

CHILDREN'S ADVOCACY CENTERS OF ILLINOIS



The Children's Advocacy Centers of Illinois (CACI) is a remarkable network of Children's Advocacy Centers (CACs). CAC services help children on their journey to healing. Every day the remarkable people that work at our CACs coordinate services, interview children and advocate on behalf of victim's rights.

In Illinois, our vision is simple: to ensure every child in the state of Illinois has access to the services offered through a CAC. While we cannot stop abuse, we can make a significant impact through prevention education and multidisciplinary services provided to the children who have suffered the horrors of abuse.



IN FY17

10,611

CHILDREN WERE
PROVIDED SERVICES BY
ILLINOIS CACS

CHILDREN'S ADVOCACY CENTERS OF ILLINOIS

The Children's Advocacy Centers of Illinois (CACI) is dedicated to the development and growth of Illinois' Children's Advocacy Centers. CACI accomplishes this by offering its members a cadre of services which are rooted in the not-for-profit organization's driving principles: *Leadership, Education and Collaboration*.

Established in 1995, CACI is the network that coordinates and provides a comprehensive response to child abuse in Illinois. As the leading resource on child abuse issues, CACI stays abreast of the latest research and literature in the child abuse field, as well as the most child-friendly approaches in investigation and treatment of child abuse.

CACI is dedicated to the multidisciplinary, child advocacy approach and a coordinated, comprehensive response to child abuse. To that end, CACI offers discipline-specific trainings to its members throughout the year; CACI seeks opportunities to collaborate with partner agencies, such as the Illinois Department of Children and Family Services and the Illinois Attorney General's Office, on education and public policy issues; and CACI guides its members on "best practices" in the field.

CACI is an accredited chapter of the National Children's Alliance.
Accreditation standards include:

Organizational Capacity: CACI implements sound administrative practices in both programming and fiscal operations.

Membership: CACI works with its members to collect and provide vital statistical information. CACI provides services that support and encourage its members to meet and exceed the 10 standards required for their national accreditation.

Training and Technical Assistance: CACI provides training and program support to developing and existing Children's Advocacy Centers throughout Illinois.

Growth and Development of CACs: CACI fosters the growth and development of CACs statewide. Currently CACs serve 98 of the 102 counties in Illinois.

Awareness and Education: CACI is responsible for the training needs of all CACs, from forensic interviewing training to advocacy, as well as working with Illinois legislators to increase awareness and accountability.

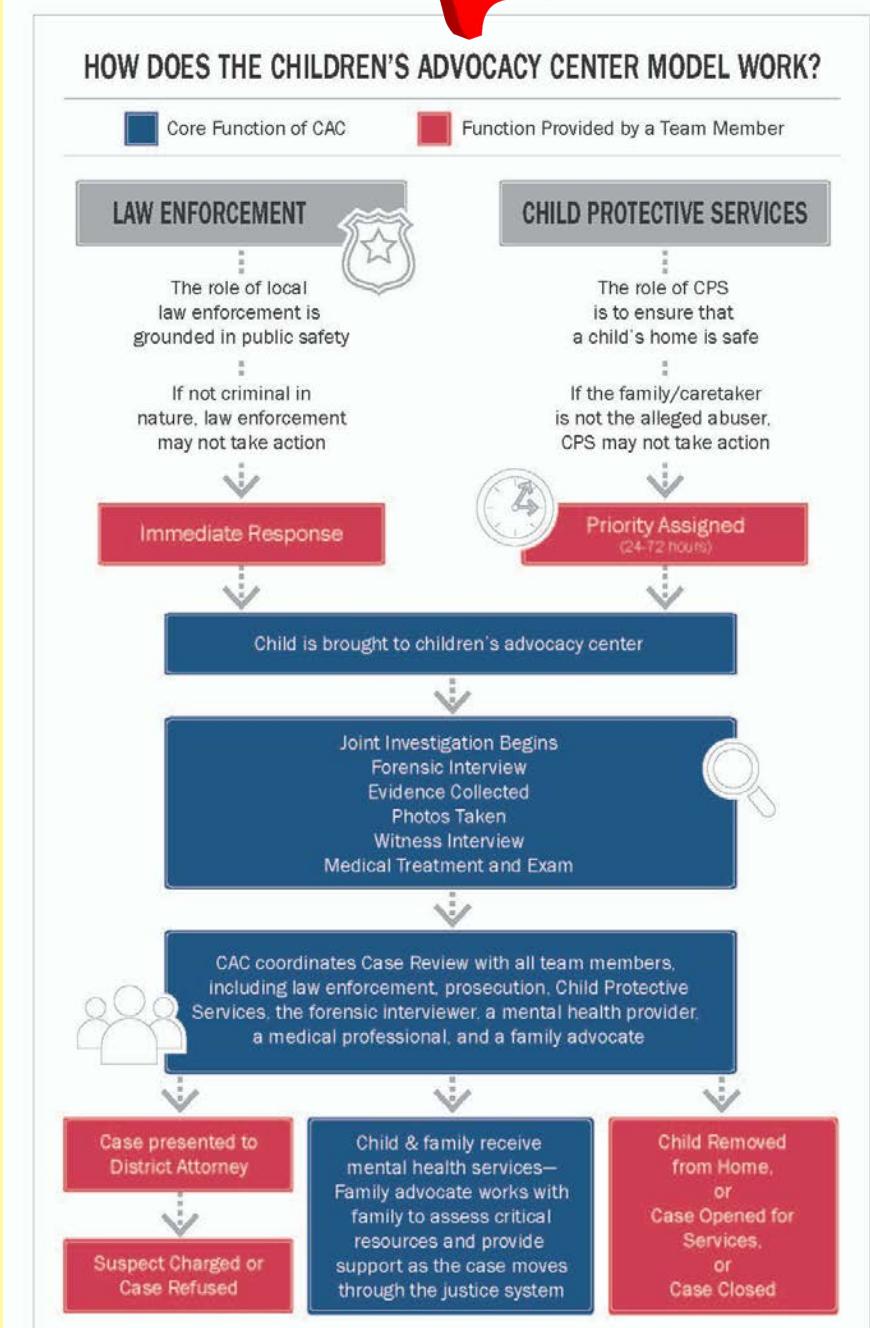
WHAT IS A CHILDREN'S ADVOCACY CENTER?

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, cops, 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.

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 not retraumatize 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.



Illinois has 39 national accredited CACs as well as 1 developing CAC



Flowchart of how children and families go through the CAC investigation and intervention process and case decisions are made - provided by National Children's Alliance

WHAT IS CHILD ABUSE?

CHILD ABUSE CAN TAKE PLACE ANYWHERE—AT HOME, SCHOOL, PUBLIC PLACES—WHEREVER A CHILD GOES OR INTERACTS WITH OTHERS. IT CAN TAKE SEVERAL FORMS, AND CAUSE LONG-LASTING SCARS ON THE BODY OF THE CHILD, AS WELL AS THE MIND. CHILD ABUSE CAN PRESENT ITSELF IN MANY FORMS. SOME SIGNS ARE NOT OBVIOUS OR VISIBLE.

WHY CACs WORK

ILLINOIS CACs ARE ACCOUNTABLE

Accreditation of CACs through the National Children's Alliance (NCA) assures the highest standard of care is provided to victims.

Accredited membership in the NCA requires that the programs meet specific standards. These standards ensure effective, efficient and consistent delivery of services by CACs to child abuse victims throughout the state.

ILLINOIS CACs GIVE CHILD VICTIMS A VOICE

In Illinois when there is an allegation of child sexual abuse or severe physical abuse, children are referred to a local CAC. There, a trained professional interviews the child while members of the multidisciplinary team (MDT) observe. During the interview, the child is encouraged to talk about their experiences in their own words.

Following the interview, the child as well as family members, receive advocacy, medical and mental health services to help with the healing process.

ILLINOIS CACs SAVE MONEY & HOLD OFFENDERS ACCOUNTABLE

Coordinated investigations are more efficient & more effective; CACs make this a reality. According to a national study, traditional investigations cost 36% more than CAC-collaborative investigations.

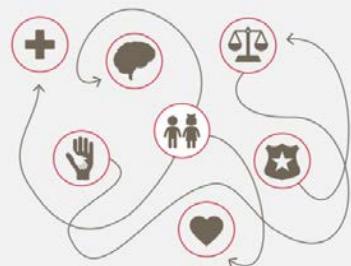
CACs can save as much as \$1,000 per child abuse case by streamlining the process, creating efficiencies & providing effective services.

ILLINOIS CACs ARE EFFECTIVE

Before CACs, children would have to speak to 10-12 different people during an investigation of child abuse, repeating their story many times. Since the creation of CACs, children are able to visit the CAC and talk to one person while the MDT views the interview & coordinates the investigation.



Without CACs



With CACs



Source: <http://nationalchildrensalliance.org/our-story>



Formed in 1988, NCA has been providing support, technical assistance, and quality assurance for CACs, while serving as a voice for abused children for more than 25 years.

V O C A

Victims of Crime Act

The Victims of Crime Act (VOCA) was passed by Congress and signed into law by President Ronald Reagan on October 12, 1984. It serves as the central source of federal financial support for direct services to crime victims.

VOCA is funded with fines paid by offenders convicted of violating federal laws, supports direct services to victims of crime. The Act requires that priority be given to services for victims of sexual assault, domestic violence, child abuse & other groups identified by the state as underserved victims of crime.

July 2017, 35 Illinois CACs applied for and received a *7.1 million dollar* VOCA grant with CACI as the Lead Entity. These funds have made a tremendous difference in the services that are being provided to children and their families and will continue to do so!

91

NEW STAFF HIRED

Including, Forensic Interviewers,
Family Advocates, MDT
Coordinators

59

OF THOSE HIRED BEING MENTAL HEALTH PROVIDERS

This link to free, accessible and timely mental health services is vital for children & their families who have experienced trauma



**69
Trainings**

ATTENDED BY VOCA FUNDED CAC STAFF

Increasing their knowledge and skill level in working with investigations and treatment of children seen in Illinois CACs

12

CHILDREN'S ADVOCACY CENTERS

Updated outdated recording systems for forensic interviews held at their CAC

HOURS OF OPERATION EXTENDED

Creating more forensic interview time slots and the ability for later evening hours



D A T A

IN THE FIRST HALF OF FY18 JULY 1, 2017 - JANUARY 2018

5,458
**CHILD FORENSIC
INTERVIEWS WERE
CONDUCTED**



3,122
MENTAL HEALTH
REFERRALS WERE
MADE FOR NON-
OFFENDING
CAREGIVERS OF
CHILDREN SEEN AT
THE CAC



719
ALLEGED
PERPETRATORS
WERE CHARGED
INVOLVING
VICTIMS SERVED
AT THE CAC

3,994
MENTAL HEALTH
REFERRALS WERE
MADE FOR
CHILDREN SEEN AT
THE CAC



1,309
CHILDREN
RECEIVED MEDICAL
EXAMS



356
CONVICTIONS/
PLEAS WERE
ENTERED
INVOLVING CHILD
VICTIMS SEEN AT
THE CAC



OUTCOME MEASUREMENT SYSTEM (OMS)

OMS helps CACs define their successes in serving children and families. It also allows CACs to report on survey items designed to capture two measurable outcomes:

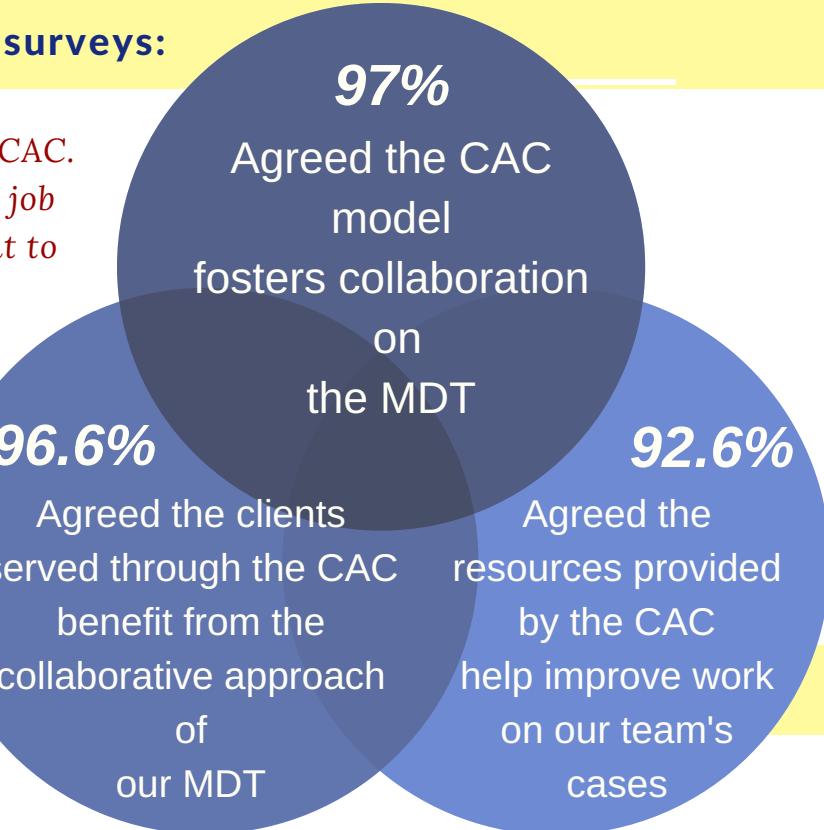
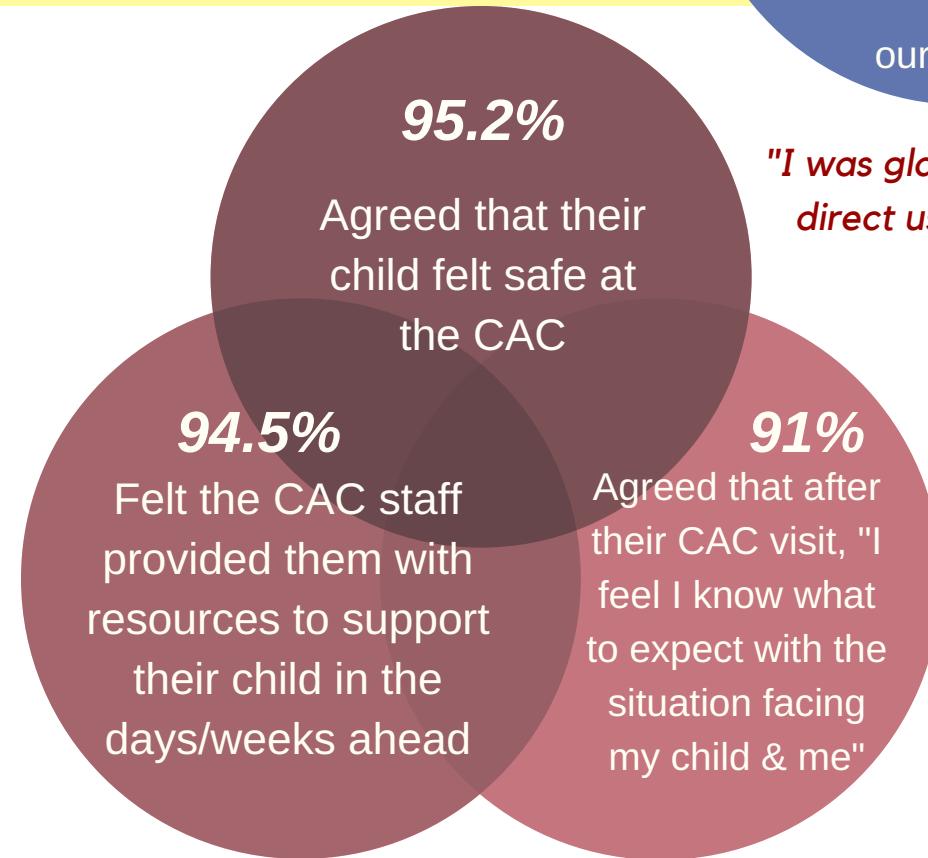
- **The CAC facilitates healing for children and caregivers.**
- **The MDT approach results in more collaborative and efficient case investigations.**

574 MDT members responded to MDT surveys:

"Everyone is a pleasure to work with up at the CAC. We appreciate the positions they hold and the job they do. I couldn't ask for a better environment to work with them in".

"I love working with our Advocacy Center. Every single case is handled professionally and with the utmost of care. This center has and will continue to play an intricate role in keeping our children safe and helping our families to recover and thrive. Keep up the good work!"

What caregivers are saying:



"I was glad someone was here to listen to us and direct us to appropriate counseling services."

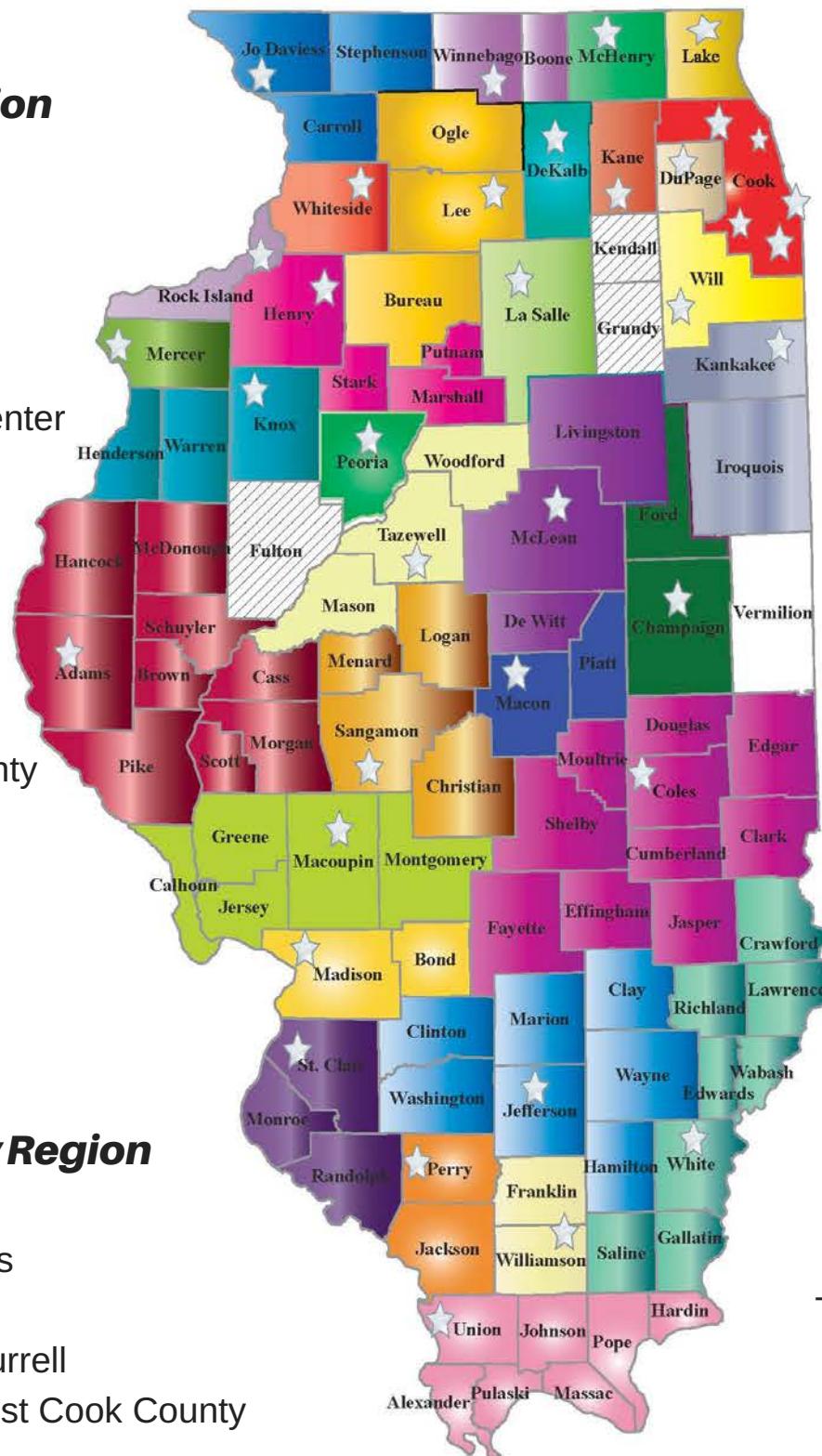
"How helpful, professional and kind the staff are at the center. They made our experience more pleasant and comfortable through the whole process of being interviewed. They did a wonderful job."

"I'm glad there are places like this to help these children and families. Luckily my son's case was very minor. The staff was friendly and willing to help."

ILLINOIS CACS

Northern Region

April House
Braveheart
Carrie Lynn
Child Network
Dani-Brandon Center
Jeanine Nicarico
DeKalb County
Kane County
Lake County
McHenry County
Mercer County
Rock Island County
Shining Star
Tyler's Justice
Will County



Central Region

Advocacy Network
Champaign County
East Central
Knox County
Child 1st
McLean County
UCAN
Peoria County
Sangamon County
Tazewell County

Southern Region

Amy Schulz
The Guardian Center
Madison County
Perry-Jackson
St. Clair County
Two Rivers
Franklin/Williamson

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**Statewide MDT
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Cara Vock
**Coordinator of Education &
Training**

Jean Garner
Strategic Administrator

Barbara Karr
**Voca Grant Program
Administrator**

Kathy Murphy
**VOCA Grant Financial
Administrator**

Michelle Hammitt
**Office Administrator/NCA
Grant Administrator**



Children's Advocacy Centers of Illinois

leading • educating • collaborating

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Please visit our website and follow us on social media for information on upcoming trainings, events, and much more!

<http://www.childrensadvocacycentersofillinois.org/>

