



Child Advocacy Centers at Children’s Wisconsin Protecting the state’s most vulnerable kids



The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention estimates that **1 in 7 children** nationwide experiences abuse or neglect each year. Wisconsin’s situation is among the most alarming. In 2022 alone, there were **35,000+** reports* of child abuse and neglect filed, equating to a child being abused or neglected every two hours. **These are just the cases we know about.**

Our kids need us

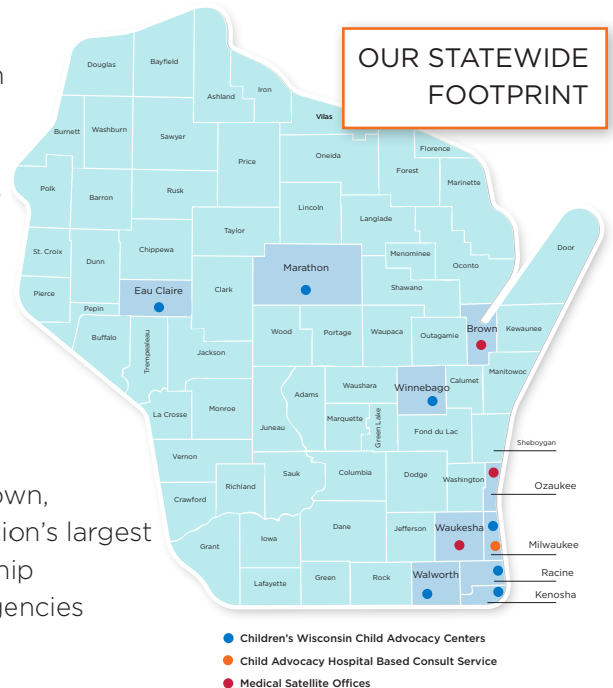
For a child whose well-being has been threatened, the visible bruises may eventually disappear, but the untreated psychological wounds impact their physical, social and mental health now and in the future.

We must do everything we can to protect our kids and ensure they have a path to justice and healing.

Designed for children who have endured physical and emotional trauma, the Children’s Wisconsin Child Advocacy Centers (CACs) serve as a safe space for kids to meet with a multidisciplinary team — including professionals in law enforcement, mental health, child protective services, victim advocacy and more — to share their story. With support from a trusted and trained forensic interviewer, kids only have to relive their painful experience of physical or sexual abuse, neglect or trafficking once. This helps CAC professionals coordinate their care and minimize trauma.

A national leader in child protection

With CACs in Milwaukee, Eau Claire, Kenosha, Outagamie, Racine, Walworth and Wausau counties and medical satellite offices in Brown, Waukesha and Ozaukee counties, Children’s Wisconsin runs the nation’s largest hospital-based CAC network. Our CACs are a collaborative partnership between our health system and nearly 30 community and county agencies across the state.



*Source: The Annie E. Casey Foundation

Caring for Northeast Wisconsin's most vulnerable kids

The vital services we offer are provided at no cost to families, and the spaces are designed to help kids feel safe. We provide the following support:

- **Forensic interviewers** investigate suspected child abuse and neglect in a way that minimizes trauma. Interviews are video-recorded and legally defensible, meaning the child is less likely to need to testify in court and the abuser is more likely to be convicted.
- **Advanced Practice Nurse Practitioners** are specifically trained in the collection of forensic medical evidence to support the investigation of criminal cases. The team at the Fox Valley CAC also supports Willow Tree Child Advocacy Center in Green Bay with medical exams, as part of the comprehensive services we provide.
- **Behavioral health consultants** provide crisis counseling, suicide screening and mental health assessment, short-term stabilization therapy for kids, and referrals to community resources.
- **Child life specialists** deliver the most compassionate care to kids as they prepare for their medical evaluation and forensic interview, an experience that can be stressful and even traumatic.
- **Victim advocate case managers and social workers** support families and connect them to resources to meet immediate needs like housing or food, legal services and more.
- **Resources** for our providers are offered so they can be physically and emotionally prepared to care for kids and their families.
- **Emergency fund** dollars support the urgent, always-evolving basic needs of kids and families.

Our impact on kids

Until child abuse, neglect and trauma no longer exist — and all kids feel safe where they live, go to school and play — the professionals in our CACs will work to help kids feel safe and whole.

- In 2023, the Fox Valley CAC served **475 kids** from 12 counties, with the majority of them residing in Outagamie and Winnebago counties.
- During the first half of 2024, the Fox Valley CAC served **270 kids**.
- Through the most innovative, evidence-based strategies, the Fox Valley CAC is on track to serve more than **600 kids** this year.

Your support is critical

Many of the critical services provided in our CACs are **free to victims and their families** but generate no revenue. A small amount of the cost of medical evaluations is reimbursed through insurance if the family has coverage, but these funds don't sustain all that we need to do to help kids heal.

Philanthropy helps us sustain this work and grow to meet the evolving needs of our kids and families. Now more than ever, **you play an essential role in ensuring kids and families receive the care they need.**



To make a gift to the Fox Valley CAC, please contact Kara Muchow,
Senior Director of Development, at (920) 205-8717 or kmuchow@childrenswi.org.

With your support, we can help our most vulnerable kids have brighter futures. Thank you!