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Award Presented to Local Woman for Child Abuse Prevention Efforts

Ponca City resident Maggi Hutchason was honored at the 18th Annual Child Abuse and Neglect and Healthy Families Conference held in Norman earlier this month. Hutchason received the “2010 Junell Kirkes Award,” which recognizes an Oklahoman who has demonstrated outstanding commitment and dedication to the child abuse multidisciplinary team process.

Hutchason is the director of the Dearing House Child Advocacy Center in Ponca City. For more than 12 years, she has been key to the success of the Kay County Child Abuse Multidisciplinary Team. Initially, she participated on the team as a child welfare worker, and since 2003 has served as the team coordinator in her role as director of Dearing House. She is the first director of Dearing House and the only full-time employee. She is available 24 hours a day, seven days a week to support the team and coordinate the services offered by the advocacy center. During her tenure, she has developed the high level of community support and participation from many agencies that is so necessary to strengthen the team’s ability to investigate cases.

Hutchason is a recent graduate of Leadership Ponca City. She serves on the Children’s Justice Act Grant National Advisory Board, the Planning Council for Smart Start Kay County, the Kay County Child Abuse Prevention Task Force, and the statewide Interagency Task Force for the Prevention of Child Abuse.

For more information about the “Junell Kirkes Award” or the Child Abuse Training and Coordination Council, contact Program Coordinator Pat Damron at the Oklahoma State Department of Health at (405) 271-7611 or patriciaad@health.ok.gov.

Photo left to right: *Maggi Hutchason, 2010 Junell Kirkes Award Winner, and Pat Damron, Oklahoma State Department of Health*

