

## Children's Hospital Central California Madera, California

An experienced nurse at Children's Hospital Central California in Madera, California, Leanne Kozub joined the hospital's volunteer child abuse prevention team in addition to her other responsibilities in 2001. The volunteer team was originally formed in 1999 when staff began noticing an increase in the number of child abuse cases coming into the hospital. "We were worried kids were falling through the cracks," Kozub says.

The team's concern spiked in 2008 when five children died from head trauma and other injuries during a 14-day period. The grave circumstances convinced the team that more had to be done. Kozub wrote an executive summary and took a deep breath as she presented it to the hospital's CEO. "As a regional children's hospital, we're failing," she told him. The Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Center was born.

In 2008, The Guilds of Children's Hospital, a volunteer group dedicated to raising financial support for the hospital, successfully raised \$1 million toward the establishment and permanent support of the center. A year later, The Guilds voted to give an additional \$4 million toward the endowment over the next five years. The team now consists of four full-time positions and two part-time positions. Kozub is thrilled with the progress. Because the program is funded through the interest on the endowment, "There will always be something here to prevent child abuse."

### Educating people one by one

The Guilds Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Center owns the RealCare Shaken Baby, the RealCare Drug-Affected Baby and the RealCare Fetal Alcohol Syndrome Baby. "One of the first things we did was

# Specialty Simulators Success Story

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purchase the simulators from Realityworks," Kozub recalls. The first time she used the RealCare Shaken Baby, she was representing the Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Center at a teen pregnancy summit. Talking with people who approached their booth, Kozub used the infant simulator as a way to start conversation. "We noticed a girl that passed by four or five times," Kozub says. "But she didn't come up to the table."

Finally, during a breakout session, the girl edged over to talk to Kozub. Within a few minutes, she was in tears, confessing that she'd had thoughts about shaking her crying infant. Gently, Kozub asked her how she handled the stressful situation. "I called my mom, who said, 'It's

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Children's Hospital Central California

your baby, you need to figure it out,” the teen replied, “Then I just had to put the baby in the crib and let her cry.” Five minutes later, the young mother went back to check on her baby after she’d settled down.

Kozub congratulated her on knowing that she needed to ask for help. “The baby is not going to hurt from crying, but she will be hurt from shaking,” she told her. The teen went to find her friends and brought them back to Kozub, telling them to listen to her message, saying, “If I could feel like shaking my baby, you could too.”

The experience affirmed their decision to purchase Specialty Simulators from Realityworks. “This is exactly what we were hoping to do with it,” Kozub says. “The biggest part of my job is education and outreach.”

## Reaching out to the community

Children’s Hospital Central California covers 10 of the state’s 58 counties. The area does not have adequate services for the number of residents, many of whom are living in poverty. The dire economic conditions further increase the demand for the center. Kozub’s team is dedicated to providing free training to outside agencies in their outreach area of 45,000 square miles.

“Our injury prevention instruction is geared toward positive parenting,” Kozub explains. Nurses teach classes from the standpoint of “how to teach other people to care for my child,” thereby eliminating defensive reactions from participants. In addition, the center trains paramedic students, school nurses, social workers, foster parents, and others. “If your agency has anything to do with injury prevention or child welfare, and you invite us to come and talk to your group, we’ll be there!” Kozub says.

One of the biggest impacts of the RealCare Shaken Baby was one that Kozub did not anticipate. “The presentations are eye-opening for the parents we teach, but also for law enforcement and child welfare,” Kozub says. “They are amazed at how little it takes to really hurt a child.”

Kozub reports that many police officers tell her how valuable they find the training. “A lot of them have said to me, ‘I regret not knowing this sooner’.” The information Kozub’s team provides makes a difference in how officers manage cases and the questions they ask attending physicians.

## Helping investigators

The benefit of Realityworks’ Specialty Simulators goes beyond education. When a baby is brought to Children’s Hospital Central California’s emergency department with suspected nonaccidental trauma injuries, a social worker calls law enforcement, child protective services and the Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Center. If an injured child’s caretakers insist that “nothing happened,” law enforcement can consult with the team for a medical opinion. Using the RealCare Shaken Baby as an illustration and walking the law enforcement officer through the X-rays, the team is able to help put the pieces of an incident together. “This is how we can clinically say, ‘It did not happen this way,’” Kozub says. “We’re able to help those who are investigating to put together a case.”

At a training Kozub conducted for a county sheriff’s department, she made the detectives shake the RealCare Shaken Baby to demonstrate the damaging effects. Weeks later, Kozub received a phone call from a distraught detective who had drawn an appalling abuse case. “I was at the training and I saw the doll,” the detective said. “I can’t imagine how someone could do this.” Kozub took the time to walk the detective through X-rays and show her pictures of the retinal hemorrhages. “The training provided a context for her and this case was much worse,” Kozub said. “Her sergeant called later and thanked me for walking her through that. It made her a better detective. It was one of those moments where we made a difference.”