

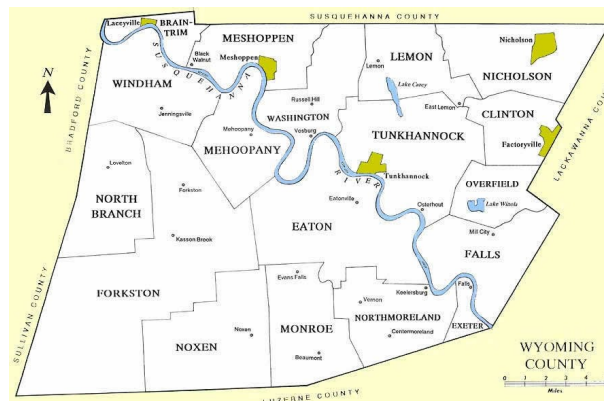
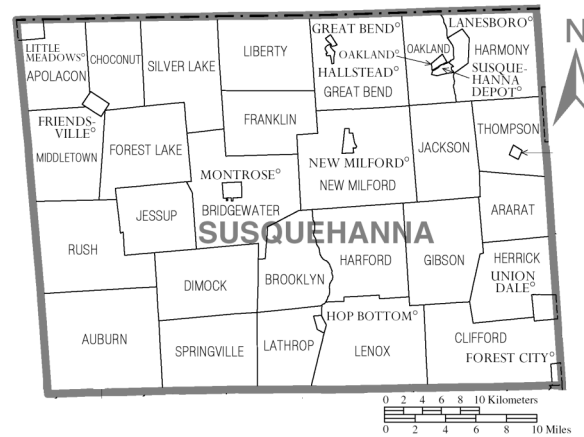
The Children's Center of Susquehanna and Wyoming Counties is a program of Family Service Association-NEPA, a private, non-profit, charitable organization. It is overseen by a committee of community members dedicated to serving children and providing the best care possible.

The Children's Center is a Child Advocacy Center (CAC) which follows the national standards set forth by National Children's Alliance.



What is a CAC?

The mission of a CAC is to provide a safe, comfortable environment for children and their families as they go through the interviewing and examination processes after disclosing some type of traumatic experience.



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WHAT TO EXPECT WHEN YOU VISIT

A Guide for Parents, Guardians, and Caregivers visiting a CAC.

Children's Center



of Susquehanna and Wyoming Counties
A Child Advocacy Center

What is the investigative process?

A team of professionals dedicated to you and your child will work together gathering all the evidence and information needed to investigate the alleged crime. Each team member has a specific role to insure that every detail of your child's report is taken into consideration. The CAC coordinates the teams' efforts and provides you and your child ongoing reports and supports throughout the investigation process.



What should my child know about the forensic interview?

It is important that you reassure your child to talk honestly and freely with the forensic interviewer. It is equally important that you not rehearse what your child should say with them. Remind them to use their own language to tell their story.

Can I be present with my child or the team during the interview?

It is understandable that during this scary and confusing time you would want to be with your child at all times. However, it might be difficult for them initially to talk about what happened in front of you and you may be upset by what they say. The team members must be focused on observing, assessing and investigating the allegations. Therefore, you are not permitted to participate in or observe the interview process.

Will someone talk with me during the interview?

A family advocate will be available for support and to discuss follow up services. You are encouraged to bring a family member or friend to sit with you during your child's interview. The team members will talk with you after the interview and discuss what will happen next.



What should my child know about the medical exam?

Explain to your child that this medical exam is completed to make sure their bodies are healthy. The exam will not hurt and the medical examiner will tell your child everything that they are doing throughout the exam.

What happens next?

The team members will meet with you and discuss next steps in the investigation and the medical provider will talk with you about the results of the exam. The CAC will have information available for counseling services in your area. They can make a referral at your request or give you the information you need.



What should I say to my child after the CAC?

Listen, Encourage, Understand

Listen if your child wants to talk but don't worry if they don't want to talk about the interview or exam. Encourage them to talk when they are ready and remind them that telling their story was brave. Understand if they aren't themselves for a few days after the interview but call the CAC or family advocate if you have further concerns.