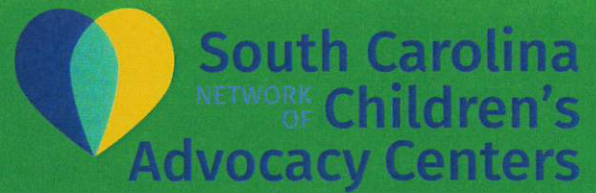


State Funding Support for Children's Advocacy Centers

January 2025

cac-sc.org



The state of South Carolina is currently home to 17 primary Children's Advocacy Centers (CACs) and 14 satellite CACs located throughout the state which provide services in all 46 counties. CACs help abused children by providing a single-stop for forensic interviews and coordinating a trauma-informed treatment response for those children. CACs reduce the trauma in children by eliminating the need for children to relive their trauma through multiple interviews with multidisciplinary team professionals, or others, while improving collaboration among all agencies involved in the response to child abuse.

Children's Advocacy Centers in South Carolina provided services to over 13,670 children in 2024 which represents a 59% yearly increase over the past 7 years. The South Carolina Network of Children's Advocacy Centers (SCNCAC) provides technical assistance, oversight, continuing education, and monitoring of accreditation standards for all CACs in South Carolina to help ensure that all children have access to the same quality of best practice and evidence based services for child abuse victims that CACs provide.

QUICK FACTS

- CACs reduce trauma and improve outcomes for abused children, while reducing costs for the state agencies they support.
- CACs play a primary role in the response to child abuse in South Carolina by providing forensic interviews of children for law enforcement agencies and the Department of Social Services (DSS), conducting forensic medical examinations, offering mental health therapy for child abuse victims and caregivers, and more.
- SCNCAC and local CACs coordinate and support the Multidisciplinary Teams (MDTs) in each county that consists of professionals who provide a first response to child abuse, ongoing investigations, and prosecution.
- The SC Child Abuse Response Protocol Act formalizes the use of CACs in the statewide response to child abuse and mandates that SCNCAC and the SC CJA Task Force provide training on the protocol.
- SCNCAC is the accredited state chapter of the National Children's Alliance and provides support, statewide services and quality improvement for all CACs in South Carolina.
- **CACs in South Carolina have received cuts in federal funding of \$4,326,638 per year which represents up to a 46% decrease in funding for some individual CACs with additional cuts projected in 2025. It is critical that the Legislature increase recurring state funding to CACs to support the mandated services CACs provide for children and families as part of the statewide response to child abuse.**

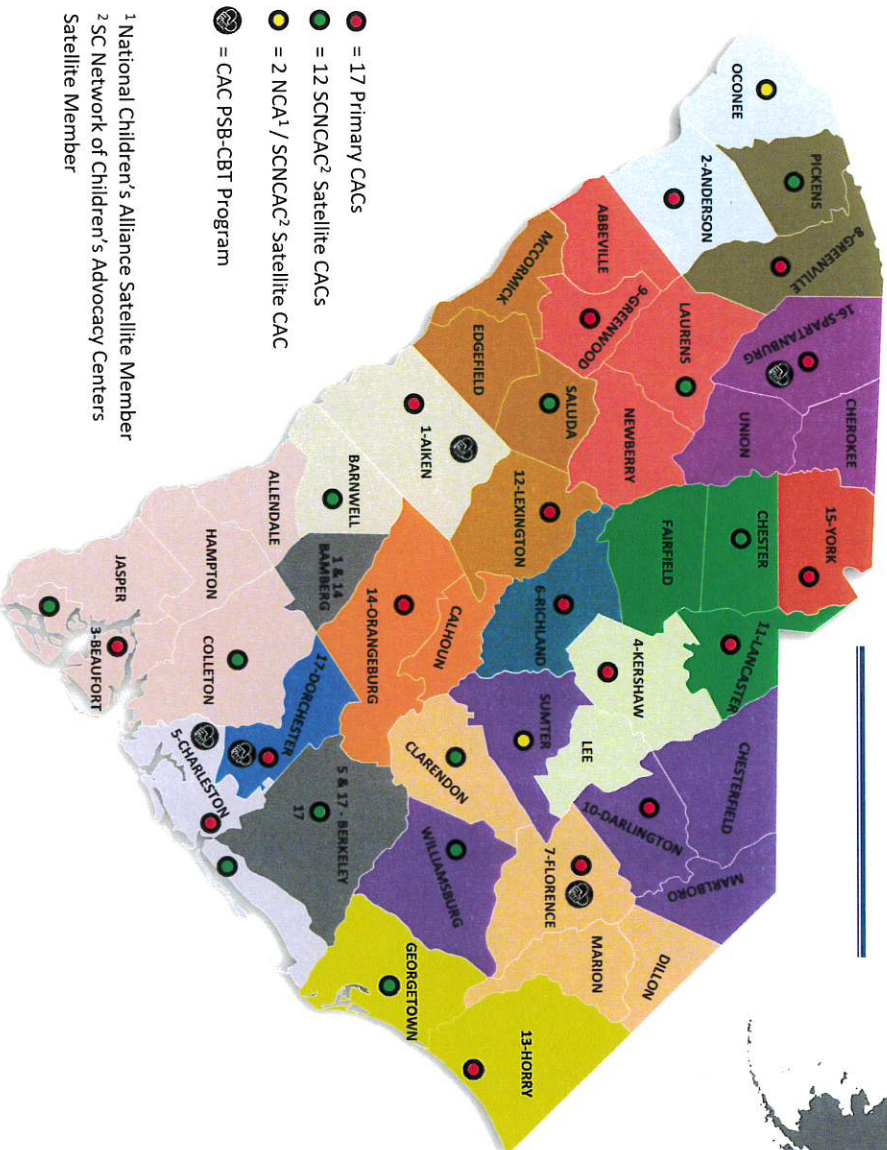
RECOMMENDATION

In 2018, the SC General Assembly first allocated state funding to support the work of SCNCAC and CACs in the statewide response to child abuse. The total funding from the state in fiscal year 2024-2025 was \$1,580,000. Of that amount, only \$80,000 were recurring funds. The balance of the appropriation was in one-time funding. State funding supports the SCNCAC statewide forensic interview recording evidence management system and other statewide services to CACs which includes direct services to children and families provided by CACs.

Child maltreatment in South Carolina is on the rise and the demand for CAC services continues to increase. **SCNCAC and the CACs in SC respectfully request the General Assembly consider maintaining the \$1,500,000 one-time funding and making the funding recurring for a total of \$1,580,000 in recurring funding. This will support the statewide programs used by all CACs and multidisciplinary team partners, and the CAC direct services to clients that support the statewide response to child abuse in South Carolina.**

- There are 17 primary and 14 satellite CACs in South Carolina serving all 46 counties.
- SC CACs provided services for over **13,670** children in 2024, a 59% increase over 7 years.

Over the past 7 years, SC CACs have seen a 59% increase in the number of kids helped each year

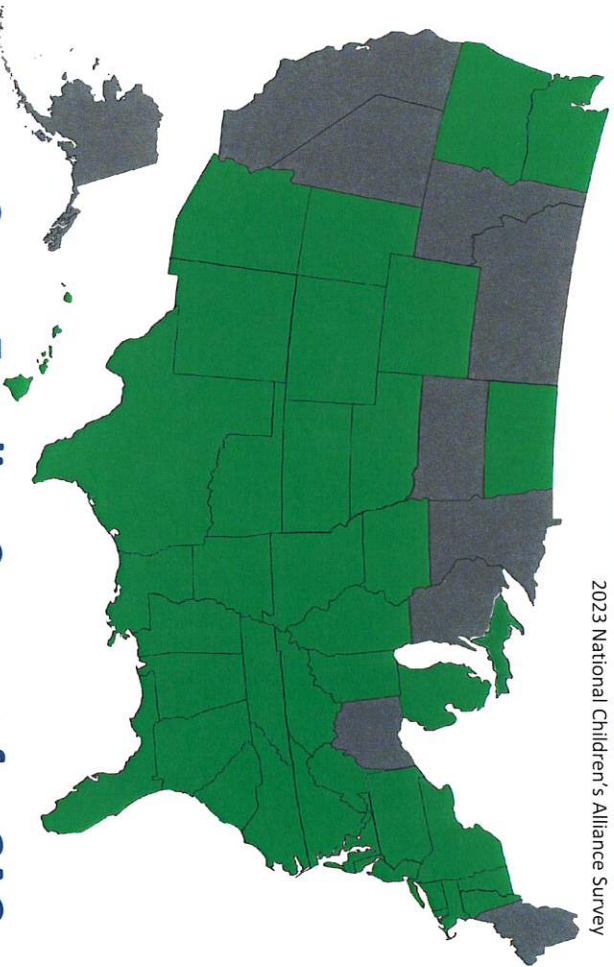


- = 17 Primary CACs
- = 12 SCNCAC² Satellite CACs
- = 2 NCA¹ / SCNCAC² Satellite CAC
- Ⓢ = CAC PSB-CBT Program

¹ National Children's Alliance Satellite Member
² SC Network of Children's Advocacy Centers Satellite Member

CACs SUPPORTED by state funding

CACs NOT supported by state funding



2023 National Children's Alliance Survey

State Funding Support for CACs

* States are listed in order of per capita CAC state funding

State *	2022 Census Data Population	Yearly CAC State Funding
Kentucky	4,512,310	\$10,000,000
Tennessee	7,051,339	\$8,500,000
Arkansas	3,045,637	\$2,900,000
North Carolina	10,698,973	\$10,000,000
Alabama	5,024,356	\$2,750,000
South Carolina	5,282,634	\$1,580,000**
Louisiana	4,590,241	\$1,500,000
Florida	22,244,823	\$5,973,500

**2024-2025 SC \$80,000 recurring & \$1,500,000 one-time funding
CACs in Georgia receive state administered TANF funding