



DENVER CHILDREN'S ADVOCACY CENTER

ABOUT DCAC:

Our mission is to prevent abuse, strengthen families, and restore childhood.

DCAC works to improve the lives of children traumatized by physical and sexual abuse, neglect, and violence. This is achieved through prevention, education, and direct services.

DCAC operates under 2 core principles:

1. We are the 1st responders to reports of child abuse in the Denver metro area. Our staff are on-call 24 hours a day/365 days a year to provide crisis management for child victims and their families.
2. Children and their needs are at the center of our work. Our partners on the multi-disciplinary team – police, prosecutors, social workers, and medical staff- come to DCAC to mitigate the child's trauma.

OUR GOALS ARE TO:



- ▶ Meet the child's complete health, mental health, and welfare needs.
- ▶ Prevent abuse and violence through education and community outreach.
- ▶ Break the cycle of abuse and violence by engaging the family as a whole.
- ▶ Ensure that every at-risk child in Denver and surrounding counties who has traumatized by neglect, abuse, and violence receives immediate, compassionate, and effective intervention.
- ▶ Children and their needs are at the center of our work.

HISTORY

- ▶ Before child advocacy centers were created, child victims of crime often had to tell their stories to more than a dozen adults - police officers, prosecutors, doctors and social workers. If the family had no money to pay for treatment, victims would have to put their names on a long waiting list for free counseling services. There was very little coordination between the various agencies. In some of the saddest cases, abused children simply fell through the cracks in the system that was supposed to save them.
- ▶ **1996** DCAC began to provide treatment to child victims ages 7 through 17
- ▶ **2000** DCAC began to meet the needs of very young victims of sexual abuse by lowering the age limit for treatment to 3 years old, and we began acquiring a reputation for our vital services to these small children.
- ▶ **2002** hiring of executive director Gizane Indart (a bilingual, bicultural professional). We pursued our mission to reach out to the Spanish-speaking families who had nowhere to go for treatment
- ▶ **2004** DCAC hired additional bilingual, bicultural therapists and began serving children as young as one year old. We also signed an historic memorandum of understanding with the Denver Police Department, the Denver District Attorney's Office and the Denver Department of Human Services to conduct all forensic interviews of children under 15 where sexual abuse is suspected or where the child has witnessed homicide or other violent crimes. We additionally became the proud owner of a new home at 2149 Federal Boulevard.
- ▶ **Today** we provide all of the services needed by child victims and their families - forensic interviews, medical exams, assessment and treatment, and victim support services – services are clustered around one central location or close by.

ASSESSMENT AND TREATMENT

- ▶ This program serves ages birth through 17 who have been sexually abused, neglected, or otherwise traumatized by witnessing violence.
- ▶ DCAC uses a neuro-developmentally informed approach to coordinate health and mental health care. Research on this method shows extremely positive treatment outcomes.
- ▶ Intensive, coordinated care management draws in all the people involved in the child's life- family members, foster parents, social service caseworkers, day care providers, victim advocates, medical doctors, teachers, and school personnel.



FORENSIC INTERVIEWS AND VICTIM ADVOCACY



- ▶ Forensic interviews are of vital importance in the investigation and prosecution of sexual assault and other crimes against children. Child victims are interviewed by DCAC's highly qualified, neutral forensic interviewers in a child friendly facility.
- ▶ Victim advocates are there for the family from the time that they arrive at DCAC until the case has concluded. We provide immediate crisis counseling, ongoing support throughout the criminal investigation, and referrals to treatment and community resources.



PREVENTION

Prevention: Denver Safe From The Start

- ▶ Prevention is at the heart of our programming. We are focusing on increasing the amount of our resources into the prevention of abuse and neglect, and the promotion of healthy childhood development. Denver Safe From The Start is our bilingual, bicultural school-based prevention program for children ages 3-8. The program works in 3 levels by engaging and educating teachers, parents, and children themselves.

TRAINING & COMMUNITY EDUCATION

- ▶ We provide training for daycare providers, educators, police, prosecutors, victim advocates, juvenile justice personnel, social workers, medical professionals, parents, foster parents, grandparents, and many others who live and work with children.





Denver Children's
Advocacy Center

WAYS TO GET INVOLVED

- ▶ Visit our website:
www.denvercac.org
- ▶ Report Suspected Abuse to
1-844-264-5437
- ▶ Volunteer with DCAC
- ▶ Prevent Abuse by talking, listening and teaching your children.
- ▶ Contribute Financially



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"Safety and security don't just happen, they are the result of collective consensus and public investment. We owe our children, the most vulnerable citizens in our society, a life free of violence and fear."