



trust. healing. justice.™

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Take a look at Emma*. She's a precious four year old girl with blue eyes who just started pre-school in September. Last Friday afternoon Emma's mother brought her to Bivona Child Advocacy Center after she learned something that made her want to throw up. Emma's mom is wondering how she could have overlooked the signs that her sweet daughter was being sexually abused by her older cousin. The 16 year-old volunteered to babysit Emma. Instead, he raped her.

A team of professionals accustomed to helping young victims assures Emma and her frightened mom that there will be only one forensic interview and medical evaluation. An investigator from law enforcement, a prosecutor from the District Attorney's office and a victim advocate observe through a one-way mirror. A specially trained interviewer speaks to Emma quietly and watches as she slowly picks up the crayons and begins to draw a picture. There is Emma in her bed with her favorite doll and her cousin - who looks like a giant with huge hands and a frown - standing over her.

As a result of Bivona's team approach, bringing together - under one roof - all of the professionals who specialize in child abuse investigations and treatment, Emma's abuse has stopped and the healing has begun. Emma is receiving therapy through Bivona Child Advocacy Center's mental health partners and learning to get and give hugs again. She loves her mommy and daddy, her new teacher, and the Jennie Bear that she got at Bivona.

Emma could be your neighbor, because sadly, the sexual and physical abuse of children is a tragedy that happens in every neighborhood, in every town.

In 2010 alone, 1,515 children were evaluated here at Bivona Child Advocacy Center.

Nationally, **a child is sexually abused every six minutes**. At Bivona Child Advocacy Center, each child that is suffering at the hands of an abuser is treated with warmth, compassion and respect. We reduce the chances that children are re-traumatized, preserve the best evidence for investigators, and allow the healing process to begin. In the United States nearly **five children die every day** as a result of abuse and neglect. Locally under Bivona's leadership and coordination, the Monroe County Child Fatality Review Team meets monthly to review child deaths to better understand how and why children die. The team's goal is to reduce the number of preventable child deaths.

On average, it **costs \$500 per child** to provide the comprehensive services we offer, at little or no cost to families. Unfortunately the need for our services is growing and we cannot do our work alone. We rely on **your support** to help us save these children, *children like Emma*, allowing them to go from **being victims to survivors**, and providing them **a path to heal**. You have the ability to make a huge difference in the life of a child. Please use your power and consider making a gift to Bivona Child Advocacy Center by **returning the enclosed envelope or by submitting a secure donation online at www.BivonaCAC.org/ways-to-help/donation-form**.

You may never know the child that you helped to save with your gift, but they will remember your kindness forever. Thank you for your generosity.

Warm regards,

Mary E. Whittier
Executive Director

**Name and photo have been changed to protect the identity of the child*

