



THE CHILDREN'S ADVOCACY CENTER OF LOWNDES COUNTY, INC. REFERRAL GUIDELINES FOR CLINICAL SERVICES

CHILDREN'S SERVICES

REFERRAL:

- ✓ The CAC must have a **CAC Referral Form** prior to making an appointment for counseling. The referral form should be filled out completely by the referral source and faxed to the CAC or completed by CAC staff if the referral is taken over the phone (usually done with a self-referral). Families can self-refer or be referred by the CAC Director of Forensic Services (DFS) or another agency, such as DFCS, BHS, the school, etc. *If the child being referred is in foster care, the names and contact info of the foster parents and the DFCS Placement Case Manager should be listed on the referral.*
- ✓ The CAC specializes in working with children who have been physically and sexually abused. Appropriate referrals are those with an allegation or history of physical or sexual abuse. Non-offending siblings of children who have been victims of abuse may also be eligible to receive services if they have been impacted by the abuse. Children who have witnessed or been victims of other crimes or trauma and children exhibiting acting out behaviors will also be considered for services.
- ✓ All counseling referrals will be screened by CAC Clinical Director to ensure that services are appropriate for the child. CAC staff will call the non-offending parents/caregivers or DFCS Case Manager and schedule a therapy intake appointment if the referral is accepted. If the referral is deemed to be inappropriate for CAC services, the Clinical Director will contact the referral source and/or non-offending parents/caregivers to discuss other resources that might be more clinically appropriate for the child.
- ✓ If the child being referred for therapy has completed a forensic interview (FI), then the referral should be screened immediately following the FI and the therapy intake appointment should be scheduled prior to the non-offending family members leaving the CAC. In the event that the Clinical Director is unavailable, the forensic interviewer may screen the referral and schedule the therapy intake appointment.
- ✓ When the CAC receives a therapy referral and abuse is alleged, the referral source will be asked to contact DFCS and law enforcement to determine if a criminal investigation should be conducted. The CAC must have documentation affirming that this has been done in order to proceed. The CAC cannot begin therapy until this has been completed.
- ✓ All referral sources should give CAC staff any specific information involving the alleged abuse or trauma that they have gathered through talking with the child or family. This information should be listed in the Referral Information section of the referral form. Referrals without this information will not be accepted. Please note that the CAC does not provide assessments to determine if sexual abuse has occurred, and therefore cannot accept referrals asking for this service. If abuse is suspected, a report needs to be made to DFCS and law enforcement.
- ✓ The CAC will schedule appointments in order of priority based on the circumstance and urgency of each individual referral.