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Each of our ten court dog teams has a red vest emblazoned with a patch of the Twentieth Judicial Circuit, which makes it clear to everyone that this is indeed a very special dog. Once the team passes through security, they take a short elevator ride to the third floor and the Family Court waiting area. Here you may find one of the dogs sprawled on the floor with a young one brushing the dog's hair, or one of the attorneys with a big smile on his face while he pets the four-legged ambassador. Often, the judges themselves may take a break just to spend some time with these incredibly special dogs.

When the State's Attorney has a child that will be testifying against an abuser, their office will contact Lisa Talcott, CAC's Pet Therapy Coordinator, to schedule a team to be at court to comfort that child before and after testifying. The calming affect that the dog has on the child is immediately evident; their breathing slows and a calmness envelopes both the dog and the child.

Our hope is that one day the therapy dogs will be allowed in the courtroom with their child so they may be an unseen comfort as they testify. For now, these amazing dogs will be spreading their love, one child at a time in the waiting area outside the Family Courtroom!