



First Witness
CHILD ADVOCACY CENTER

Funding Request: HF774 / SF765

Restoring Hope 2023 Capital Funds Request

First Witness Child Advocacy Center

First Witness Child Advocacy Center (CAC) is a child-focused non-profit agency offering hope, healing, and justice for alleged victims of child abuse and their families. We were founded by and for the community and have been serving northern Minnesota communities since 1991.

First Witness CAC is built upon a national model where the investigative process for child abuse is streamlined and provided in a child-friendly setting. We bring together a collaborative multidisciplinary team of professionals made up of law enforcement, social workers, doctors, therapists, advocates, prosecutors, and public defender's office. Our dedicated team members work together to investigate child abuse and coordinate needed services.

We provide forensically sound interviews for children, adolescents, and vulnerable adults who have reported sexual abuse, physical abuse, witnessed violence, or who may have been otherwise victimized. Our interviews provide a safe and comfortable space for victims to talk about the abuse in one video recorded interview by a trained professional forensic interviewer.

The report of abuse is not the end but rather the beginning. Our family advocates help parents understand the system and professionals involved and connect children and families with resources in their community. First Witness CAC offers in-depth initial and ongoing advocacy for children and families.

Mission

Our mission is to strengthen our communities' response to child abuse.

Vision

Our vision is of a society that supports children and ends child abuse.

Impact 2022

Our impact has consistently climbed each year. Our dedication to the children and families of our community is highlighted throughout our ongoing work.

Served **210** children

reporting sexual and physical abuse or having witnessed a violent crime through a child-friendly forensic interview monitored by multidisciplinary team members.

Trained **167** professionals

on protocol and practice of child-friendly forensic interviewing at beginning and advanced levels.

Trained **546** advocates

nationwide with our nationally accredited advocacy trainings for advocates working with a CAC.

Served **498** new children and parents

in our advocacy services including ongoing support for non-offending caregivers, mental health, medical advocacy, court advocacy, crisis calls, and safety planning.

Provided **264** child sexual abuse prevention education presentations

to 3893 students, caregivers, and community members.

Provided **22** presentations

to 493 individuals in local civic groups, churches, and college classrooms.

