

Quick steps to follow...

1. Make a referral by phone or email to the SLV CAC Family Advocate (Theresa@slvtucasa.net).
2. Family Advocate will set up the forensic interview and provide the date and time to all parties involved, including the family if requested.
3. Law Enforcement and CPS need to be present at the interview.
4. Attend the MDT meeting.
5. Expect the Family Advocate to follow up with you to determine the direction of the case to make sure the family is also aware.

What else should I know?

Children are not able to provide interviews well if they are tired, hungry, scared, or stressed. Allow them to rest up before the interview. If it is at all possible, do not request that the child be interviewed in the middle of the night or early morning.

Assess for safety.:

- Can the parent or caregiver protect the child?
- Do they understand that they should not interview the child?
- Can a safety plan be made to protect the child, and if not, what needs to occur?
- If a safe place is needed for the child and the non-offending caregiver to stay, Tu Casa, Inc. can provide them with temporary shelter.



The Children's Advocacy Center of the San Luis Valley (SLV CAC) Program

Guide for Partnering Agencies

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.

The Children's Advocacy Center of the San Luis Valley (SLV CAC) Program

Tu Casa, Inc.
P.O. Box 473
Alamosa, CO 81101
Phone: (719) 589-2465

www.slvtucasa.net

What population does the SLV CAC serve?

The SLV CAC serves children (ages 0-17) that have been victims of sexual assault and/or severe physical abuse and neglect. We also interview children who have been witnesses to a crime or violence and adults with developmental disabilities who have been victims of sexual assault.

How to make a referral to the SLV CAC:

Upon receiving a report of child sexual abuse, follow your protocol on deciding response time and determining if a forensic interview and/or Sexual Assault Nurse's Exam (SANE) are needed.

Do not interview the child/ren further until they are in a safe environment. The goal is to only interview them once.

- Determine if the child/ren are safe where they are, and if not, decide whether a safety plan can be created or there needs to be a removal of the child until they can be interviewed.
- If safe shelter is needed, Tu Casa, Inc. can provide temporary shelter.
- The SLV CAC would prefer that the child come to the interview rested. It is not in the child's best interest to be interviewed on the scene or late at night/early morning.

The SLV CAC has an electronic referral form that can be distributed to your agency upon request. Your agency can fill out the referral form and email it the SLV CAC Family Advocate (Theresa@slvtucasa.net). You can also call Tu Casa, Inc.'s 24-Hour Hotline (719.589.2465), accessible 24 hours a day and on weekends and holidays.

What happens after I make the referral?

The Family Advocate will call you and talk about setting up a forensic interview and/or SANE Exam. The Family Advocate will get permission from law enforcement to contact the non-offending parent or caregiver to set up the interview. If the referral involves the Department of Social Services, the Family Advocate will let the Caseworker decide who will make contact with the family. Then, the Family Advocate will schedule the forensic interview and call all parties with a date and time.

Where will the forensic interviews be conducted?

All interviews will be conducted at the Children's Advocacy Center of the San Luis Valley. The SLV CAC has an interview room that is set up to be non-suggestive and neutral for the child. There is an observation room where Investigative Multi-Disciplinary Team (MDT) members can observe. All interviews conducted at the SLV CAC will be recorded. Immediately after the interview, MDT members with investigative responsibilities will be given a DVD copy of the interview for their records.

Do I have to be present for the interview?

Yes, the Investigating Officer and/or Caseworker must be present for the interview. At some point during the interview, the Forensic Interviewer will take a break and check in to see if they need more information or clarification. **Your input is very important, and you know better than anyone what you need to conduct a thorough investigation.**

What happens to the non-offending parents and caregivers while the interview is happening?

The Family Advocate will meet with the family and gather basic information regarding contact information and personal information. The Family Advocate will also share

information regarding their options around Victim's Compensation and on-going support services.

Before the interview the Family Advocate will introduce the Forensic Interviewer to the family.

What next?

The Family Advocate will distribute an appointment card with a date, time, and location for you to attend the **Multi-Disciplinary Team** meeting to review the case with all parties involved, including a representative from the District Attorney's Office.

There, all parties will discuss what they have done up to this point, make recommendations for the on-going case, and address any other issues that may arise.

The Family Advocate will serve as the voice for the family.

Need more information...

Contact us at:

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