



MENTAL HEALTH


Abuse and other forms of trauma can have lifelong effects on individuals, families, and communities. Many studies have shown the strong relationship between trauma and serious outcomes such as post-traumatic stress disorder, depression, anxiety, substance use, physical health problems, and even poverty and early death. But these outcomes can be prevented when individuals receive evidence-based services and support early on. Evidence-based treatments (EBTs) like those delivered at the Children's Advocacy Centers (CACs) can significantly reduce trauma symptoms and prevent the long-term effects of exposure to trauma.

The CACs are committed to using evidence-based and trauma-specific screening, assessment and treatments shown in research to be effective so that those affected by trauma can heal.

Children's Advocacy Centers in North Dakota are child-friendly settings that coordinate and provide services for children who may have been abused. The CACs help thousands of people each year using evidence-based practices.

Benefits of Mental Health Services

- Starts the healing process after trauma
- Teaches coping skills to deal with the impact of trauma
- Helps to reestablish safety after trauma
- Helps address other mental health concerns like depression and anxiety
- Allows the expression of feelings that may otherwise come out as behaviors
- Gives the opportunity to talk about the experience in a safe place
- Improves self-esteem and confidence
- Enhances future safety
- Builds resiliency to handle future stress



EBTs can help reduce trauma symptoms

75% of children who had PTSD when they started treatment no longer had PTSD at their last follow-up

Cohen et al., 2011

Evidence-Based Treatments: Therapy That Works!

CAC Mental Health Services

The CACs offer mental health screening, assessments, and treatment to determine the individual's needs and inform the clinician what trauma-specific EBT will best meet the identified needs of the client. Various trauma-specific EBTs are offered on-site or via telehealth at each CAC.

Accessing CAC Mental Health Services

Mental health services at CACs are provided at no cost to families.

What is Mental Health Treatment?

Mental health treatment, sometimes referred to as therapy, is a unique opportunity to meet with a trained professional who will guide an individual through an evidence-based treatment to reduce symptoms. It is important to remember that healing is a process and different for each person. Treatment relies on everyone's willingness to be open and participate. The client, or caregiver, should feel welcome to voice any concerns, discomfort, or barriers to treatment with the clinician.

Caregiver's Role in Treatment

One of the most important predictors of healing after trauma is support from caregivers. Caregivers play an integral role in helping a child heal and ultimately treatment works best when caregivers are involved. The level of caregiver involvement varies depending on the treatment type, but in every treatment, caregivers play an active role in sessions and are aware of the treatment goals and skills learned. Caregivers can assist children by helping them practice learned skills at home. Trauma impacts the whole family and so part of treatment will include support for the caregiver.

Szota, Schulte, Christiansen, 2022

Trauma-Focused Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (TF-CBT)

An intervention that integrates cognitive behavioral techniques with trauma-specific interventions

Child & Family Traumatic Stress Intervention (CFTSI)

A brief, early intervention for children and their caregivers

Alternatives for Families Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (AF-CBT)

An intervention that improves the relationship between children and caregivers in high-conflict families

Problematic Sexual Behavior Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (PSB-CBT)

A child and caregiver group intervention to reduce or eliminate incidents of problematic sexual behavior

Parent Child Interaction Therapy (PCIT)

A caregiver coaching intervention for young children with disruptive behavior problems

Child Parent Psychotherapy (CPP)

An intervention for very young children and their caregivers to address stressful experiences

Cognitive Processing Therapy (CPT)

An intervention for adults who have experienced trauma

Structured Psychotherapy for Adolescents Responding to Chronic Stress (SPARCS)

A group intervention for teens who are experiencing trauma and chronic stress



Bismarck • Dickinson • Jamestown
Standing Rock • Watford City
701.323.5626 | dakotacac.org



Minot • Williston • Bottineau
701.852.0836 | northernplainscac.org



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701.234.4580 | rrcac.org