

Dale, Geneva D.A. asks for advocacy center support

Ebony Horton

ehorton@dothaneagle.com

OZARK — While child abuse cases may often result in arrests, the healing process of children involved in those cases never begins in a courtroom, Dale/Geneva County District Attorney Kirke Adams told Dale County commissioners at a Wednesday budget hearing.

The healing often starts at the Child Advocacy Center in Dothan, he said. Adams requested funds and support at the meeting to start such a program in Dale County under the Dothan center's direction.

Adams said the advocacy center is not contracted to do work within Dale and Geneva counties but was involved in at least 99 cases in Dale County last year and 103 in Geneva County.

Adams said a grant could be obtained to start a similar program in Daleville if the county and cities offer some kind of

support. So far, Adams said the City of Ozark has pledged \$2,500 and the City of Daleville \$2,000. The Geneva Commission was expected to offer some funds as well, he said.

"I don't care at this point what you could give as long as it's something to show we will support this facility. ... When I started this job, I realized real quick that one of the biggest tools we have for our kids ... is the Child Advocacy Center in Dothan. Tons of these cases are the worst of the worst but (they at the center) are a saving grace," he said.

"My office is devoting \$20,000 to this, which shows just how much I believe in this."

District 1 commissioner Doug Williamson said he'd like to see the commission offer as much as possible. District 2 commissioner Glenn Grantham said he'd like to see the commission give at least \$5,000.

"This is something I think we should really get behind," he said.