



For Immediate Release

Children's Advocacy Centers Are Making a Difference for Abused Children and Saving the Community Money

Washington, DC-

May 23, 2006 - Members attending National Children's Alliance annual Leadership conference in Washington, DC are learning that two recent studies have shown that Children's Advocacy Centers are working **and** offering cost savings to the communities in which they exist. Currently there are more than 600 CACs that have been admitted as accredited or associate members of National Children's Alliance, the CAC accrediting agency.

U.S Rep. Bud Cramer (D-Ala.): "In 1984, I established the first Children's Advocacy Center in Huntsville, Alabama to help abused children move through the justice system in a child-friendly, child-focused environment. These studies reaffirm the need for Children's Advocacy Centers and I hope these results will encourage communities across the country to develop similar programs of their own."

New research from the University of New Hampshire's Crimes Against Children Research Center has shown that Children's Advocacy Centers are successful in doing just what they were designed to do, namely coordinating investigations of child abuse by bringing police, child protection, medical and mental health professionals together to help families in a child-friendly environment.

The UNH study, The Multi-Site Evaluation of CACs, funded by the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (OJJDP) found children at CACs were more likely to get medical examinations and referrals to mental health services, and parents were more satisfied with the job investigators are doing.

In addition, a separate study recently conducted by the National Children's Advocacy Center in partnership with National Children's Alliance, has shown that on a case by case basis, traditional investigations were 36% more expensive than investigations conducted in a community with a Children's Advocacy Center. The average cost of a CAC investigation was \$2902 compared to \$3949 for a non-CAC investigation, generating a cost savings of more than \$1,000 per case.

"These are important findings because they validate the tremendous contributions of child advocacy centers to the welfare of our children," said Regina B. Schofield, Assistant Attorney General for the Office of Justice Programs, U.S. Department of Justice.

In 2005, Children's Advocacy Centers provided services to more than 160,000 children, the majority being seen for allegations of child sexual abuse.

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