

Texas Loves Children Is Proud to Announce the Creation of "Child Defend" for Alabama



▲ Texas Loves Children participated in a press conference for its Online Center for Alabama on February 3, 2012, at the University of North Alabama. Pictured (above) from left: *Hon. Jimmy Sandlin (Ret.)*, Director of UNA's Center for Juvenile and Family Justice; *Barbara Elias-Perciful*, President of Texas Loves Children; *Hon. David Breland (Ret.)*, Former District Juvenile Judge in Morgan County; *Kelley Parris-Barnes*, Director of Alabama's Department of Child Abuse and Neglect Prevention; *Dr. Phillip Bridgmon*, Chair of UNA's Department of Criminal Justice.

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UNA Department of Criminal Justice Launches Website To Help Foster, Abused Kids

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WHNT News 19 Reporter
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The UNA Department of Criminal Justice is launching a new website to help children in the foster system, and abused and neglected children..

It's a first of its kind site in Alabama that joins forces with attorneys and judges throughout the state. The site is modeled after a similar design from Texas.

The web site is called Child Defend. It's purpose is to make the often-times defenseless child in the case, a priority, during their time in the legal system.

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"They can research past cases, look at the mistakes that were made, and not make those same mistakes again," said Kelley Barnes, with the Department of Abuse and Neglect Prevention.

Child advocates say many times kids need protection from what's going on inside their own homes. With the start-up of this website, they hope the children's court system can get them the resources they need.

"Children can just endure some unspeakable horrors. We all know about those, we hear about those, and we know many of those are true," said former District Juvenile Judge in Morgan County, David Breland. "So what we're trying to do, is provide the tools, and resources to prevent that."

"Better results, quicker results, we want to see the only quick result in their case so they have a permanent home, but we want to make sure it's the right choice so having the right tools," said Jimmy Sandlin, with the Center for Juvenile and Family Justice.

Judges, attorneys, and other professionals who work with children, can log in and send questions or concerns through the network. Then in an instant, hundreds of registered users are connected. A conversation develops, and it doesn't take long, before the legal community can come up with a solution.

"This will help them better perform and better serve the children that they are appointed to represent," said Sandlin.

Legal professionals throughout the state can register with the website to provide their services and expertise on any case.

Creators expect the website to be up and running by the end of the month.