

MANATEE CHILDREN'S SERVICES

CASE FOR SUPPORT

MANATEECHILDRENSSERVICES.COM



1227 9th Ave. W.
Bradenton, FL 34205

What **Children** Face

1,750 children died last year in the U.S. from abuse or neglect. **Over 6,500 children are abused or neglected annually just in Manatee County.**

Many factors come into play that can result in kids being physically or mentally harmed, denied food and necessities, abandoned, or sexually abused – often by someone they know... by someone who is supposed to take care of them and keep them safe.

There is NEVER reason to or excuse for hurting a child. But circumstances do exist that conflate and conspire to create scenarios where children become victims in their own homes.

Family members and caretakers may be dealing with economic hardship, loss of a job, inadequate coping mechanisms, mental health issues, substance abuse, the effects of generational trauma, incarceration, inability to access to childcare resulting in lack of supervision, or unstable living situations, all of which make their children vulnerable to abuse and neglect.

CHILD ABUSE OR NEGLECT

Any act or failure to act on the part of a parent or caretaker which results in death, serious physical or emotional harm, sexual abuse, or exploitation of a child.

Or

Any act or failure to act which presents imminent risk of serious harm to the child.

-U.S. Dept. of Health
Human Services



Whatever the catalyst, the results are the same – children are hurt and need help.

The fear; insecurity; feelings of being unsafe; lack of access to basic needs; physical, emotional, and sexual abuse; confusion; shame and embarrassment; guilt; separation from family; and other resulting factors leave these children with deep emotional scars – scars that may well last a lifetime.

Abuse as children can also put them at higher risk for repeated abuse over the course of their lives if they don't receive appropriate post-abuse support.

**47 CHILDREN ARE ABUSED OR
NEGLECTED PER SECOND IN THE
UNITED STATES**

Abuse. Neglect. Homelessness.

Manatee Children's Services is Part of the **Solution**

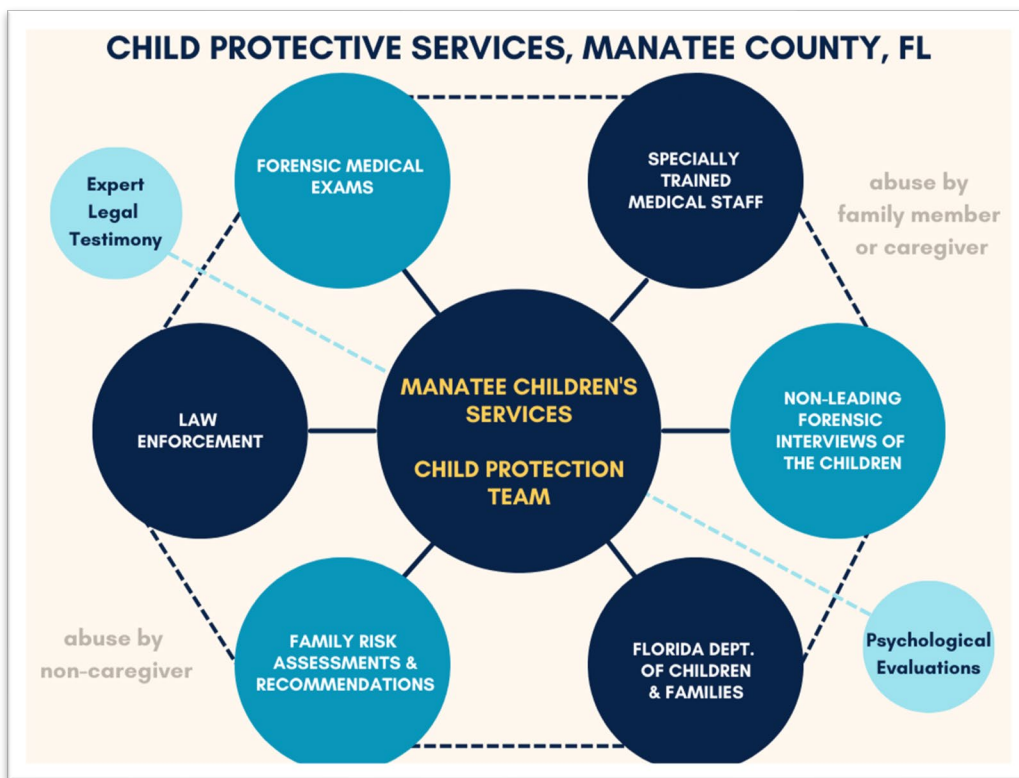
The mission of Manatee Children's Services is to advocate for and provide the resources, skills, and shelter to alleviate abuse through *prevention and intervention* for all children and their families in Manatee County, FL.

Manatee Children's Services provides a wide network of programs that work both to prevent situations of abuse and to deliver services that provide compassionate care for children who have been removed from an abusive or neglectful environment.

The following are snapshots of each of Manatee Children's Services core areas of work.

Child Protective Services & the MCS Child **Protection** Team

Manatee Children's Services is the organization appointed by the State of Florida to both *deliver direct services and facilitate the coordination of partner services* in response to incidents of the abuse or neglect of a child. Child Protective Services is the umbrella name for the whole collaborative. The Child Protection Team is formed of staff members at Manatee Children's Services who perform the work and coordinate services from all partners.



Children dealing with the most difficult events in their lives are treated with professionalism, care, and compassion by a team of qualified professionals who are trained to help children deal with the aftermath of abuse.

Protection. Safety. Compassion.

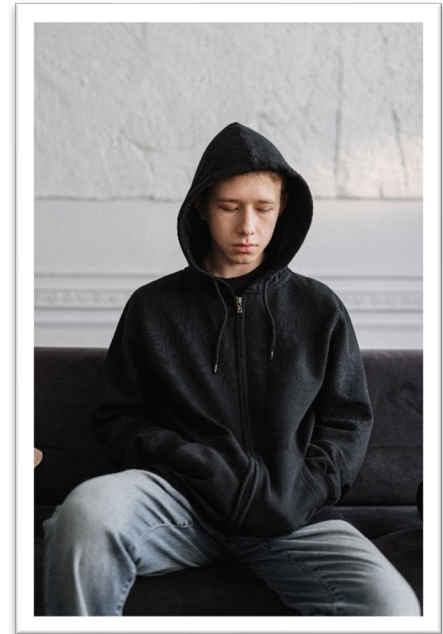
Manatee Children's Services Emergency **Shelter** & Group Homes

Emergency Shelter

When our community's law enforcement officials respond to child abuse reports and remove children from unsafe environments, the MCS Emergency Shelter serves as a safe haven. The shelter can house up to 12 children from 6 to 17 years old at one time.

The Emergency Shelter provides nurturing, crisis intervention, counseling, advocacy, academic support, recreational activities, food, and transportation. Most children reside in the shelter for a period of two weeks while a more permanent placement is identified.

The youth housed by MCS represent all races and ethnicities, are economically disadvantaged, and are at significant risk for human trafficking, as determined by law enforcement and by the MCS intake assessment.



Long Term Housing

Manatee Children's Services operates three group homes, each of which are licensed for human trafficking recovery services by the Florida Department of Children and Families, due to the high rate of children verified as victims of trafficking or youth at risk of becoming involved in human trafficking.



Each group home houses up to six children, ages 11 to 17, and a set of house parents. Our group homes provide long-term housing and care until the children are placed with a permanent foster family, reunified with a family member, or transition to their own housing at 18 years of age.

Each child has the opportunity to experience a stable, safe, and loving family life, possibly for the first time in their lives. MCS's group home program also helps prepare foster children for independent living at age 18, as stability in adulthood can help decrease abuse occurrences among future generations.

Whether children need MCS for the short term, or for years, we work with case managers to ensure all of the kids have access to the services they need to help them thrive.

Shelter. Kindness. Education. Stability.

Mental Health **Counseling** Services

The devastating effects of abuse on a child can last a lifetime if left untreated. Manatee Children's Services provides mental health counseling programs that specialize in treatment for child victims of physical or sexual abuse.

The clinical programs at MCS use Trauma-Focused Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (TF-CBT) to help children overcome trauma-related difficulties. These programs assist the child, along with non-offending family members, and help decrease behavior patterns and emotional responses that occur as a result of trauma.



Child victims of crime and their family members engage in mental health counseling to help them heal from the difficult and painful process of being victimized by criminal acts. Survivors of child sexual abuse and their family members engage in specialized, community-based, family-centered treatment from a highly qualified sexual abuse therapist. This therapist is supervised by a Licensed Mental Health Therapist who is certified by a member of the Association for Treatment of Sexual Abuse.

To help clients achieve long-term success, MCS's clinicians provide families with therapeutic education to help break the cycle of abuse and help ensure it does not happen again. Children in the treatment program are taught how to recognize safety threats, how and who/when/where to report abuse, and how to protect themselves. They also learn how to recognize grooming practices, use their voice to say no and report abuse, and protect themselves. These strategies reduce the rate of potential abuse in the future.



**SURVIVORS OF CHILD ABUSE ARE
SIGNIFICANTLY LESS LIKELY TO HAVE A BANK
ACCOUNT, OWN A CAR OR HOUSE OR MAKE
FINANCIAL INVESTMENTS AS AN ADULT.**
NATIONAL CHILDREN'S ADVOCACY CENTER

Support. Counsel. Thrive.

Prevention Services

Manatee Children's Services believes that the best way to handle child abuse and neglect is to make sure it doesn't happen in the first place. That is why we offer services for the following groups:

- **Grandparents & Caregivers**- a prevention program for kinship caregivers, provides support, mentoring, and resources to caregivers who are raising grandchildren, nieces, nephews, or other relative children after removal from the home due to abuse or neglect.

Manatee Children's Services offers support groups with exceptional guest speakers, parenting workshops, kinship warmline telephone support, counseling services, children's peer groups, advocacy, community resources, holiday food drives, and referrals for appropriate services. The primary goal of these offerings is to ensure relative caregiver homes remain free from abuse and neglect and that children in the program do not enter or re-enter foster care.



- **Teens** - Teens and their families face many challenges in and out of school, including personal safety, human trafficking, social media safety, pregnancy prevention, communication, and relationships.

Through our teen program, youth ages 10 to 17 and their families receive education and mentoring through

a Family Advocate to guide them in making safe, healthy decisions. The program's primary focus is teen pregnancy prevention, as statistics reveal that children of teenage mothers may be more at risk for abuse. Additionally, other factors such as lower economic status, lack of social support, and high stress levels contribute to the link between young parents and child abuse.

CHILDREN WHO EXPERIENCE NEGLECT ARE SEVEN TIMES AS LIKELY THAN OTHER TYPES OF ABUSE VICTIMS TO BECOME PREGNANT AS ADOLSCENTS.

-AMERICAN ACADEMY OF PEDIATRICS

Manatee Children's Services also participates in an early intervention program for youth ages 10 to 17 who are at risk of offending or experiencing a mental health crisis. We partner with a network of over 50 professionals from public/private partnership agencies across the region to deliver a combination of services to help the youth through the crisis. The ultimate positive result of this multi-agency approach is to prevent youth from removal from the home due to behavioral issues and to limit behaviors that could result in incarceration.

- **Kids of All Ages** – Manatee Children's Services provides age-appropriate workshops in Manatee County schools that teach children to identification problematic or dangerous situations along with prevention techniques they can use to avoid such situations.

The program is delivered by trained child-service professionals and uses puppets, stories, videos, music, and role-playing during presentations to fully engage young children and deliver education in a manner that will make them remember and recognize child abuse.

Prevention. Preparation. Action.

- **Parents** – Manatee Children’s Services is dedicated to helping parents reach their full potential and become their child’s greatest role model. The programs we offer provide at-risk families with specialist/therapist-directed sexual abuse prevention and personal safety skills, as well as help families who have been separated prepare for reunification. Through our programs, parents will be able to increase knowledge, decrease stress, identify strengths, receive community support and resources, and gain skills that help reduce the risks of child abuse in the home.

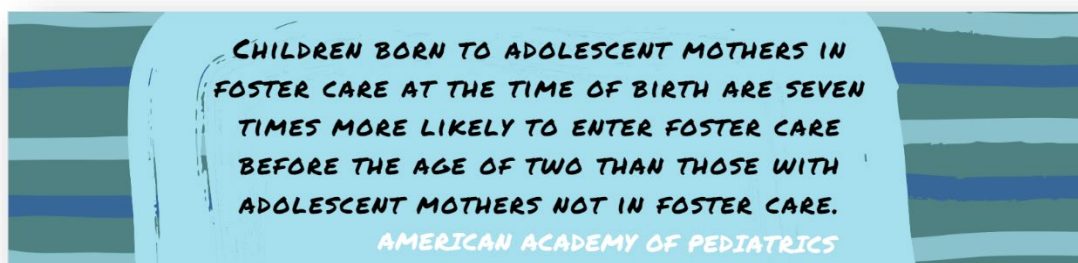
Impact of Manatee Children’s Services’ Solutions

According to the U.S. Department of Health & Human Services, **in terms of financial cost to the community, child abuse prevention program benefits may include:**

- Reduced health and mental health care costs
- Reduced costs of out-of-home care services
- Reduced costs of child welfare services
- Reduced law enforcement and judicial system costs for intervention in cases of child abuse and neglect
- Increased earnings of the child's family members

Benefits for the children and families:

- Reduced personal and family stress
- Fewer incidents of child abuse
- Improved social functioning of the children
- Improved physical health
- Improved mental health
- Improved educational achievement
- Increased family stability



The life-long ripple effect of keeping children safe and healthy is that they are more likely to live where they are able to take care of themselves and not repeat the generational behaviors of their families.

Impact. Solutions. Better Future.

Resources Needed

Manatee Children's Services helps children survive the most difficult circumstances. We work to keep children safe, and partner with agencies throughout the region to support youth and families in ways that will make life better for all.

Some of this work is funded through contracts with federal, state, and local governments. **Much** of the work is not. Manatee Children's Services must secure philanthropic donations to adequately deliver the care described on previous pages. **But we want to do more than provide adequate care; we always want to be able to deliver the best possible care and the appropriate resources that each child, teen, and family needs.**

To deliver such care, we must secure and maintain the appropriate staffing, tools, and facilities for medical and forensic services, as well as for emergency and long-term housing. Please review the budgetary inserts for specific details on current and upcoming needs.

You Can Make the Difference

Investments from individuals, companies, and community groups make the difference between good and great, between scared and safe, and sometimes – between life and death. Your gift can help children prevent and/or survive abuse and neglect... and help them break the generational cycle of violence.

Please invest in the children and teens who need adults who care.



To discuss ways to give, including estate planning gifts and donations of stock, please contact us at 941-345-1200.

To give by credit card online, scan here:



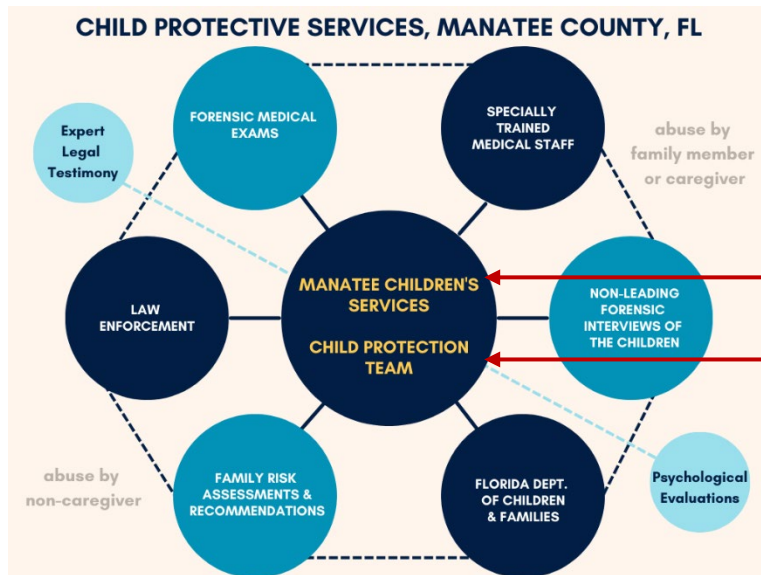
You. Us. Children. Families.

Facilities That House Services for Victims of Child Abuse & Neglect

Since 1977, Manatee Children’s Services (MCS) has been providing compassionate, comprehensive care for children who have experienced abuse or neglect. MCS is the hub of a network of service providers that help children through the most difficult times in their young lives.

MCS currently operates two service delivery and administrative buildings, an emergency shelter, and three group homes. **The majority of the interconnected services children receive through the MCS partnership network are delivered at the main MCS location on 9th Avenue in Bradenton. The once residential building is over 100 years old and was last renovated in the 1990s.**

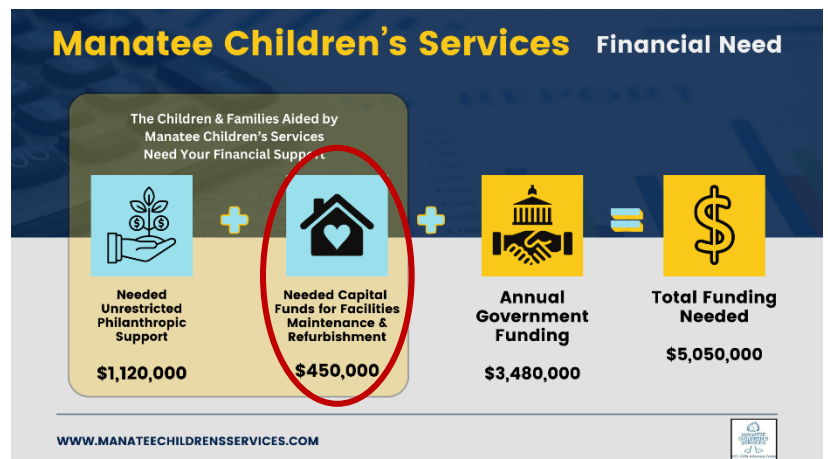
Right now, the MCS Child Protection Team is operating in a *separate building* from the agency’s other core services. It is absolutely necessary for continuity of the children’s care that Child Protection Services operate under the same roof as the rest of the MCS network for services.



Children will receive a higher quality of care when teams who provide all the necessary services in the wake of abuse or neglect can operate at *one location*. Continuity of care and ease of information sharing can make the process less traumatic for the children in need of compassionate services.

In the near term, MCS will renovate our three-story building on 9th Ave in Bradenton. This location currently houses prevention and treatment programs. In addition to prevention and treatment, the renovated version of the building will also be able to house the Child Protection intervention team *under the same roof*, so children will not have to move from building to building during the post abuse exam, interview, and follow up services process.

The renovation will include the addition of a shower in the medical exam room to provide victims with comfort and privacy, ADA-compliant entrances for persons with disabilities, conversion of current room structures to allow for privacy during medical exams and interviews with children, new flooring to meet state-required health standards for medical exams, and facility upgrades to ensure longevity and safety of the building for at least 40 years.



Please help MCS update the 9th Ave. facility, so that child victims of abuse receive the care they need in the most appropriate setting possible.

Our three-story home where MCS will serve CPT families. The front entrance will provide a warm, inviting welcome to abuse victims.



The rear entrance of our three-story home will be converted to house MCS parenting programs.