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Washington County Children's Justice Center to Open Expansion Project

April 29, 2024 – St. George, UT – The Washington County Children's Justice Center is pleased to announce the opening of an expansion project that will strengthen access to trauma-informed services for children who have been victims of abuse and other crimes.

Located at 441 East 500 South in St. George, the new building is adjacent to the current Children's Justice Center, and will house the Children's Justice Center's growing medical and mental health programs and will also provide training space for the Center's multidisciplinary team that investigates and prosecutes child abuse cases in Washington County. The current Children's Justice Center building will continue to house forensic interviewing and victim advocacy services.

A ribbon-cutting event is scheduled for Monday, April 29 at 10 AM.

"We are honored to hold the stories of children who have been victims of abuse and to help them on their journey to becoming healthy, thriving survivors," said Kristy Pike, director of the Washington County Children's Justice Center. "While it is true that Washington County has been growing, this additional building is more about our expanded services. When the current space was completed 16 years ago, no one was thinking we would be offering medical and mental health services on-site, but today we do. Now we have purpose-built space specifically for those services."

Like all Children's Justice Center services, the new building has been a public/private partnership. Intermountain Health has provided a charitable land lease on the 1.22-acre parcel of land where the expansion is located. Washington County has pledged American Rescue Plan Act construction funding, and \$500,000 was raised in the community through a combination of grants and donations.

"We are constantly in awe of the generosity of our community as the Center works to fulfill its mission of collaborating with multidisciplinary partners to protect each child, advance justice, promote healing, and educate our community," said Amy Dansie, chair of the Friends of the Washington County Children's Justice Center. "Our community always steps up!"

"We are appreciative of the great collaboration between Intermountain, Washington County, the City of St. George, the state of Utah, Children's Justice Center staff, and private partners to quietly care for the most vulnerable in our community – our children," said Washington County Commissioner Gil Almqvist.

“The Children’s Justice Center is crucial to our county’s response to crimes against children,” said Washington County Attorney Eric Clarke. “The collaboration that happens there between CJC staff, law enforcement, Child Protective Services, medical and mental health professionals, prosecutors, and others is key in helping us ensure a safe community.”

The Friends of the Washington County Children’s Justice Center is a qualified 501(c)(3) with a mission of supporting the work of the Washington County Children’s Justice Center. Services of the Center include forensic interviews, victim advocacy, and medical and mental health services for children who have been victims or witnesses of abuse or other crimes. In 2023 the Center served 419 primary victims and their non-offending families. The most common allegation for the kids seen at the Center was child sexual abuse/assault.

The Washington County Children’s Justice Center is accredited by the National Children’s Alliance, and is a public/private partnership funded in-part by the Utah Attorney General’s Office, Washington County, The Utah Office for Victims of Crime under the Office for Victims of Crime Department of Justice, the Friends of the Washington County Children’s Justice Center, and by private donations. For more information or to donate, visit www.cjwc.com.

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