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The **Granite State Children's Alliance** (GSCA) is a state-wide organization dedicated to putting the needs of New Hampshire's child abuse victims first.

Accredited by the National Children's Alliance, The GSCA operates four Child Advocacy Centers, directly serving the children of Belknap, Cheshire and Hillsborough Counties. The GSCA also operates the membership organization for all Child Advocacy Centers in the State, providing technical assistance, training, and organizational resources to ensure that all children in our State have access to high quality, comprehensive, specialized and culturally competent services in their local Child Advocacy Center.

**Mission:** The **Granite State Children's Alliance** strives to ensure that all victims of child abuse and their families are provided a neutral environment where justice, healing, equity and prevention are fostered through the consistent, high quality and sustaining collaboration of community partnerships at Child Advocacy Centers.

**History:** New Hampshire's efforts to better protect its children date back to 1983, when the New Hampshire State Senate established a committee to study the State's child protection system. Recommendations from that committee led to the creation of the Attorney General's Task Force on Child Abuse, which would ultimately inspire the creation of New Hampshire's first Child Advocacy Center, the Child Advocacy Center of Rockingham County.

With the CAC of Rockingham County providing a successful model, Governor Craig Benson issued an executive order in July, 2003 to establish the Governor's Commission for Child Protection. In November, 2003, that Commission issued its findings and recommended the development of a statewide network of Child Advocacy Centers. Governor Benson and Attorney General Peter Heed then secured funding to help establish CACs in every county of the State, with the funding for these Centers phasing down over a period of 5 years.

The **Granite State Children's Alliance** (GSCA) was born in 2004 as the Child Advocacy Center of Hillsborough County. In 2011, the CAC of Hillsborough County merged with the Greater Lakes Child Advocacy Center, the Monadnock Region Child Advocacy Center and the New Hampshire Network of Child Advocacy Centers to become the **Granite State Children's Alliance**. The GSCA operates Child Advocacy Centers in Keene, Laconia, Manchester and Nashua. It is also operates the State's National Children's Alliance Chapter, a membership organization which provides technical assistance, training, and organizational resources to all Child Advocacy Centers across New Hampshire.

The **Granite State Children's Alliance** is a 501(c)3 non-profit organization, with more than 90% of its budget coming from caring citizens and businesses in New Hampshire.

## **Programs operated by the Granite State Children's Alliance**

### **Belknap County**

The Greater Lakes Child Advocacy Center  
65 Water Street  
Laconia, NH 03246  
(603) 524-5497

### **Cheshire County**

Monadnock Region Child Advocacy Center  
164 Emerald Street  
Keene, NH 03431  
(603) 352-0413

### **Hillsborough County – South**

Child Advocacy Center of Hillsborough County  
2 Wellman Avenue, Suite 140  
Nashua, NH 03064  
(603) 889-0321

### **Hillsborough County - North**

Child Advocacy Center of Hillsborough County  
960 Auburn Street  
Manchester, NH 03103  
(603) 623-2300

## **Independent Members of the Granite State Children's Alliance:**

### **Carroll County**

The Child Advocacy Center of Carroll County  
56 Union Street  
Post Office Box 948  
Wolfeboro, NH 03894  
(603) 569-9840

### **Merrimack County**

Merrimack County Child Advocacy Center  
4 Court Street  
Concord, NH 03301  
(603) 228-0529

### **Coos County**

Child Advocacy Center of Coos County  
P.O. Box 6623  
Berlin, NH 03570  
(603) 788-4633

### **Rockingham County**

Child Advocacy Center of Rockingham County  
100 Campus Drive  
Suite 11  
Portsmouth, NH 03801  
(603) 422-8240

### **Grafton/Sullivan Counties**

CAC of Grafton and Sullivan Counties at  
Dartmouth Hitchcock Medical Center  
1 Medical Center Drive  
Lebanon, NH 03756  
(603) 653-9012

43B Birch Street  
Parkland Professional Building  
Derry, NH 03038  
(603) 434-5565

24 Opera House Square  
Moody Building, Suite 203  
Claremont, NH 03734

### **Strafford County**

Strafford County Child Advocacy Center  
259 County Farm Road  
P.O. Box 799  
Dover, NH 03821  
(603) 516-8100

Mt. Eustin Commons  
Cottage Street, Suite 271  
Littleton, NH 03561

**Child Advocacy Centers:** Child Advocacy Centers (CACs) are child-focused, facility-based programs where representatives from many disciplines work together to conduct interviews and make team decisions about child abuse cases. New Hampshire's CACs are based on a proven, nationally recognized model and bring together trained professionals to investigate abuse and coordinate the ongoing support of child victims of abuse.

Partners of New Hampshire's Child Advocacy Centers include:

- **County Attorney/Prosecutors** – The county prosecutor leads the investigative team.
- **Law Enforcement** – New Hampshire's police departments assign investigators to their local Child Advocacy Center team. They gather evidence and interview non-offending parents, suspects and other witnesses.
- **Child Protective Services** – The mission of the Division for Children, Youth and Families (DCYF) is to protect children. DCYF social workers conduct interviews with family members and develop safety plans. They will refer children and families to counseling and other support services in the community.
- **Medical Providers** – Physicians assigned to a Child Advocacy Center team have years of experience examining children for possible abuse.
- **Crisis Service Advocates** – A crisis service advocate provides support to non-offending parents and other family members who have come with the child to the CAC. The crisis center advocate is not part of the investigative team and does not discuss confidential conversations with investigators unless they're made aware of unreported abuse that by law must be reported.
- **Victim/Witness Advocates** – A victim/witness advocate from the County Attorney's office will attend the forensic interview, track cases as they come in for prosecution, and work with the family to prepare for trial. They will accompany the family to court and provide other necessary support services.

The Child Advocacy Centers operated by the Granite State Children's Alliance are accredited by the National Children's Alliance (NCA), having passed a rigorous accreditation process which tested our Centers against NCA's standards of quality service provision.

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Over 2000 abused children are handled by New Hampshire's Child Advocacy Centers each year. Estimates are that only 1-in-10 abused children ever come forward. Nationally, 1-in-4 girls and 1-in-6 boys will be sexually abused by their 18<sup>th</sup> birthdays.

The physical and sexual abuse of children is a silent epidemic. There is a need to educate the people of New Hampshire about the depths of the problem and the solutions the Granite State Children's Alliance and its network of Child Advocacy Centers provide.