



# 2021 Annual Report



Dakota Children's  
ADVOCACY CENTER

# Who We Are



## Dakota Children's Advocacy Center

The Dakota Children's Advocacy Center (DCAC) provides a compassionate and effective way to bring services to children and families affected by abuse. Our collaboration with multidisciplinary team members significantly reduces the trauma associated with child abuse and improves case outcomes. We help coordinate care and investigation from first report to conviction and beyond, while keeping the child at the center of everything the team does.

*The mission of the DCAC is to provide a safe, family-friendly environment that promotes hope, health, and healing to traumatized children and their families.*



Dakota Children's  
ADVOCACY CENTER



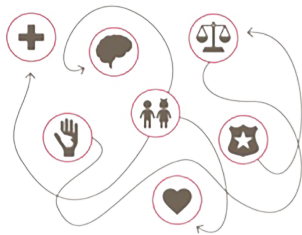
Backed by  
National Children's Alliance®  
Accredited Member



# What We Do

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, law enforcement, 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.

## Without CACs



## With CACs



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 re-traumatize 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.

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## Our Goals



Do the best job possible in finding out what happened.



Help make the process as comfortable as possible for you.



Work in cooperation with other services/programs to help your child and you.



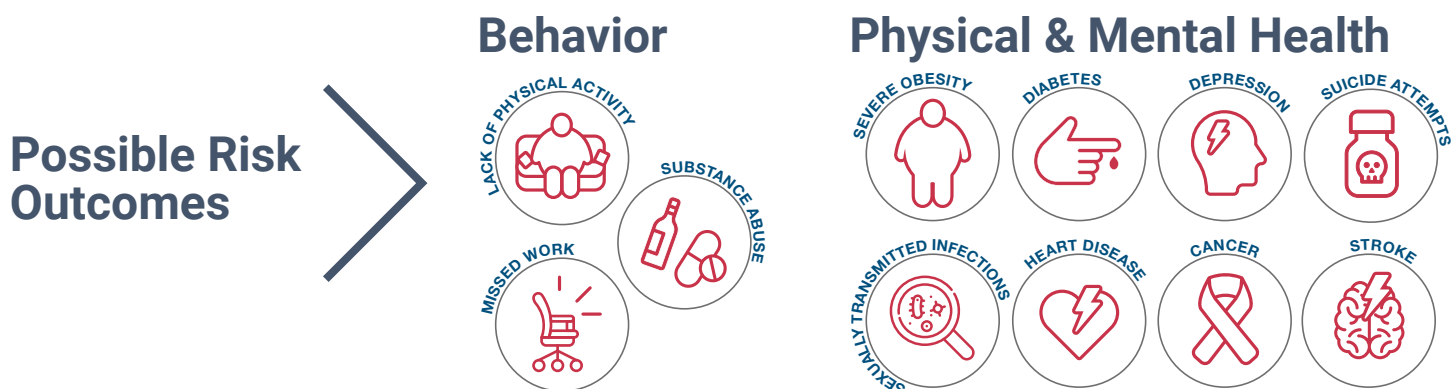
Help your family begin to heal.

# Why It Matters

Child abuse and other forms of trauma can have lifelong effects on children, families, and communities.

## Child trauma can last a lifetime.

Many studies have shown the strong relationship between Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs), which include childhood trauma like abuse, and serious outcomes such as post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), depression, substance use, health problems, and even poverty and early death.



## Trauma is both common and costly to society.

How many children are we talking about? Nearly half of all U.S. children experience at least one type of childhood trauma. That exacts a toll on children, their caregivers, and their community, and our country as a whole also pays a price. Quite literally: In addition to the physical, emotional, and social costs of child abuse, it also carries economic costs.<sup>1</sup>

### Abuse and other forms of trauma are common.

Nearly half of all U.S. children—some **34 million**—have experienced at least one type of childhood trauma, while **16 million** have experienced two or more types of trauma.<sup>2</sup>

### Abuse carries a heavy cost.

The lifetime cost for each victim is

**\$210,012<sup>1</sup>**

Each year, total lifetime costs of new cases of child abuse reach approximately

**\$124 billion**

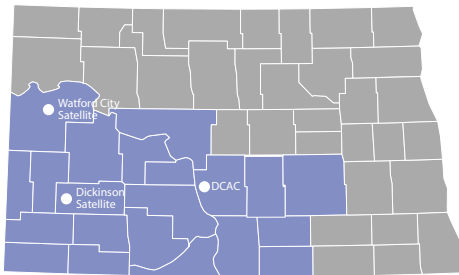
<sup>1</sup> Fang, X.; Brown, D., Florence, C., and Mercy, J. The economic burden of child maltreatment in the United States and implications for prevention. (2012) Child Abuse and Neglect, Volume 36, Issue 2, February 2012, pages 156-165.

<sup>2</sup> Bethell, C, Newacheck, P, Hawes, E, Halfon, N. Adverse childhood experiences: assessing the impact on health and school engagement and the mitigating role of resilience. (2014) Health Affairs Dec; 33(12):210-2016

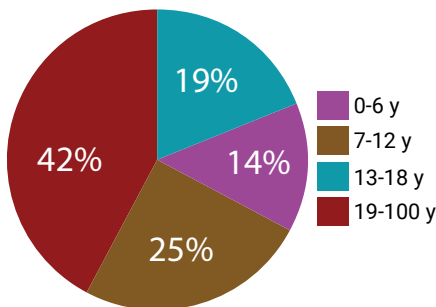
# Who We Serve

**One in every 10 children** will be a victim of sexual abuse by their 18th birthday; approximately 65% will be female. Based on data from the CDC, a conservative estimate for the cost of maltreatment in North Dakota is more than \$525 million in one year.\*

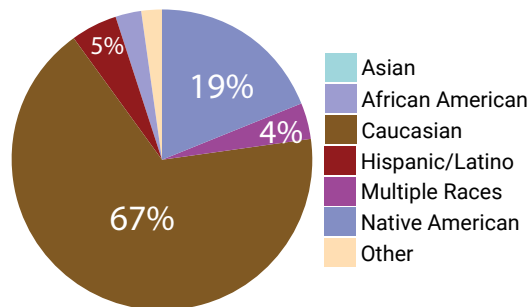
\*Numbers are based on averages from over the years.



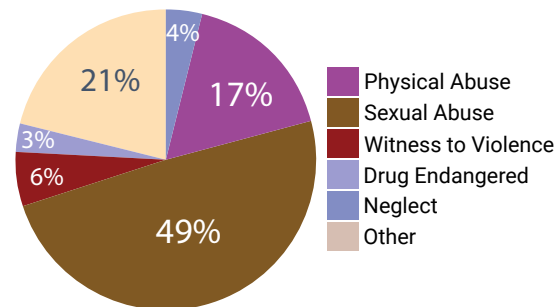
The DCAC serves ND with 3 convenient locations in Bismarck, Dickinson, and Watford City so no matter where you live you have access to services.



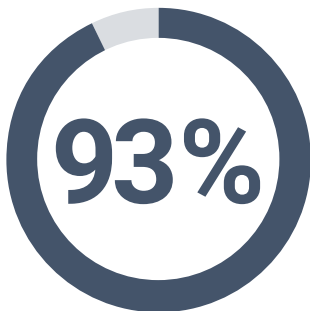
Age



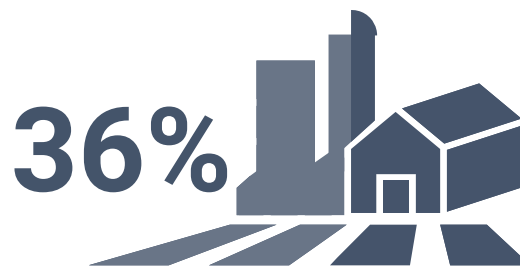
Race



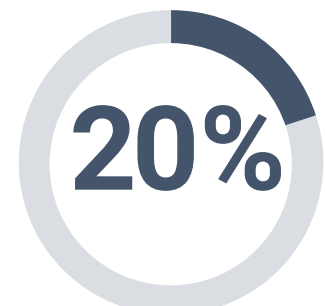
Types of Abuse



know their offender. Almost always, the dangers to children are not from strangers, but from someone they know and trust.



of referrals came from rural counties.



of offenders are <18; highlighting the need for evidence-based services for kids with sexual behavior problems. Like the PSB-CBT group the DCAC offers.

**The Dakota Children's Advocacy Center exists to change those numbers and lead the fight against the cycle of child abuse through a more coordinated and compassionate approach.**

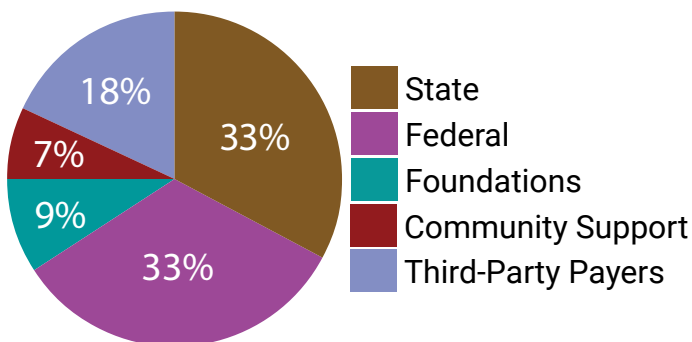


# How We Are Funded

## Average Revenue and Expenses

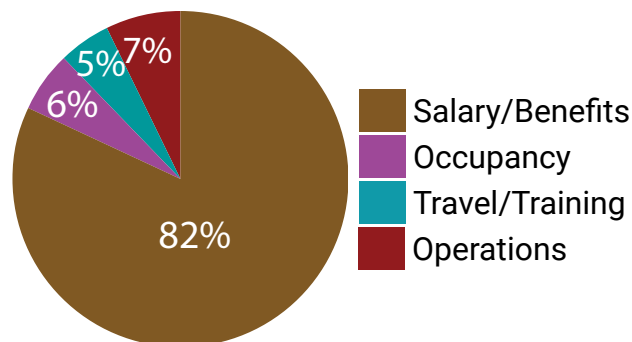
### Revenue

As a non-profit organization, the DCAC is dependent on the generosity of the communities we serve. CACs never bill families for services. We are funded through grants, foundations, community support and third-party payers.



### Expenses

By far a majority of our expenses go to supporting direct services to traumatized kids and their families. We do this so we can provide a safe, family-friendly environment that promotes hope, health, and healing.



## Partners in Our Success



Backed by  
**National Children's Alliance®**  
Accredited Member



Missouri Slope Areawide  
United Way



Corrections and  
Rehabilitation



Human Services



OTTO  
BREMER  
TRUST™



**CHILDREN'S  
ADVOCACY  
CENTERS**  
OF NORTH DAKOTA



United Way  
of Dickinson



NORTH DAKOTA  
COMMUNITY  
FOUNDATION

# Our Services

Attention to the needs and abilities of children is the hallmark of the Children's Advocacy Center model to ensure that children are not further victimized by the systems intended to protect them. From the initial allegation of abuse, the Multidisciplinary Team (MDT) approach allows the child an opportunity to talk with a single interviewer in a safe, neutral setting, thus protecting the victim from being unnecessarily interviewed by multiple people from each specific field. The team continues to work together to guide the investigation, treatment, management and possible prosecution of the case to ensure the greatest level of protection and care for the child and his/her family.



## Forensic Interviews

Specially trained Forensic Interviewers work with the MDT to ensure victims are not interviewed unnecessarily and allow them to share their story in a safe, legally sound and neutral setting.



## Advocacy Services

Advocacy focuses on the needs of the youth and non-offending caregiver(s), providing needed support and information along with a compassionate, listening ear.



## Medical Evaluations

Specialized medical evaluations are offered to ensure the health and safety of each victim, identify any evidence of abuse, and refer for additional care as needed.



## Mental Health Care

Specialized, evidence-based, trauma-focused mental health services are offered to the victim and family to help them cope with the trauma and to assist them through the healing process.



## MDT Collaboration

CACs and MDT members come together to improve the response of the investigation and intervention of child abuse.



## Prevention and Education

While there is no one thing we can do to guarantee children will be safe, there are things we can do to decrease the likelihood of abuse and improve our response to it.

# Our Year in Review

2021

## Our Numbers



**9,689**  
Services



**940**  
People



**53%**  
of State Served

A 26% increase in services from 2020.

## Our Services



**357**  
Forensic  
Interviews



**6,139**  
Advocacy  
Services



**141**  
Medical  
Evaluations



**1,831**  
Mental Health  
Sessions



**1,221**  
Prevention &  
Education

## Our 2020 Highlights



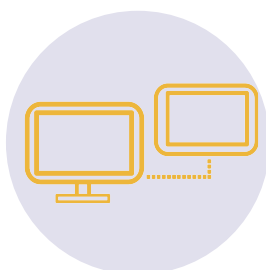
In its first year, the Dickinson Satellite Clinic saw over 100 children and provided over 1,500 services to them.



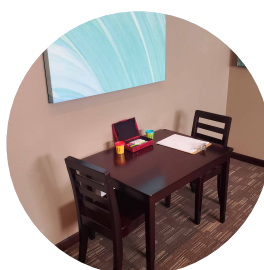
The DCAC started offering Parent-Child Interaction Therapy (PCIT) to help strengthen the bond between parents and young children.



In June the DCAC moved to a new space in Bismarck which has allowed us to increase access and services.



Approximately 1/2 of mental health services are provided over telehealth, meaning we are reaching kids who didn't have access before.



We started offering Extended Interviews, which for some—such as kids with different abilities—makes the process of telling their story possible.



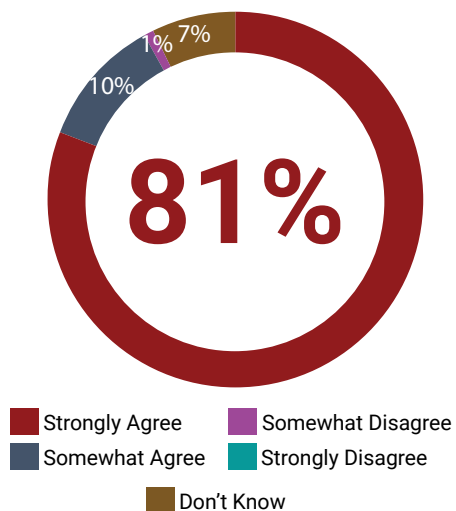
In 2021 we have worked hard to expand partnerships across our communities to ensure we're able to meet the needs of the kids who need our help.



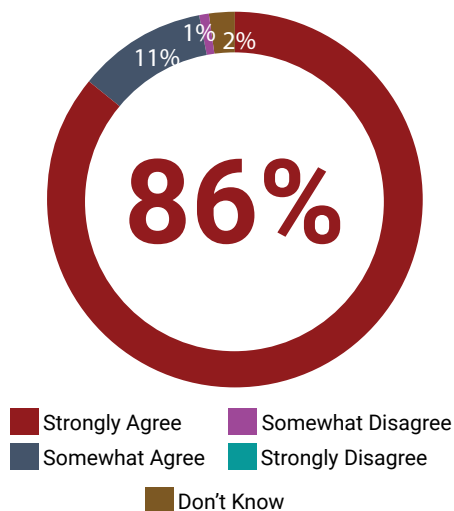
# Our Impact

*"This has been such a hard thing for us and the Dakota Children's Advocacy Center has literally been a life-saver. Your services are amazing and we are so grateful."*

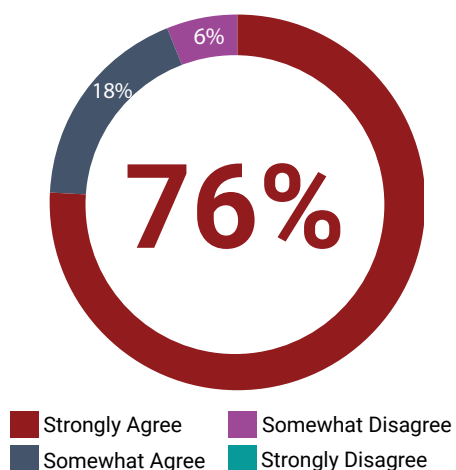
**I believe my child felt safe at the center.**



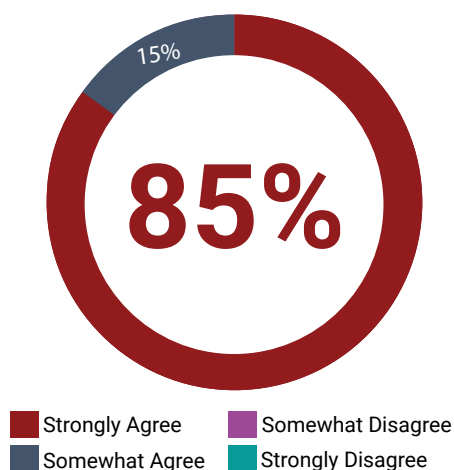
**The DCAC provided me with resources to support my child.**



**The DCAC provides resources that build better cases.**



**MDT members feel clients benefit from the collaborative approach.**



*"The Dakota Children's Advocacy Center is an invaluable resource."*

# Our Need

## There is still so much to do.

With more funding and resources we could:



### Increase Access to Medical Services

Every child who has been abused should have access to specially trained expert medical services to ensure their bodies are okay and to provide services if they are not. **It is our goal to one day have funding to have a medical provider on staff** to ensure this availability.



### Increase Access to Mental Health Services

All Mental Health Services are consistently on a wait list, which means kids in crisis have to wait to heal. **It is our goal in increase therapy staff at all of our locations**, so kids and families can receive services when they need them.



### Provide Comfort Through a Therapy Dog

Therapy dogs are proven to decrease stress and increase comfort. **It is our goal to have a therapy dog at each of our centers** to provide comfort for our families, staff and team members.



### Actively Work to Prevent Abuse

The DCAC provides services everyday to children who have experienced unimaginable things that no person should ever have to experience. **It is our goal to have dedicated prevention staff to lead the charge in doing all we can do to make sure children have safe and happy childhoods.**



### Community Awareness

Families need to know we are here when they need us, and the community needs to know how to partner with us to make that happen. **It is our goal that people not only know our name, but they are actively involved in helping us protect kids and provide support so we can offer healing and support to those who need it.**

# How You Can Help



The services of the Dakota Children's Advocacy Center (DCAC) are made possible because of the generous support of the community. We have grown out of a community need to better the response and intervention of those most vulnerable and we need you to partner with us to make that happen. Donate today!

***The DCAC is solely funded through grants, donations and third-party payers.  
Every penny donated helps make a difference in the lives of children.***

## **Donate**

Your generous donation will help provide Hope, Health & Healing to abused and neglected children.

## **Wish List**

Visit us @ [www.dakotacac.org](http://www.dakotacac.org) to view our Wish List of needed items that help us support the families we serve.

***For more information on how  
you can help visit our website @  
[www.DakotaCAC.org/how-you-can-help](http://www.DakotaCAC.org/how-you-can-help)  
[info@dakotacac.org](mailto:info@dakotacac.org)  
701-323-5626***

## **Volunteer**

In order to provide services free to families, the DCAC truly depends on the help of volunteers. Volunteers contribute their unique talents, skills and knowledge to help restore hope, health and healing to children and their families.

## **Join a Committee**

When it comes to making a difference in improving children's lives, there is a place for everyone to contribute. Child abuse and neglect is a community problem.



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ADVOCACY CENTER