

What is H.E.A.R.T.?

- ♥ The majority of the children seen at Child Advocacy Centers (CAC) in NH are of school age. Through our Helping Ensure Appropriate Response to Trauma (H.E.A.R.T) program, CACs are partnering with school districts to address trauma related needs of these children.
- ♥ The goal of the H.E.A.R.T. program is, with caregiver permission, CAC staff will inform the appropriate school personnel that a student has experienced some sort of childhood trauma which led them to be seen at a CAC, and special care may be warranted.
- ♥ CAC staff will NOT inform the school of the often personal and private nature of the trauma the child experienced.
- ♥ It is the hope of the CAC that through this program, children who are seen at our CACs will receive an appropriate response to their trauma related learning and behavioral struggles, ensuring that they can be successful learners in their school community.
- ♥ Through this collaboration with local school communities, we hope to ensure that children who experience child abuse, neglect or other adversity can heal, survive and thrive not only in their education, but in life.



**Granite State
Children's Alliance**[™]
New Hampshire's Network of
Child Advocacy Centers

For more information on the
H.E.A.R.T. Program please contact:

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H.E.A.R.T

Helping **E**nsure **A**ppropriate
Response to **T**rauma

What is a Child Advocacy Center?

The Granite State Children's Alliance (GSCA) represents New Hampshire's network of Child Advocacy Centers (CACs).



Our mission is to provide all victims of child abuse a neutral environment where justice, healing, equity, and prevention are fostered through consistent, high quality and sustaining collaboration of community partners.

It is our goal to help every child victim move beyond their trauma to heal, survive and thrive.

Each year CACs in NH provide forensic interviews, family support and follow up services to over 2,000 child victims and their families.

Child Advocacy Centers are located in every county in New Hampshire to serve children who experience physical or sexual abuse or who are witness to violent crime. Each CAC is a welcoming, family friendly facility and all services are confidential. NH's CACs provide forensic interviewing, family support and other healing services free of charge. We respond to the various forms of child abuse which exist in every socio-economic category and the majority of children seen in our centers are of school attendance age.



- ♥ 20% of New Hampshire's Children had one or more Adverse Childhood Experience (A.C.E) in 2018.*
- ♥ Child Advocacy Centers in NH served 2011 children for interviews related to physical abuse, sexual abuse, neglect, as a witnesses to violent crime or some other A.C.E in 2018.
- ♥ A study of 2100 children in Spokane Washington showed the following:**
 - ♥ Children exposed to 1 or more ACEs had a 54% chance of having academic/behavior problems at school.
 - ♥ Children exposed to 2 or more ACEs had a 74% chance of having academic/behavior problems at school.
 - ♥ Children exposed to 3 or more ACEs had an 88% chance of having academic/behavior problems at school.
- ♥ The majority of children seen at NH Child Advocacy Centers are of school age. Often educational staff, teachers, guidance or school administrators are not aware that a student has experienced some sort of trauma or adverse experience.
- ♥ Research indicates that appropriate response and early intervention can help to mitigate the long term effects of childhood trauma.
- ♥ The H.E.A.R.T program will form a collaboration between school districts and Child Advocacy Centers in order (with parental permission) to inform appropriate school personnel when a child has been seen at a CAC, so that school staff can respond to the child's needs in an appropriate, trauma informed way.