

CAC Overview & Child Sexual Abuse Case Process for Harris County

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Mission Statement

The mission of The CAC is to provide a professional, compassionate & coordinated approach to the treatment of sexually abused children and their families and to serve as an advocate for all children in our community.



Children's Advocacy Centers

Primary Goals:



Minimize
re-victimization of child victims and
supportive family members and facilitate
healing



Facilitate an approach that results in a more
collaborative and efficient case investigation
through effective fact finding and strong case
development

CAC Services

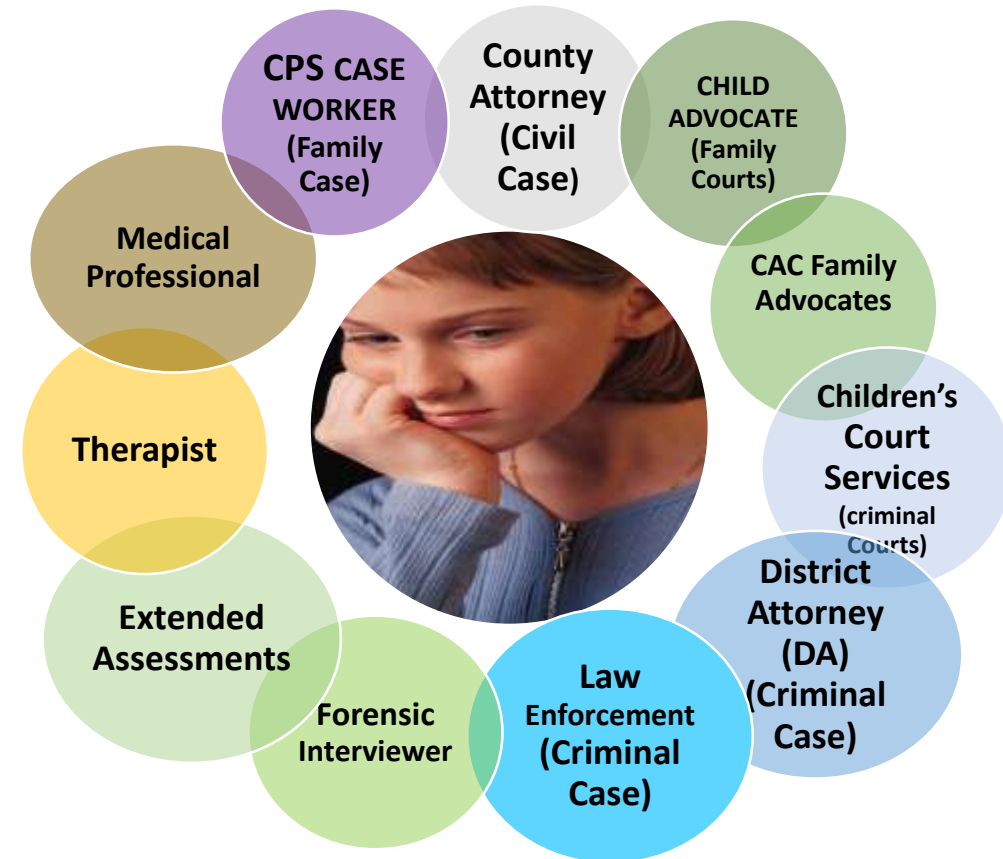


- CAC Intake
- Multidisciplinary Enhancement Initiative (MEI)
- Forensic Services
- Medical Clinic
- CAC Mental Health Services
- Case Reviews (CSART & CST MDT)
- Children's Court Services
- Children's & **Volunteer Services**
- Training & Outreach



Multidisciplinary Team

- Communication
- Collaboration
- Coordination



Partnership

Working together to address the needs of sexually abused children.

- Investigation (Civil & Criminal)
- Legal (Civil and Criminal)
- Service Providers



Co-Located Partners



Texas Department of
Family and Protective Services



Partnership

Investigations

- Children's Protective Services (CPS) -TDFPS
- Harris County Precinct 1
- Harris County Precinct 4
- Harris County Precinct 3
- Harris County Precinct 5
- Harris County Sheriff's Office
- Harris County Juvenile Probation Department
- Houston Metro Internet Crimes Against Children (ICAC) Task For
- Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI)
- Texas Rangers-Company "A"
- Homeland Security Investigations (HSI)
- U.S. Postal Inspector

School District- Police Department

- Aldine ISD Police Dept.
- Alief ISD Police Dept.
- Cypress Fairbanks ISD Police Dept.
- Houston ISD Police Dept.
- Katy ISD Police Dept.
- Pasadena ISD Police Dept.
- Spring ISD Police Dept.
- Spring Branch ISD Police

Police Departments

Baytown
Bellaire
Deer Park
Friendswood
Galena Park
Hedwig Village
Houston
Humble
Jacinto City
Jersey Village
Katy
Lakeview
La Porte
Memorial Village
Pasadena
Seabrook
Southside Place
Spring Valley Village
Stafford
Tomball
Webster
West University Place



Partnership (cont'd)

Legal

- Harris County District Attorney's Office
- Harris County Attorney's Office
- U.S. Attorney's Office-Southern District

Services

- Baylor College of Medicine & Texas Children's Hospital
- Memorial Hermann Healthcare Systems
- Crime Stoppers-Houston

- Child Advocates, Inc.
- Harris County CPS
- Harris County Institute of Forensic Sciences
- Texas Center for the Missing
- Communities In Schools (CIS)-Houston





Criminal Investigation

Fact Finding

• **Determine if a crime has occurred by gathering all evidence (direct, indirect, circumstantial)**

- Child disclosure
 - Forensic interview or statement told to law enforcement
- Witness statements
 - Outcry witness: first adult person who is 18 years or older the child disclosed to
- Video
- DNA & medical
- Social media
- Text, pictures, etc.
- Suspect statement

Who sends the child and family to The CAC?



Texas Department of
Family and
Protective Services
(DFPS)

and / or



Law Enforcement



Multidisciplinary Team Services



Multidisciplinary Enhancement Initiative (MEI)

This team ensures that the CAC can focus on its primary mission while keeping all the moving parts of the operation functioning efficiently. They make sure the system is in place to allow the direct service providers (like the forensic interviewers or medical professionals) to do their work effectively.

Key Reminders:

- Reviews each DFPS Statewide Intake received to determine if the case involves allegations of SXAB, SXTR, serious injury, or fatality/near fatality. We review close to 200 Statewide Intakes per day.
- Oversees the case tracking systems ensuring that data on each case is correctly documented and maintained.
- Organizes case files and tracks the progress of ongoing investigations to ensure that nothing falls through the cracks.
- Responsible for case review and case coordination. They ensure that all involved professionals (law enforcement, social workers, medical staff, legal teams, etc.) are available and have the necessary resources at the right times.



Security & CAC Receptionist



CAC Central Intake



Forensic Services

Interviewing, Assessments and Advocacy



Purpose of the Forensic Interview

To obtain information from a child about abuse allegations that will support **accurate** and **fair decision-making** by the MDT within the criminal justice, child protection, and service delivery systems.



The Children's Assessment Center



Observation Room

Law Enforcement Officer
&
CPS Investigator
Only



Interview Room

CAC Interviewer
&
Victim Child
Only

The majority of
sexually abused children,
at some point,
say it did not happen.



Medical Services

Texas Children's Hospital & Baylor College of Medicine



Medical Clinic



- Full Medical Services
- Non-acute sexual assault exams
- Colposcopy Examination
- 120-hour rule



Clinical Assessment Program



Purpose of the Clinical Assessments

- Evaluate current trauma symptoms
- Assess trauma-specific symptoms and discuss with caregiver
- Triage clients with complex needs
- Make an informed recommendation regarding clinical needs:
 - Individual therapy
 - Group therapy
 - Community services
 - Outpatient or inpatient (higher level of care)
 - CARE session
 - No therapeutic intervention needed at this time

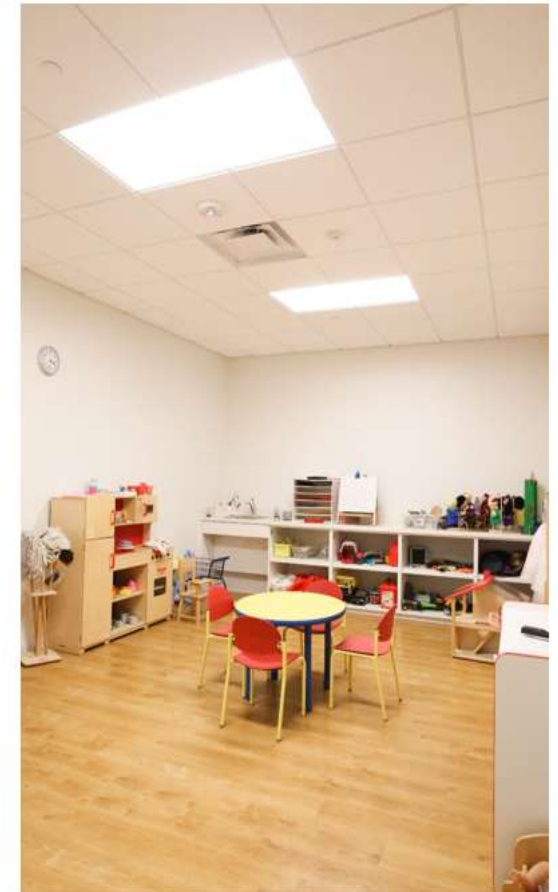


Therapy and Psychological Services



Therapy & Psychological Services

- Staff psychologists
- Staff therapists
- Interns from the disciplines of social work, family therapy, psychology, & Psychiatry
- Licensed Sex Offender Treatment Provider (LSOTP)
- Attending Psychiatrist
- Psychiatry Residents



Building Appropriate Sexual Education

B.A.S.E.

Referrals are made solely from the Harris County District Attorney's Office

BASE is a diversion program for youth who have engaged in Problematic Sexual Behaviors that could result in criminal charges.



B.A.S.E. Treatment Goals

- Enhance Empathy for Victim
- Recognize Offense Cycle
- Develop Coping Strategies
- Create a safety plan to decrease likelihood of re-offending
- Receive evidence-based therapy for youth's victimization history (if applicable)



CAC Activity Center

Young Children



Teen Corner



Children's Court Services



Children's Court Services

INFORMATION AND
SUPPORT DURING THE
COURT PROCESS

REFERRALS FOR
COMMUNITY
RESOURCES AND
COUNSELING/THERAPY

ASSISTANCE W/VINE
AND CVC

COURT UPDATES AND
EXPLANATION

1:1 COURT
ORIENTATION AND
PREPARATION FOR
CHILDREN GOING TO
COURT

ADVOCACY AND
ACCOMPANIMENT
DURING MEETINGS
WITH PROSECUTORS

COURTROOM TOURS

SUPPORT AND
ACCOMPANIMENT
DURING TRIAL



The Children's Assessment Center

Thank You



Please feel free to contact The Children's Assessment Center if you have any questions or concerns in the future.

THE CHILDREN'S ASSESSMENT CENTER

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