

The Lighthouse Annual Update



A place of healing and hope.

<https://vimeo.com/357618857>

What is a Children's Advocacy Center?

A child friendly and safe location for child victims of abuse.



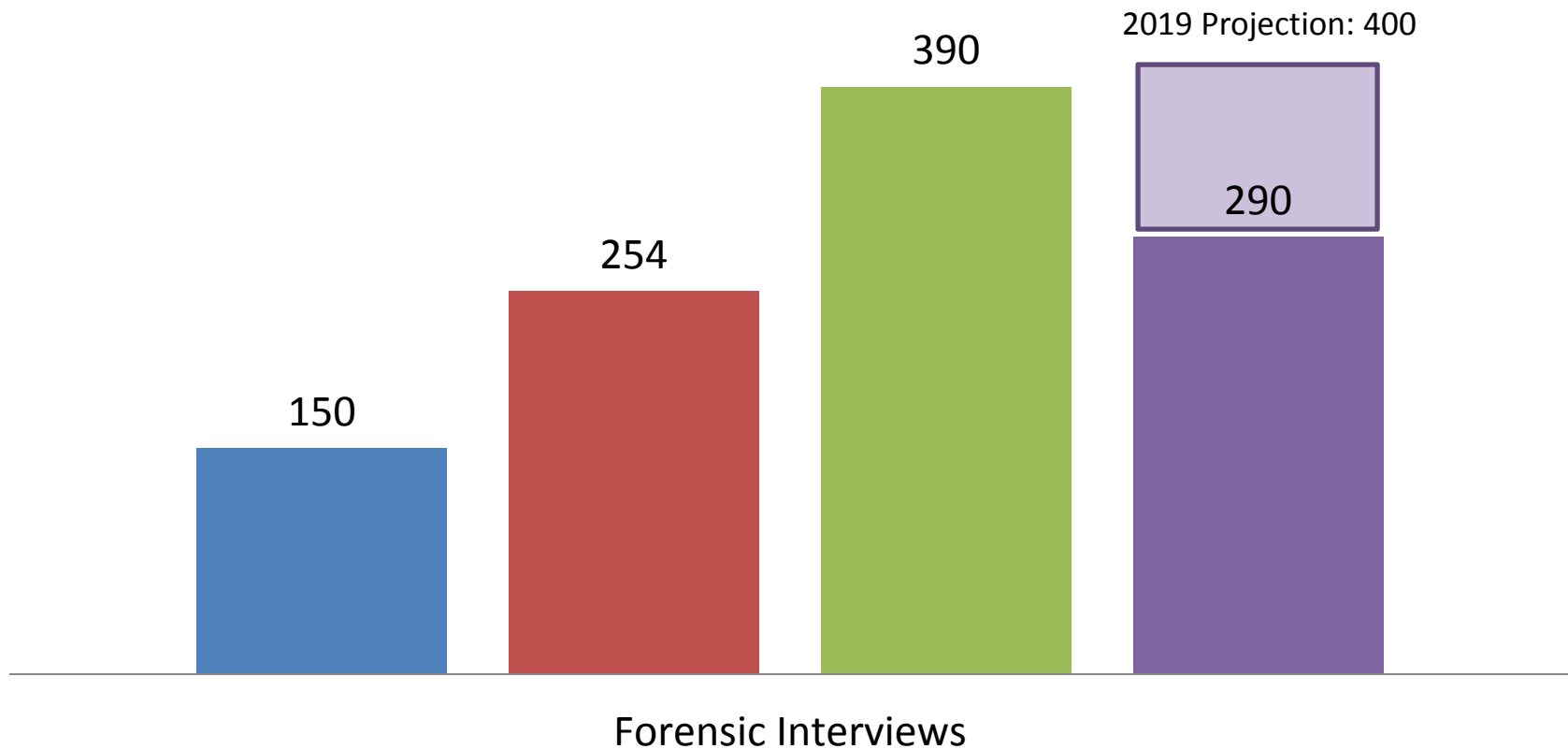
What services are provided at The Lighthouse?

- Forensic Interviews
- Family Advocacy Including Crisis Intervention
- Trauma Focused Mental Health Services
- Specialized Medical Services
- Child Sexual Abuse Prevention Education



How many children are seen at The Lighthouse?

■ 2016 ■ 2017 ■ 2018 ■ 2019 (Jan-Current)



Recent Findings and Updates

- Increase in children experiencing problematic sexual behaviors.
- Foster care youth runaway screenings/Human trafficking screenings.
- Trained 2 forensic interviewers. Trauma therapist onsite.
- Increase in community education and awareness events.
- Subprograms: Celebrate! & Kara's Kloset



'Together We Shine' Building Campaign



AK Saturday, October 6, 2018 The Gazette | GastoniaGazette.com

Fire clears way for kids' advocacy center

By Eric Wildstein
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Flames and a plume of dark smoke soared from a former house at 3100 Bethlehem Church Road during a controlled burn in Gastonia on Friday morning. Firefighters from multiple area departments burned the home, which was donated from Bethlehem Church, to clear the way for the new Gaston County Children's Advocacy Center building. "The property gets burned to clear the way for the new building," said Heather Kauffman, supervisor at the Children's Advocacy Center. "So it's really a win-win for our community all around."

Also known as The Lighthouse, Gaston's Children's Advocacy Center is a child-friendly and neutral location for children to share their stories while the child and family receive various services. The Lighthouse also provides community education for child sexual abuse prevention.

The organization has

seen a sharp increase in the number of interviews with children over the past year, warranting the need for a larger facility, said Kauffman.

The Lighthouse has been operating in the Highland Health Center since April 2016. The house on Bethlehem Road was previously used by Bethlehem Church and for group meetings from other organizations. The new facility will feature a dedicated therapy wing for individual and group therapy, and the ability to offer play therapy. It also will have a more homelike atmosphere with living room and kitchen settings and other general living spaces.

The building plan is still a work in progress, though Kauffman showed a preliminary design Friday. These plans call for a one-floor layout in a 7,700-square-foot space. Kauffman said the project "has been a dream for a long time" and expressed her gratitude for the community's support, particularly Bethlehem Church.

"It's an extremely, extremely gracious offer



Bethlehem Church donated property where the Gaston County Children's Advocacy Center will build their new facility. Here, area firefighters train as they burn the old structure which had occupied the property Friday morning, Oct. 5, 2018. (MIKE HENDRICKS/THE GASTON GAZETTE)

for them and I think speaks to the vision of what we're doing and their support to get behind community projects and really help our community," said

Kauffman.

You can reach Eric Wildstein at 704-869-3528 or Twitter.com/TheGazetteEric.



PUBLIC NOTICE TO: CITIZENS AND BUSINESSES OF GASTON COUNTY

The Gaston County Board of Commissioners cordially invites you to attend its induction ceremony for newly appointed Commissioner



'Together We Shine' Building Campaign



Goal: A comforting environment with space for necessary services and program growth.

‘Together We Shine’ Building Campaign

- Funds are being held by Community Foundation of Gaston County
- Benefit Luncheons
- Room Sponsorships
- Individual Donor Meetings
- Foundation Applications

How can you help?