

## **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: July 8, 2019**

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### **SAFE launches app for working with child abuse victims with disabilities App will support law enforcement and other child abuse investigators in the field**

**Austin, TX—** SAFE's Disability Services recently launched the All Kids SAFE digital guide to support law enforcement and other child abuse investigators working with child victims who have disabilities or who are Deaf, DeafBlind, DeafDisabled, and hard of hearing (DDBDDHH).

All Kids SAFE provides information and communication tips for interacting with children with autism spectrum disorder; communication, mental health, and intellectual disabilities; and children who are DDBDDHH. The guide also provides general tips on working with all children with disabilities and children who are in distress. This information can be used by law enforcement officers and Child Protective Services staff as a quick reference in the field or as an office resource.

"When a child or adolescent with a disability has been abused and is in distress, first responders and child abuse investigators may not immediately recognize that the child has a disability—or know how to best respond. Our hope is that the digital guide will provide practical information that is easy to access during those times—whether the child is at school, at home, or in the community," said Michelle (Shell) Schwartz, SAFE Disability Services Director.

All Kids SAFE can be accessed on a smartphone, tablet, or desktop computer through [allkidssafe.org](http://allkidssafe.org). This project was funded by the Texas Center for the Judiciary through a 2018 Children's Justice Act grant.

"The bottom line is that first responders and investigators need information in the field about working with child victims with disabilities. This digital guide places that information at their fingertips," Schwartz said.

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#### **About SAFE**

SAFE is a Central Texas nonprofit committed to providing safety, stability, and healing to anyone who has experienced violence and abuse. Locally, we provide housing, support services, and prevention programs to stop the cycle of violence. Globally, we engage in conversations that shape a culture free from violence and abuse. Learn more at [safeaustin.org](http://safeaustin.org).

#### **About SAFE Disability Services**

Since its beginnings in 1996, SAFE's Disability Services has been recognized as a national leader in domestic and sexual violence prevention and intervention for children and adults with disabilities.

