

Principal Media Contact: DT Townsend
Savannah River Nuclear Solutions, LLC
803.952.7566
dt-lawrence.townsend@srs.gov

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Savannah River Nuclear Solutions Expands Resources for Children in Aiken and Barnwell

AIKEN, S.C. (April 30, 2021) – April is National Child Abuse Prevention Month. This month recognizes the importance of families and communities working together to prevent child abuse and neglect. Over the last two years, Savannah River Nuclear Solutions (SRNS) has contributed \$40,000 to the Child Advocacy Center of Aiken County (CAC). While Aiken is listed in their name, the CAC provides support for victims of child abuse in multiple counties across South Carolina, including Barnwell.

In 2003, a group of concerned citizens spear-headed a task force made up of representatives from local child-serving agencies to address the lack of a coordinated response to investigations into child abuse. The CAC was established to ensure that all the services and assistance a child and their family would need could occur in one location – a safe, nurturing, child-friendly environment, at no cost to a child's family.

CAC offers a team approach that includes medical professionals, law enforcement, and other specialists who make decisions together about how to best help the child and their family. This multidisciplinary team (MDT) response is a core part of the work CAC does



Savannah River Nuclear Solutions (SRNS) recently contributed \$40,000 to the Child Advocacy Center of Aiken County (CAC), which provides support for victims of child abuse in multiple counties across South Carolina, including Aiken and Barnwell. (From left) Kent Williams, SRNS Radiological Protection Department Director; Steve Griffith, Barnwell County Sheriff; Captain Darlene Cook, Barnwell County Sheriff's Department (BCSD); Susan Wright, Victim's Advocate, BCSD; Lt. Darren Towne, BCSD; Child Advocacy Center Director, Maryann Burgess.

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in South Carolina. Captain Darlene Cook of the Barnwell Sheriff's Office is a member of the MDT in Barnwell. "The CAC provides a safe environment for children to talk to an experienced interviewer, while gathering information law enforcement can use for prosecution," said Cook. "Our children are our future, and we need to protect them. The CAC is one of the big pieces of the puzzle that provides that protection and is a doorway to healing for both children and parents. It is a priceless resource."

Coming alongside community partners like the CAC is a vital theme to the SRNS Corporate Philanthropy Program. "The CAC met with us and expressed their interest in expanding mobile services to Barnwell County," said Kent Williams, SRNS Director of Radiological Protection and CAC Board Member. "In 2020, 34 children from Barnwell, Allendale and Bamberg County were interviewed and the CAC has already interviewed 13 so far in 2021. Having a place to offer services in Barnwell will reduce travel time for victims and their families and provide services closer to those in Allendale and Bamberg as well."

"During these changing times, the CAC remains focused on protecting the children. Through this collaboration, prevention services and support help protect children and produce thriving families," said CAC Director, Maryann Burgess. "We are so grateful to SRNS for their continued support of our mission and supporting not only the victims of child abuse but our continued efforts to train others in recognizing and preventing abuse."

Savannah River Nuclear Solutions, a Fluor-led company with Newport News Nuclear and Honeywell, is responsible for the management and operations of the Department of Energy's Savannah River Site, including the Savannah River National Laboratory, located near Aiken, South Carolina.

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SRNS-2021-1027