

Children's Advocacy Centers of Kansas

To: Chairman Barker and Members of the House Federal and State Committee

From: Kim T Parker for Children's Advocacy Centers of Kansas

Date: March 18th, 2019

Re: Proponent Testimony Senate Bill 77

Good Morning Chairman Barker and Committee Members,

Thank you for the opportunity to provide proponent testimony to SB77. I offer this testimony on behalf of the Children's Advocacy Centers of Kansas. This bill highlights a significant area of care needs for some Kansas children who have struggled with problem sexual behavior. Currently there are gaps in services for this unique population of children and their families. This measure would bring attention and ensure that steps are taken to provide this special service.

I have attached the comments of Juliane Walker the Executive Director of the Children's Advocacy Centers of Kansas and the testimony of Diana Schunn Executive Director of Children's Advocacy Center of Sedgwick County for your consideration.

We urge your continued attention to the issues highlighted in this bill.

Respectfully Submitted

Kim T Parker

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On Behalf of the Children's Advocacy Centers of Kansas



In support of Senate Bill77

Testimony of Diana Schunn, Executive Director

Child Advocacy Center of Sedgwick County

March 18th, 2019

Senator Barker and Members of the Committee, thank you for the opportunity to share our support of SB77 regarding Kansas Department for Children and Families offering voluntary services to children with problem sexual behavior.

The Child Advocacy Center of Sedgwick County (CACSC) was founded on the belief that no single agency can serve and treat child abuse—a multidisciplinary team response is necessary. Mental health treatment providers are an integral part of this multidisciplinary team, as they understand the dynamics of families and how trauma and behavioral concerns can influence a child.

The impact SB77 will have on our community is timely and important. Due to gaps in services for this unique population, the CACSC started an evidenced-based treatment program within the last year for children with problem sexual behavior and believes strongly in the importance of offering and providing services to these children and their families immediately. The treatment program known as “Problematic Sexual Behavior-Cognitive Behavioral Therapy” (PSB-CBT) has proven to be 98% effective in eliminating sexual behavior problems in children. Caregiver participation in the program is required and necessary for the support of the child with sexual behavior problems to make changes and for the family to heal.

We believe the amendments passed out of the Senate changing the language on line 17, “future sexual abuse by the child with problem sexual behavior” to “future sexual behavior problems by the child” are appropriate. This small change takes away the stigma of a child being labeled as a perpetrator of abuse and shifts to a simple reminder that these are just children – children with sexual behavior problems that can be addressed and corrected through the support of evidenced-based treatment.

The passing of this legislation will bring awareness to communities regarding the serious nature of the need for treatment for children with problem sexual behavior. I support and encourage the movement forward with this bill. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Diana Schunn

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March 18th, 2019

Chairman Barker and Members of the Committee

Testimony Reference SB77

Thank you for the opportunity to share our support for SB77 regarding service provision for children exhibiting problem sexual behavior.

The Children's Advocacy Center of Kansas (CAACKS) is the State Chapter member association representing the 16 nationally accredited Child Advocacy Centers (CAC) in Kansas. In 2017, Kansas CACs provided direct services to 4,573 children ages 0-18 following a report of abuse. Seventy-five percent of these cases involved sexual abuse. In a report compiled by the National Children's Alliance, in 20-25% of cases handled by Children's Advocacy Centers (CACs), youth or children under age 18 have acted out against another child.¹

Youth with problematic sexual behavior (PSB) are a diverse population of children and adolescents who have, for a variety of reasons, engaged in problematic sexual behavior. To help decrease the likelihood of these children exhibiting further problematic sexual behavior, it is paramount to ensure immediate access to evidence-based services for the youth and the family. Best case scenario is to have access to a therapist with specific training in PSB.

Children's Advocacy Centers have an interest in addressing this issue and serving children and youth with problematic sexual behavior, their victims, and families. There are several CACs in Kansas currently able to provide expertise and therapeutic services and other CACs are interested in advancing their services once they have the proper training. Kansas CACs are already working in partnership with the Department for Children and Families and law enforcement. With guidance of informed multiple disciplinary teams, both policy and professional responses to problematic sexual behavior of youth can be coordinated through collaboration among agencies.

In addition to services being available for children with PSB, we are also in support of the provision of services denoted in SB77 for the child's family. Often times the child victim of a child exhibiting PSB is a sibling, relative or other child living in the home. Parents and other adults in the home need to understand the risk and protective factors for children with PSB in order to provide proper guidance and close supervision, in addition to teaching accurate information about children's bodies and respectful behavior.

SB77 brings focus to a critical issue facing some children in our Kansas communities and we, again, support the actions this bill addresses. We believe the amendment to change the bill under Section 1 (2): replace the words "sexual abuse" with "problem sexual behavior" are good.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Juliane Walker, Executive Director

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1. National Children's Alliance 2015 statistical data submitted by Children's Advocacy Center members.