



2024 Annual Report



Dakota Children's
ADVOCACY CENTER

Who We Are



Dakota Children's Advocacy Center

The Dakota Children's Advocacy Center (DCAC) provides a compassionate and effective way to bring services to children and families affected by abuse. Our collaboration with multidisciplinary team members significantly reduces the trauma associated with child abuse and improves case outcomes. We help coordinate care and investigation from first report to conviction and beyond, while keeping the child at the center of everything the team does.

The mission of the DCAC is to provide a safe, family-friendly environment that promotes hope, health, and healing to traumatized children and their families.



Dakota Children's
ADVOCACY CENTER

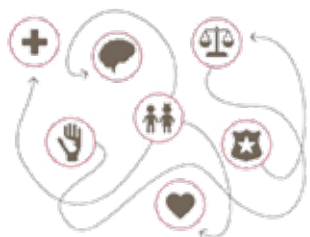


Backed by
National Children's Alliance
Accredited Member

What We Do

To understand what a Children’s Advocacy Center (CAC) is, you must understand what children face without one. Without a CAC, the child may end up having to tell the worst story of his or her life over and over again, to doctors, law enforcement, lawyers, therapists, investigators, judges, and others. They may have to talk about that traumatic experience in a police station where they think they might be in trouble, or may be asked the wrong questions by a well-meaning teacher or other adult that could hurt the case against the abuser.

Without CACs



With CACs



When police or child protective services believe a child is being abused, the child is brought to the CAC—a safe, child-focused environment—by a caregiver or other “safe” adult. At the CAC, the child tells their story once to a trained interviewer who knows the right questions to ask in a way that does not re-traumatize the child. Then, a team that includes medical professionals, law enforcement, mental health, prosecution, child protective services, victim advocacy, and other professionals make decisions together about how to help the child based on the interview. CACs offer therapy and medical exams, plus courtroom preparation, victim advocacy, case management, and other services. This is called the multidisciplinary team (MDT) response and is a core part of the work of CACs.

Our Goals



Do the best job possible in finding out what happened.



Help make the process as comfortable as possible.



Coordinate with other agencies to maximize assistance.



Help families begin to heal.



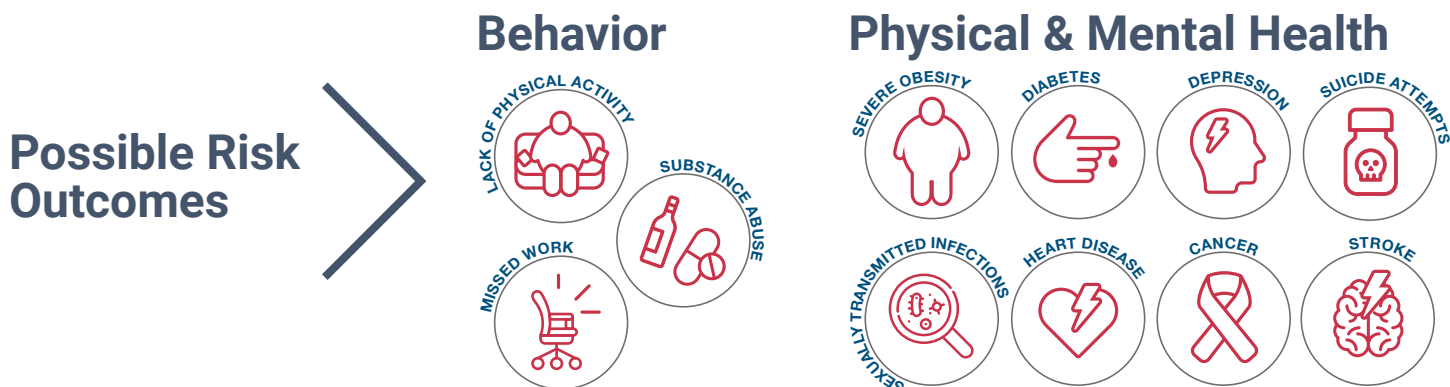
Build resilient teams and staff so we can provide the best possible services.

Why It Matters

Child abuse and other forms of trauma can have lifelong effects on children, families, and communities.

Child trauma can last a lifetime.

Many studies have shown the strong relationship between Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs), which include childhood trauma like abuse, and serious outcomes such as post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), depression, substance use, health problems, and even poverty and early death.



Trauma is both common and costly to society.

How many children are we talking about? Nearly half of all U.S. children experience at least one type of childhood trauma. That exacts a toll on children, their caregivers, and their community, and our country as a whole also pays a price. Quite literally: In addition to the physical, emotional, and social costs of child abuse, it also carries economic costs.¹

Abuse and other forms of trauma are common.

Nearly half of all U.S. children —some **34 million**—have experienced at least one type of childhood trauma, while **16 million** have experienced two or more types of trauma.²

Abuse carries a heavy cost.

The lifetime cost for each victim is

\$210,012¹

Each year, total lifetime costs of new cases of child abuse reach approximately

\$124 billion

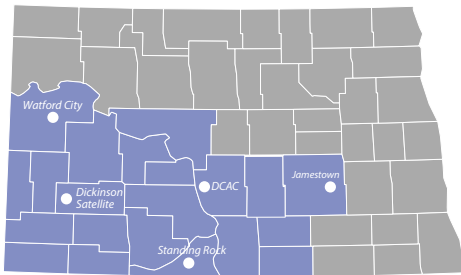
¹ Fang, X.; Brown, D., Florence, C., and Mercy, J. The economic burden of child maltreatment in the United States and implications for prevention. (2012) Child Abuse and Neglect, Volume 36, Issue 2, February 2012, pages 156-165.

² Bethell, C, Newacheck, P, Hawes, E, Halfon, N. Adverse childhood experiences: assessing the impact on health and school engagement and the mitigating role of resilience. (2014) Health Affairs Dec; 33(12);210-2016

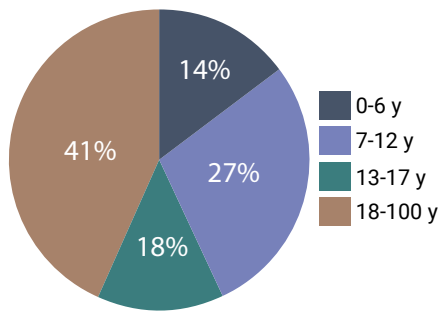
Who We Serve

One in every 10 children will be a victim of sexual abuse by their 18th birthday; approximately 65% will be female. Based on data from the CDC, a conservative estimate for the cost of maltreatment in North Dakota is more than \$525 million in one year.*

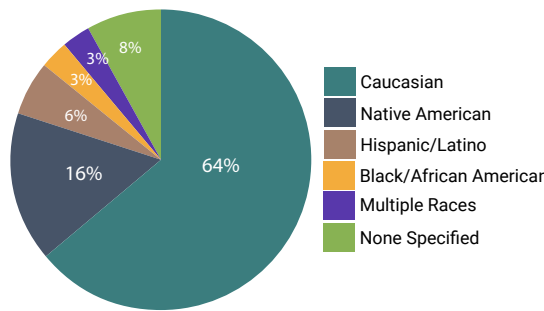
*Numbers are based on averages from over the years.



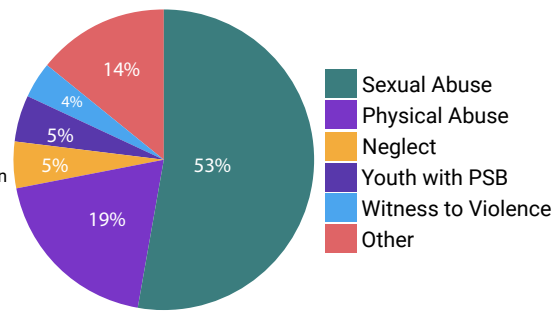
The DCAC serves ND with 5 convenient locations in **Bismarck, Dickinson, Jamestown, Watford City, and Standing Rock**, so no matter where you live you have access to services.



Age



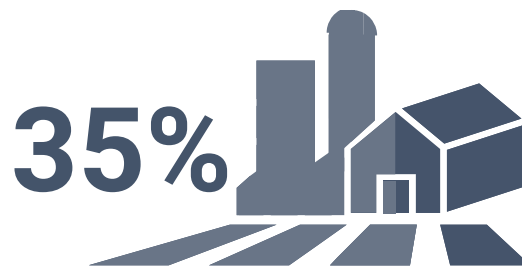
Race



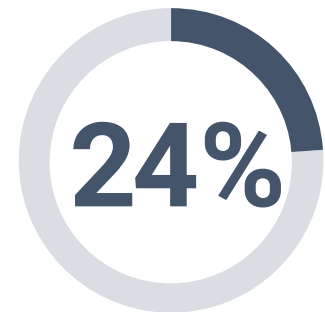
Types of Abuse



know their offender. Almost always, the dangers to children are not from strangers, but from someone they know and trust.



of referrals came from rural counties.



of offenders are <18; highlighting the need for evidence-based services for kids with sexual behavior problems. Like the PSB-CBT group the DCAC offers.

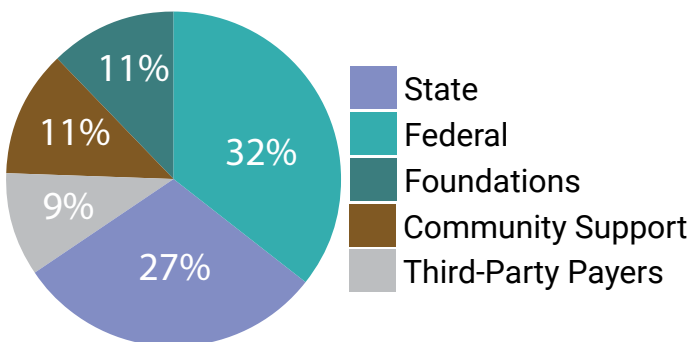
The Dakota Children's Advocacy Center exists to change those numbers and lead the fight against the cycle of child abuse through a more coordinated and compassionate approach.

How We Are Funded

Average Revenue and Expenses

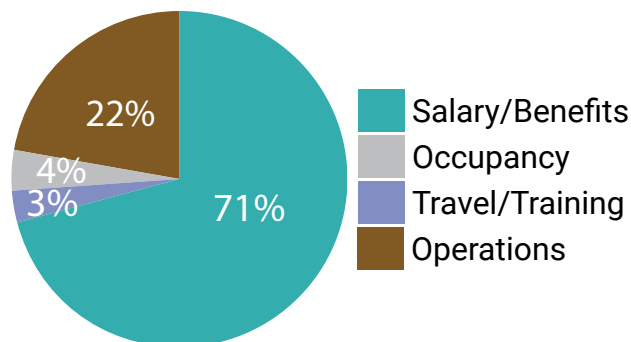
Revenue

As a non-profit organization, the DCAC is dependent on the generosity of the communities we serve. CACs never bill families for services. We are funded through grants, foundations, community support and third-party payers.



Expenses

By far a majority of our expenses go to supporting direct services to traumatized kids and their families. We do this so we can provide a safe, family-friendly environment that promotes hope, health, and healing.



Partners in Our Success



Our Services

Attention to the needs and abilities of children is the hallmark of the Children's Advocacy Center model to ensure that children are not further victimized by the systems intended to protect them. From the initial allegation of abuse, the Multidisciplinary Team (MDT) approach allows the child an opportunity to talk with a single interviewer in a safe, neutral setting, thus protecting the victim from being unnecessarily interviewed by multiple people from each specific field. The team continues to work together to guide the investigation, treatment, management and possible prosecution of the case to ensure the greatest level of protection and care for the child and his/her family.



Forensic Interviews

Specially trained Forensic Interviewers work with the MDT to ensure victims are not interviewed unnecessarily and allow them to share their story in a safe, legally sound and neutral setting.



Advocacy Services

Advocacy focuses on the needs of the youth and non-offending caregiver(s), providing needed support and information along with a compassionate, listening ear.



Medical Evaluations

Specialized medical evaluations are offered to ensure the health and safety of each victim, identify any evidence of abuse, and refer for additional care as needed.



Mental Health Care

Specialized, evidence-based, trauma-focused mental health services are offered to the victim and family to help them cope with the trauma and to assist them through the healing process.



MDT Collaboration

CACs and MDT members come together to improve the response of the investigation and intervention of child abuse.



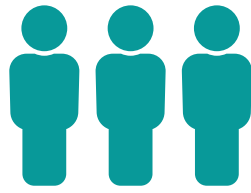
Prevention and Education

While there is no one thing we can do to guarantee children will be safe, there are things we can do to decrease the likelihood of abuse and improve our response to it.

Our Numbers



17,840
Services



1,152
People



66%
of Counties
Served

A 25% increase in services from 2023.

Our Services



432
Forensic
Interviews



10,616
Advocacy
Services



158
Medical
Evaluations*

*Medical evaluations completed
by Central Dakota Forensic
Nurse Examiners



3,268
Mental Health
Sessions



3,366
Prevention &
Education

Our 2024 Highlights



Continuing to envision our big dream so that children and families can access all of the services they need in one space.



Started a Caregiver Support Group so caregivers have the resources they need to support their kids.



We added a development position as we experience significant loss of funding from grants.



Started providing group services to schools to reach kids that need us but never get to us.



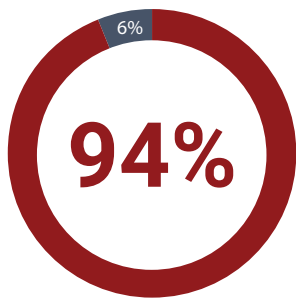
Updated our website and flyers to include Spanish so that our services are accessible to all those we serve.

Our Impact

“This has been such a hard thing for us and the Dakota Children’s Advocacy Center has literally been a life-saver.

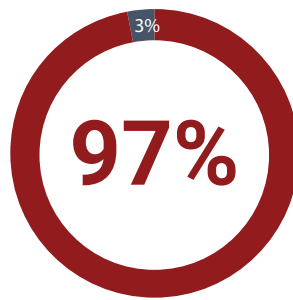
Your services are amazing and we are so grateful.”

I believe my child felt safe at the center.



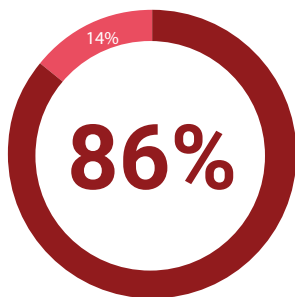
■ Agree
■ Disagree / Don't Know

The DCAC provided me with resources to support my child.



■ Agree
■ Disagree / Don't Know

The DCAC provides resources that build better cases.

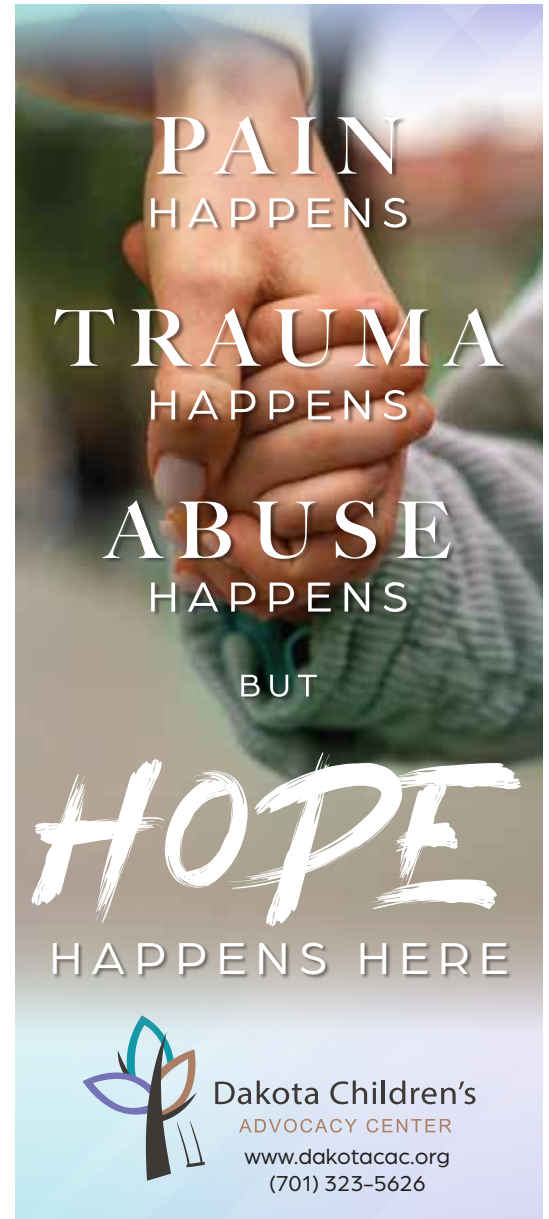


■ Agree
■ Disagree / Don't Know
■ Not Applicable

MDT members feel clients benefit from the collaborative approach.



■ Agree
■ Disagree / Don't Know



“The Dakota Children’s Advocacy Center is an invaluable resource.”

Our Need

There is still so much to do. With more funding and resources we could:



Create a One-Stop Shop

So that families have easier access to the services they need.



Increase Access to Mental Health Services

All Mental Health Services are consistently on a wait list, which means kids in crisis have to wait to heal. **It is our goal to find funding to increase therapy staff at all of our locations**, so kids and families can receive services when they need them.



Expand Services to Reach Gaps in the State

Our services only work if children and have families have access to them. **It is our goal that one day our state will be gap free in providing services to abused children.** Whether it be satellite locations or providing services over telehealth, we want to be within reach, when needed.



Actively Work to Prevent Abuse

The DCAC provides services every day to children who have experienced unimaginable things that no person should ever have to experience. **It is our goal to lead the charge in doing all we can do to make sure children have safe and happy childhoods.**



Community Awareness

Families need to know we are here when they need us, and the community needs to know how to partner with us to make that happen. **It is our goal that people not only know our name, but they are actively involved in helping us protect kids and provide support so we can offer healing and support to those who need it.**



Increase Access to Medical Services

Every child who has been abused should have access to specially trained expert medical services to ensure their bodies are okay and to provide services if they are not. **It is our goal to one day have funding to have a medical provider on staff** to ensure this availability.

How You Can Help



The services of the Dakota Children's Advocacy Center (DCAC) are made possible because of the generous support of the community. We have grown out of a community need to better the response and intervention of those most vulnerable and we need you to partner with us to make that happen. Donate today!

The DCAC is solely funded through grants, donations and third-party payers. Every penny donated helps make a difference in the lives of children.

Donate

Your generous donation will help provide Hope, Health & Healing to children experiencing abuse and trauma.

Wish List

Visit us @ www.dakotacac.org to view our Wish List of needed items that help us support the families we serve.

For more information on how you can help visit our website @

***www.DakotaCAC.org/how-you-can-help
giving@dakotacac.org
701-323-5626***

Volunteer

In order to provide services free to families, the DCAC truly depends on the help of volunteers. Volunteers contribute their unique talents, skills and knowledge to help restore hope, health and healing to children and their families.



Join a Committee

When it comes to making a difference in improving children's lives, there is a place for everyone to contribute. Child abuse and neglect is a community problem.

Sponsor Our Events

Giving Hearts Day, Wing Fling, Heroes on the Green Golf Tournaments and more!



Dakota Children's
ADVOCACY CENTER