

**CHILDREN'S
ADVOCACY CENTER**
of Santa Clara County



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ADVOCACY
CENTER OF
SANTA CLARA
COUNTY**

IMPACT REPORT

ABOUT THE CAC

Opening in April 2021, the Children's Advocacy Center of Santa Clara County (CAC) has served **1,435** children* and youth, providing a critical role in the prevention, identification, and prosecution of child abuse, while helping young survivors heal from their painful experiences.

The CAC multidisciplinary team approach brings professionals, government agencies and community organizations, who collaborate to offer comprehensive services including: law enforcement investigations, child protective services, prosecution, mental health, medical services, and victim advocacy. This "all under one roof" approach enhances coordination of services and the safety of the children and youth.

Located adjacent to the O'Connor Hospital Medical Center, the Children's Advocacy Center is a state-of-the-art facility that promotes the County's mission and core values: to offer effective, efficient, and quality services. Two other medical programs under the Santa Clara Valley Healthcare Department of Pediatrics are joining the CAC at 455 O'Connor Drive. The Pediatric Developmental Specialty Clinic (PDSC) provides comprehensive educational, developmental, and behavioral assessments for children with academic and behavioral challenges. The SPARK Clinic (Supporting, Protecting And Respecting Kids) is the medical home for children in foster care, and other children in Santa Clara County whose families have been involved with the Department of Family and Children's Services (Social Services).



"Throughout this difficult process, the staff and center were so helpful. I so appreciate everyone. Great experience."
-CAC Caregiver

*Unduplicated counts of children/youth who received services.

OUR MISSION

The Children's Advocacy Center of Santa Clara County is a collaboration dedicated to the health, protection, and empowerment of all youth.

OUR VISION

At the Children's Advocacy Center of Santa Clara County, we envision a County where children are safe from abuse, survivors receive the resources to heal, families are resilient, prevention is possible, and justice is accessible.



The Children's Advocacy Center of Santa Clara County is located at 455 O'Connor Drive in San Jose. This year, two other medical programs under the Santa Clara Valley Healthcare Department of Pediatrics are joining the CAC at 455 O'Connor Drive: the SPARK Clinic and the Pediatric Developmental Specialty Clinic (PDSC). These three programs comprise the Youth Center for Evaluation and Advocacy. Photo courtesy of Loopnet.

OUR GUIDING VALUES



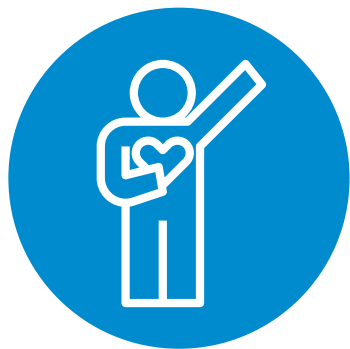
COMMITMENT

Youth and caregivers always come first. We support those who come to the CAC to seek hope, healing, and justice. We serve with compassion, empathy, and respect for all.



COLLABORATION

Our Multidisciplinary Team (MDT) is built on respect – for each other, survivors, and for our shared commitment to the mission and vision of the CAC. We take an integrated approach to the investigation, treatment, and prosecution of child abuse cases.



INTEGRITY

We strive for excellence in all we do, for the sake of the youth and families we serve. A commitment to compassion, professionalism, and ethical behavior informs everything we do. We strive to treat our clients, our staff, and our team partners with dignity and respect, valuing diversity, recognizing privacy and confidentiality.



TRAUMA- INFORMED

We are committed to providing trauma-informed care to all clients including youth and their caregivers, recognizing the principles of safety, trustworthiness, choice, collaboration, and empowerment in the delivery of all services.

YOUR CAC

The CAC is an inclusive, child-focused, facility-based program where representatives from many disciplines meet to discuss decision making about the investigation, medical treatment, counseling, intervention, advocacy for survivors and families, and prosecution of child abuse cases.

The CAC encompasses 11,000 square feet and includes:

- Licensed medical clinic with three exam rooms and offices, an X-ray room, and a nurse station.
- Multipurpose spaces, including children's playrooms, family room, a multifunctional classroom, and consultation areas.
- Workspaces for protective services, including two forensic interview and observation rooms, with: one-way glass and audio/visual recording systems; and office areas for legal representatives, peace officers, victim advocates, and social workers.
- Conference rooms and private offices, workspaces, and hoteling stations for partner agencies.
- Therapist office space, counseling space for individuals, families, and groups.

Take a virtual tour of the facility by clicking on our website and video [here](#).



Play space adjacent to the forensic interview rooms.



One of three medical exam rooms at the CAC.

OUR SERVICES

Services are free, comprehensive, and designed to meet the special needs of each child and family.



Multidisciplinary Forensic Interviews

Forensic Interviews provide children and youth with a safe space to tell what happened to them to experts specially trained in trauma-informed and legally sound interviewing. These interviews are essential to the investigation of child sexual abuse, physical abuse, and neglect. All forensic interviews are video- and audio-recorded and can produce evidence critical to the investigation and criminal prosecution. Multidisciplinary Forensic Interviews are monitored and guided by law enforcement, social services, and prosecution to reduce the number of times children and youth need to be asked about the abuse they have suffered.



Medical Exams

Specially-trained and expert medical staff provides age-appropriate evaluations for young survivors of sexual abuse, assault, physical abuse, and neglect. Patients, parents, and caregivers are often relieved to learn that their bodies are healthy.



Victim Services & Advocacy

Victim Advocates from YWCA Golden Gate Silicon Valley and Community Solutions work in collaboration with the Victim Services Unit from the Santa Clara County District Attorney's Office. Advocates support the child, parents, and caregivers throughout the investigation and prosecution of the case, connecting families to support services including victim's compensation, confidential advocacy, case management, therapy, and counseling.



Therapy

Starting April 2023, we are able to offer on-site specialized, evidence-based, trauma-focused mental health services to CAC youth and their family members to help cope with the trauma and to assist them through the healing process.



Outreach & Education

The CAC provides expert training for professionals. We partner with organizations to offer classes for families and the community on healthy parenting and child abuse prevention.

ANNUAL HIGHLIGHTS



BUILDING OUR CAPACITY

The CAC has increased our staffing and program capacity, hiring bilingual Victim Advocates, Forensic Interviewers, Medical Providers, and Therapist. Meet our team [here](#).



EMOTIONAL SUPPORT

One of the CAC's most celebrated employees is Darcy, a Labrador Retriever who joined the CAC in October 2022. Darcy is a specially trained facility dog who changes the lives of children at the CAC every day. Learn more about Darcy's story [here](#).

CHILD ABUSE MEDICAL EVALUATION HOTLINE

669-299-8810 CALL 24/7, 365!

In January 2023, the Medical Clinic at the CAC launched the Child Abuse Medical Evaluation Hotline, a resource for professionals and community members to access timely and expert information about medical care for children who may have experienced child abuse and neglect. Now law enforcement, social workers, and other professionals can dial the 24/7 hotline for consultation and to schedule medical care for abused or neglected children. Mandated reporters who contact the CAC for medical consultation or assessment are connected with the Department of Family & Children's Services Child Abuse and Neglect Center (CANC) hotline.



AWARDS & RECOGNITION

The CAC has received recognition locally and across the state. In November 2022, the CAC received the Santa Clara County Executive's Office *Team Excellence Award* highlighting the CAC's effective collaboration across multidisciplinary teams in the County. In February 2023, Jennifer Puthoff, CAC Program Manager, was recognized by the District Attorney's Office during the Annual Awards Ceremony for her leadership and development of the CAC's programming. In April of 2023, Marlene Sturm, CAC Medical Director, received the 2023 CAPSAC Neal Snyder Outstanding Service Award. CAPSAC is the California chapter of the American Professional Society on the Abuse of Children, a leading national organization supporting professionals who serve children. You can learn more [here](#).



Prior to the establishment of the CAC, services for child abuse victims were dispersed at different locations throughout the County. Now we are able to offer comprehensive services all under one roof.

April 2022-March 31, 2023, the CAC provided the following services:

513 Forensic Interviews

Provided for children and teens in partnership with thirteen Law Enforcement and Investigative Agencies from across the County, as well as well as federal agencies and those from out of county- **18% increase from 2022 and a 40% increase prior to the establishment of the CAC.**

434 Specialized Medical Exams

Provided for children and teens of alleged sexual abuse, sexual assault, physical abuse and neglect. Services include Sexual Assault Forensic Exams, Physical Abuse Exams and follow-up medical appointments-**49% increase in the number of exams and medical encounters as compared to 2019, prior to the COVID-19 pandemic and the establishment of the CAC.**

15,163 Advocacy Services*

For clients, siblings and protective family members including confidential victim advocacy, case management, referrals to counseling and therapy services, advocacy support during forensic interviews and medical exams, as well as court accompaniment-**1,000% increase in advocacy services since 2021.**

*Number reflects the total number of advocacy services received by clients, siblings, and families. Some families received more than one service.

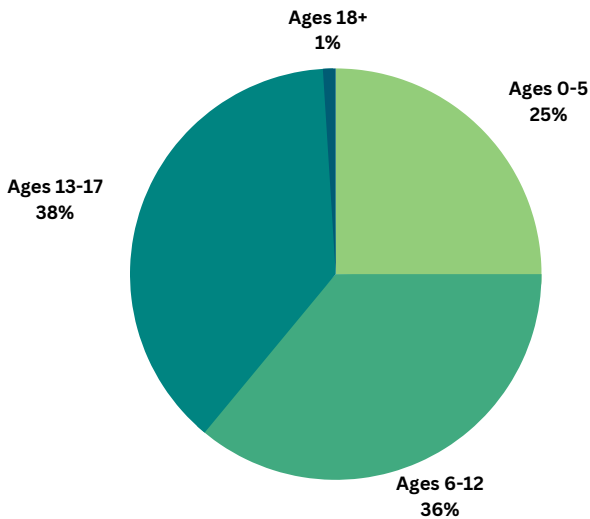
347 Professionals Received Training

Provided community education for stakeholders and the public, including community tours, lectures and the certified CFIT (California Forensic Interview Training), Interview Techniques Training and FBI Sextortion training for investigators, detectives, and child welfare staff-**27% increase since 2022.**

CHILDREN & YOUTH AT THE CAC

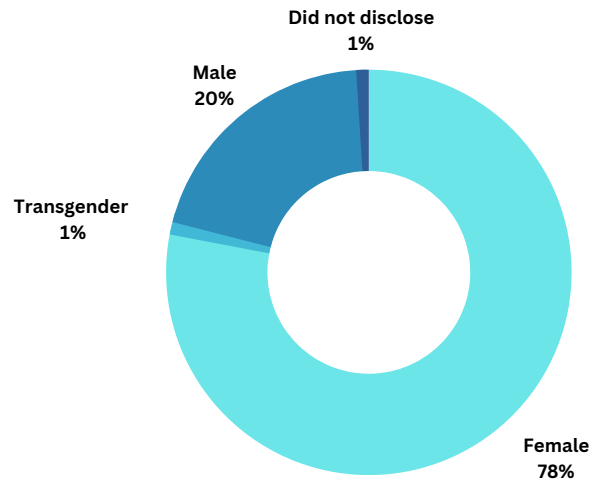
CAC Clients by Age

Includes Forensic Interviews and Medical Services
April 2022-March 2023, n=772
Figure 1.



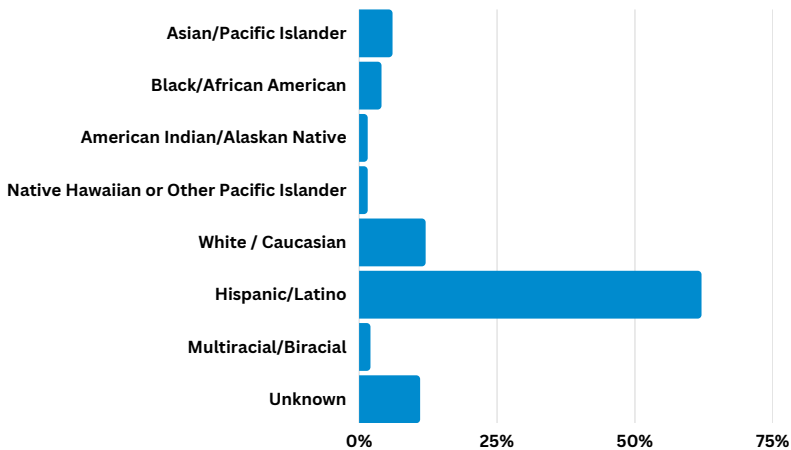
CAC Clients by Gender

Includes Forensic Interviews and Medical Services
April 2022-March 2023, n=772
Figure 2.



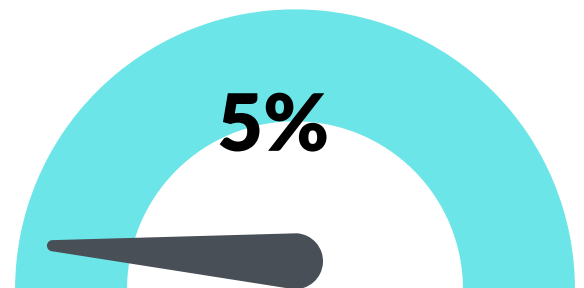
CAC Clients by Race & Ethnicity

Includes Forensic Interviews and Medical Services
April 2022-March 2023, n=772
Figure 3.



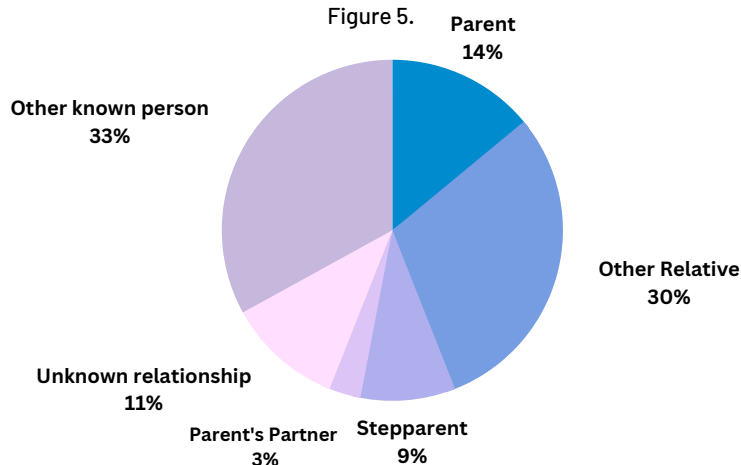
CAC Clients Identified with Special Needs

Includes Forensic Interviews and Medical Services
April 2022-March 2023, n=772
Figure 4.



Relationship of Alleged Offender to Youth/Child

Includes Forensic Interviews and Medical Services
April 2022-March 2023, n=772
Figure 5.



OUR IMPACT

The CAC maintains accountability to our mission and quality standards by surveying* clients and our Multidisciplinary Team (MDT). What does this mean for youth and their families? All of us working together to provide the support children and their caregivers need to thrive and heal.

"Que me hicieron sentir segura."

"That they made me feel secure/confident." -Youth

"Very friendly, available, helpful and sensitive and made us feel cared for in many ways."

-Caregiver

"I appreciated how attentive they are to making my child feel comfortable including myself."

-Caregiver



"I like how they listen and made me feel open to talk about this."

-Youth

"Thank you for the CAC's hard work, especially on my behalf and on behalf of the children we serve. I am so grateful." - Social Worker, DFCS

"I am thankful for the staff, the friendly manner, communication of expectations, and safe and friendly environment for my child." -Caregiver

"I liked how they make you feel very safe and like you have control over everything."

-Youth

"There is equal respect and space provided to people across disciplines." - Peace Officer, MDT Member

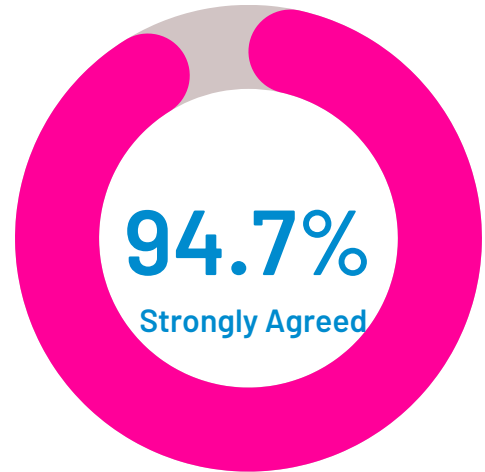


*CAC received 377 survey responses from Caregivers and 368 responses from Youth from April 2021-March 31, 2023. Outcome Measurement System (OMS) is a standardized, research-based set of surveys designed to measure Children's Advocacy Center (CAC) performance based on feedback from families and multidisciplinary team (MDT) members. The program is coordinated by the National Children's Alliance (NCA), the accrediting body and membership association for CACs in the United States and beyond.

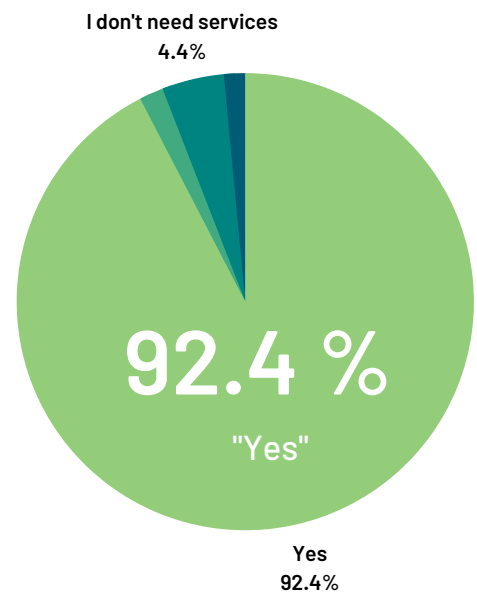
OUR IMPACT

Parents or Caregivers were asked:

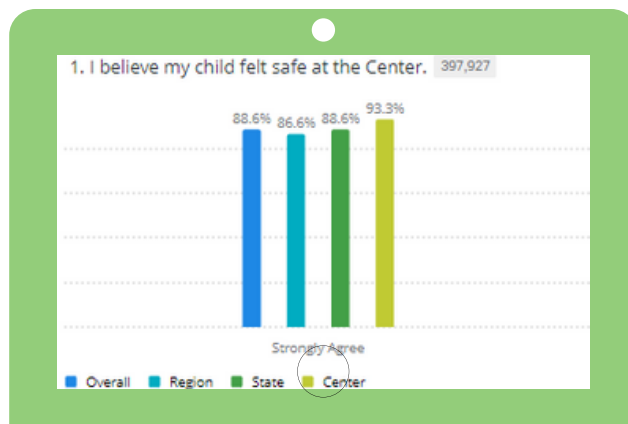
Did the CAC Staff provide you with resources to support your child and respond to his or her needs in the days and weeks ahead?



Did someone at the CAC give you information about how to access services like counseling or family support?



The Children's Advocacy Center of Santa Clara County, for the second year, has consistently outranked other CACs from across the State, Region, and Country in all twelve domains.



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HOPE. HEALING. JUSTICE.

"The collaboration between law enforcement, advocates, our health care partners, and social workers, at the CAC has been very beneficial. "

I want to take a moment to express my appreciation for the entire staff and program at the Children's Advocacy Center of Santa Clara County (CAC). The CAC medical staff provided consultation for two of our cases and after-hours. I utilized the Child Abuse Medical Evaluation 24/7 Hotline and found it not only helpful, but essential. Having twenty-four-hour access allowed my agency to resolve serious matters not only in a timely manner, but in a manner that best serves children involved in those cases.

I have been in law enforcement for twenty-two-years. Most of that time I have spent as a detective and supervisor investigating physical and sexual abuse of children. I have a passion for these cases as they affect the most vulnerable members of our communities. I have traveled to other jurisdictions and worked with multiple other agencies over the past two decades. In my experience, I observed them working collaboratively with their partners in social services and health care to complete their sole mission of keeping children safe. Yet, we never had a program such as this here, in Santa Clara County. Having a CAC here for our local agencies and partners was something I advocated for many years. I'm excited that it finally came to fruition!

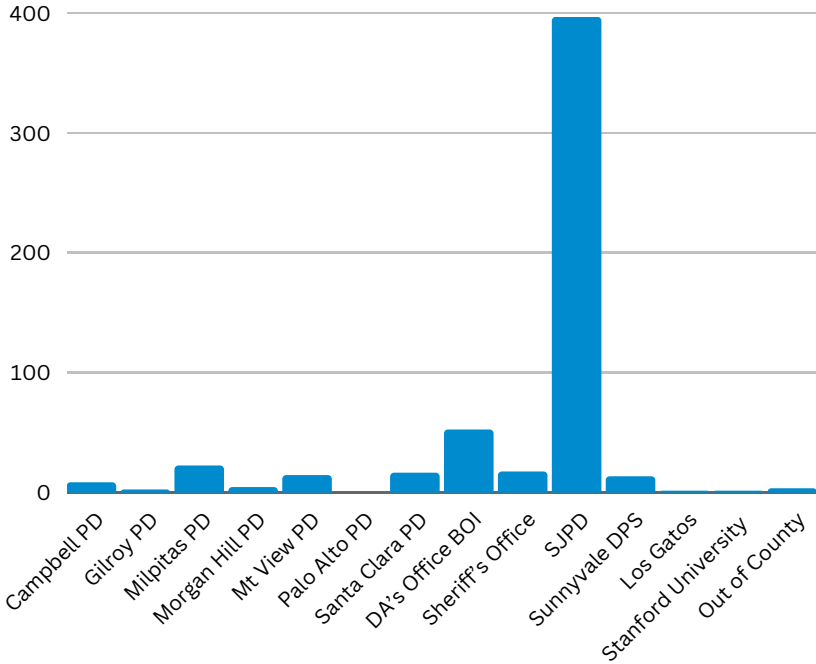
Lastly, the collaboration between law enforcement, advocates, our health care partners, and social workers, at the CAC has been very beneficial. I think we all agree, our mission is the same. That is, the wellbeing and safety of young children in our community.

Tony Serrano, Lieutenant, Bureau of Special Operations, Investigations Unit
Sunnyvale Department of Public Safety

BY THE NUMBERS 2023

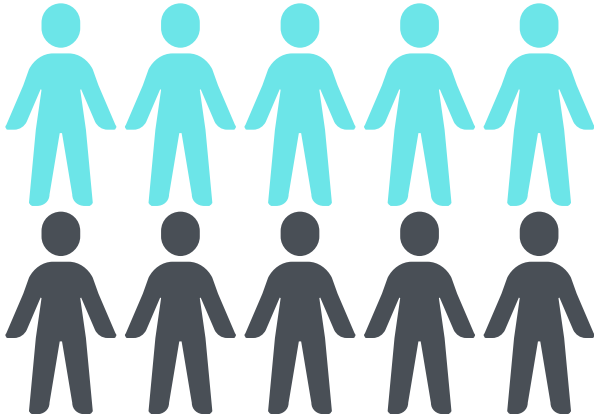
Forensic Interview Referrals to the CAC by Law Enforcement Agency

April 2022-March 31, 2023, n=513
Figure 6.



Forensic Interview "Medical Hand-Off" Referrals to CAC Medical Clinic

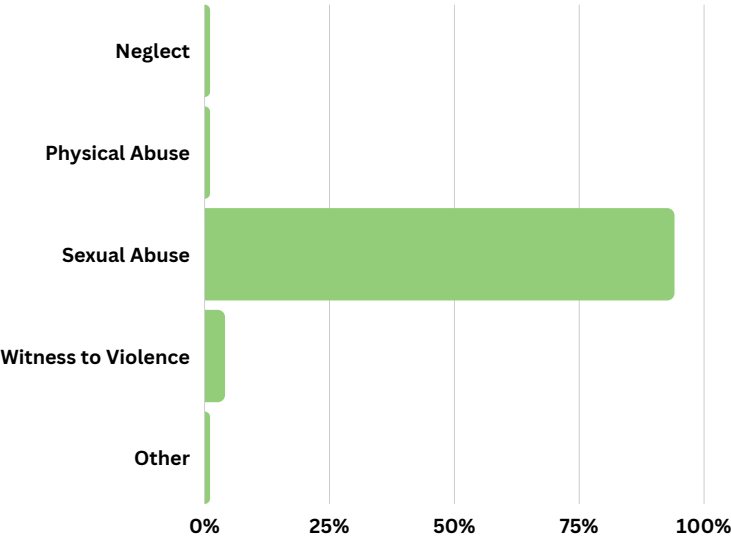
April 2022-March 31, 2023, n=460
Figure 7.



89% of youth who received a Forensic Interview had a hand off by law enforcement to the CAC Medical Clinic with 53% accepting medical services.

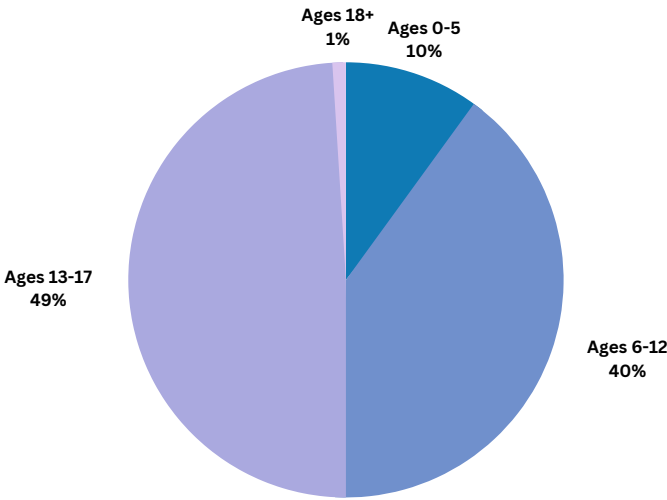
CAC Forensic Interviews Conducted by Allegation Type

April 2022-March 31, 2023, n=513
Figure 8.



CAC Forensic Interviews Conducted by Age

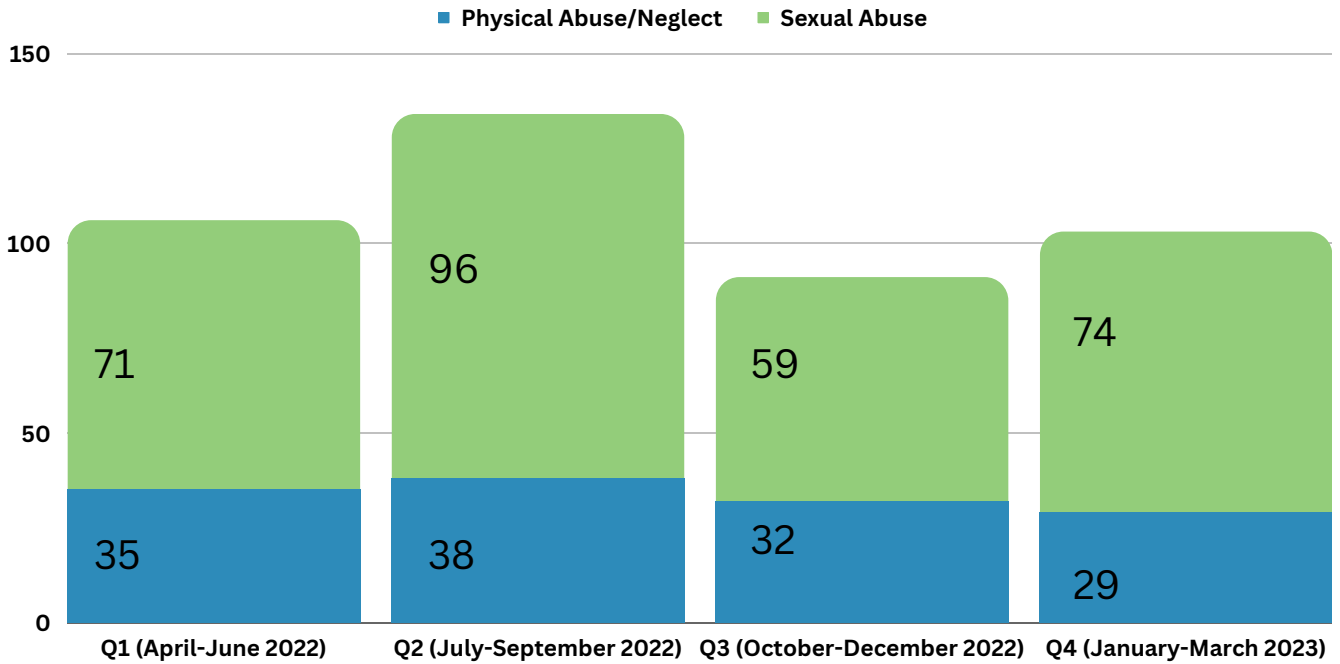
April 2022-March 31, 2023, n=513
Figure 9.



BY THE NUMBERS 2023

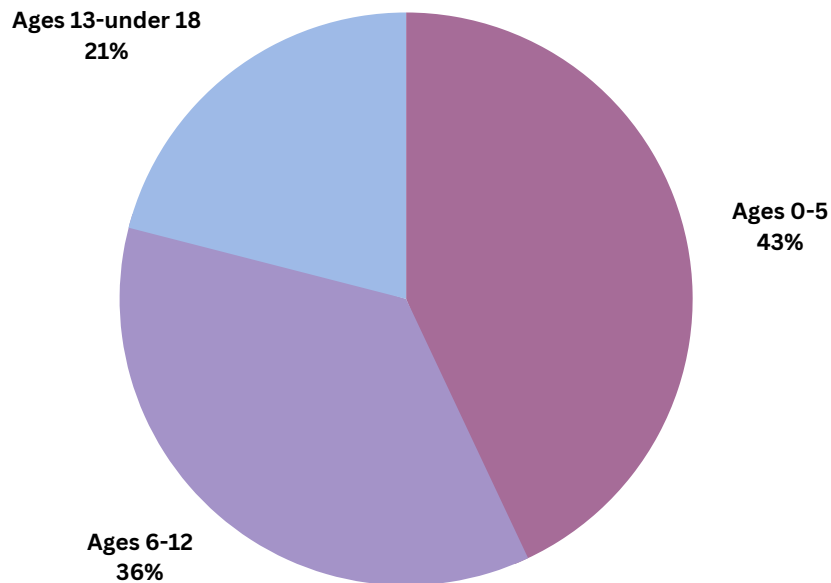
CAC Medical Encounters: Case Distribution

Case Distribution for Medical Encounters by Quarter
April 2022-March 2023, n=434. Figure 10.



CAC Medical Encounters by Age

April 2022-March 31, 2023, n=434
Figure 11.



ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Thank you to our partners. Your support has helped children in our community to find the hope, help, and healing they deserve.

Child Abuse Prevention Council of Santa Clara County

City of San Jose

County of Santa Clara, Facilities & Fleet Department

County of Santa Clara, Office of the District Attorney

County of Santa Clara, Office of Gender-Based Violence Prevention

County of Santa Clara, Office of LGBTQ

County of Santa Clara, Technology Services & Solutions

Santa Clara County Board of Supervisors

Santa Clara Valley Health Care

The Valley Medical Center Foundation

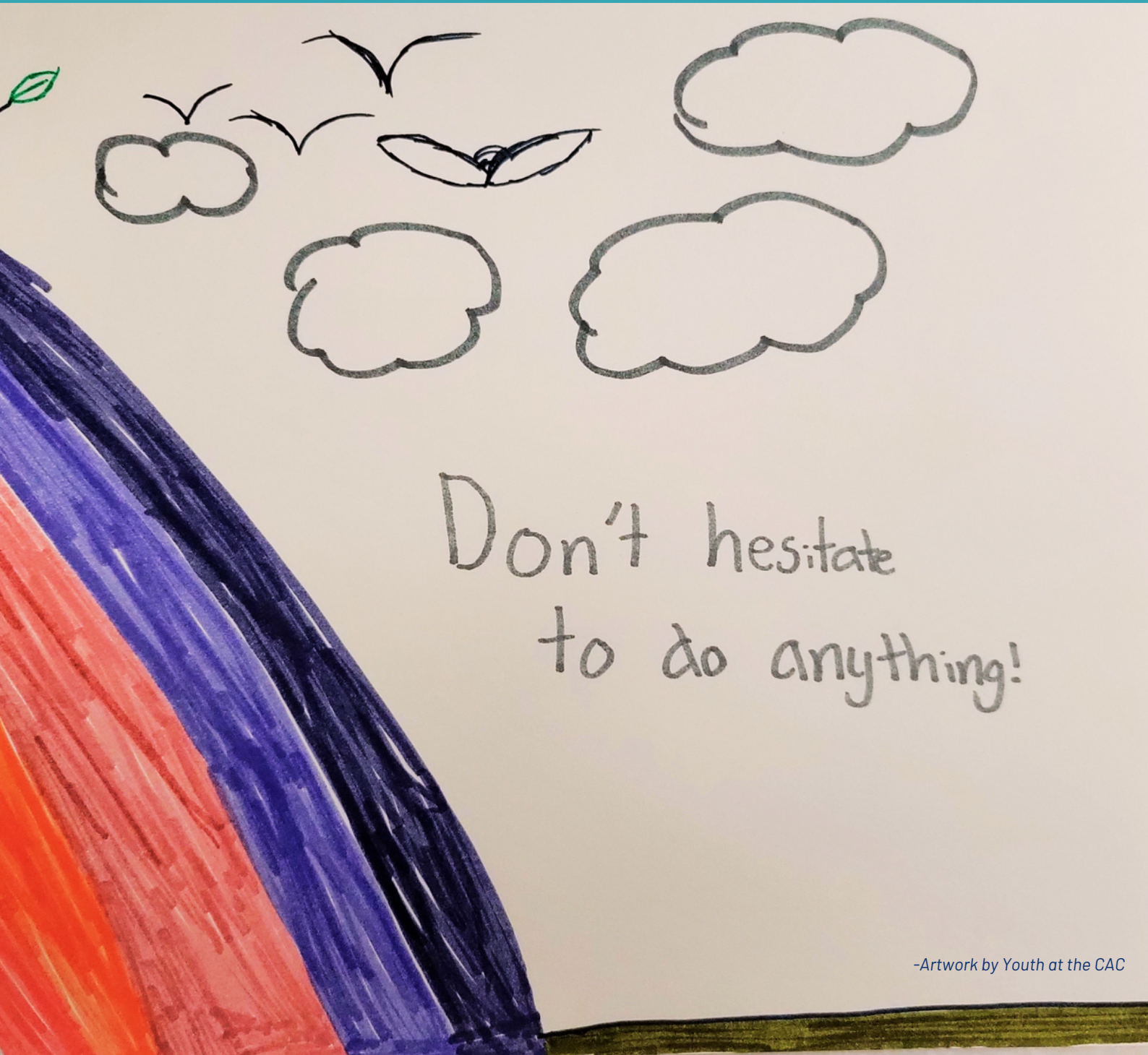
Law Enforcement & Public Safety Partners

- Bureau of Investigation -District Attorney- County of Santa Clara
- Campbell Police Department
- CA Highway Patrol
- County of Santa Clara Office of the Sheriff
- Department of Family Children Services -Social Services- County of Santa Clara
- Department of Homeland Security (DHS)
- Gilroy Police Department
- Federal Bureau of Investigation
- Los Altos Police Department
- Milpitas Police Department
- Los Gatos - Monte Sereno Police Department
- Morgan Hill Police Department
- Mountain View Police Department
- Palo Alto Police Department
- San Jose Police Department
- Santa Clara Police Department
- Sunnyvale Department of Public Safety

Community Partners

- Bill Wilson Center
- Community Solutions
- First 5 Santa Clara County
- Inclusion Collaborative of the Santa Clara County Office of Education
- Legal Advocates for Children & Youth (LACY), Law Foundation of Silicon Valley
- Room Redux of Bay Area
- Santa Clara County Library District
- Stanford, Pediatric Advocacy Program, Stanford School of Medicine
- The Welcoming Center, Seneca Family of Agencies
- The Q Corner - Santa Clara County Behavioral Health Services
- Toeniskoetter Development, Inc.
- Pacific Clinics
- YWCA Golden Gate Silicon Valley





Don't hesitate
to do anything!

-Artwork by Youth at the CAC

Questions? Contact us.

Contact

Children's Advocacy Center of
Santa Clara County

455 O'Connor Drive, Suite 150,
San Jose, CA, 95128

669-299-8800 (Main)

669-299-8810 (Child Abuse Medical
Evaluation 24/7 Hotline)

669-299-8830 (Forensic Interviews)



www.cac-sccgov.org



CAC@dao.sccgov.org



Watch our video [here](#)

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