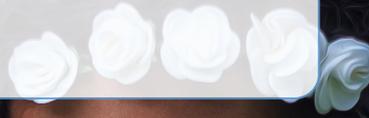


Lighting the Path Ahead

A Statewide Outcomes Measurement Report for
Ohio Network of Children's Advocacy Centers

2022



OHIO NETWORK OF
CHILDREN'S ADVOCACY CENTERS

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1. Actual quotes from caregivers whose child was served by an Ohio CAC in 2022. Survey responses are collected anonymously by Ohio CACs. Some names are omitted or replaced with pronouns. The photos are for illustration purposes only and have no connection to the content.

2. Actual quotes from Ohio MDT members from 2022 MDT Survey responses. MDT surveys are collected anonymously by Ohio CACs and photos are for illustration purposes only and have no connection to content.

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About the Ohio Network of Children's Advocacy Centers (ONCAC)

ONCAC serves as the State Chapter for a network of 28 Accredited Children's Advocacy Centers (CACs) and 9 additional Developing Centers/MDTs throughout Ohio. Our network serves Ohio families across 63 counties. ONCAC is committed to building on existing resources to benefit multi-disciplinary efforts across the state by providing education, support, and networking opportunities to enhance Ohio's response to child abuse. The CAC multi-disciplinary approach maximizes the strengths of all disciplines involved in child sexual abuse investigations and minimizes the trauma to child victims. ONCAC envisions a future where every child and family in Ohio has access to the full-array of high-quality CAC services. By providing care tailored to the needs of each community, we are lighting the path forward toward healing and safety for Ohio's children.

What are CACs and how do they help youth in Ohio?

To understand what a CAC is, you must understand what children experience without one.

Without a CAC, a child may end up having to retell the details of the worst experience of their life over and over again, to doctors, police, lawyers, therapists, investigators, judges, and others. Furthermore, they may not get the help they need to heal once the investigation is over.

Without CACs



With CACs



Working Together: When law enforcement or child welfare agencies believe a child is being abused, the child is brought by a safe adult/caregiver to the CAC; a safe, neutral, child-friendly, developmentally appropriate environment. At the CAC, the child tells what happened to them to a specially trained forensic interviewer who provides a neutral, fact-finding interview. Then, based on the interview, a Multi-Disciplinary Team (MDT) that includes specialized medical and mental health professionals, law enforcement, prosecution, child protective services, victim advocacy, and other professionals make decisions together about how to best help the child based on the information gathered in this one-time interview. Through coordination of services, CACs are able to offer a range of services like mental health treatment, medical exams, victim advocacy, case management, and more for the child and non-offending caregivers.

What is OMS:

In an effort to gather data on how effective CACs are in addressing the needs of the child and family, the Outcome Measurement System (OMS) is used. The OMS was originally developed by CACs of Texas in collaboration with the RGK Center at the University of Texas at Austin. Children's Advocacy Centers participated in a National Children's Alliance (NCA) pilot project of the OMS program in 2012. NCA collaborated with the Crimes Against Children Research Center at the University of New Hampshire help to streamline and improve the process. They expanded the program for nationwide use in 2014. As early adopters of this program in 2012, Ohio CACs initiated data collecting processes via the OMS Pilot program as a means of quality assurance to ensure that current services under the MDT model were delivering the best results. These efforts continue to guide our development today.

How Outcome Measures Inform and Guide the Evolution of CAC Practice:

Each year, Ohio CACs engage in a massive data collecting effort coordinated under the Outcome Measurement System (OMS) to provide concrete insights to aid in the evaluation of their programs. By evaluating the impacts these programs have over the course of the previous year, we are able to continually adapt and increase the quality of services we bring to the children and families in our communities. By guiding our growth systematically and identifying optimum practices that yield sustained healing and just outcomes, we are able to improve Ohio Multi-Disciplinary Team (MDT) responses. In order to get feedback directly from caregivers of children served by CACs and their MDT members, OMS used standardized survey questions to measure how well they are providing care to children and families in Ohio across the following three core components:

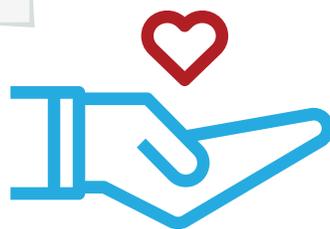
- **Safety and Healing:** Restoring the lives of children and families after abuse
- **Justice and Security:** Striving toward just outcomes for victims of abuse and protecting all kids from abusers
- **Dependability and Community Trust:** Ensuring children, families, and MDT members can trust their CAC, MDT, and the CAC model

What do we measure:

OMS, in conjunction with ONCAC, works to evaluate efforts to continually enhance MDT response capacity and increase accessibility throughout Ohio to the full-array of services provided. These findings simultaneously build stronger collaborative partnerships both throughout our network of MDTs and with the larger Ohio service ecosystem. To effectively measure across the three aforementioned domains of a) safety and healing, b) justice and security, and c) dependability and trust; the items on each survey are respectively designed to look at the following two overarching outcome indicators:

1. How well the CAC facilitates healing for children and caregivers.
2. Whether the MDT approach results in more collaborative and efficient case investigations

Two caregiver surveys measuring outcome (1) and one MDT survey measuring outcome (2) are utilized. A random sample of Caregivers complete an initial survey at the end of their first visit to the CAC and then complete a follow-up survey to provide feedback on their experiences. MDT surveys are given to members twice a year regarding team performance across all cases.



1,447

Total Caregiver Survey Responses



206

Total Multidisciplinary Team (MDT) Survey Responses

A Note on 2022 Annual Statewide Data:

Every year, Ohio CACs provide children and families with healing and justice in a child-focused, safe setting with a MDT they can trust. In the following, we will break down the data we have collected throughout 2021-2022 and highlight key insights that demonstrates how CACs achieve our three principle outcomes.

Support & Healing

98% of caregivers agree that CACs in Ohio provide them with resources to support their children.



Justice & Safety

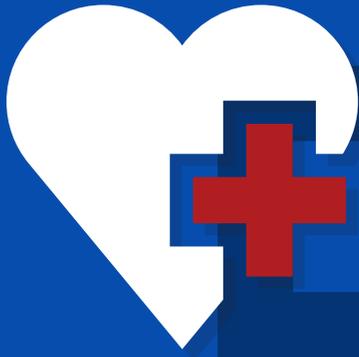
98% of MDT members in Ohio believe clients benefit from the collaborative approach of the MDT.



Dependability & Community Trust

If caregivers in Ohio knew anyone else who was dealing with a situation like the one their family faced, 97% would tell that person about the CAC.





Support & Healing

How CACs in Ohio are helping to restore lives



CACs continue to help create a space in which children and caregivers can feel safe. Here is what caregivers said about their experiences at their local CAC:

“Overall it was great and I’m glad to have learned this place existed. My child loved [the environment] and it really helped calm her down right away when we walked in.”¹

“I liked that the staff were so kind and made me feel at home and comfortable. They made sure that as a parent I knew exactly why we were here and what would be taking place step by step. This is a very comfortable place to come to for help for my child”¹



From the Data:

97% of Caregivers in Ohio agree that their child felt safe at the CAC and 98% Agree that CACs help families support their children.



"Everyone was extremely kind. I am glad that my child was able to meet with such concerned individuals. We both feel so much better about everything!"¹

"I could be open and honest with the staff who understood my fears and were very comforting."¹

"We appreciate that there is a place like this where people can go to, to get helped with the utmost care!"¹



96% of Caregivers in Ohio Agree: After our visit at the CAC, I feel I know what to expect with the situation facing my child and me.

92% of Caregivers in Ohio Agree: I was given information about the various services and programs provided by the CAC.

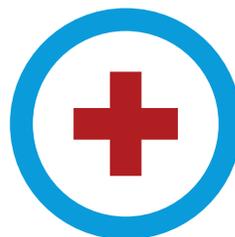
With a CAC, healing can begin the moment a child and their caregiver first arrives. It is clear from the response provided by Caregivers that their experience and the experiences of their children have been overwhelmingly positive. The two major contributing factors identified by caregivers that informed their favorable assessment of the CAC experience this year were:

- a) the child-friendly, comfortable home-like atmosphere found in CACs and
- b) a staff that takes its time with both the caregiver and child making sure that you have all the information and resources you need in the moment and on the path ahead.

At CACs, our Multi-Disciplinary Teams are with them every step of the way.

Caregivers in Ohio satisfied with child's **Medical Exam:**

97%



Caregivers in Ohio satisfied with child's **Mental Health Services:**

97%



Caregivers in Ohio Satisfied with child's **Forensic Interview:**

95%





Justice & Safety

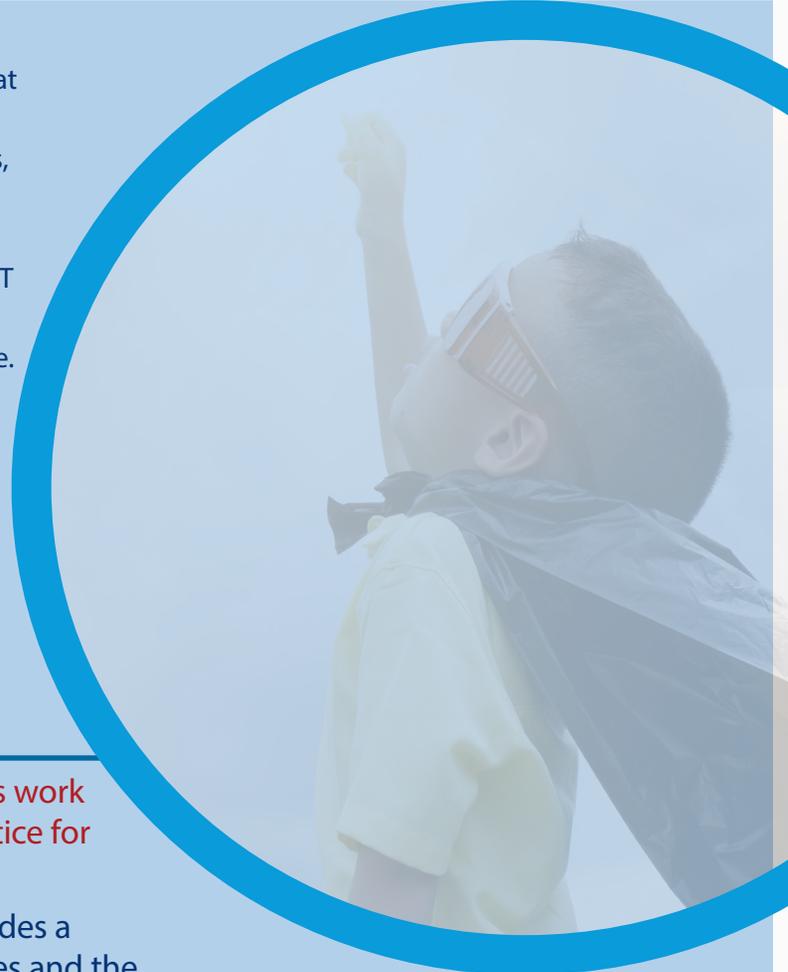
How CACs in Ohio strive to ensure just outcomes for kids and work to protect all children

The Multi-Disciplinary Team (MDT):

The heart of the work of a CAC is built around its MDT, a Team that includes medical professionals, law enforcement, mental health providers, prosecutors, child welfare agencies, victim advocates, and other professionals. The MDT reviews the forensic interview and other case information, and then makes decisions together about how to best meet the unique needs of each child. This MDT collaboratively shares case information that each team member needs to perform their functions and to ensure the best outcome.

How Ohio MDTs help provide justice and safety:

By coordinating the investigation and combining the available evidence on the child's case, the MDT helps build a complete picture of every aspect of the abuse case. This helps prosecutors build stronger cases against abusers, helps courts to determine just outcomes to protect all children from the abuser, and helps dedicated agencies determine how to serve the best interests of the child, based upon detailed aspects of the case.



CACs help partners work together to get justice for children:

"The CAC team provides a multitude of resources and the input they routinely provide enables me to better protect the children I am assisting, along with their caregivers. Without this team, I would have a much more difficult time closing cases with a successful outcome. " ²

"The team that I work with never ceases to amaze me when it comes to the dedication, attitude, resources, and help they provide for these cases and helping these victims who are traumatized. I have only been working with the team for a short while, but I can honestly say that when I look back on my career, I will look at this time as being one of the most proud things that I have been a part of. " ²





"I feel very lucky to be a part of a team that continues to work through barriers to serve our county's families in the best way possible. Each entity is valuable and I appreciate having such great collaboration. "2



MDT Members in Ohio Agree:

My supervisor/agency is supportive of the work of the multidisciplinary team.



98%

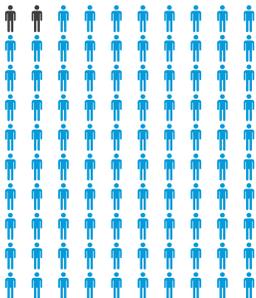
The CAC provides resources that help me work on these cases.



98%

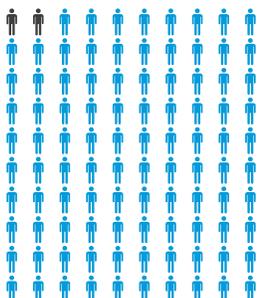
Caregivers Agree:

I feel the CAC has done everything possible to assist my child and myself.



98%

I am satisfied with the CAC response and availability to answer any question that I had since my initial visit.



98%

MDT Operations and Collaborative Resources:

I have an opportunity to provide input into the forensic interview process, thereby securing the level of information needed to fulfill my area of responsibility.

97% Agree

The Children's Advocacy Center Model fosters collaboration on the MDT.

97% Agree

All members of the multidisciplinary team are actively involved in cases relevant to their role

95% Agree



Dependability & Community Trust

Children and families served know they can trust their Local CAC and the CAC model in Ohio

Why caregivers trust their community's CAC in the most difficult of times:

"I was treated with respect and guided through our case with a kindness that I needed at the time. I had no idea how to pursue our case or what actions to follow, and the Center was amazing at being there for us." ¹

"The environment was friendly and child honoring. It was a pretty shocking thing to be bringing my family into the CAC, but the kindness we found inside its walls helped me get over the frustration and shock I was feeling for being there." ¹



"Since working with the center, my children and I have a better understanding of what we have been needing all along. All of the staff have [made it] a safe place to us and have been on point with our needs and are helping us become a very healthy family." ¹



“[There are] time and time again, horror stories about being stuck, and no one helping. This was exactly the opposite. The center is personable, yet professional. Personal, yet structured. It is a safe haven for families.

I received prompt communication in a time of great turmoil. I cannot recommend this service enough.”¹



Building Trust:

The CAC staff made sure I understood the reason for my visit to the CAC today.

99%

The process for the interview of my child at the CAC was clearly explained to me.

99%

I feel I have received information that has helped me understand how I can keep my child safe in the future

97%

If I knew anyone else who was going through a situation like the one my family faced, I would tell them about the CAC.

99%

MDT members willingly share information relevant to our cases.

97%

I believe the clients served through the CAC benefit from the collaborative approach of our MDT.

99%



A Network of Trust:

Navigating systems of care and justice can be difficult. Ohio families, MDT members, and their agencies trust the CAC model and each other. Our network of CACs are united in providing the best care for all Ohio families.



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