

Meeting Growing Needs

2024 ANNUAL REPORT

FOR OKLAHOMA'S CHILDREN



Children's Advocacy
Centers of Oklahoma

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The Children's Advocacy Centers of Oklahoma (CACO) is a statewide membership organization representing a diverse network of

31 members

dedicated to the protection, healing, and advocacy of children impacted by abuse.

Our Membership includes:

21 Accredited Children's Advocacy Centers (CACs)
(Including 1 CAC with a Satellite Center)

3 Developing CACs
(Including Choctaw Nation's Ahni Center)

6 Freestanding Multidisciplinary Teams (FSMDTs)

1 Sovereign Nation Tribal MDT (Chickasaw Nation)

Letter from the Board President



Since our incorporation in 1999, Children's Advocacy Centers of Oklahoma (CACO) has remained steadfast in our commitment to supporting and advancing the Children's Advocacy Center movement throughout our state. Our strength lies in collaboration — with dedicated professionals, partner agencies, and key stakeholders across Oklahoma — working together to ensure that every child has access to compassionate, coordinated care.

At the heart of our mission is the belief that no child should have to navigate the complexities of abuse investigations or find critical services alone. CACs bring together multidisciplinary teams to serve the child as one unified force — focused on healing, justice, and hope.

As I reflect on the year 2024, I continue to be amazed by what our small but mighty CACO staff has accomplished in support of our statewide network — and even more inspired by what local CACs are achieving every day for the children they serve. That's why the theme of this year's report is Growth & Development.

Here are just a few highlights that exemplify that growth:

- **For the first time in 14 years, we welcomed a newly accredited CAC to our network.**
- **We established new relationships with freestanding multidisciplinary teams (FSMDTs) in western Oklahoma — welcoming them as members in 2025.**
- **We partnered with a consulting firm to produce a comprehensive Growth & Development Statewide Report, informed by feedback from MDT professionals across Oklahoma.**
- **We released the second edition of our HOPE Outcomes Research Report, showcasing the transformative support and resilience-building work happening in CACs statewide.**

And this is just a glimpse of our impact in 2024.

While our work continues, we invite you to pause and celebrate the accomplishments we've achieved together — with our CACs, FSMDTs, and all those who share our mission. Together, we are truly changing children's lives.

With gratitude,

Dan Patten
CACO Board President



CACO's Vision

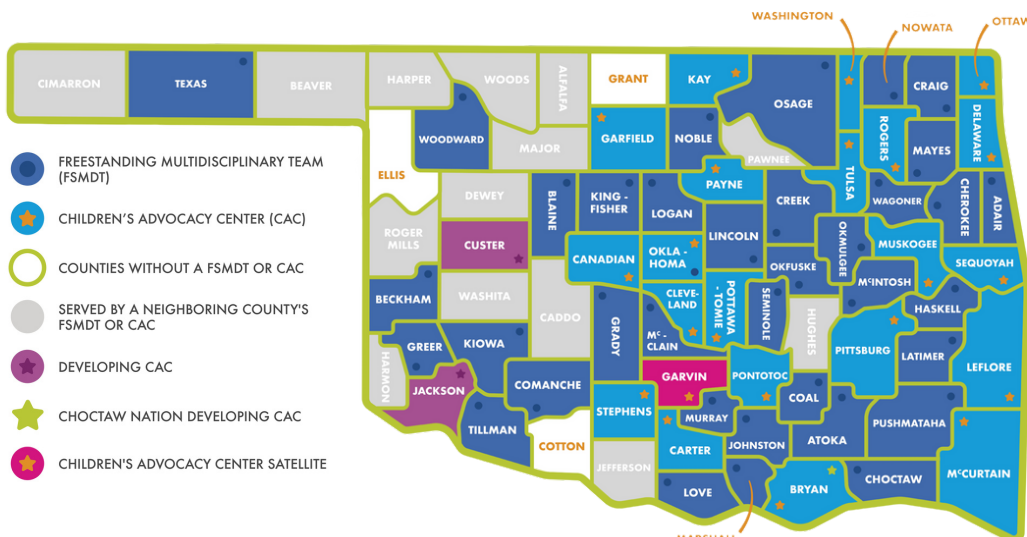
Every child in Oklahoma deserves equal access, when needed, to gold standard, accredited CAC services — right in their own community.

What is a CAC?



When police or child protective services believe a child is being abused, the child is brought to the CAC — a safe, child-focused environment — by a caregiver or other “safe” adult. At the CAC, the child tells their story once to a trained interviewer who knows the right questions to ask in a way that does not re-traumatize the child. Then, a team that includes medical professionals, law enforcement, mental health, prosecution, child protective services, victim advocacy, and other professionals make decisions together about how to help the child based on the interview. CACs offer therapy and medical exams, plus courtroom preparation, victim advocacy, case management, and other services. This is called the multidisciplinary team (MDT) response and is a core part of the work of CACs.

2025 MDT Coverage Area



This map is a representation of the locations of CACs and FSMDTs.

Scan or visit the online directory at cacok.com/directory



What We Do and How



CAC/MDT SUPPORT & TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

We provide expert guidance, training, and consultation to local Children's Advocacy Centers (CACs) and Multidisciplinary Teams (MDTs).

In 2024 we provided over

600
hours

CAC/MDT technical support and training

ADVOCACY & POLICY

We advocate at the state level for policies and funding that strengthen child abuse prevention, intervention, and recovery efforts. We host an annual CACO CAC Day at the Capitol, along with additional legislative events tailored to inform Oklahoma lawmakers about the critical work of CACs.



TRAINING & PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

We organize statewide training for MDT professionals including law enforcement, child welfare, medical providers, mental health professionals, and others, and share emerging research and promote best practices in trauma-informed care and child advocacy.

Statewide peer support groups



- Forensic Interview Peer Review
- Victim/Family Advocate Peer Support Group
- MDT Facilitator Peer Group

In 2024 we delivered

52

customized training events



Mitigating secondary trauma

We offer free and **CONFIDENTIAL** mental health consultations for any member of an Oklahoma or Tribal MDT.



STANDARDS & ACCREDITATION SUPPORT

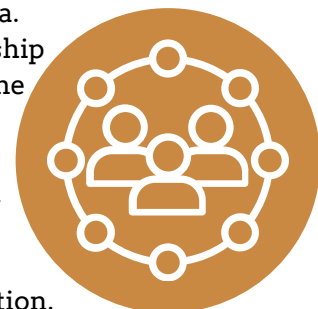
We guide freestanding MDTs (FSMDTs), Tribal MDTs, and CACs through the NCA accreditation and re-accreditation processes.

We offer customized training and technical support for FSMDTs and Tribal MDTs exploring the development of accredited CACs. All CACs in Oklahoma must maintain national accreditation to qualify for state funding. We provide the required accreditation reviews to every center, in accordance with state statute.



COLLABORATION & NETWORKING

We foster open communication and meaningful collaboration among MDTs statewide. We host regular leadership retreats and statewide meetings. CACO staff actively participates in statewide stakeholder meetings and serves on key boards and taskforces that shape the child advocacy landscape in Oklahoma. Through these leadership roles, CACO ensures the voices of CACs and multidisciplinary teams are represented in policy discussions, systems planning, and cross-sector collaboration.



2024 Research Highlights



ADVANCING HOPE THROUGH CONTINUED CAC RESEARCH

In 2024, CACO proudly continued its collaboration with all 21 accredited Oklahoma CACs and 2 Developing CACs to produce the second statewide HOPE Science Outcomes Report — an innovative effort to better understand the transformative impact of the CAC model.

In partnership with Dr. Evie Muilenburg-Trevino of *Hope Wired*, 2024's research expanded its scope to measure for hope in caregivers.

Visit **CACOK.com** or scan to access CACO's CAC 2024 Statewide Caregiver Satisfaction & Hope Findings report.



The findings were **Significant and Compelling**

- Oklahoma CACs are effective in **reducing caregiver anxiety**.
- **Caregiver Hope levels increased** after they came to the Center.
- Supporting families in finding hope during incredibly difficult times is a core goal of every CAC — and **this data confirms they are achieving it**.

This research underscores what we already know: hope is not just a feeling — it's a measurable outcome. And across Oklahoma, CACs are delivering it every day.

CAC GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT RESEARCH

In response to the lack of access to accredited Children's Advocacy Centers (CACs) in rural western Oklahoma — and the broader geographical barriers impacting service access statewide — CACO launched a strategic initiative in 2024 to expand the reach of child advocacy

services in underserved communities.

Partnering with independent data consultants from WithInsight, CACO began a multi-phase research and development process aimed at identifying gaps and designing sustainable, community-driven solutions.

During the summer of 2024, CACO convened targeted discussion groups with key leaders and stakeholders. These conversations focused on frontline challenges, community-specific needs, and opportunities for innovative service delivery models.

By integrating the lived experiences and insights of those working directly with child victims and their families, CACO is ensuring that the future expansion of CAC services is both responsive and effective.

Visit **CACOK.com** or scan to access CACO's 2024 Statewide Growth & Development report.

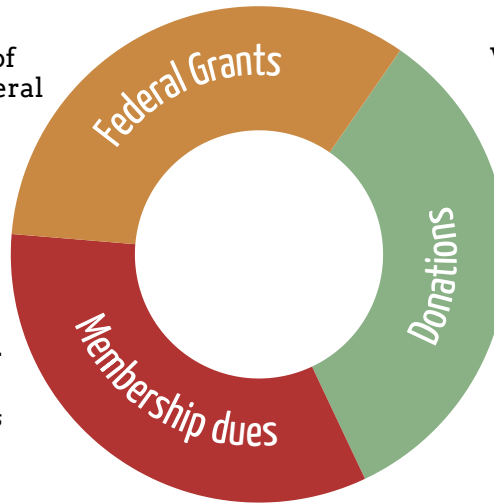




THANK YOU TO OUR GENEROUS 2024 DONORS AND STAKEHOLDERS!

Children's Advocacy Centers of Oklahoma is supported by federal grants provided by the Department of Justice and administered by the National Children's Alliance.

CACO is a membership organization, and our member CACs pay annual membership dues. Those membership dues directly support our advocacy efforts.



We rely on public support in the form of donations. Donations to CACO are tax deductible.



To aid in our efforts to fulfill our mission, click on the **DONATE** button at CACOK.com



August Fundraiser Launched

In 2024, CACO launched an exclusive fundraiser – Art & Advocacy. This online art auction occurs every August.



Scan the QR code to learn how you can participate.

Thank you to our Board of Directors

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Children's Advocacy Centers of Oklahoma

MISSION: To unite and support child abuse professionals to protect Oklahoma's children.

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