



# MENTAL HEALTH

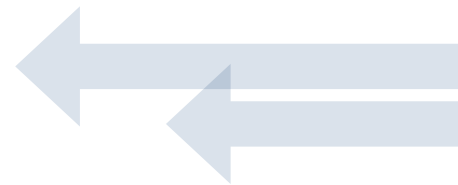
Abuse and other forms of trauma can have lifelong effects on individuals, families, and communities. Many studies have shown the strong relationship between trauma and serious outcomes such as post-traumatic stress disorder, depression, anxiety, substance use, physical health problems, and even poverty and early death. But these outcomes can be prevented when individuals receive evidence-based services and support early on. Evidence-based treatments (EBTs) like those delivered at the Children's Advocacy Centers (CACs) can significantly reduce trauma symptoms and prevent the long-term effects of exposure to trauma.

The CACs are committed to using evidence-based and trauma-specific screening, assessment and treatments shown in research to be effective so that those affected by trauma can heal.

*Children's Advocacy Centers in North Dakota are child-friendly settings that coordinate and provide services for children who may have been abused. The CACs help thousands of people each year using evidence-based practices.*

## Benefits of Mental Health Services

- Starts the healing process after trauma
- Teaches coping skills to deal with the impact of trauma
- Helps to reestablish safety after trauma
- Helps address other mental health concerns like depression and anxiety
- Allows the expression of feelings that may otherwise come out as behaviors
- Gives the opportunity to talk about the experience in a safe place
- Improves self-esteem and confidence
- Enhances future safety
- Builds resiliency to handle future stress



## EBTs can help reduce trauma symptoms

**75%** of children who had PTSD when they started treatment no longer had PTSD at their last follow-up

*Cohen et al., 2011*

# Evidence-Based Treatments: Therapy That Works!

## CAC Mental Health Services

The CACs offer mental health screening, assessments and treatment to determine the individual's needs and inform the clinician what trauma-specific EBT will best meet the identified needs of the client. Various trauma-specific EBTs are offered on-site or via telehealth at each CAC.

## Accessing CAC Mental Health Services

Mental health services at CACs are provided at no cost to families and are offered in person or via telehealth.

## What is Mental Health Treatment?

Mental health treatment, sometimes referred to as therapy, is a unique opportunity to meet with a trained professional who will guide an individual through an evidence-based treatment to reduce symptoms. It is important to remember that healing is a process and different for each person. Treatment relies on everyone's willingness to be open and participate. The client, or caregiver, should feel welcome to voice any concerns or barriers to treatment with the clinician.

## Caregiver's Role in Treatment

One of the most important predictors of healing after trauma is support from non-offending caregivers.\* Caregivers play an integral role in helping a child heal. Ultimately treatment works best when caregivers are involved. Caregivers are included in treatment depending upon the treatment model. Caregivers can assist children by helping them practice learned skills at home. Trauma impacts the whole family and so part of treatment will include support for the caregiver.

*\*Szota, Schulte, Christiansen, 2022*

## Trauma-Focused Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (TF-CBT)

An intervention that integrates cognitive behavioral techniques with trauma-specific interventions

## Child & Family Traumatic Stress Intervention (CFTSI)

A brief, early intervention for children and their caregivers

## Alternatives for Families Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (AF-CBT)

An intervention that improves the relationship between children and caregivers in high-conflict families

## Problematic Sexual Behavior Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (PSB-CBT)

A child and caregiver group intervention to reduce or eliminate incidents of problematic sexual behavior

## Parent Child Interaction Therapy (PCIT)

A caregiver coaching intervention for young children with disruptive behavior problems

## Child Parent Psychotherapy (CPP)

An intervention for very young children and their caregivers to address stressful experiences

## Cognitive Processing Therapy (CPT)

An intervention for adults who have experienced trauma

## Structured Psychotherapy for Adolescents Responding to Chronic Stress (SPARCS)

A group intervention for teens who are experiencing trauma and chronic stress



Dakota Children's  
ADVOCACY CENTER

Bismarck • Dickinson • Jamestown  
Standing Rock • Watford City  
701.323.5626 | dakotacac.org



Northern Plains  
Children's Advocacy Center

Minot • Williston • Bottineau  
701.852.0836 | northernplainscac.org



Fargo • Grand Forks  
701.234.4587 | rrcac.org