

Improving the CAC experience
for children and strengthening
pathways for specialized health
services for child well being.



Granite State
Children's Alliance™

New Hampshire's Network of
Child Advocacy Centers



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FROM THE
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR



Joy Barrett, GSCA Executive Director

Dear Friends and Supporters,

2016 was an exciting and pivotal year for the Granite State Children's Alliance (GSCA) as we remain dedicated to continually improve the lives of vulnerable children and their families through a trauma informed, victim centered response to child abuse and neglect. While there are thousands of individual stories of survival, nothing compares to the enormous demonstration of bravery, resiliency and hope we witness in children each day.

Last year GSCA along with member Child Advocacy Centers (CAC) across NH achieved several milestones contributing to improvements in our response to child abuse.

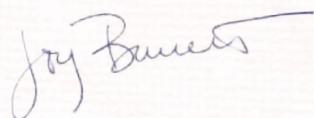
- GSCA released a public responsibility movement KNOW & TELL - knowing the signs of abuse and telling responsible authorities when you recognize them.
- Together we celebrated the accomplishment of all NH CACs earning national accreditation with the National Children's Alliance.
- We are proud of the development of a model CAC in Laconia where children will receive health services on-site through the support of agency partners.
- And with an increase in awarded funds, our CACs made improvements in staff capacity with the addition of Family Support Specialist positions to provide the highest-quality care to child victims of abuse and their families.

The momentum of 2016's successes gave us extraordinary motivation to look forward to 2017 and beyond as we ventured on a yearlong strategic planning initiative, Runway to 2021. The results of this work will positively affect the direction of our organization, our child protection system in NH and our CAC movement for the future. This report provides an introduction of who we are, what we do, and highlights where we are going.

This is the year to take the next step forward remaining dedicated to the tireless fight to assure that children and their families have a victim centered CAC experience in a safe and responsive place to move beyond their trauma to Heal, Survive and Thrive.

Thank you for supporting our work!

With gratitude,



Joy is the Executive Director for the Granite State Children's Alliance (GSCA). GSCA provides leadership, technical assistance and support to all Child Advocacy Centers (CACs) in NH.

GSCA also has the privilege of operating CACs in the Hillsborough, Cheshire and Belknap Counties.



WHO WE ARE

The Granite State Children's Alliance (GSCA) is a statewide chapter organization dedicated to putting the needs of New Hampshire's child abuse victims first. Accredited by the National Children's Alliance, GSCA operates four Child Advocacy Centers (CACs),

directly serving the children of Belknap, Cheshire and Hillsborough Counties. GSCA also serves as the New Hampshire Chapter of the National Children's Alliance, providing technical assistance, training, and organizational resources to

all Child Advocacy Centers in the State.

Who we are, What we do and Why it matters

Mission

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

History

Here is a brief overview of New Hampshire's Child Advocacy Center Movement.

- 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 in 2001, 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 each Center phasing down over a period of 5 years.
- Today, New Hampshire has 100 percent coverage with a CAC in every county; two in Hillsborough County and every CAC in NH is accredited with the National Children's Alliance.

WHAT IS A CAC?

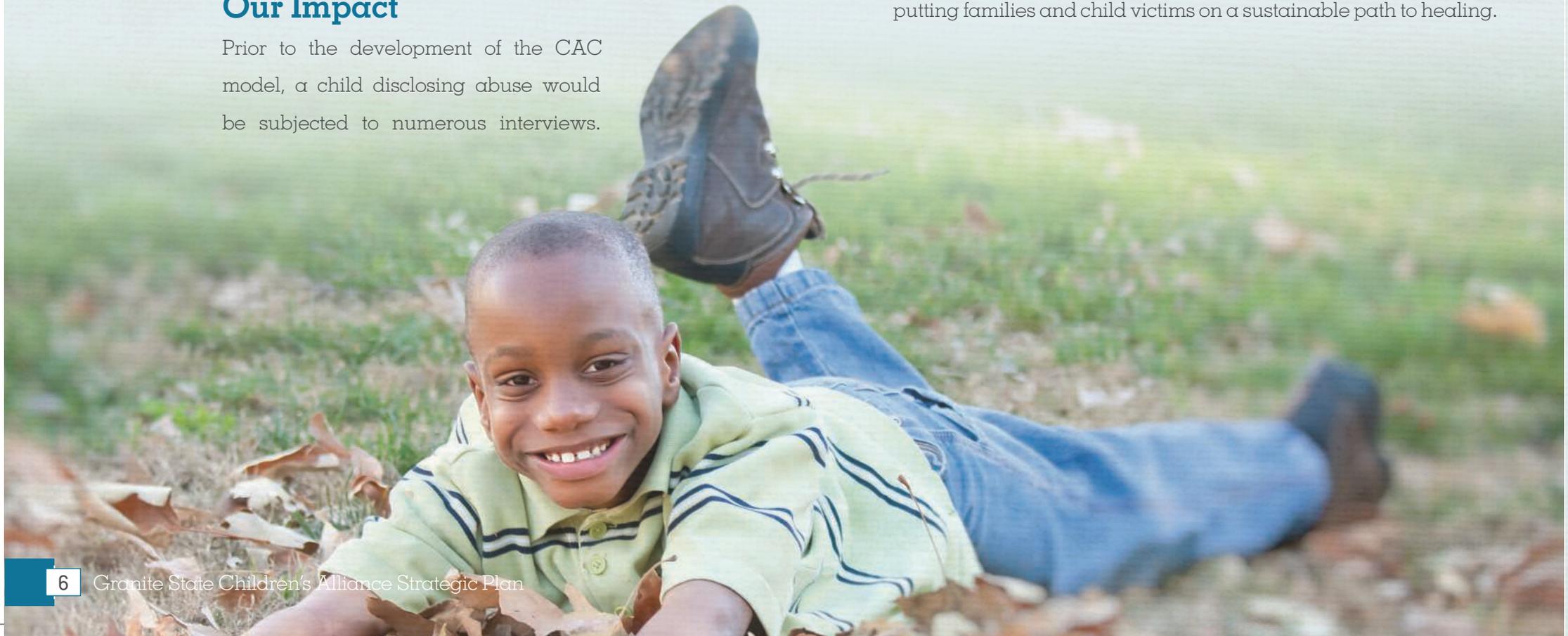
Based on a nationally recognized model, **New Hampshire's Child Advocacy Centers** are community partnerships dedicated to pursuing the truth in child abuse cases and coordinating social services for child victims. By bringing together our State's law enforcement, county attorneys, protective services, victim advocacy agencies and health professionals, New Hampshire's child advocacy centers provide safe, child friendly locations for interviewing child victims. Children are interviewed by a forensic interviewer. The forensic interviewer has special training and is experienced in talking with children.

Our Impact

Prior to the development of the CAC model, a child disclosing abuse would be subjected to numerous interviews.

The social service and the criminal justice systems, at that time, were not working together in an effective manner which added to children's emotional distress, and created a segmented, repetitious, and often frightening experience for child victims. Compounding this problem was the lack of communication between the professional disciplines involved. This resulted in child sex offenders not being held accountable for their crimes, leaving children and our community at serious risk.

The Granite State Children's Alliance seeks to break the cycle of abuse not only by seeking justice for child victims, but also by putting families and child victims on a sustainable path to healing.



A Different Approach

The Multi-Disciplinary Team (MDT) approach used at Child Advocacy Centers has been deemed best practice in the investigation of child abuse cases. This approach is coordinated by a CAC Forensic Interviewer and ensures all aspects of the case are examined and that efforts are coordinated between MDT professionals.

Our Partners

Professionals assigned to a Child Advocacy Center team specialize in the area of child abuse.

Our partners include:

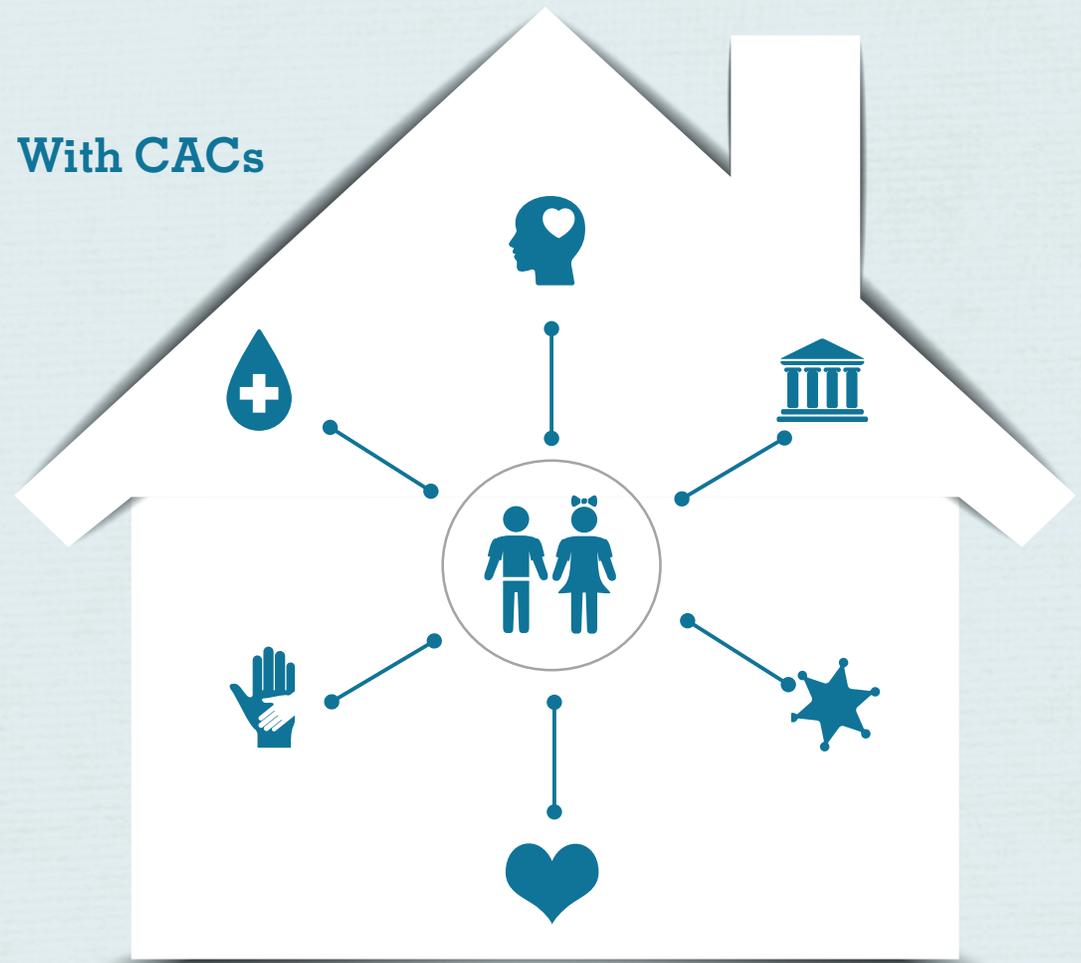
- **County Attorney/Prosecutors** – The county prosecutor leads the team and has the final decision as to whether charges will be filed. Prosecution may not happen in every case.
- **Law Enforcement** – Police Departments in New Hampshire assign investigators to their local Child Advocacy Center team. They interview children, non-offending parents, suspects and other witnesses and gather evidence from the scene of the alleged event.
- **Child Protective Services** – The role of the Division for Children, Youth and Families (DCYF) is to help protect children. The DCYF social workers conduct interviews with family members and develop safety plans. They may refer children and families to counseling or other support services within the community.
- **Medical Providers** – Physicians assigned to a Child Advocacy Center team have years of experience examining children for possible abuse. The exam may not prove if the child has been abused or not. Eighty percent of all children who have been abused have normal exams.
- **Crisis Center Advocates** – A crisis center advocate is available to provide support to non-offending parents/caregivers who have come with the child to the interview. The crisis center advocate is not part of the investigative team. They are a resource for support, referrals and information.
- **Victim/Witness Advocates** – Child Advocacy Centers work closely with the victim/witness programs at each County Attorney's Office. The victim/witness advocate attends the interview, tracks cases as they come in for prosecution, works with the family to prepare for a criminal case in court as well as provide other support services.

When police or child protective services believe a child is being abused, the child is brought to the CAC—a safe, child-focused environment—by a caregiver or other “safe” adult. At the CAC, the child tells their story once to a trained Forensic Interviewer who knows the right questions to ask in a way that does not re-traumatize the child. Then, a team that includes medical professionals, law enforcement, mental health, prosecution, child protective services, victim advocacy, and other professionals make decisions together about how to help the child based on the interview. CACs refer children to therapy and medical exams, victim advocacy, case management, and other services. This is called the multidisciplinary team (MDT) response and is a core part of the work of CACs.

Without CACs



With CACs




Justice


Law Enforcement


Child Advocacy


DCYF


Mental Health Supports


Medical Health Services


Children

CURRENT STATE

- **There are 11 Child Advocacy Centers in New Hampshire** – providing access to all children in the state. We have one in each county; Hillsborough County has two.
- **All New Hampshire CACs are accredited** with the **National Children’s Alliance**
- There are **3 CAC Models** in New Hampshire:
 - Non-profit
 - County-based
 - Hospital-based
- On average, children referred to a CAC were interviewed for:
 - **Sexual abuse: 76%**
 - **Physical abuse: 17%**
 - **Other** (*witnessed a crime, neglect, etc.*): **11%**

Most children seen at CACs are **between the ages of 7 and 12 years old**

27% are between 0-6 years old

38% are between 7-12 years old

31% are between 12-18 years old

4% are Undisclosed

(Several NH CACs support victims older than 18 years of age)

30%

of CAC cases increased since 2013

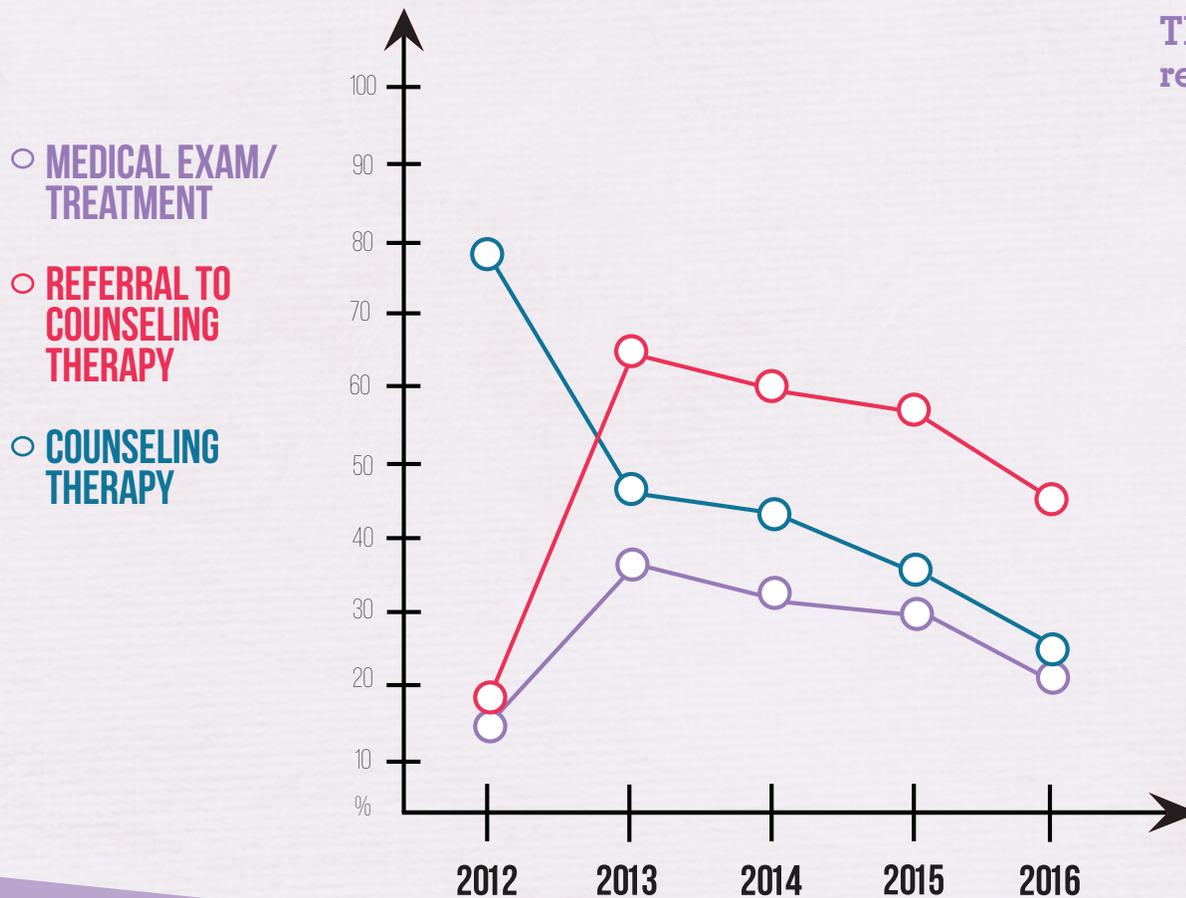
2015 Data from GSCA - NCATrak from all CACs in NH

Where we are Today

Total Number of Children Served at CACs in NH



Total Referrals Made by CACs



The number of children seen at CACs receiving health services since 2012

- Medical Exams/Treatment**
733 of the 2,359 children (or **31% of children**) received a medical exam or consultation
- Referrals to Counseling/Therapy**
1,359 of the 2,359 children (or **58% of children**) were referred for health assessment or treatment
- Counseling/Therapy - Treatment**
777 of the 2,359 children (or **33% of children**) received mental health treatment



We Celebrate!

- All CACs in New Hampshire are Accredited with NCA
- Increase in VOCA funding for ALL CACs
- Strengthened Accreditation Standards from NCA
- The Development of a Model CAC in NH
- Family Support Specialists
- Know & Tell





Building the Runway

Granite State Children's Alliance (GSCA) conducted several work sessions with key stakeholders over a 12 month period (February 2016 to February 2017). Our goal is to build a runway for an improved CAC experience and strengthened pathway for specialized health services for child well being.



Meet our facilitator leading us through this strategic planning process: [Melisa Gillis, M.Ed.](#)

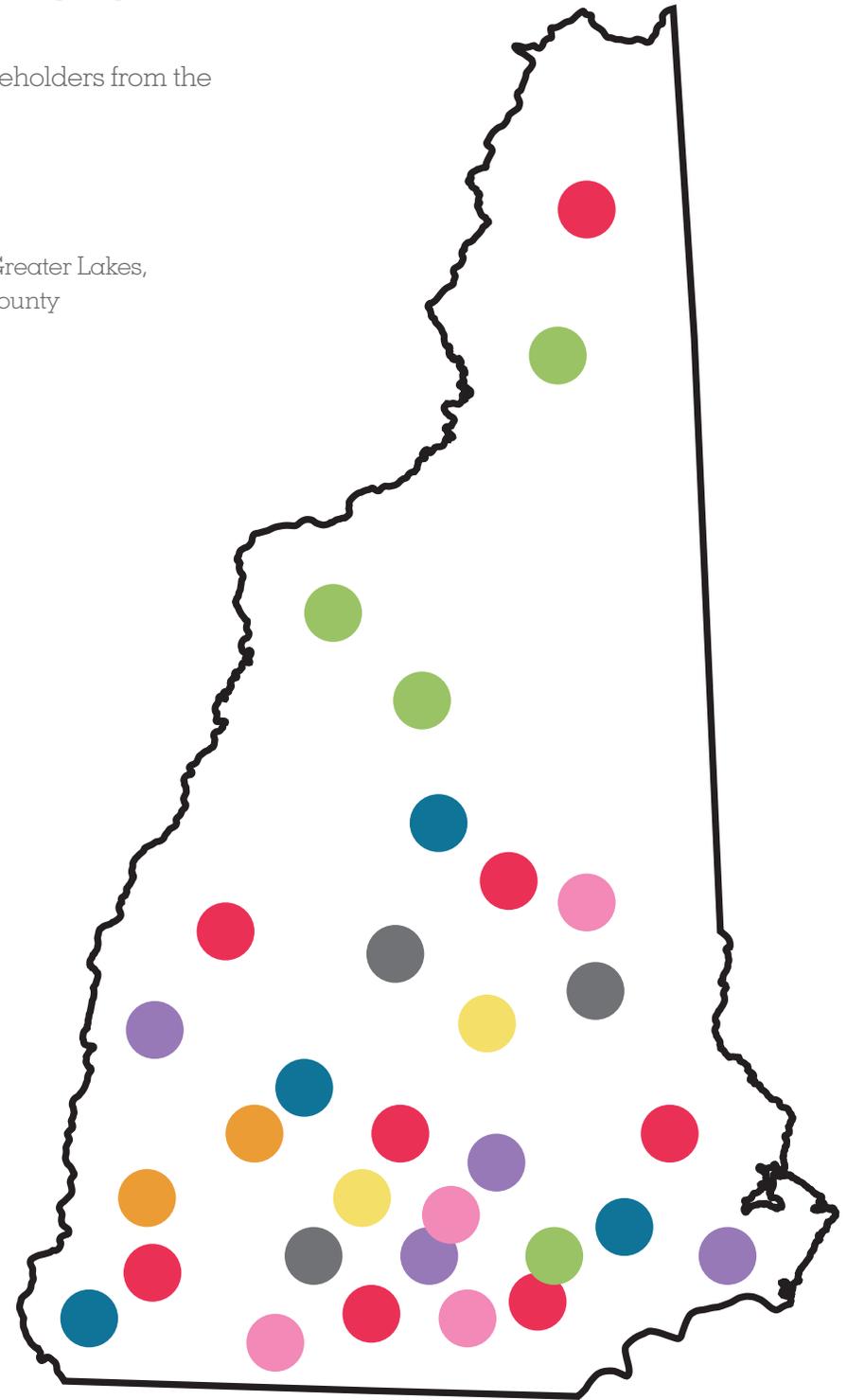
Melisa Gillis is a dynamic and energetic consultant with over 30 years of successful facilitation in the fields of culture change, leadership, team development, and organizational development with a focus on aligning leaders, teams and organizations. Her approach includes partnering with her clients to ensure a methodology that satisfies building relationships while soliciting the knowledge and wisdom of the people to create sustainable solutions.



Who Participated and From Where

With support of our NH CAC membership, we invited all relevant stakeholders from the entire state of New Hampshire.

- **Child Advocacy Centers**
 Granite State Children's Alliance
 NH CACs: Rockingham, Hillsborough County (Nashua/Manchester), Greater Lakes, Merrimack County, Strafford County, Coos County, Grafton/Sullivan County
- **Law Enforcement**
 Manchester Police Department
 North Hampton Police Department
 Grantham Police Department
 Allenstown Police Department
- **DCYF - Division of Children, Youth and Families**
- **Crisis Centers**
 NH Coalition Against Domestic & Sexual Violence
 NHCADSY - Sexual Assault Nurse Examiner (SANE) Program
 Haven Crisis Center
 MCVP Crisis Center
- **Health Professionals and Organizations**
 Pediatricians (Hillsborough County and Coos County)
 Children's Hospital at Dartmouth (CHaD)
 Child Life
 Child Abuse Protection Program
 Mental Health Services (DHHS)
- **NH Attorney General's Office/County Attorney**
 Victim Compensation Assistance — NH Attorney General's Office
 Office of Victim/Witness Assistance — NH Attorney General's Office
 Belknap County Attorney's Office
- **Health Insurance — Medicaid**
 NH Healthy Families
 Wellsense
- **Other Participating Partners**
 Child Abuse Survivors
 Community Members
 NH Human Trafficking Task Force
 NH State Representatives



Runway Attendees

Jen Adams	Monadnock County Advocacy Center	Erin Lehto	Hillsborough County Child Advocacy Center (Manchester)
Carlos Agudelo	Monadnock Region CAC	Gabby McNulty	Granite State Children's Alliance
Carley Ahern	Belknap County Attorney's Office	Cait Miller	Strafford County Child Advocacy Center
Erin Albright	Give Way to Freedom/NH Human Trafficking Task Force	Tracy Monbleau	Well Sense
Joy Barret	Granite State Children's Alliance	Denise Morrison	Granite State Children's Alliance
Dr. Brian Beals	Coos County Child Advocacy Center/ Board Member	Meghan Noyes	Granite State Children's Alliance
Kathy Beebe	Haven Crisis Center	Meg Oliviero	Granite State Children's Alliance
Stacey Bellmore	Division for Children, Youth & Families	Shanna O'Rorke	MCVP Crisis Center
Jessica Bergeron	Community Member	Sgt. John Parsons	Grantham Police Department
Dr. Skip Berrien	NH State Representative	Nicole Petrin	Merrimack County Advocacy Center
Melissa Blanchette	Hillsborough County Child Advocacy Center (Manchester)	Jennifer Pierce-Weeks	NH Coalition Against Domestic and Sexual Violence
Cathy Brittis	Grafton/Sullivan Child Advocacy Center	Kimberly Preston	Coos County Child Advocacy Center
Janet Carroll	NH Coalition Against Domestic and Sexual Violence	Deborah Pullin	Children's Hospital at Dartmouth Chad (CAPP)
Bob Collinsworth	Monadnock Region CAC	Alan Robichaud	Human Trafficking Task Force
Bethany Cottrell	Merrimack County Advocacy Center	Lynda Ruel	Office of Victim/Witness Assistance – NH Attorney Generals Office
Jennifer Deroian	Hillsborough County Child Advocacy Center (Nashua)	Kaitlin Sapack	Merrimack County Advocacy Center
Angela Ford	Well Sense	Lyn Schollett	NH Coalition Against Domestic and Sexual Violence
Melisa Gillis	Gillis Consulting	Dawn Shea	Allenstown Police Department
Dr. Wendy Gladstone	Children's Hospital at Dartmouth CHaD	Danielle Snook	Program Specialist - NH Attorney General's Office
Lori Grant	Merrimack County Advocacy Center	Gail Snow	Division for Children, Youth and Families
Melissa Gulbrandsen	Belknap County Attorney's Office	Sgt. Josh Stokel	North Hampton Police Department
Dr. Sooze Hodgson	Community Member	Tonya Suarez	Grafton/Sullivan Child Advocacy Center
Wanda Kennerson	NH Healthy Families	Maureen Sullivan	Rockingham County Child Advocacy Center
Lisa Lamphere	Victim Assistance – NH Attorney General's Office	Amy-Lynn Sullivan	Hillsborough County Child Advocacy Center (Nashua)
Jessica Laperle	Children's Hospital at Dartmouth - Child Life	Jody Thompson	Grafton/Sullivan Child Advocacy Center
Sgt. Matt Larochelle	Manchester Police Department	Erika Ungarelli	Department of Health and Human Services
Teri Larock	Dartmouth-Hitchcock Medical Center (CAPP)	Lynn Zimmernam	Volunteer Supporter
Lt. Nicole Ledoux	Manchester Police Department		



SNAPSHOT: THE NEXT 5 YEARS



WHERE WE'RE GOING

The purpose of our strategic planning initiative is to improve outcomes for child victims of abuse

We Believe In ...

Becoming a Recognized Leader Empowering Local Communities to Identify, Respond and Serve Child Victims of Abuse

NH CACs are committed to leading the effort for a collaborative response to a victim-centered, trauma informed service model.

Expanding Access to Child Advocacy Centers

All victims of abuse are deserving of a high-quality, consistent, and seamless response which is easily accessible, welcoming and incredibly supportive.

Advancing the Pathway to Medical and Mental Health Services for Child Victims and their Families

Child abuse and neglect is a public health crisis that demands a multidisciplinary response for effected children and families with appropriate assessment, evaluation and treatment.

Strengthening a System of Organizational Excellence

GSCA is committed to organizational excellence for the continued growth and success of CACs across New Hampshire.

RESOURCES

- Assessment of Need for Specialized Medical Care for Child Abuse and Neglect in NH - 2015
- National Children's Alliance Standards for Accredited Members - 2017 Edition





MEASURING RESULTS

GSCA and CACs in New Hampshire will measure outcomes and continue to improve the CAC experience for victims of abuse and their families moving forward.

The Outcome Measurement System (OMS) — What Does it Tell Us?

Child Advocacy Centers in NH utilize OMS to give families and team members a voice in the CAC process, which in turn allows centers to demonstrate their success and find areas for improvement. Through this evidence-based reporting process, CACs survey clients by collecting information to make sure that the services they provide to children and families—and the MDT model—are working.

OMS allows CACs to report on survey items designed to capture three measurable outcomes:

- Healing: Restoring the lives of children and families after abuse
- Justice: Striving toward collaborative and efficient case investigations supporting the CAC/MDT approach
- Trust: Ensuring children, families, and MDT members can trust their center and the CAC model

What children, families and team members think matters!

I have spoken with others in the field, and expressed how immensely impressed I was by the experience. No one wants to go through this experience. I feel fortunate to have had my daughters concerns handled so well. The people you have are amazing.

- Caregiver of a child served by a CAC

I really appreciated that we were the only ones there, it wasn't like an office with people coming and going. Our Family Support Specialist was wonderful answering our questions and watching our girls while we were interviewed. The setting was calm and loving. The hand prints on the walls showed my girls that they weren't alone.

- Caregiver of a child served by a CAC

Everyone was friendly and put us at ease. We were given many opportunities to ask questions and were treated with great respect.

- Caregiver of a child served by a CAC

Working with the different Child Advocacy Centers throughout the state has been an absolute delight in the scope of my work. The CAC network is supportive, helpful and attentive, and I have had great experiences working with all the staff.

- Member of MDT

Granite State Children's Alliance Team:

Joy Barrett

Executive Director

Megan Oliviero

Director of Education & Outreach

Meghan Noyes

Director of Program Services

Phil Hueber

Director of Resource Development

Denise Morrison

Administrative Assistant

Executive Directors of CACs:

Strafford County

Cait Miller, Executive Director

Carroll County

Elizabeth Kelley, Executive Director

Merrimack County

Bethany Cottrell, Executive Director

Rockingham County

Maureen Sullivan, Executive Director

Sullivan/Grafton County

Cathy Brittis, Executive Director

Hillsborough County (North/South)

Meghan Noyes, GSCA Director of
Program Services

Belknap County

Meghan Noyes, GSCA Director of
Program Services

Cheshire County

Meghan Noyes, GSCA Director of
Program Services

Coos County

Kimberly Preston, Executive Director

GSCA Board Members

GSCA Executive Committee

Joseph "Tate" Curti – President

Southern New Hampshire Medical Center

Cyndi Livermore – Treasurer

Livermore Consulting Group

Philip Taub, Esq. – Vice President

Nixon Peabody, LLP

Michael Moushegian – Secretary

Rockingham County Attorney's Office

GSCA Members

Cathy Brittis, CAC of Grafton/Sullivan County at DHMC

Andy Crews, AutoFair

Tiffany Eddy, Focus First Communications

John Gasaway, Attorney General's Office

Chris Hodgdon, Comcast

Stephen Langan, Fidelity Investments

Joseph M. Leahy, MD, Southern New Hampshire Medical Center

Lt. Nicole Ledoux, Manchester Police Department

Brad Russ, National Criminal Justice Training Center

Adrian Thomas, MD, New Hampshire Neurospine Institute

Richard C. Tracy, New Hampshire Department of Justice

LEADERSHIP TEAM

OUR SPONSORS

**Thank you to these partners
for their considerable support
of GSCA and this strategic
planning effort.**

**Together improving outcomes for
child victims of abuse.**

Gillis Consulting

New Hampshire Charitable Foundation

Spectrum Marketing Companies

Nixon Peabody

*Thank
You!*

A special thank you to Spectrum Marketing Companies for their efforts and talent in "bringing to life" the results of our important work in the design of this Runway report.

KNOW & TELL

The Granite State Children's Alliance created KNOW & TELL, a public responsibility movement to educate and empower adults to KNOW the signs of abuse and TELL responsible authorities when they recognize them.

April 20, 2016 Governor Maggie Hassan proclaimed KNOW & TELL day as a reminder that all NH adults are mandated reporters of child abuse and as Granite Staters we have a collective responsibility to keep children safe from abuse. Statistics show only 1 in 10 incidents of child abuse is reported by the child. Our message is if you KNOW or suspect abuse, step up and TELL responsible authorities. Leave the investigating to our experts who KNOW how to care for the most vulnerable in our communities.

KNOW & TELL is in the early stages of development and implementation as we work towards creating a robust program of materials, workshops and PSAs with the consistent message that we can all find the courage to report abuse, KNOW & TELL.

GSCA is also teaming up with the Crimes Against Children Research Center at UNH to measure the impact of KNOW & TELL in NH. This will enable GSCA to evaluate the effectiveness of KNOW & TELL and our marketing strategies at changing public attitudes toward mandated reporting and intervening on behalf of a child in need.

We can all do better for our kids!

Report what you see or suspect by calling DCYF at (800) 894-5533 and your local law enforcement.



**KNOW
& TELL**
NO EXCUSE - END ABUSE





Granite State Children's Alliance™

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Child Advocacy Centers

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