



NATIONAL CHILDREN'S ALLIANCE FACT SHEET

CONTACTS:

Teresa Huizar
Executive Director
THuizar@nca-online.org
202.548.0090

Cori Plotkin
Media Contact
coriplotkin@me.com
303.887.4298

NATIONAL CHILDREN'S ALLIANCE (NCA) is the national association and accrediting body for children's advocacy centers around the country, dedicated to helping local communities respond to allegations of child abuse in ways that are effective and efficient – and put the needs of child victims first. NCA provides accreditation, training, support, technical assistance and leadership on a national level to the over 700 local children's and child advocacy centers (CAC) and communities responding to reports of child abuse and neglect across the country.

MISSION: To promote and support communities in providing a coordinated investigation and comprehensive response to victims of child abuse. NCA strives to provide every child access to the services of an accredited Children's Advocacy Center.

BACKGROUND: In 1988, representatives from child advocacy centers around the country joined forces to establish the National Network of Children's Advocacy Centers. A decade later, in an effort to reflect the Network's national composition and focus, the National Network became known as the **National Children's Alliance**. In line with original intent, NCA continues to provide accreditation opportunities, financial assistance, training, technical assistance, research and education to communities, child abuse professionals and the over 700 children's and child advocacy centers throughout the United States in support of child abuse intervention, advocacy and prevention.

TYPES OF ADVOCACY CENTERS ASSOCIATED WITH NCA:

CHILDREN'S ADVOCACY CENTERS (CAC) are child-focused, facility-based programs in which representatives from many disciplines work together to conduct interviews and make team decisions on cases of child abuse. CAC models for child abuse intervention are proven and effective, bringing together trained professionals to investigate and provide medical and mental healthcare as well as support to child victims of abuse, while holding offenders accountable through the court system. CAC locations are child-focused and designed to create a sense of safety and security for child victims.

CACs associated with NCA undergo an accreditation process that follows a regularly updated set of 10 standards established by the NCA board of directors that ensure effective, efficient and consistent delivery of services. Once accredited, CACs then localize the standards to meet the unique needs of individual communities. The accreditation process ensures that CAC programs adhere to rigorous standards of quality service provision known to be effective in helping children heal from the effects of abuse. More than 700 CACs are located across the country with services that generally include:

- Forensic Interviewing Services
- Forensic Medical Evaluations
- Victim Advocacy and Support
- Specialized Mental Health Services
- Community Education and Outreach

STATE NCA CHAPTERS are member organizations comprised of CACs within a given state, similar in structure to NCA. And, like the CACs they serve, no two Chapters are alike. State Chapters exist primarily to support their member CACs, assisting with the development, continuation, and enhancement of the CAC model as promoted by NCA standards of accreditation. State Chapters also serve as a resource for their member CACs, facilitating a network within the state to support their members and the agencies involved in the investigation, treatment and prosecution of allegations involving child abuse. State Chapters are eligible to apply for accreditation with NCA, in a process that follows a separate set of standards from those for individual CACs.

REGIONAL CHILDREN'S ADVOCACY CENTERS (RCAC) were established by the U.S. Department of Justice Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention. RCACs are funded separately from NCA, local CACs and State Chapters, but work in tandem with NCA to offer a full range of training, technical assistance, consultation and information to established and developing CACs. RCACs are also instrumental in assisting individual communities in developing a comprehensive and multi-disciplinary approach to child abuse intervention, increasing community understanding of child abuse and assisting in the accreditation application process for local CACs by clarifying membership standards and conducting site visits. There are four RCAC's located within accredited CACs throughout the country:

- **Northeast Regional** (Serving Connecticut, Maine, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New York, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island and Vermont)
- **Midwest Regional** (Serving Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Kansas, Michigan, Minnesota, Missouri, Nebraska, North Dakota, Ohio, South Dakota and Wisconsin)
- **Southern Regional** (Serving Alabama, Arkansas, Delaware, District of Columbia, Florida, Georgia, Kentucky, Louisiana, Maryland, Mississippi, North Carolina, Oklahoma, South Carolina, Tennessee, Texas, Virginia and West Virginia)
- **Western Regional** (Serving Alaska, Arizona, California, Colorado, Hawaii, Idaho, Montana, Nevada, New Mexico, Oregon, Utah, Washington and Wyoming)

***Nearly five children die in America every day from abuse and neglect.
In 2011, Children's Advocacy Centers around the country served over 279,000 child victims of
abuse, providing victim advocacy and support to these children and their families.***

***There is a need to further educate local communities of the resources offered by accredited
Children's Advocacy Centers and the positive impact a child-focused approach to abuse
intervention has on child victims and their families.***