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Information from: Children's Cove and A Safe Place



Children's Cove and A Safe Place Nantucket Enhance Partnership to Bring Critical Child Abuse Services Directly to Nantucket

New collaboration eliminates travel barriers, providing on-island services and immediate support for child victims and families.

NANTUCKET, MA – July 9th, 2025 – Today marks a significant step forward in supporting child victims of crime on Nantucket. The Barnstable County Commissioners have executed an Interagency Agreement between Children's Cove: The Cape and Islands Child Advocacy Center and A Safe Place Nantucket, formalizing an enhanced partnership that will allow Children's Cove to provide services directly on the island.

For nearly 30 years, Children's Cove has been a vital resource on Cape Cod, Nantucket, and Martha's Vineyard, offering a comprehensive, collaborative, and supportive response to children who have experienced sexual abuse, severe physical abuse, domestic violence or sexual exploitation. Their child-friendly, confidential facility in Barnstable provides a safe space for streamlined investigations alongside partners including local law enforcement, the Massachusetts Department of Children and Families, the Cape & Islands District Attorney's Office, and the Massachusetts Department of Public Health.

While families on Nantucket have received the services and been supported by Children's Cove since 1997, they have historically faced significant challenges having to travel by ferry or plane to access these essential services on the mainland. This new, formal partnership directly addresses these barriers. Children's Cove will now be able to conduct forensic interviews and

coordinate the multidisciplinary response with child victims at the new home of A Safe Place on Nantucket, making services dramatically more accessible for island families.

A Safe Place plays a crucial role in the Nantucket community, providing free, confidential services to survivors of domestic violence and sexual assault. Dedicated to eliminating violence and empowering individuals, they offer direct services, preventive education, supervised family visitation, crisis intervention, counseling, and advocacy. Children's Cove and A Safe Place have more than two decades-long history of collaboration, coordinating care for child victims and their non-offending family members on Nantucket.

"A number of years ago, we started the conversation with the community and our partners at A Safe Place about how we could better serve Nantucket families," stated Stacy Gallagher, Director of Children's Cove. "It became clear that we needed to remove barriers of access to our services, as well as be more visible on Nantucket. We are thrilled to be doing that together through this expanded partnership."

This enhancement was made possible as A Safe Place recently advanced the purchase and renovation of a new facility as part of their capital campaign aimed at increasing their scope and reach on Nantucket. "Children's Cove has been a vital part of our response services and coordinating care for the most vulnerable members of our community," said Jennifer Frazee, Executive Director for A Safe Place on Nantucket. "We wanted Children's Cove at the table as we started our design process to envision a center that could truly support our community in need."

In planning the new Nantucket office, staff and stakeholders from both organizations collaborated closely to design a dedicated forensic interview room, an observation area for the multidisciplinary team, and a family waiting room. This purpose-built space will allow families on Nantucket to access Children's Cove Forensic Interview services directly on the island, with immediate connection to care and support services from A Safe Place.

This expanded partnership offers numerous benefits for child victims and their families, most significantly eliminating the burden of lengthy and costly travel. It also allows for immediate, in-person connection with A Safe Place staff for comprehensive family support. Furthermore, the Child Advocacy Center (CAC) model inherently increases efficiency through its collaborative approach; conducting multidisciplinary team meetings and interviews on-island minimizes travel for multiple individuals from investigative agencies, decreasing costs and enhancing productivity for Nantucket law enforcement and other partners. All costs for the Nantucket space are covered by state and federal staff grants, Nantucket Community Foundation travel grants, and free rent from A Safe Place.

This strengthened collaboration is a testament to the foresight, commitment, compassion, patience, and ingenuity of a group of community leaders dedicated to helping child victims of abuse and violence. Through their collective efforts, these agencies have found a powerful way to expand partnerships and deliver more effective support to children on Nantucket.

A ribbon cutting ceremony at the new A Safe Place facility will be held at the end of the summer upon completion of the building to commemorate the launch of these expanded, on-island services for victims of crime on Nantucket.

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ABOUT CHILDREN'S COVE

Children's Cove, a department of Barnstable County, has been the Cape and the Island's Children's Advocacy Center since 1997. Children's Cove provides coordinated and comprehensive multidisciplinary services to child victims of sexual abuse, physical abuse, witness to domestic violence and child sexual exploitation and trafficking. To learn more visit www.childrencove.org

ABOUT A SAFE PLACE

A Safe Place is a domestic violence and sexual assault counseling and advocacy center serving the Nantucket community. It provides free and confidential support to survivors as well as community and school-based prevention education and awareness-raising activities. To learn more visit: www.asafeplacenantucket.org

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