

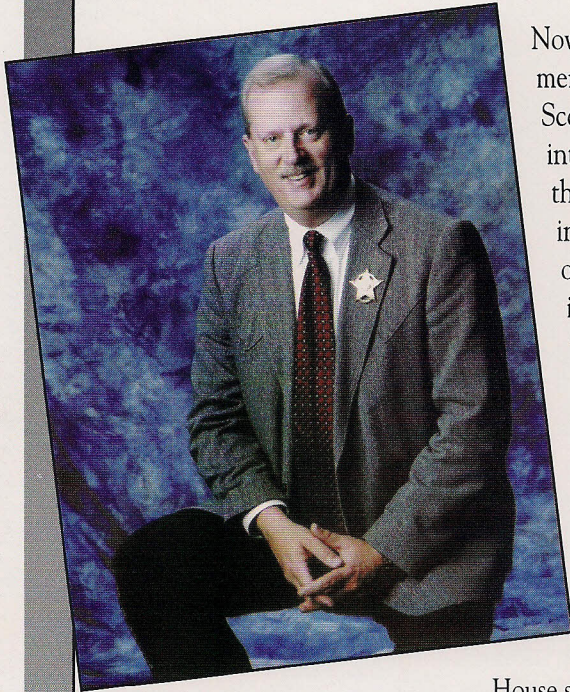


## BRAZOS COUNTY OFFICE OF THE SHERIFF CHRISTOPHER C. KIRK

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I want you to know how important the Scotty's House Child Advocacy Center is for our communities. The physical or sexual abuse of a child is a heinous crime which demands swift and congruent responses from child protective services and the criminal justice system. Prior to the opening of Scotty's House, CPS caseworkers, investigators and prosecutors were carrying out their duties independently which meant that a child would often be interviewed about the abuse multiple times, each time having to relive the traumatic events.



Now, through the coordination of Scotty's House, a multi-disciplinary team made up of members of each of the protection components come together and discuss the case with Scotty's House staff. Then, in a home-like atmosphere, the child interacts and is interviewed by a well-trained forensic interviewer. This interview is monitored through the use of electronic equipment by the investigator and caseworker who can direct the interviewer as needed. Most importantly, the interview is tape recorded so the child only has to relate the events of their abuse one time. The tape becomes evidence and is shared with the team members who then carry out their duties in protecting the victim and bringing the offender to justice.

Scotty's House is one of the few advocacy centers in the State that have an on-site forensic medical exam room. In this room, the child meets and is examined by an amiable medical professional. This setting is a less threatening atmosphere and more comfortable for the child than that of a hospital emergency room.

At the same time that these services are being provided, the victim and their family are receiving crisis counseling from a professional counselor on Scotty's House staff. This advocacy counseling continues after the investigation is concluded and through the prosecution of the case. With the goal of assisting the child and family in the healing process, Scotty's House staff are available for support or referral to other resources in the community.

The unduplicated services of Scotty's House are used by all of the law enforcement agencies in this area. We have come to rely on these services and strongly support the mission of Scotty's House as advocates for abused children.

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Brazos County Sheriff

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