



**CHILDREN'S ADVOCACY CENTER FOR NORTH TEXAS  
MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING FOR WISE AND JACK COUNTIES**

We, the undersigned, by and through our supervisory heads, (and through our designated representatives, listed below) do hereby agree to the following policy supporting the creation, development, and implementation of Children's Advocacy Center in the Counties of Wise and Jack, Texas.

To wit:

At present the number of child sexual and physical abuse cases in Wise and Jack Counties continue to increase, representing not only an immediate danger to each child who is victimized, but also a continuing threat to the mental, physical, and emotional welfare and safety of Wise and Jack Counties.

Recognizing these problems, we support the mission of the Children's Advocacy Center for North Texas to provide justice and healing for abused children through interagency collaboration and community education. This child-oriented organization serves as a cooperative effort among the involved agencies, wherein a multidisciplinary team approach is utilized in the investigation of child sexual and physical abuse, the medical and therapeutic treatment of the victims, and the prosecution of those who victimize children.

We do further agree that the stated purpose of the Advocacy Center is:

1. To develop, achieve, and maintain interagency and inter-professional active collaboration in the investigation of child sexual and physical abuse cases (with details regarding specific types of cases enumerated and outlined in the agreed interagency protocol and procedure);
2. To provide for a coordinated multidisciplinary team approach to be focused on the child victim's needs, on the criminal and civil investigation of abuse and on the emotional healing of the child and support of non-offending family members;
3. To develop, maintain, and support an environment that emphasizes the best interests of children and provides investigatory and rehabilitative services.

4. To aid or assist in obtaining evidence useful for both criminal prosecution as well as protective action in civil proceedings;
5. To provide case screening and investigative procedures so as to minimize the number of false allegations of sexual and physical abuse reports, with the early detection of such cases leading to the timely exoneration of innocent parties;
6. To facilitate coordination of alleged child abuse by the investigating agencies including presence at forensic interviews, scheduling of forensic medical exams (where appropriate), presence at case review meetings and open information sharing with other partner agencies;
7. To provide and/or coordinate therapeutic treatment programs including counseling and sexual assault examinations;
8. To reduce, to the greatest extent possible, the number of interviews to which child sexual and physical abuse victims are subjected, therefore minimizing "re-victimization" of these children;
9. To provide for the extensive and continued training education of those professionals working within the multidisciplinary team, as well as for those outside professionals in the community who deal with victims of child sexual and physical abuse;
10. To develop a comprehensive process for documenting demographic data that will enable research and the evaluation of services provided to victims of child sexual and physical abuse, as well as their families, and that will provide a clearinghouse of information, education, and referral for the community.

Therefore, because each agency has specific responsibilities regarding the investigation of child sexual and physical abuse, the medical and therapeutic treatment of the victims, and the prosecution of those who victimize children:

**We do hereby acknowledge that the multidisciplinary team approach to addressing child abuse issues facilitated by the Children's Advocacy Center for North Texas in Wise and Jack Counties, Texas, serves to enhance the individual efforts of each agency involved and unifies our community -- through these respective agencies, as well as through public support and awareness -- in the daily struggle to ensure the protection and preservation of the children of Wise and Jack Counties, Texas.**

**All State and Federal laws will be followed in connection with this agreement. This agreement can be terminated by any party without cause by giving written notice to the other parties.**

**This agreement shall become effective upon signature of the parties listed below:**

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**Date**

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**Kristen Howell, Chief Executive Officer  
Children's Advocacy Center for North Texas**

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**Date**