



PROGRAM SPOTLIGHT

Children's Hospital of The King's Daughters (CHKD): A Child Advocacy Center (CAC) and NCTSN Program Serving Military Children

Introduction

This Program Spotlight provides a focus on Children's Hospital of The King's Daughters Child Advocacy Center (CHKD CAC) located in Norfolk, Virginia. Of particular interest is CHKD's unique status of having a Child Advocacy Center addressing incidents of child maltreatment and harmful behaviors that take place across military and community settings. CHKD CAC provides a comprehensive array of child trauma clinical services, as well as serves as a central coordinating hub for a military/civilian community coordinated response to child abuse, domestic violence, harmful aggression and problematic sexual behavior cases. In addition to a description of services, a Resource Guide is provided to access training material from the NCA and NCTSN to help guide program staff to develop a military-informed, trauma-informed CAC program addressing child maltreatment in military settings, as well as helping to develop a community coordinated response to these issues.

Children's Hospital of The King's Daughters Child Advocacy Center

Established in 1998, Children's Hospital of The King's Daughters Child Advocacy Center became a NCA Accredited Child Advocacy Center in 2003 and has sustained the high level of service provision required to maintain this status since that time. As an accredited member of NCA, CHKD CAC provides essential services to children who have experienced maltreatment. Primary program services include child maltreatment related forensic interviewing, medical examinations and consultation, case management and victim advocacy, in addition to mental health visits such as psychological assessment and evaluation, evidence-based child trauma therapies, including TF-CBT and PCIT. Most military referrals seen at CHKD CAC are from the U.S. Navy; however, CHKD CAC also receives referrals from U.S. Army, U.S. Air Force, and U.S. Coast Guard, reflecting the high numbers of military bases/installations and families in the Norfolk area. The majority of referrals were sent to CHKD CAC by one of three military Multidisciplinary Teams' (MDT) partners, typically by Family Advocacy Program (FAP) or Military Criminal Investigative Organizations (MCIO) staff member seeking CHKD CAC forensic or clinical support for child maltreatment victims ages 2-17 years. The most frequent referral types for services are physical and sexual abuse and witnessing family violence.

CHKD CAC Work with Military Partners

According to CHKD CAC, education, communication and collaboration are necessary to sustain partnerships and provide positive outcomes for the military children and families they serve. CHKD CAC staff continually work to increase their military partners' knowledge of trauma-informed care by providing regular training and consultations by their highly-skilled staff, and reciprocally obtain knowledge from the military's highly-skilled service members, staff and affiliates. CHKD CAC has worked closely with each military branch (especially FAP and MCIO) to create and ratify strong Memorandum of Understandings (MOUs) that infuse NCA standards, best practice services, and are aligned with military policy and procedure. For example, CHKD CAC case managers collaborate with the Army Family Advocacy Program (FAP), Navy Fleet and Family Support Center

(FFSC), Army Criminal Investigative Department (CID) and Navy Criminal Investigative Service (NCIS) to provide specific training and assistance. Critical to the program's success has been the program's Case Managers/Victim Advocates facilitation of 3 military MDTs and 7 civilian/city based MDTs, which has allowed for improved flow of communication and information across all MDT teams, as well as civilian and military agencies.

The NCTSN Military and Veteran Families Program

The mission of the NCTSN is to raise the standard of care and increase access to services for children and families who experience or witness traumatic events. The NCTSN is a unique network of frontline providers, family members, researchers, and national partners committed to changing the course of children's lives by improving their care and moving scientific gains quickly into practice across the U.S. The NCTSN has expanded open access to virtual trainings and resources in child and family trauma-specific evidence-based, assessment, interventions, and promising practices. It has collaborated to significantly improve child-serving systems to better address the impact of trauma on child development, improve trauma screening procedures, and coordinated trauma-specific individual and family treatment services that work to prevent secondary adversities and related mental health co-morbidities (i.e., suicidal ideation, substance abuse). The NCTSN Military and Veteran Families Program was established to develop and adapt the foundational knowledge of the NCTSN approach to child traumatic stress to support the needs of military and Veteran children and families. For example, military families can be significantly negatively impacted by a service member parent's combat-related mental health problems and physical injuries, as well as by the stress of wartime deployment. NCTSN Military and Veteran Families Program provides trauma-informed resources for community based and military installations to address the psychological effects of child sexual and physical abuse and neglect, grief and loss, harmful aggressive and problematic sexual behaviors.

ADDITIONALLY

As a NCTSN site and an Accredited program through NCA, CHKD CAC program staff participate in collaborative groups addressing military issues and have access to resources that are vital to effectively providing support for military child victims of maltreatment and their families. The CAC integrates these resources and best practices into their MDTs and partners with stakeholders to support sustainable outcomes for the military children they serve. Two resources include "NCTSN Military and Veteran Families and Children Training Resources and Technical Assistance: Supporting Military and Veteran Children Affected by Trauma," and NCTSN's "Child Maltreatment in Military Families: A Fact Sheet for Providers."

The NCTSN/DoD Academy on Child Trauma

The NCTSN has forged a unique partnership with the Department of Defense's Military Community and Family Policy (MC&FP) to provide training for FAP personnel to improve knowledge and skills on evidence-based, trauma-informed practices in working with military families and children. The NCTSN and DoD developed the "Academy on Child Traumatic Stress", an online platform for delivery of virtual child trauma training lessons and materials to train and inform military FAP clinical staff, FAP New Parent Support Staff (NPSP), military family life counselors (MFLCs), DoDEA school support staff, and law enforcement. Course work includes Protective Factors Framework for Military, Skills for Psychological Recovery (SPR), and Foundational Knowledge on Child Trauma, Problematic Sexual Behaviors, and AF-CBT. The Academy encompasses an integrated learning management system and a social networking platform that affords learners access to eLearning material and a way to share and interact with other learners.

Resources from NCTSN

Military Culture, Screening, and Interventions for Military Child Maltreatment

- [An Overview of the Military Family Experience and Culture](#)
- [Child Abuse and Neglect in Military Families: Community and Military Partnerships](#)
- [Child Maltreatment and Domestic Violence in Military and Civilian Populations](#)
- [Child Maltreatment in Military Families- Interview with Deborah Gibbs, PhD](#)

- [Child Maltreatment in Military Families: A Fact Sheet for Providers](#)
- [Evidence-Based Treatments: Elements or Adaptations for Military Family-Informed Care](#)
- [Family Advocacy and New Parent Support: Responding to Child Abuse or Neglect and Domestic Abuse in the Military](#)
- [Family Violence, Military Sexual Trauma, and Child Maltreatment](#)
- [Meeting the Intervention Needs of Military Children with Steve Cozza, MD](#)
- [Prevention Services and Treatments for Military and Veteran Families](#)
- [Understanding Child Trauma and Resilience for Military Parents and Caregivers](#)

The Children’s Advocacy Center Model and National Children’s Alliance

National Children’s Alliance (NCA) is the national association and accrediting body for Children’s Advocacy Centers (CACs). Formed in 1988, NCA now provides support, technical assistance, and quality assurance for over 900 CACs nationwide. CACs are child-focused, facility-based programs in which representatives from core disciplines—law enforcement, child protection, prosecution, mental health, medical, and victim advocacy—collaborate using a trauma-informed approach to investigate child abuse reports, conduct forensic interviews, provide evidence-based interventions, and assess cases for prosecution. While each CAC sets its own case acceptance criteria, all CACs provide services in cases of suspected child sexual abuse. Most CACs also offer services in cases of suspected physical abuse and commercial sexual exploitation of children and many extend services to children exposed to violence, youth with problematic sexual behaviors, and adult abuse victims with developmental delays.

As local community-based programs, CACs are designed to meet the unique needs of the communities they serve and, as such, no two CACs look or operate exactly the same. However, they are founded on a shared belief that child abuse is a multifaceted community problem and no single agency, individual, or discipline has the necessary knowledge, skills, or resources to serve the needs of all children and their families. The CAC’s coordinated and comprehensive response is also guided by a shared philosophy that the combined expertise of professionals across disciplines results in a more complete understanding of case issues and better provides help, support, and protection to children and families as they pursue healing and justice.

NCA’s CAC-Military Partnership Project

National Children’s Alliance is committed to ensuring that all children and families impacted by child maltreatment have access to the high-quality, seamless response provided by CACs. Many children in military families experience barriers to accessing these comprehensive services and lack a coordinated response between CACs and the military child abuse response system. Successful CAC-military partnerships like those at CHKD serve as a model and show us that effective collaboration and improved coordination is possible. NCA’s CAC-military partnership initiative is addressing barriers to CAC services for military families and supporting expansion and enhancement of CAC-military partnerships nationwide.

Through a grant from the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (OJJDP), NCA administers a national sub-grant program providing funding to CACs for projects to establish or enhance military partnerships and improve services to military families locally. On the national level, NCA hosts a monthly collaborative work group that brings together CACs, military program representatives, and other partners like NCTSN to develop training, education, and resources for the field. Additionally, NCA is working with Congress and the Department of Defense to address administrative barriers to CAC-military collaboration through the development of national MOUs that will ease logistical burdens on local partnerships and pave the way for information sharing and seamless case coordination.

Resources from NCA

Status of CAC-Military Partnerships Report

NCA's [Status Of CAC-Military Partnerships Report 2019](#) presents themes from a comprehensive national needs assessment of CAC-military partnerships, provides a state by state summary on the status of CAC-military partnerships, and outlines recommendations for CAC and military leadership and policymakers. This report is available on NCA's website.

CAC-Family Advocacy Program Map

This interactive [map](#) displays the locations of CACs and military installations with Family Advocacy Program (FAP) offices. Users can filter results by NCA membership type for CACs and branch of service for FAP offices. The map is publicly available on NCA's website.

Fact Sheets: Military Child Abuse Response Roles

For CACs, understanding the roles played by key military programs involved in child abuse response is a critical first step in providing a comprehensive response for military families in the community. These fact sheets provide an introduction to the systems and programs that CACs should be familiar with in the U.S. Air Force, Army, Marine Corps, and Navy. The fact sheets are publicly available on NCA's website.

- [How Key U.S. Air Force Roles Support Children and Families in Child Abuse Response](#)
- [How Key U.S. Army Roles Support Children and Families in Child Abuse Response](#)
- [How Key U.S. Marine Corps Roles Support Children and Families in Child Abuse Response](#)
- [How Key U.S. Navy Roles Support Children and Families in Child Abuse Response](#)

Children's Advocacy Center-Military Partnerships Webinar Series

Coordination between Children's Advocacy Centers and military partners requires foundational knowledge of the systems and programs involved in child abuse response and key elements of effective case collaboration. This webinar series is designed to lay the groundwork and support effective CAC-military partnerships that provide coordinated care for military families. Webinars are available to NCA members and their military partners on [NCA Engage](#), NCA's professional networking and learning community.

- [Introduction to Children's Advocacy Centers for Military Partners](#)
- [Introduction to the Department of Defense Family Advocacy Program](#)
- [Introduction to Military Criminal Investigative Organizations](#)
- [Introduction to the Military Health System and the Armed Forces Center for Child Protection](#)
- [Introduction to the Military Legal System Webinar](#)
- [Preparing for CAC-Military Collaboration: Identifying Military Families and Tracking Military Affiliation](#)
- [Child Abuse Reporting in the Military](#)
- [Collaborating with Military Partners](#)
- [Victim Support and Advocacy for Military Families](#)
- [Child Advocacy Center-Military Case Review](#)

The Family Advocacy Program (FAP)

Military Family Advocacy Program (FAP) is guided by DoD policy to “...promote early identification, reporting, and coordinated, comprehensive intervention, assessment, and support to victims of child abuse, domestic abuse, and children and youth exhibiting or impacted by PSB-CY.” FAP programs are staffed and located on each military base/installation where families reside and serves as a central coordinator for the base MDT process including development of MOUs with CACs. FAP provides or coordinates services for children and families impacted by violence, abuse and emotional abuse or neglect. FAP victim advocates, new parent support staff, and clinicians respond to reports of domestic violence, child abuse and neglect, and problematic sexual behaviors.

- [Military One Source Family Advocacy Program](#)
- [DoD Manual 6400.01](#)
- [Healthy Military Family Systems: Examining Child Abuse and Neglect](#)

For More Information

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