



SUPPORT *Hope, Healing, & Justice* FOR NEW MEXICO'S CHILDREN

Fund \$1m increase for CACs in CYFD (Agency Budget #690)

What are Children's Advocacy Centers?

Children's Advocacy Centers are child-focused, child-friendly facilities where children and their non-offending caregivers can get the help they need to stop abuse and begin healing.

How do CACs Help Kids?

When law enforcement or CYFD suspect a child is experiencing abuse, the child is brought to the CAC where they talk to a highly skilled, specially trained forensic interviewer. Forensic interviewers are trained to ask developmentally appropriate, non-leading questions to avoid retraumatizing the child.

CACs work with their multi-disciplinary team (victim advocates, mental health providers, medical providers, CYFD, law enforcement, and prosecutors) to ensure the child and their family achieve *hope, healing, & justice*



WITHOUT A CAC



WITH A CAC

Child Abuse is at Crisis Levels & Needs Intervention

New Mexico Ranks **50TH** in Overall Child Well-Being⁽¹⁾



SEVERITY AND NUMBER OF CASES ARE ON THE RISE

- CACs are seeing more & more cases of children suffering increased violence
- CACs saw a 50% increase in child abuse cases from 2014 to 2020

LOW WAGES & BURNOUT MEANS LOSING HIGHLY SKILLED STAFF

- Forensic interviewers are specially trained & experience vicarious trauma yet do not make competitive wages
- CACs are struggling to support current staff and hire to fill essential openings



FAMILIES IN SOME AREAS MUST DRIVE **3+ HOURS**

- Long distances and high travel costs to access care particularly impacts rural communities



WITH \$1 MILLION, CACS CAN:

- Increase salaries and benefits
- Hire additional forensic interviewers, therapists, & victim advocates (especially bilingual staff and staff at rural locations)
- Hire full-time MDT Facilitators
- Fund transportation services
- Provide training for MDT partners (such as law enforcement, prosecutors, & CYFD)

Visit us at nmcacs.org

i. Annie E. Casey Foundation's National KIDS COUNT Data Book (2022)

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