



SAFESPOT

Children's Advocacy Center of Fairfax County



Director's Message

A few months ago, SafeSpot received a referral from the local Fairfax County Police Department. There was a report of a young boy who had been sexually assaulted by his stepfather. Clearly very frightened, "Nick" was brought to SafeSpot by his mother. His eyes focused only on the ground and his mouth uttered not a single word. Understandably, Nick's mother was also distraught. She proceeded to cry when offered a cup of coffee.

The SafeSpot multidisciplinary team sprang into action. Nick was first given a warm welcome by his professionally trained forensic interviewer, who was able to provide the safety, compassion and receptive ears Nick so desperately needed. This setting allowed him to share his trauma. Nick's mother was also given the space to meet with a family advocate, with whom she could share her fears and needs. Next, a quick entry was made to the mental health therapy program so Nick could start addressing the harm done to him, building resiliency, and learning about healthy relationships..

The fact of the matter is that the world is a hard place for kids. People hurt each other, including children. But in Fairfax County, there is a team of professionals trained and ready to act when our children experience the worst. In a recent therapy session, Nick told his therapist that he feels stronger and thinks he will be okay. At SafeSpot, we know he will be okay thanks to your support.

Each of you are a part of this Fairfax County team! All working to ensure expert care for child victims and a way to navigate an impossible journey. Thank you!

With much appreciation,

Heather O'Malley
Managing Director

News of Note

SafeSpot Receives 2020 Child Advocacy Award

Awarded by Fairfax Court Appointed Special Advocates (CASA)



We are proud to announce that SafeSpot is the recipient of the 2020 Child Advocacy Award from the Fairfax County CASA program.

In 2000, the Fairfax CASA Board of Directors founded the Child Advocacy Award in honor of Vivian Watts, who served Fairfax CASA with immense dedication as the organization's Executive Director from 1993-2000, and who resolutely served our community for nearly 30 years as a Virginia House Delegate.

This award was established to recognize exemplary service by an individual or organization demonstrating exceptional dedication to furthering the well-being of all children, especially those who are innocent victims of abuse and neglect.

Congratulations, SafeSpot Team!

[CASA Website](#)

#Giving Tuesday Campaign *A Fundraising Success*



GIVING
TUESDAY

December 1, 2020

#GivingTuesday
#GiveResilience

Record support was received during this year's Giving Tuesday fundraising campaign! We could not be more grateful, or inspired, by the generosity of our supporters. In just 24 hours, we raised \$18,950 for children and families impacted by abuse! We are incredibly thankful for all of you who donated!

Tis' the Season!

*Supporting SafeSpot During
the Holidays is as easy
as 1 - 2 - 3!*



There are three easy ways to support SafeSpot, and children, this holiday season:

1. "Adopt" SafeSpot By Purchasing an Item From our Amazon Wish List!

We've created our own holiday wish list and packed it with children's books, therapy supplies, kid-friendly snacks, and more! All you have to do is add an item from our wish list to your basket, and it will automatically ship directly to us. Be sure to include your name on the gift message so we can thank you for your support!

[Access SafeSpot's Amazing Wish List Here](#)

2. Use Amazon Smile for All Your Holiday Shopping

When you shop [Smile.Amazon.com](#) and set your charity of choice as SafeSpot – Children's Advocacy Center of Fairfax County, Amazon donates 0.5% of your purchase price directly to our Center. Shopping has never been so impactful!

3. Make a Year-End Donation

Your tax-deductible contribution will help ensure SafeSpot can continue to meet the needs of abused children in Fairfax County. Each year our Center serves more than 450 children and caregivers with forensic interviewing, family advocacy, and trauma focused therapy. With your commitment, we can offer hope and healing to even more children. An easy, online donation link is below, but if you would like to mail in your support, please use the following address:
PO Box 148, Fairfax, VA 22038

[Year End Donations](#)



Nothin' but Aces and Holes in One for Champions for Children!

Despite COVID Hurdles, Tournament Nearly Matches Previous Year's Net \$



Despite the limitations charitable events faced throughout COVID 19's grasp, this intrepid duo adroitly managed the 2020 Champions for Children Golf and Tennis Tournament! Twenty-two foursomes and three tennis courts full of benevolent players joined Co-Chairs, Andy Klaff and Angelique Bennett, on October 26th at the Westwood County Club. With loads of fun competition and a silent auction in tow, Andy and Angelique's committees nearly matched the previous year's net profits! Of course the 2020 CFC Team could not have hit these figures with out sponsors, volunteers and committee members! Many grateful thank yous to every individual who dedicated themselves to this effort!

Due to the pandemic, the task of raising sponsorships for the original April date, and then again in October, became a two-folded project. Therefore, a special thank you to the Sponsorship Committee members, who managed to enlist the many generous, personal and corporate donors!

Sponsorship Committee:

Andrew Roberts
Andy Klaff
Armen Manoogian
Phil O'Deen
Ralph Masino
Randy Turk

Golf & Tennis Tournament Photo Gallery





Welcome to the Team, Virgil!

New Facility Assistance Dog Joins the SafeSpot Family



SafeSpot is honored to announce the newest staff member to our community, Virgil, a facility assistance dog! After over a year of applications and interviews SafeSpot has been awarded the opportunity to receive a facility dog for our child advocacy center through a nonprofit organization, Canine Companions for Independence (CCI). (www.cci.org) This organization enhances the lives of people by providing highly trained assistance dogs and ongoing support to ensure quality partnerships.

The dogs spend six to nine months training with professional CCI instructors at one of five regional training centers. The dogs learn over 40 specialized commands before completing Team Training where they are matched with an adult. Facility dogs work with a professional in an education, visitation, criminal justice or healthcare setting. It is truly a privilege to be selected to receive the facility dog as these animals are the product of years of training and are given to the SafeSpot free of charge. Virgil was matched with SafeSpot and his handler, Michele Thames, during an intensive training program which was completed on November 7, 2020. Virgil is the successor to Pecos, the first facility dog in a child advocacy center in the State of Virginia. Pecos retired in November 2020.

Facility assistance dogs are different from typical family pets in that CCI dogs are specifically training to work with a wide variety of people. Numerous studies have demonstrated benefits of dogs for our clients. We recognize the role a dog will have in helping children build healthy attachments, increased verbal interactions, boost self-esteem, decrease anxiety, reduce loneliness, and improve attention skill. These components directly complement the primary goal which is to reduce the additional trauma experienced by child victims, improve prosecution outcomes, and provide efficient, compassionate, thorough, no-cost services to the child victim and non-offending family members.

Virgil will be a huge asset to our program and will benefit our children and families in countless ways.

Clients will be able to assist in daily routines of grooming, exercising and training. Examples of trained commands such as “VISIT” and “LAP” can allow for positive and calming interactions between the child and the dog. The dog may come to a child’s therapy session, sit in a forensic interview, accompany a child to court, and attend the Fairfax County Multidisciplinary Team Case Review. Through careful training the CCI facility dog is comfortable working in a variety of environments and with children who may move or interact differently when he is present. Children will naturally participate with more enthusiasm in criminal justice-related activities. For those that need a social bridge to improved interactions with peers and adults, such support can be provided by shared attention given to Virgil. As CCI describes, facility dogs are, “Goodwill ambassadors, and often, best friends as well. They open up new opportunities and new possibilities and spread incredible joy”. Woof! Woof!

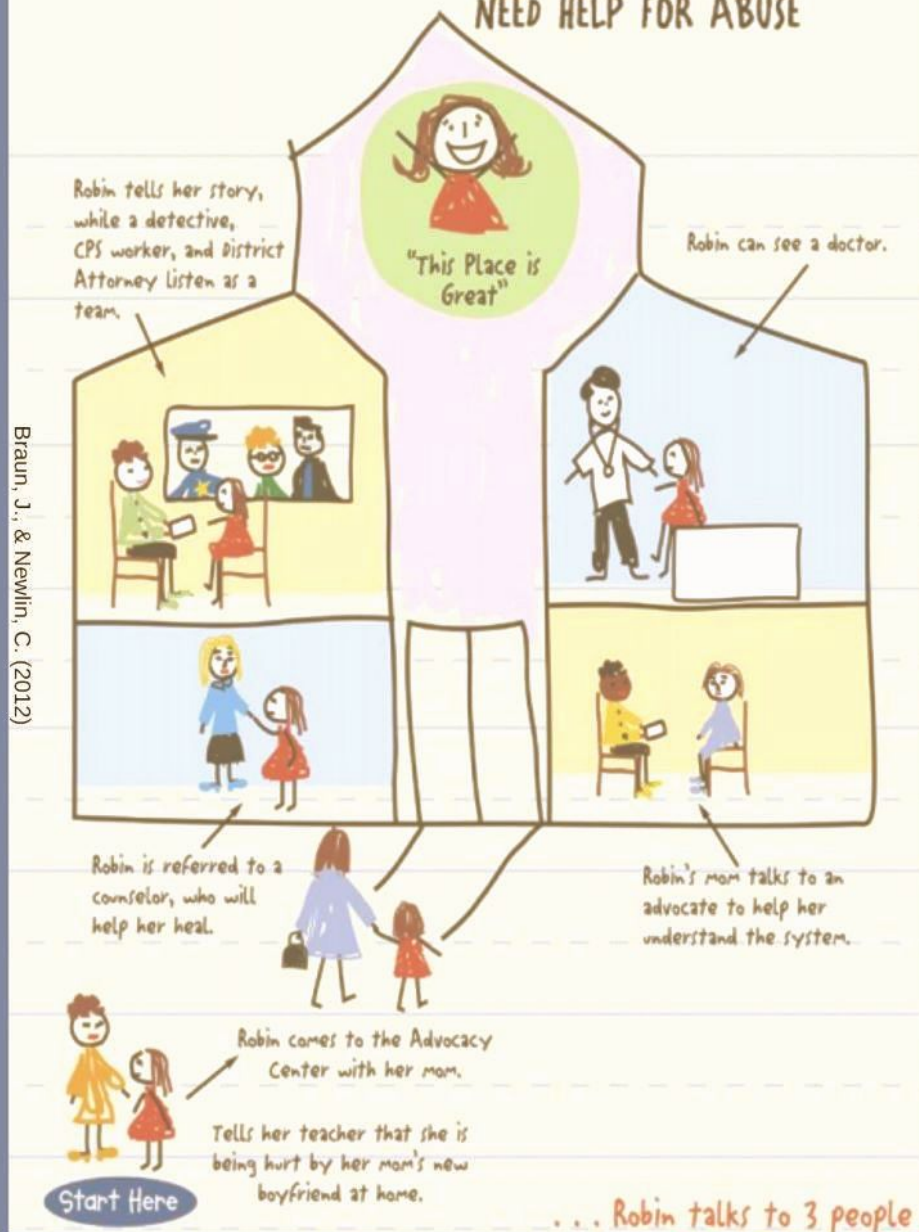


“Goodwill ambassadors, and often, best friends as well. They open up new opportunities and new possibilities and spread incredible joy”.

Changing the Child Abuse System

Changing the Child Abuse System

WHAT HAPPENS TODAY WHEN KIDS NEED HELP FOR ABUSE



#MDTAAppreciation



Visit our website

OUR MISSION:

The mission of SafeSpot Children's Advocacy Center of Fairfax County is to provide a child-friendly, culturally sensitive environment that promotes the safety and well-being of child victims of abuse while facilitating a comprehensive, multi-disciplinary team approach to the intervention, investigation, prosecution and treatment of sexual abuse and severe physical abuse.

STAY CONNECTED



