



**Barnstable County Children's Cove
Covid-19 Services Update
Effective Date: June 2, 2021**

As department of Barnstable County Government, Children's Cove is regularly updated on the regional impacts and response to COVID-19 here on the Cape & Islands. Children's Cove has emergency response planning in place for this situation as it unfolds and evolves in order to continue to provide the highest quality services and supports to our community. This outlines some the steps and processes we currently have in place, effective June 2nd, 2021

- We have a developed and continue to improve an in-person emergency response to cases involving child sexual abuse, severe physical abuse, witness to domestic violence and commercial sexual exploitation. The response includes increased screening questions related to health of all individuals, and forensic interviews will be conducted in-person with all safety precautions meeting or exceeding state and county guidelines. This includes:
 - Required use of face masks for all staff, multi-disciplinary partners and families utilizing services regardless of vaccination status.
 - Handwashing stations and sanitizer available throughout the building.
 - A plexiglass partition remains in the forensic interview room.
 - Air-purification technology, daily cleaning of the facilities including disinfection of all surface areas.
- Staff members are working in a hybrid-work model, with the majority of staff now working in office.
- Multi-disciplinary team members are now cleared to participate in the response and forensic interview process in-person.
- Staff members at Children's Cove continue to be available by their publicly accessible email address (listed [here](#)), or by calling our main phone number, 508.375.0410. Callers can leave a message for who they are looking for, or in the Intake mailbox if they are unsure who to contact. Messages will be returned as soon as possible.

During times of stress and isolation, instances of abuse can increase. Additionally, individuals who have undisclosed trauma may be further challenged by their trauma experience with a reduction of their natural supports.

- **If you are in immediate danger call 911 and provide as much detail about yourself, your location and how you are in danger.**
- The DCF Child at Risk Hotline is 800.792.5200 and the local Hyannis office is 508.760.0200

- If someone is abusing you, or has abused you in the past, **you are not alone**. You have not done anything wrong and you are not in trouble. If you have a safe trusted adult to talk to, ask them to call for help with you. If you do not, call Children's Cove, the Department of Children and Families, or your local police department.
- If you are a parent or caregiver and have learned that someone you care about has been abused: **The most important first step is to stay calm**. The child has undergone a potentially traumatic experience and could be more frightened by your response than the abuse itself. Be sure to thank the child for being honest and courageous enough to tell someone, then call Children's Cove, the Department of Children and Families, or your local police department.
- To learn more about signs of child abuse, or how to have the conversation about body safety, visit our website at: www.ChildrensCove.org/parents-caregivers/how-to-protect-your-child/