



Family Assistance Guide

Case Contact Information

Contact information for all Investigators involved:

Contact 1

Name:

Phone:

Email:

Contact 2

Name:

Phone:

Email:

Contact information for my Family Advocate is:

Name:

Phone:

Email:

What is a Children's Advocacy Center?

Children's Advocacy Center for Denton County (The Advocacy Center) is a non-profit organization that was created to minimize the trauma of child abuse victims. The Advocacy Center is a child appropriate facility that provides comprehensive assessment and treatment services for children suspected as victims of abuse or neglect. The Advocacy Center's specially trained team includes Law Enforcement, Child Protective Services, Denton County's District Attorney's Office staff, Juvenile Probation, medical personnel, mental health professionals, Forensic Interviewers, and Family Advocates.

Services offered by the Children's Advocacy Center for Denton County include:

- Digitally recorded forensic interviews in a neutral, child appropriate facility
- Family Advocates available to provide resources, information, and case updates
- Childcare available during appointments
- Counseling services to victims and their non-offending caregivers
- Referrals for medical evaluations and examinations
- Coordinated investigations with case follow-up
- Professional training on child abuse and reporting
- Community education on prevention of child abuse

What is Child Abuse?

There are several different types of child abuse.

Physical Abuse

Physical injury that results in substantial harm to the child, or the genuine threat of substantial harm from physical injury to the child, including an injury that is at variance with the history or explanation given. This excludes an accident or reasonable discipline by a parent, guardian, or managing or possessory conservator that does not expose the child to a substantial risk of harm. It is also the failure to make a reasonable effort to prevent an action by another person that results in physical injury and substantial harm to the child.

Sexual Abuse

Sexual conduct harmful to a child's mental, emotional or physical welfare, including conduct that constitutes the offense of indecency with a child, sexual assault, or aggravated sexual assault; failure to make a reasonable effort to prevent sexual conduct harmful to a child; compelling or encouraging the child to engage in sexual conduct; and causing, permitting, encouraging, engaging in, or allowing the photographing or filming or depicting of the child if the person knew or should have known that the resulting photograph, film or depiction of the child is obscene or pornographic.

Neglect

The leaving of a child in a situation where the child would be exposed to a substantial risk of physical or mental harm, without arranging for necessary care for the child, and the demonstration of an intent not to return by a parent or guardian of the child.

Emotional Abuse

Inflicting mental or emotional injury to a child, and/or causing or permitting the child to be in a situation in which the child sustains a mental or emotional injury that results in an observable and material impairment in the child's growth, development, or psychological functioning.

Definitions taken from Texas State Family Code, Section 261.001

How can I help my child?

How you respond to your child's disclosure of abuse is important to their healing. The following are some healthy suggestions on how you can be supportive of your child:

- 👂 Be willing to listen quietly to what your child has to say about the abuse.
- 👂 Be open to discuss the abuse with your child on the child's timetable. Do not press for details.
- 👂 Give your child time and space to discuss feelings about the abuse and the abuser.
- 👂 Accept your child's feelings about the abuse, whether the feelings are ones of anger, sadness, anxiety or positive feelings about the abuser.
- 👂 Reassure your child that the abuse is not the child's fault.
- 👂 Reassure your child that you are confident that your child has the strength to recover from the abuse and to lead a happy and productive life.
- 👂 Refrain from emotional outbursts about the abuse.
- 👂 Emotional outbursts on your part may increase your child's anxiety level.
- 👂 Refrain from talking to others in front of your child about the abuse or the abuser.
- 👂 Make sure that your child participates in recommended therapy.
- 👂 Be patient with your child and yourself. Trauma does not heal immediately.

What is a Family Advocate?

The Family Advocate Team is committed to guiding and educating families through each step of the investigation, prosecution and healing process.

Services available through your Family Advocate:

- 👤 Crisis Intervention and liaison between the family, law enforcement, Child Protective Services, the Juvenile Justice System, the Denton County District Attorney's Office and medical professionals.
- 👤 Education on the legal process in relation to child abuse.
- 👤 Case management services and case updates.
- 👤 Available food pantry and clothing closet for emergencies only.
- 👤 Connection to community resources for assistance.
- 👤 Referrals for counseling and / or appropriate outside treatment providers.
- 👤 Referrals to Bikers Against Child Abuse (B.A.C.A.)
- 👤 Assistance in applying for Crime Victim's Compensation (CVC) and U-Visa's.
- 👤 Court accompaniment as necessary.
- 👤 Coordination of on-site and off-site medical evaluations.
- 👤 Seasonal Programs which include: Back-to-School, Thanksgiving and Christmas.

Children's Advocacy Center for Denton County

1854 Cain Drive
Lewisville, TX 75077
Phone: 972-317-2818
Fax: 972-317-6989
www.cacdc.org

To report child abuse call: 1-800-252-5400

Clinical Services

The Advocacy Center offers FREE counseling to victims and their non-offending family members. These services are offered in English and in Spanish.

Therapy is provided by clinicians who are specially trained in trauma and sexual abuse. Services The Advocacy Center offers are:

- 👤 Individual counseling
- 👤 Play therapy
- 👤 Group therapy
- 👤 Family therapy
- 👤 Couples therapy

Trauma and sexual abuse affect the whole family. The Advocacy Center offers parent support groups where parents can share their feelings, experiences, and help each other through the process of healing and the legal justice system.

If you have questions regarding Clinical Services contact:

Angi Gibson, M.Ed, LPC-S: 972-538-9616
or
Cari Purdy, MA, LPC-S, RPT-S: 972.538.9611

Community Resources

2-1-1: Free helpline for community services 24 hours a day / 7 days per week.

Denton Community Food Center: (940) 382-0807

Assists with food for residents of Northern Denton County.

Denton County Friends of the Family: (940) 387-5131

Crisis Line: (800) 572-4031 | Shelter (940) 382-7273

Provides safety planning, case management, legal advocacy, counseling and transitional housing to adult victims of rape, sexual abuse and domestic violence.

Giving HOPE, Inc: (940) 382-0609

Provides advocacy, rental and utility assistance to those at-risk of homelessness. Also provides counseling and case management services to clients diagnosed with HIV/AIDS.

Interfaith Ministries of Denton, Inc: (940) 565-5479

Provides assistance with rent and utilities, medical & vision, transportation, diapers, and assistance with obtaining vital records.

Christian Community Action (CCA): (972) 436-4357

Provides a large range of services which include financial, housing food, medicine, vocational classes and more.

Legal Aid of Northwest Texas: (940) 383-1406

Provides legal services to eligible low income residents.

Victim Information Notification Everyday (VINE): (877) 894-8463 www.vinelink.com

Provides case notifications after a suspect is indicted.

Traffick 911: (817) 575-9923

A Texas-based non-profit organization who exists to free American youth from sex trafficking through prevention, identification and empowerment.

For additional community resources or questions, please contact your Family Advocate.

Crisis Hotline Information:

National Domestic Violence Hotline: (800) 799-SAFE (7233)

National Suicide Prevention Hotline: (800) 273-8255

National Human Trafficking Hotline: (888) 373-7888

