforcement agencies were invited to participate, the Montgomery County Sheriff's Office, Conroe Police Department and Montgomery County Constable's Office Pct. 3 have participated the most.
- Montgomery County Women's Center
- BCFS Common Thread
- Freedom Place
- Texas Forensic Nurse Examiners





# Healing Outcomes

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What is equally important to the numbers of children and families who are provided our unique services is the impact that our children's advocacy center has on the families that come through our doors. These impacts are referred to as "outcomes." Outcomes answer the questions of "How" and "In What Ways" are families lives supported by our program's unique partnerships collaborations.

In 2020

**3,738 individual family members**  
received services from the family advocacy department.

They were offered referrals in the community and across Children's Safe Harbor departments through their responses to our needs assessments. Family advocates follow up with parents and guardians two weeks after their first contact, often through our services of forensic interviews and two months after seeking counseling services.

Out of 581 children who were interviewed as being at risk for abuse and trauma, 154 of them –21%– disclosed to a forensic interviewer of their own personal experiences of abuse and victimization. These children were offered our full services as they shared their stories.

# Counseling Successes

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**4,394 hours**

of counseling services provided to clients FREE of charge

Of the clients in counseling, 92 were discharged having successfully completed the Trauma Focused-Cognitive Behavioral Therapy recommended 12 sessions of treatment. After just six sessions, 92% of caregivers reported that they had noticed positive changes in their children.

# Survey Questions & Responses

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## What did you appreciate the most about your experience at the Center?

"Everyone was very caring and discreet about such a delicate situation we felt safe and not judged. Felt like everyone just wanted to help."

"I am thankful for Safe Harbor being there to help our children and us parents during times like this."

"How they explain services and resources and actually listen."

"The friendliness and caring nature of all the staff."

"That the focus was on minimizing any further impact on the children."

"Very cordial, open and honest."



## What did you appreciate the most about your experience at the Center since your first visit?

"I found the staff especially professional and caring, during our family crisis."

"That the ultimate focus is the literal BEST interest of the child."

"Everyone was extremely nice and kind."

"Family Advocate checked on family and it was appreciated."



# Board of Directors

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**Victoria Constance, MSPH, PhD**  
Executive Director & CEO of  
the Board of Directors  
Children's Safe Harbor



**Crystal Plumley BSN, RCN-OB**  
Houston Methodist Hospital



**Mary Nan Huffman, JD**  
President  
Legal Counsel  
Houston Police Officer's Union



**Dwight Johnson**  
Retired Sgt., Cisd Police Dept.



**John Frere**  
Past President  
Retired Director of Real Estate  
and Business Services,  
Anadarko Petroleum Corp.



**Faith Casperson**  
Retired Head Nurse, Cisd



**Matthew Rodrigue**  
Vice President  
Deputy  
Harris County Constable Office  
Precinct 4



**Dr. Gurpreet Mukker-Casperson,  
DPM FACFAS**  
Foot & Ankle Surgery



**Paul Purcell**  
Secretary  
Executive Director  
Montgomery County  
Medical Society



**Jill Parker**  
ADA Compliance Specialist  
Locke Lord LLP



**Reynaldo Saldares**  
Treasurer  
Retired, Occidental Petroleum Corp.



**Kate Sloan**  
V.P. of Corporate Planning  
Western Gas Resources



**Kathleen Borchardt, MD, FACOG**  
Houston Methodist Hospital  
Obstetrics & Gynecology



**Patricia Bellows, MD**  
Houston Methodist Hospital  
Obstetrics & Gynecology



**Kimberly K. Perry**  
Court Administrator  
418th District Court



**Ryan Hutson**  
Commercial Real Estate Broker  
The J. Beard Real Estate Co.



**Laura Smith**  
Senior Property Manager  
The Patrinely Group



**Shanna Redwine, JD**  
Chief of Special Victims Unit  
Montgomery County District  
Attorney's Office



**Marissa Kubiak, BSN, RN**  
Houston Methodist Hospital



**Tom Casperson, MD**  
Anesthesiologist



**Nicole Capps**  
Investigative Program Director  
Texas Department of Family  
and Protective Services



**Yesenia Garcia**  
Branch Manager  
Woodforest National Bank



– Virtual Fundraiser –



**ANGLIA**  
HOMES

  
*The Manners/Coole  
Foundation*

 **WOODFOREST<sup>®</sup>**  
*Charitable Foundation*

# Fundraising

On December 11, 2020, we held a Virtual Fundraiser to raise funds and awareness for child sex trafficking and exploitation.

Thanks to our generous underwriters Woodforest Charitable Foundation, Anglia Homes and The Manners/Coole Foundation, along with other business and individual donors, we raised more than \$170,000.

Total Net:  
**\$170,700.75 was raised**  
for Children's Safe Harbor.

## Donors

### **\$50,000 Underwriters:** \_\_\_\_\_

Anglia Homes  
The Manners/Coole Foundation  
Woodforest Charitable Foundation

### **Business Donors:** \_\_\_\_\_

Waterway Wealth Management (\$5,000)  
Schwab Charitable Fund (\$1,000)

### **Individual Donors:** \_\_\_\_\_

Julia Pace (\$6,115)  
Eli & Mary Nan Huffman (\$1,030)  
Vanessa Manners (\$1,030)  
Reynaldo Saludaes (\$1,000)

Dr. Tom & Faith Casperson (\$515)  
Dr. Lloyd Everson (\$515)  
William Phillip (\$515)

Pamela Armand  
Patricia Brown  
Adi Centeno  
Bradley Chappell  
Victoria Constance  
Dr. Franklin Douglass  
Sheila Dowell  
Tyler Dunman  
Linda Freede  
Liz Grimm  
William Harness  
Healthy Living Primary Care PC  
Rick Jones  
Joan Kuczynski  
Jakira Lewis  
Cheryl Mahon  
Kim Marling

Christopher Meades  
Hallie Moore  
Bryan & Mary Neskora  
Tamara Niquette  
Susan Nossa  
Jill Parker  
Peter & Cindy Perretti  
Kate Rhoad  
Judy Robert  
Matthew Rodrigue  
Kate Sloan  
Neha Srivastava  
Nancy Stamilio  
Monica Sung  
Ann Wolford  
Mary Katherine Workman



# Awareness

Each year at the end of April's Child Abuse Awareness Month, Children's Safe Harbor has exhibited a colorful display of pinwheels representing the number of cases we handled in the previous year.

## 2,615 pinwheels

represented the number of children served in 2019.

Children's Safe Harbor was recognized with a gold award in the 2020 MarCom Awards competition for an awareness video produced by videographer Max van Otterdyk from our annual pinwheels art display on April 28, 2020. The MarCom Awards is an international competition that recognizes outstanding achievement by creative professionals involved in the concept, direction, design and production of marketing and communication materials and programs.

The pinwheels art display is an annual awareness event in recognition of April being Child Abuse Prevention and Awareness Month. Each pinwheel represented the number of child victim cases they served in the previous year in 2019, therefore a total of 2,615 were installed.

Max van Otterdyk of Maxotter Productions, who was a senior at The Woodlands High School and Class President at the time, captured the symbolic installation of the colorful pinwheels by community leaders, members of Children's Safe Harbor's staff and board of directors, and members of the Montgomery County Child Abuse Multi-Disciplinary Team. The video also included several heartfelt interviews and sentiments.

The display was presented on grounds of the Montgomery County Ed Chance Courthouse Annex in The Woodlands and remained throughout the day as a public awareness initiative.



Pictured is videographer Max van Otterdyk (center) with Victoria Constance, MSPH, Ph.D., Executive Director of Children's Safe Harbor (left), and Liz Grimm of Liz Grimm Public Relations (right).

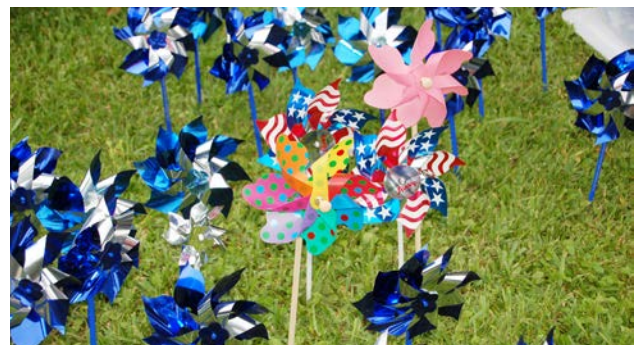
To view the video, go to:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jby9dEY8t3o>

Or scan the code with your phone:







# Volunteers

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In 2020, we had 42 volunteers and interns providing direct service work for a total of 4,393 hours. Children's Safe Harbor was incredibly blessed. Despite the unprecedented times of a global pandemic and the economic and social consequences, we had a strong community of supporters that continued to advocate for our children and mission.

In December 2020, **BACA (Bikers Against Child Abuse)** helped Children's Safe Harbor host a socially distanced drive-thru holiday event in which dozens of families gathered to pick up groceries, toys, stuffed animals and gift cards. Thanks to our long-standing partnership with BACA we were able to spread joy to families who were able to get necessary items to help them during the holidays amid a global pandemic.

We also want to say a huge shout-out for an incredibly swift and creative solution to a problem. Our Board President **Mary Nan Huffman**, Legal Counsel, Houston Police Officers Union, and Board Member **Kathleen Borchardt, MD**, Houston Methodist Hospital, rallied to create an Amazon wish list and Facebook awareness campaign about our families' needs that resulted in hundreds of donated pallets of food and supplies. Their generosity ensured that every family in need and healing from trauma, in addition to feeling the economic burdens of a global pandemic, were given proper support and resources to help them through the holiday season.

In addition, Board Secretary **Paul Purcell**, Executive Director of Montgomery County Medical Society, showed concern and compassion for all our families and provided hundreds of N95 masks and sanitizing supplies that kept our families safe.

Board Vice President **Matt Rodrigue**, Deputy for Harris County Constable Precint 4, and his wife **Kelly Rodrigue** mobilized Memorial Hermann Hospital Nursing Staff under Kelly's supervision to create a food drive for our families.

Our community is deeply blessed by our Board of Directors who routinely go above and beyond their roles to directly support our children and families in need!









# Volunteers

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## — Special Volunteers: Adopt-A-Family Donors —

Each year we are asked to create a special list of needs for those families facing economic hardships during the holiday season. In addition to children and families navigating sexual assault and trauma during the holidays, it makes an enormous impact when all of the other children in their classes and neighborhoods are talking about all the gifts they are asking Santa for and our kiddos aren't sure if they will receive anything from Santa this year. One child simply asked for socks and underwear for herself and her younger brothers on her Wish List.

These amazing Adopt-A-Family Donors are members of our Board of Directors, staff members and long term financial donors who wanted to go that extra mile to fill a family's wish list and bring the wrapping paper for the parents or guardians to have the pleasure of wrapping these gifts and placing them under the Christmas tree.

**Participants included:** Kim Perry and family, Christine and Ivan Escobedo, Miguel Sanchez, Tammy Detre, Lisa Anderson, Gina Waller, Tracie Hollier, Mayra Domingue, Karen Owens, Betty H. of Houston Methodist, Matthew Rodrigue, Tori Lowe, Nicole Jendrick, Mikayla White of Coldspring Post Office, Juan Turcios, Jacqueline Hardeman, Tiffany Wiggins, Jill Parker, and Brandy Eppes.

# Donation

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In May 2020, Children's Safe Harbor received a **\$50,000** donation from Woodforest Charitable Foundation to help children and families who were experiencing trauma from abuse that was further impacted by the crisis of the COVID-19 pandemic.

The funds received from Woodforest Charitable Foundation supported Children's Safe Harbor's implementation of tele mental health capabilities given the CDC's safety guidelines. Laptops and mobile forensic equipment were purchased for staff to work remotely with clients and to continue professional training in new modalities. New therapy materials such as art supplies and workbooks to help children process trauma were also purchased.



# New Website Debut

In December 2020, we launched our updated and improved website as an investment to further communicate and showcase our work as a children's advocacy center in the community, serving child victims of sexual abuse, physical abuse, neglect, human trafficking and trauma.

The new website is interactive, informative, educational, easy to navigate and promotes awareness.



[ChildrensSafeHarbor.org](https://ChildrensSafeHarbor.org)



## How to Help



Please visit our website to find out how to volunteer and support our children's advocacy center.

**[ChildrensSafeHarbor.org](https://ChildrensSafeHarbor.org)**





Serving Children and Families in  
Montgomery, San Jacinto & Walker Counties

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936-756-4644 | [childrenssafeharbor.org](http://childrenssafeharbor.org)  
1519 Oddfellow Street, Conroe, TX 77301





Design provided with a generous non-profit discount  
by Hallaron Advertising for the second year in a row.





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