

If you think your child has been sexually abused...

1. Believe your child.
2. Report the suspected abuse to law enforcement or the local county Department of Social/Human Services.
3. Praise your child for telling you.
4. Let your child know of your support.
5. Remain as emotionally calm and supportive as possible.
6. **Above all, do not further interview your child.** Wait for direction from law enforcement or Child Protective Services.

What else should I know?

The Children's Advocacy Center of the San Luis Valley does not offer advice on child custody issues. Any type of child abuse or neglect should be reported to the local Department of Social/Human Services.

Alamosa County DHS

(719) 589-2581

Conejos County DSS

(719) 376-5455

Costilla County DSS

(719) 672-4131

Rio Grande/Mineral County DSS

(719) 657-3381

Saguache County DSS

(719) 655-2537



Tu Casa, Inc.

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The goal of the Children's Advocacy Center of the San Luis Valley (SLV CAC) is to ensure that children are not further victimized by the intervention systems designed to protect them.

Services Provided at SLV CAC#

The Children's Advocacy Center of the San Luis Valley (SLV CAC) Program serves children (ages 0-17) who have been victims of sexual assault or severe abuse/neglect and their non-offending parents or caregivers. The Program's services and facilities can also be used for adults with developmental or physical disabilities as appropriate.

Forensic Interviewing

For victim/s, witnesses, or developmentally-delayed adults:

- The Center has four neutral, trained forensic interviewers who can provide forensic interviews in a non-threatening, trauma-free manner.
- They use a semi-structured protocol to ensure the child is interviewed only once.
- Extended Interviews can be done by a trained interviewer under special circumstances, but only the investigating Multi-Disciplinary Team can make that decision.
- All interviews are free and available in English and Spanish.

Sexual Assault Nurse's Exam (SANE)

The SLV CAC can assist in referring the child for a SANE Exam if recommended by law enforcement or DSS/DHS.

Non-acute or non-emergent SANE exams can be done on-site at the SLV CAC.

During the SANE Exam, a colposcope is used to take photographs of any injury that may be found. The colposcope shows the slightest trauma, tears, and/or abrasions found anywhere on the body, including the genital area. A trained SANE nurse or doctor will perform the exam. It is free of charge to the family.

Remember, if no physical evidence is found, this does not mean that a person was not sexually assaulted or abused.

Family Advocacy

For children and their non-offending parents and caregivers:

- Referrals to and information on services in our community, including counseling and play therapy
- Assistance with Victim's Compensation
- Court system navigation and support
- Trainings and education to the community regarding child sexual assault and abuse

Multi-Disciplinary Team (MDT)

- Works closely with Child Protective Services (CPS), Law Enforcement, SANE Nurses, and the District Attorney's office.
- Offers trainings and education to community agencies regarding child sexual assault and abuse.
- Conducts monthly case review.

How to obtain these services?

Referrals for forensic interviewing and SANE services must be made by the Department of Human/Social Services and/or law enforcement. Referrals can be

made by phone or by completing a referral form and returning it to the Family Advocate.

Families can seek supportive services through the SLV CAC such as help with counseling services and information on other providers in the San Luis Valley.

Partnerships

The SLV CAC works closely with our regional partners in law enforcement and Social/Human Services. We do not make legal decisions about the case and cannot change the decisions made by other agencies. Our partnerships ensure the focus remains on the best interests of the child.

For more information, contact us at:

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