

Funding Request: HF774 / SF765

Restoring Hope 2023 Capital Funds Request

First Witness Child Advocacy Center

First Witness Child Advocacy Center (CAC) is a child-focused non-profit agency offering hope, healing, and justice for alleged victims of child abuse and their families. We were founded by and for the community and have been serving northern Minnesota communities since 1991.

First Witness CAC is built upon a national model where the investigative process for child abuse is streamlined and provided in a child-friendly setting. We bring together a collaborative multidisciplinary team of professionals made up of law enforcement, social workers, doctors, therapists, advocates, prosecutors, and public defender's office. Our dedicated team members work together to investigate child abuse and coordinate needed services.

We provide forensically sound interviews for children, adolescents, and vulnerable adults who have reported sexual abuse, physical abuse, witnessed violence, or who may have been otherwise victimized. Our interviews provide a safe and comfortable space for victims to talk about the abuse in one video recorded interview by a trained professional forensic interviewer.

The report of abuse is not the end but rather the beginning. Our family advocates help parents understand the system and professionals involved and connect children and families with resources in their community. First Witness CAC offers in-depth initial and ongoing advocacy for children and families.

Mission

Our mission is to strengthen our communities' response to child abuse.

Vision

Our vision is of a society that supports children and ends child abuse.

Impact 2022

Our impact has consistently climbed each year. Our dedication to the children and families of our community is highlighted throughout our ongoing work.

First Witness

CHILD ADVOCACY CENTER

Served **210** children

reporting sexual and physical abuse or having witnessed a violent crime through a child-friendly forensic interview monitored by multidisciplinary team members.

Trained **167** professionals

on protocol and practice of child-friendly forensic interviewing at beginning and advanced levels.

Trained **546** advocates

nationwide with our nationally accredited advocacy trainings for advocates working with a CAC.

Served **498** new children and parents

in our advocacy services including ongoing support for non-offending caregivers, mental health, medical advocacy, court advocacy, crisis calls, and safety planning.

Provided **264** child sexual abuse prevention education presentations

to 3893 students, caregivers, and community members.

Provided **22** presentations

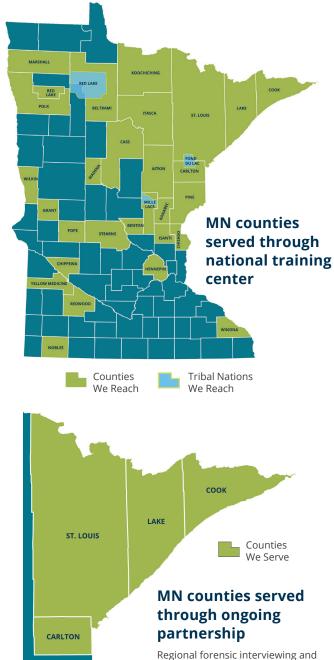
to 493 individuals in local civic groups, churches, and college classrooms.



Funding Request

1,500,000 is requested for the purchase of new space to house First Witness Child Advocacy Center and Training Center in Duluth, renovations of the premises, supplies and equipment, and demolition of a portion of the property to establish a parking lot. Total project includes \$850,000 to purchase the building, 1.8 million dollars for the building's construction and renovation, and \$500,000 to establish a building maintenance trust fund.

Since our beginnings First Witness CAC has expanded our efforts to include family advocacy services, fulltime forensic interviewers, a national training center, a child abuse prevention program serving schools and community agencies, and expansion to both Carlton County and Lake County. In 2010 we served 75 children through our forensic interviewing program, in 2022 we served 228 children through forensic interviews and intensive family advocacy.



Regional forensic interviewing and advocacy services provided in Cook, Lake, St. Louis and Carlton counties



MINNESOTA CHILDREN'S ALLIANCE





Visit firstwitness.org or scan the QR code to learn more about us



Contact Us

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