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Opinion

## **EDITORIAL: Oakland is fortunate to have CARE House agency**

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Child abuse is disgusting and just hearing the term makes your skin crawl and your stomach turn.

It's far too prevalent in our society and that's why such organizations as CARE House are good to have in Oakland County.

CARE House attacks child abuse on three fronts. First, there's prevention — officials try to intervene for youngsters at risk before they suffer from abuse. Specialists work with families, teaching basic parenting and nurturing skills. They educate adults on recognizing the signs of abuse and how to report the incidents.

The organization also helps the victims of abuse through individual and group therapy.

The third area is intervention, where counselors work with non-offending family members to give them support and advice on how to protect their children from an abusive relative.

CARE House is building a new, 14,000-square-foot facility on Woodward Avenue in Pontiac to replace its current facility, which is about 6,500 square feet.

Officials report they are about two-thirds of the way to their \$4 million fund-raising goal and are trying to raise the balance through donations from the public. Although times are tough, this is a worthy organization, so if you can afford to give, please do so.

The problem of child abuse is sadly pervasive, even in Oakland County. The new facility will allow CARE House to help up to 8,000 clients, which is twice as many as the agency currently serves.

As Patricia Rosen, executive director, notes, the need is great.

“We work with children suspected of physical abuse or neglect,” explains Rosen. “And the numbers are staggering.”

Experts estimate that one in four girls and one in six boys are at risk of being abused. For Oakland County, that means up to 60,000 youngsters could be in danger at any given moment.

Donations are the primary source of revenue for CARE House and, as Rosen notes, “We do enjoy tremendous support from the community.”

About 41 percent of CARE House income is from contributions. Another 16 percent comes from the federally funded Victims of Crime Act; 11 percent from special events; 10 percent federally funded Healthy Start/Healthy Families; 8 percent from foundations and corporations; 6 percent from Oakland County government; 5 percent from the state and federally funded Children’s Trust Fund; and 3 percent from the United Way.

Rosen proudly notes that 89 percent of the revenue goes for programs that help abused children and their families. Another 6 percent goes toward fund-raising and 5 percent for administration.

CARE House has been serving the county for 30 years. It attempts to stay transparent to the public through its operation and through open houses conducted the second Tuesday of the month. The next meeting, this Tuesday, includes lunch and a tour of the facility. Space is limited, so if you want to attend, call (248) 332-7173 or go online at [www.carehouse.org](http://www.carehouse.org).

Although the new facility is in Pontiac, the problem of child abuse is much more extensive throughout our society.

“Our clients come from all walks of life,” notes Cathy Weissenborn of Bloomfield Hills, president of the Board of Trustees. “Abuse is not just a Pontiac problem. It crosses all socioeconomic backgrounds.”

Good Morning

One of the saddest facts about child abuse is that the victim often grows up to be an abuser.

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