



CULTURALLY COMPETENT, CHILD-FRIENDLY SETTING

The Children's Advocacy Center (CAC) is comfortable, private, and both physically and psychologically safe for diverse populations of children and their family members. Cultural competency is a fundamental component of the CAC philosophy and is as central to operations as developmentally appropriate, child-friendly practice. Cultural norms influence nearly every aspect of working with children and families.

FORENSIC INTERVIEWS

The purpose of a CAC forensic interview is to obtain information from a child about abuse allegations that will support accurate and fair decision making by the MDT within the criminal justice, child protection, and service delivery systems.

FEATURES:

- Developmentally appropriate for children aged 3-17, or for adults with developmental delays
- Unbiased, fact-finding, and legally sound, using the Semi-Structured Cognitive Approach
- Observed and recorded to avoid multiple interviews and to ensure preservation of testimony
- Bilingual, off-site, and extended interviews available upon request

MEDICAL EVALUATION

All children who are suspected victims of child sexual abuse are entitled to a medical evaluation by a provider with specialized training. The collection and documentation of possible forensically significant findings are vital. Because many children are familiar with the helping role of doctors and nurses, they may disclose information to medical personnel that they might not share with investigators. In fact, some children are able to describe residual physical symptoms to medical providers even when no injury is seen.

ADVANTAGES:

- Medical Direction from the top Pediatric specialist in child abuse in Southern Arizona
- MDs, NPs, and RNS trained and certified in sexual assault, child abuse, and child sexual abuse
- Scheduled or emergent (Priority-1) exams available 24/7
- Follow-up exams for confirmation of healing and cause of injury
- Photographic consultations, including for child pornography, available upon request

Where abuse ends and healing begins

MENTAL HEALTH

Evidence-based, trauma-focused mental health services, designed to meet the unique needs of the children and caregivers and foster healing by minimizing potential trauma to children. Without effective therapeutic intervention, many traumatized children will suffer ongoing or long-term adverse social, emotional, developmental and health outcomes that may impact them throughout their lifetimes.

SERVICES:

- Evidenced-based treatments and practices with strong empirical support
- Focus on reducing the impact of trauma and the risk of future abuse
- Counseling for family members to support the child's recovery and ongoing protection
- Interactive sessions for families to build communication and positive coping skills
- Educational workshops for foster parents to build skills to care for traumatized children

VICTIM SUPPORT AND ADVOCACY

Victim support and advocacy services are provided to all CAC clients and their caregivers as part of the Multidisciplinary Team response. Research demonstrates that parent/caregiver support is essential to reducing trauma and improving outcomes for children and family members. Up-to-date information and ongoing access to comprehensive services are critical to a child and family's comfort and ability to participate in an ongoing investigation, possible prosecution, intervention and treatment. Victim support and advocacy responsibilities are implemented consistent with victims' rights legislation and ensure a consistent and comprehensive network of support for the child and family.

MULTIDISCIPLINARY TEAM

A functioning and effective multidisciplinary team (MDT) is the foundation of the Children's Advocacy Center (CAC). This group of professionals from specific, distinct disciplines collaborates from the point of report to reduce trauma to children and families and improve services, while preserving and respecting the rights, mandates and obligations of each agency. The CAC is not just a facility, but serves as an interagency coordinated response center.

BENEFITS:

- Suspects are more likely to cooperate when confronted with evidence generated by the MDT
- Clients are supported by CAC staff, leaving law enforcement to focus on the investigation
- Collaboration allows MDT members to utilize others' training and expertise
- Effective information sharing places DCS workers in a better position to monitor child safety
- Felony prosecution rates are nearly doubled when using a CAC

[Join our Multidisciplinary Team to help combat child abuse and neglect. Call \(520\) 724-6600](#)