

*Celebrating*  
— 25 YEARS —

March 2021  
Issue No. 1



## FLORIDA NETWORK OF CHILDREN'S ADVOCACY CENTERS

565 E Tennessee Street, Tallahassee, Florida 32308

850-671-4791



[CAC DIRECTORY](#) | [RESOURCES](#) | [CONTACT](#)



## IMPROVING LIVES OF ABUSED CHILDREN

[learn more](#)

### ABOUT US

The FNCAC is a not-for profit, 501(c)3 organization that was founded in 1996 by a membership of six local centers.

Our membership has grown exponentially, as the FNCAC now embodies all **27 children's advocacy centers and serves 85 percent of the children and families** in the Sunshine state. We are an Accredited State Chapter of the National Children's Alliance.

The primary functions of the FNCAC are to **educate and support children's advocacy centers** through specialized training and technical support, to advocate for children's advocacy centers at the state and national levels, and to manage and distribute funds to Florida's children's advocacy centers.

### Child Advocacy Centers

In FY 19/20, Florida CACs provided 204,571 direct services to 27,558 children identified as victims of abuse or neglect.

[RESOURCES](#)

Without CACs



With CACs



## New FSU Interns

Florida Network of Children's Advocacy Center partnership with the FSU College of Business Department of Marketing through the support of Dr. Keith Ferguson has yielded wonderful results. Our new FSU interns, Austin Kim and Lauren Gordon helped us get this newsletter going and are researching communication and marketing plans to better position FNCAC among non-profits serving children who are abused, neglected, and exposed to violence.



## TRAINING & EVENTS CALENDAR

### Training

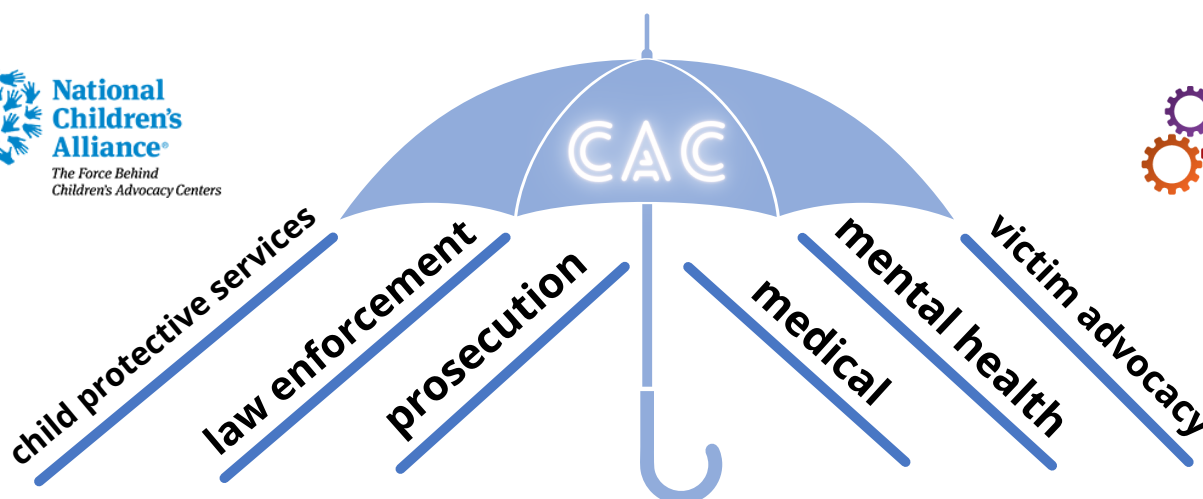
Thank you to our partner Florida Department of Children and Families for awarding FNCAC a CJA grant providing funds for the following trainings:

- (FNCAC) sponsored Children's Advocacy Center Training
- Trainings conducted by the National Children's Alliance
- Trainings conducted by the National Children's Alliance

Training currently available: [45-hour crime victim advocates course](#)

## WE ARE A MULTIDISCIPLINARY TEAM

A multidisciplinary team is a group of professionals from specific, distinct disciplines that collaborates from the point of report and throughout a child and family's involvement with the CAC.



**TUNE IN to**  
**<https://news.wfsu.org/>**

FNCAC Executive Director, Cindy Vallely, and FNCAC Board President, Jackie Stephens, will be interviewed about child abuse and the child advocacy centers in Florida on **Thursday, April 15th at 11:00** on Tom Flannigan's show, **Perspectives**.  
<https://news.wfsu.org/show/perspectives>

## **Amazon Smile**

Help Support the FNCAC  
when ordering through  
Amazon Smile

<https://smile.amazon.com/ch/59-3496460>

## **SMALL-GROUP SUCCESSES**

- Currently, the Suncoast Child Advocacy Center offers two support groups: SPEAK (Safe Parents Empowering Adults and Kids) and a Teen Empowerment and Positive Recovery Group.
- Both groups are facilitated by a child advocate and geared towards education/prevention. The groups are designed to provide additional support to clients in therapy. The advocates try to run groups quarterly. Typically, people can join throughout, but it is best to go through each group weekly.

SPEAK is for parents who have a child or children who have experienced sexual abuse.

The topics addressed during the five-weeks cover the dynamics of child sexual abuse (CSA), the process of grief and loss as it pertains to CSA, parenting tips, the treatment process, and how to incorporate self-care.

SAMARA LOUIS, AN ADVOCATE AT SUNCOAST CENTER CAC, FACILITATES THE SPEAK PROGRAM AND CAN BE REACHED AT (727) 327-7656 EXT. 5223 FOR MORE INFORMATION

HER CO-WORKER, ADVOCATE TYLER SMITH, RUNS THE  
TEEN EMPOWERMENT GROUP AND IS AVAILABLE AT  
(727) 327-7656 EXT. 5235.



# SOFT EARS WAGGING TAILS

**Certified Facility Dogs** (FDs) are full graduates of organizations that are members of Assistance Dog International. These dogs are strategically raised and professionally trained and have temperaments that are uniquely suited to working at a CAC. They are confident, calm, affectionate and comfortable with close contact with kids.



Children's Advocacy Centers are in the "business" of doing everything possible to assist children who have been victims of abuse or neglect – whether that's investigating allegations, helping victims find justice or helping them heal from trauma.

DENISE CONUS, MENTAL HEALTH PROGRAM DIRECTOR,  
KIDS HOUSE OF SEMINOLE, INC.



## Certified Facility Dogs

A CAC requires a professional dog for our professional environment, behavior control and exceptional demeanor (so as not to disrupt the workplace), safety for all (for clients, safety and liability protection for the handler and the agency). Certified FDs meet all of these requirements and have been evaluated and matched with handlers who can assure this quality and safety are maintained at all times.

## CERTIFIED FACILITY DOG BENEFITS

- These dogs can play a role in **providing comfort and easing anxiety, calming children**, including those participating in forensic interviews, medical exams, therapy or testifying in court.
- Their ability to **help a child feel safe, calm and happy** (as described by actual child victims) enables children to be grounded and relaxed, and therefore more willing and able to participate in forensic interviews or trauma processing in therapy.
- They can also play an active role – participating in specific activities that support therapeutic goals.
- These activities can **help children begin to trust**, find their voice, gain self-confidence and self-esteem, calm heightened emotions and learn mindfulness and coping skills.
- These FDs allow us to introduce a **healthy, positive sensory experience** that can calm the persistent fear or the survival state in the brain often seen in abuse/neglected children.
- Research shows: a dog's friendly, kind face and calm demeanor can positively impact our nervous system; a dog's eye gaze can cause the release of oxytocin in our brain; and a dog's warmth, soft hair and unique smell can promote mindfulness and grounding.

Most of all, a Certified Facility Dog can provide unconditional love – something many of our children have never experienced.

IF YOU WOULD LIKE MORE INFORMATION REGARDING THE USE OF CERTIFIED FACILITY DOGS IN CACS, YOU CAN CONTACT DENISE CONUS AT CONUS@KIDSHOUSE.ORG

YOU CAN ALSO READ ABOUT THE WORK OF FD JORDON ON FACEBOOK @JORDONSJOURNAL.

# Brunch Bags and Bingo

Due to COVID the event is being  
rescheduled for  
**Oct 16, 2021.** Save the Date!

[EVENT INFORMATION](#)



## Room Makeovers

Funds raised are providing **Safe Spaces, Cozy Places** grants to the CACs for bedroom makeovers for children who have been physically and/or sexually abused in their bedrooms.

Room Makeover photos coming in our next newsletter!



## CELEBRATE WITH US FOR OUR 25TH ANNIVERSARY!

**Celebrate with us for our 25th Anniversary!**  
**Upcoming Events**

[2021 Florida Krimes Against Kids Conference](#)

[Upcoming Board/Membership Meetings](#)

[Training & Events Calendar](#)



**25**  
YEARS

[CONTRIBUTE HERE](#)

[WWW.FNCAC.ORG](http://WWW.FNCAC.ORG)