



USI AWARDED
KELLOGG GRANT

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NEWS RELEASE

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The University of Southern Indiana and the Child Advocacy Center of Evansville, Indiana have begun a project to improve investigative services for victimized children.

The project is funded by a one-year \$25,000 grant from the W.K. Kellogg Foundation of Battle Creek, Michigan.

"The growing concern for children who have been victimized is a national phenomenon," said Melissa Vandeveer, USI assistant professor of nursing and project director. "Locally, this concern has served as the stimulus for the organization of professionals directly involved with the management of child abuse cases. Individuals from law enforcement, child protective services, the prosecutor's office, and others in the community have identified that victimized children are developmentally different than adults and have specialized needs during the investigative process."

This project will provide strategies for social work and law enforcement professionals that address the unique aspects of victimized children in order to minimize stress associated with the investigative process.

Educational offerings will be developed for personnel working with child abuse cases in the 11 county southern Indiana region. Three workshops will address examination and interview methods that consider the child's developmental level in order to minimize stressful aspects of the investigative process and to protect the child.

Reference and educational materials will be acquired and made available to professionals, civic groups, and individuals in the community.

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An information booklet to prepare the child for the interview and physical examination will be developed and distributed to investigative personnel.

A computer data base system will be established to improve follow-up services.

Equipment and materials will be purchased to assist the Child Advocacy Center members in obtaining optimal recorded interviews.

"The multiple agency cooperation of the Child Advocacy Center in Vanderburgh county and the mission of the University of Southern Indiana to serve the educational needs of the Southern Indiana region will enable more professionals to receive the desired specialized training," according to Virginia Combs, Division Supervisor, Child Welfare, Vanderburgh County, and Assistant Chairman, Child Advocacy Center. "Consequently, the children of these 11 counties and their families will be relieved of some of the stress during this traumatic experience."

The W. K. Kellogg Foundation, established in 1930 to "help people help themselves," has distributed more than \$1.2 billion in support of programs in agriculture, education, and health. Areas of emphasis within those broad fields include community-based, problem-focused health services; a wholesome food supply; and broadening leadership capacity of individuals. Although projects in opportunities for youth are concentrated mainly in Michigan, the Foundation supports worthy projects in other states. The Foundation is today the largest private philanthropic organization in the world. It supports programs in the United States, Latin America, the Caribbean, and southern Africa. Limited worldwide involvement is achieved through international networks of activities related to the Foundation's programming interests.