



CHILDREN'S ADVOCACY CENTERS OF NORTH DAKOTA

HOW TO ESTABLISH A CAC OR SATELLITE IN YOUR COMMUNITY

The Children's Advocacy Centers of North Dakota envisions a world where every North Dakota child has access to a great, high-quality Children's Advocacy Center (CAC).

The following is a checklist that gives a broad set of needs that must be address before a CAC can really get started. While the activities are listed in approximate order, some will need to take place concurrently and there will be variations in each community.

Step 1: Assessment and Team Building

- Contact the Children's Advocacy Centers of North Dakota. They have resources and support you may need to help you through this process.

www.cacnd.org 701-587-1229 director@cacnd.org
- Contact the local CAC currently serving your county as they may have agreements, contracts and plans in place for services in your area. They also know local team members and can help build connections for you.
- Convene a working committee or task force of key individuals
 - Law enforcement
 - Child Protection
 - Prosecution
 - Medical
 - Mental Health
 - Advocacy
 - Victim Services (Sexual Assault and Domestic Violence)
 - Community Cultural Representatives
- Conduct a needs assessment of the extent of the problem in the community
 - What is the extent of the problem and how can CAC help improve community response to child abuse?
 - Are there already services in your area?
 - Does your plan address a gap for CACs in the CACND Growth Plan?
 - Collect the following statistics from the past three years:
 - Number of investigations conducted by Child Protective Services
 - Number of investigations and arrests related to crimes against children recorded by all local law enforcement agencies
 - Number of convictions/prosecutions connected to alleged crimes against children in the projected services area

- Number of juvenile adjudications connected to alleged crimes against children in the projected service area
 - This data will provide a comprehensive overview of current strengths and weaknesses in the child abuse investigation, prosecution and intervention systems within your own community. These statistics can serve as a roadmap for determining the scope of the local program, what services it should offer, what the target population looks like, which local agencies need to be involved and at what level. In addition, once the local center is operational, this initial needs assessment will provide an important benchmark for determining if the program is truly making a difference in these cases and in the lives of child victims. The CACND Growth and Sustainability Plan can be a good resource during this process.
- Identify Community Leadership
 - Identify and involve local community leaders with an interest in issues related to child abuse victims and their families. Assess level of interest and commitment related to formation and support of a CAC.
 - Who needs to be involved?
 - Who will convene the group and guide the process?

Step 2: Research and Policies

- Know ND Laws governing CACs
 - 27-20-51.i Inspection of Court Files and Records
 - 50-25.1-02.7 Definition of a CAC
 - 50.25.1-11.c Confidentiality of Records – Authorized disclosures
 - 50-25.1-11.1 Confidentiality of Children’s Advocacy Records
- Development of governance board or advisory structure
 - Who will make policy decisions or provide guidance to CAC?
 - How will the board of directors or advisory board be structured?
 - How will members be recruited, oriented and retained?
- Develop statements of vision and mission
 - What is our vision of the future?
 - What is our mission in working to actualize this vision?
 - Does our mission statement address:
 - Who we are?
 - What we do?
 - For whom?
 - To what end or purpose?
- Determine CAC service population
 - What geographical area will be covered?
 - Will only sexual abuse victims be served? Physical abuse? Severe neglect?
 - Other forms of child victimization?
- Identify CAC Structure and Services
 - How will your CAC be structured?

- Will it be an independent nonprofit? If so, who will seek 501(c)3 tax exempt status and file for corporation? Or will it be affiliated or sponsored by a participating agency (prosecution, child protection, law enforcement, hospital based, etc.?)
- What programs will be offered at the CAC?
- Will medical exams and mental health therapy be offered on-site or through referrals?
- Where can agency be located for maximum accessibility?
- What space (size and design) needs to be available for program?
- Will facility be purchase or leased, new or renovated?

Step 3: Funding and Development

- Identify community resources
 - Identify and communicate with individuals, groups, businesses and organizations that have an interest in the well-being of local children. Identify community resources including people, finances, facilities, materials, services, etc. that might be useful in the establishment, development and maintenance of a CAC. By contacting CACND as early as possible in the development stages of a CAC, communities can benefit from the wealth of collective experience of successful, established CACs throughout North Dakota. CACND can provide resource materials, public presentations, and training. CACND can also provide ongoing direction and technical assistance for communities in the early stages of CAC development.
 - How will you sustain your program?
 - Who can/will help and in which ways?
 - What resources will be needed, how will they be obtained, by whom?
 - Research and seek out grant and other funding opportunities.
- Staffing and agency roles
 - What staff roles and qualifications are needed?
 - Which staff will be hired by CAC?
 - Who else will be assigned to the program by participating agencies?
 - Will assigned staff be located at the CAC facility?
 - Will a “master interviewer” be hired by the CAC or will agency Investigators conduct all interviews?
- Multi-disciplinary team protocol development
 - How will the participating agencies, MDT and CAC, all work together?
 - Who will compromise the MDT?
 - Same team for all cases or possibly different team for each case?
 - How will joint investigative interviews occur?
 - How will cases be tracked and reviewed by the team?
- Develop interagency agreement and obtain agency commitment
 - What approach do participating agencies agree on?
- Develop policies and procedures for security and safe-guards (internal financial controls, liability insurance, conflict of interest polices, etc.

- How will children, program, board and staff be safeguarded?
- Do written policies and procedures include: staffing, screening, confidentiality, safety, client records, intake, investigation, therapy and child abuse reporting, no perpetrators on-site?

Step 4: Sustainability and Growth

- Volunteer recruitment, screening and training program development
 - How will volunteers be recruited, screened, trained and supervised?
- Provide training for program staff and the community
 - How will training be provided, by whom and for which groups?
- Consider providing child abuse prevention programming
 - What role will the CAC take regarding prevention? Primary? Secondary?
- Develop program evaluation and accountability plan
 - How will program be evaluated and demonstrate accountability?
- Cultivate leadership on ongoing basis
 - How will leadership be developed to ensure the long-term viability of the organization?
- Plan and implement community outreach and awareness campaign
 - How will the community be informed about the new program?