



# SAFE, HEALTHY AND THRIVING: Helping Kids Heal from Abuse

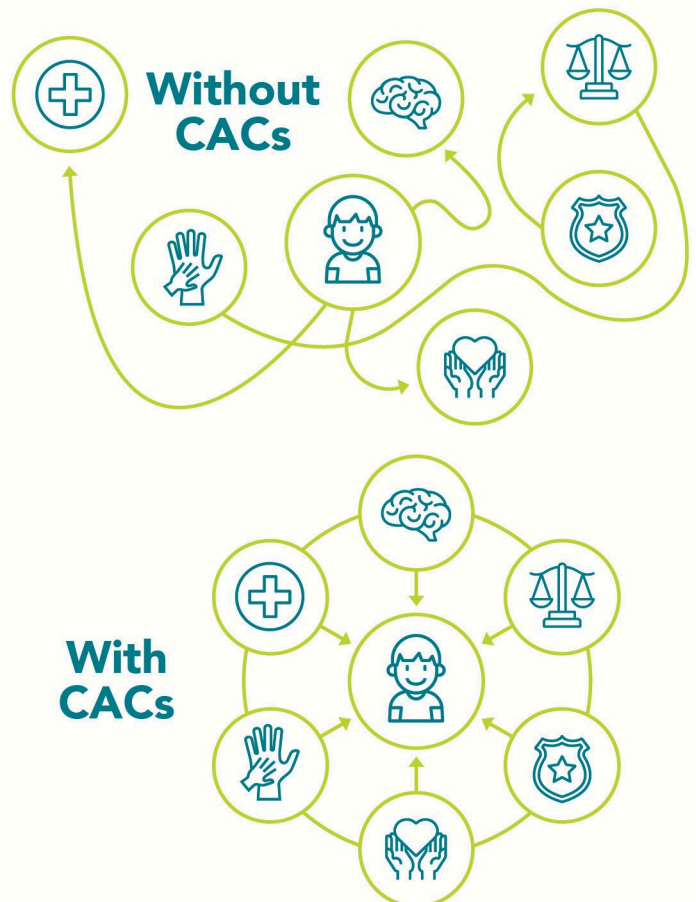
Every seven minutes a child maltreatment report is made in Minnesota. From that moment on, teams of professionals (listed below) across the state work together to help kids in the wake of abuse.<sup>1</sup>

As a statewide coalition, the Minnesota Children’s Alliance (Alliance) represents 13 children’s advocacy centers (CACs) that serve 3,000 kids each year. We collaborate with trained professionals to put the needs of children and families first.

## CACs are the gold standard

To ensure a supportive and effective response for the child and family, these professionals come together at a CAC, which is a safe, child-focused environment. The core of the CAC is the multidisciplinary team, which enables professionals across systems to work together more seamlessly.

- Child protection and law enforcement investigators lead the investigation
- County attorneys pursue civil and criminal cases
- Forensic interviewers conduct neutral, fact-finding interviews
- Child and family advocates help navigate confusing systems
- Medical professionals provide specialized medical care
- Mental health practitioners use trauma-informed therapy approaches



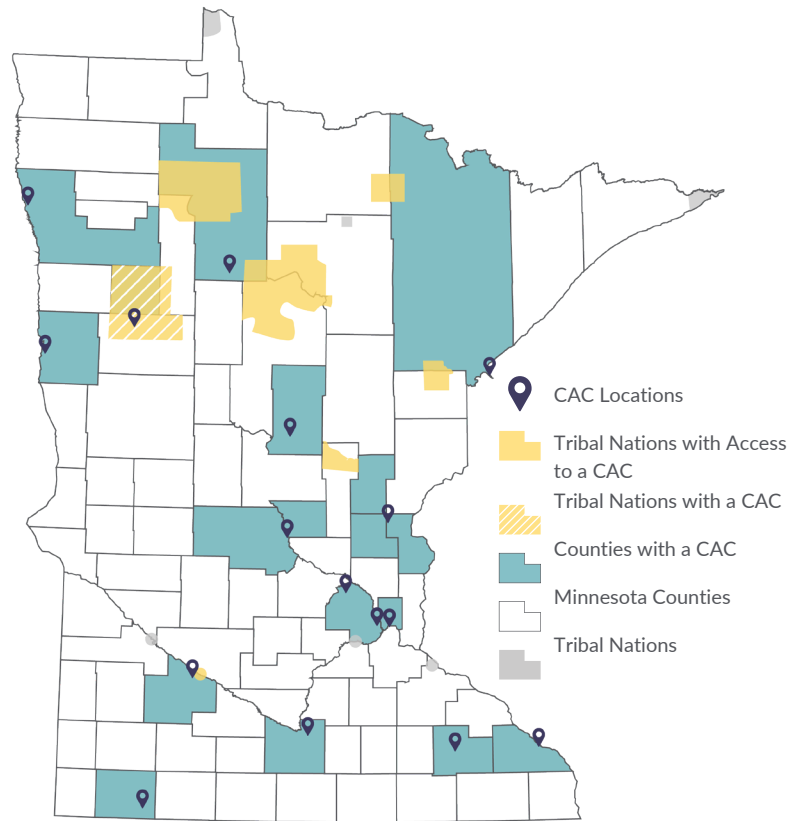
## More support is needed

Nationwide, 97 percent of caregivers agreed that CACs provide them with resources to support their children. And 98 percent of MDT members reported that children benefit from the collaborative approach.<sup>2</sup>

But too many kids in Minnesota, over 700,000, don't have ready access to a CAC. Expansion funding passed by the state legislature in 2015 has helped nearly double the number of CACs but the need for services outpaces the demand. In 2022, 5,025<sup>1</sup> kids were reported victims of sexual abuse, but only 43 percent of those received a CAC response.<sup>3</sup>

## Access is limited in rural areas

Children shouldn't have to travel across the state to access needed services from a CAC. Many communities, particularly in rural areas, do not have local access to this critical resource and face long drives for specialized care.



## 16% of counties and 7 tribal nations

*have coverage through a local CAC.*

Children in other counties and tribal nations may travel several hours to access specialized services like medical and mental health care.

## 3,000 kids

*rely on Minnesota CACs each year<sup>3</sup>*

## 700,000+ kids under 18

*live in a county without a CAC<sup>4</sup>*

## Sources

1. Minnesota Department of Human Services. *Minnesota's Child Maltreatment Report*, 2022. <https://edocs.dhs.state.mn.us/lfservlet/Public/DHS-54080-ENG>.
2. National Children's Alliance. *Healing, Justice, and Trust: A National Report on Outcomes for Children's Advocacy Centers 2022*. <https://www.nationalchildrensalliance.org/measuring-cac-outcomes/>.
3. Minnesota Children's Alliance, Annual Service Statistics, 2023.
4. US Census Bureau, American Community Survey, 2017-21. Source geography: Tract. Accessed via SparkMap, <https://sparkmap.org>.



*For more on the Alliance and child abuse in Minnesota contact:*

**Marcia Milliken**, *Executive Director*  
[marcia@minnesotachildrensalliance.org](mailto:marcia@minnesotachildrensalliance.org)  
612.615.4605