



Case referral criteria

MERIT serves children under the age of 18 years old suspected of being abused or neglected. Requests for evaluation must be made by DCFS, physicians, law enforcement or children’s advocacy centers.

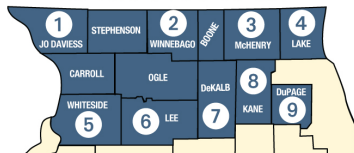
MERIT providers

- Ray Davis, MD
Medical Director of MERIT
- Shannon Krueger, MSN, CPNP, SANE-P
Director of MERIT
- Heather Sharp, MSN, CPNP, SANE-P

Case coordinator

- Stephanie Washington, CMA
- Rocio Ocampo, CMA

MERIT serves Winnebago and 12 other counties and the CACs listed.



1. Tyler’s Justice CAC, Stockton
2. Carrie Lynn Children’s Center, Rockford
3. CAC of McHenry County, Inc., Woodstock
4. Lake County CAC, Gurnee
5. April House, Morrison
6. Shining Star Children’s Center, Dixon
7. Family Service Agency’s CAC of DeKalb County, DeKalb
8. Kane County CAC, Geneva
9. DuPage County CAC, Wheaton



For more information or to request an evaluation, please contact:

MERIT

Monday - Friday, 8:30 a.m.-5 p.m.

2350 N. Rockton Avenue, Suite 204
Rockford, Illinois 61103

Tel: (815) 395-8810

Fax: (815) 963-8752

Web: go.uic.edu/MERIT

YOU CAN HELP!

Support the program through monetary donations or gifts of juice boxes, non-perishable snacks, stuffed animals, books, diapers and new children’s clothing.

All donations should be directed to:

Office of Medical Advancement
College of Medicine Rockford
1601 Parkview Ave., Rockford, IL 61107
T: (815) 395-5921 · E: COMRGiving@uic.edu

See our Amazon wish list at go.uic.edu/MERITwishlist



MERIT

Medical Evaluation Response Initiative Team

Providing
comprehensive
child abuse
evaluations



**UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS
COLLEGE OF MEDICINE
ROCKFORD**



Every 10 seconds a report of child abuse is made in the United States, with an average of four to five children lost every day to abuse and neglect.*

In Winnebago County, four children are physically/sexually abused every day—one of the highest rates in the state.**

*<https://www.childhelp.org/child-abuse-statistics/>

**Department of Children and Family Services

The Medical Evaluation Response

Initiative Team (MERIT) is an innovative program that provides comprehensive child abuse evaluations. Developed by healthcare providers in collaboration with the University of Illinois College of Medicine Rockford, the Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS) and the Carrie Lynn Children's Center, the MERIT program serves nearly 400 children under the age of 18 each year from Winnebago and 12 other counties in Northern Illinois.

Why the need for MERIT?

Significant barriers exist that prevent suspected victims of child abuse and neglect from receiving expert and timely medical evaluations. This has led to problems in the investigation process, making it more difficult for DCFS and law enforcement to intervene appropriately. In addition, many health providers have not received adequate training in abuse and neglect, which has led to medical opinions that differ from experts. MERIT advocates for

children in the prosecution of offenders. By providing this evidence-based, expertly trained referral source, children are given the voice they deserve in these crisis situations and the closure they need to help begin the healing process.

How does MERIT work?

- The MERIT case coordinator receives requests for evaluation of suspected child abuse from DCFS, law enforcement, children's advocacy centers (CACs), and physicians.
- The coordinator then assigns the case to one of the medical providers, who will collaborate with the multi-disciplinary investigative team as needed.
- Upon completion of the expert evaluation, the MERIT provider reviews the results of the evaluation with the appropriate parties.
- An expert medical opinion will be provided to the referring agency.

MERIT

MEDICAL EVALUATION RESPONSE INITIATIVE TEAM