

# National Guidelines for Canadian Child Advocacy Centres

## Guideline 1 Child-focused Setting

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**LUNA**  
CHILD AND YOUTH  
ADVOCACY CENTRE





# Luna Child and Youth Advocacy Centre

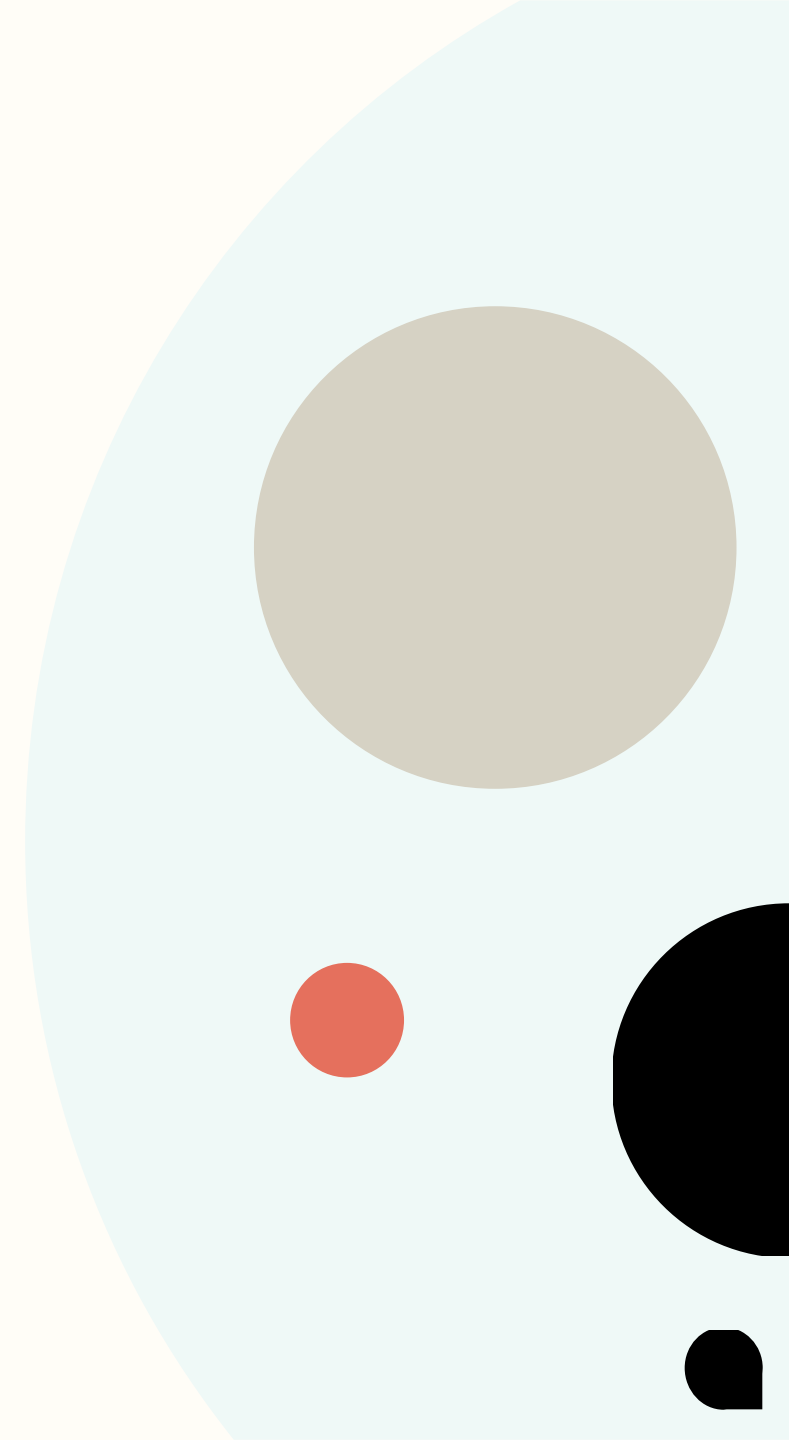
Luna is one of 40 Child/Child and Youth Advocacy Centres located across Canada.

Luna is located in Calgary, Alberta on the traditional territories of the people of Treaty 7 region in Southern Alberta. Calgary, named Mohkinstsis in Blackfoot, is also home to Metis Nation Region 3.

# Guideline 1: Child-Focused Setting

*The CAC/CYAC provides services to diverse populations of children, youth and their supporting family members in a welcome, physically and psychologically safe, neutral, trauma-informed and comfortable child-and youth friendly setting.*

*(Source: National Guidelines for Canadian CACs/CYACs, 2021)*



# We believe...

The child is our first priority.

Not the needs of the family.

Not the child's story.

Not the evidence.

Not the needs of the courts.

Not the needs of police, child protection, attorneys, etc.

**The child is our first priority!!**

*(Source: Ann Ahlquist and Bob Ryan, 1993, Child First Doctrine)*

# Physical and Psychological Safety

*A safe setting is a Trauma Aware one.*



<https://www.beingtraumaaware.com/>

# **Safe, Welcoming, Comfortable & Neutral Child & Family Areas**



## Child-Focused Setting

# Key Component

*All client and family areas, as well as investigative interview rooms, should be safe, welcoming, comfortable and neutral, and reduce anxiety.*

*(Source: National Guidelines for Canadian CACs/CYACs, 2021)*



# Code of Conduct

- Contact not related to CAC service provision between staff/volunteers and a child/client is prohibited.
- Physical contact between child/client and staff/MDT members must be consistent with the safety and well-being of the child/client.
- Staff/volunteer interaction with child clients should be interruptible and/or observable.
- It is the duty of staff to report suspected child abuse. Luna staff are mandatory reporters and Luna ensures that mandated reporter training is provided to all staff and volunteers.
- Updates to provincial legislation and mandated reporter laws are provided to staff and volunteers annually, if applicable.

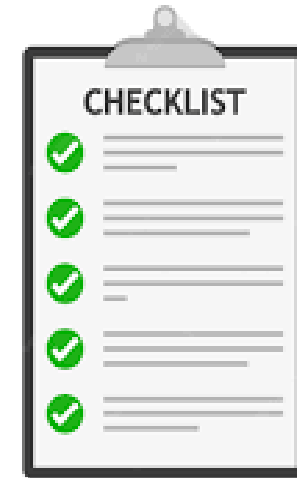
*(Adapted from National Children's Alliance, National Standards of Accreditation For Children's Advocacy Centers, 2023 Edition)*



# Child Safety Assessment

Luna's Assessment includes but is not limited to:

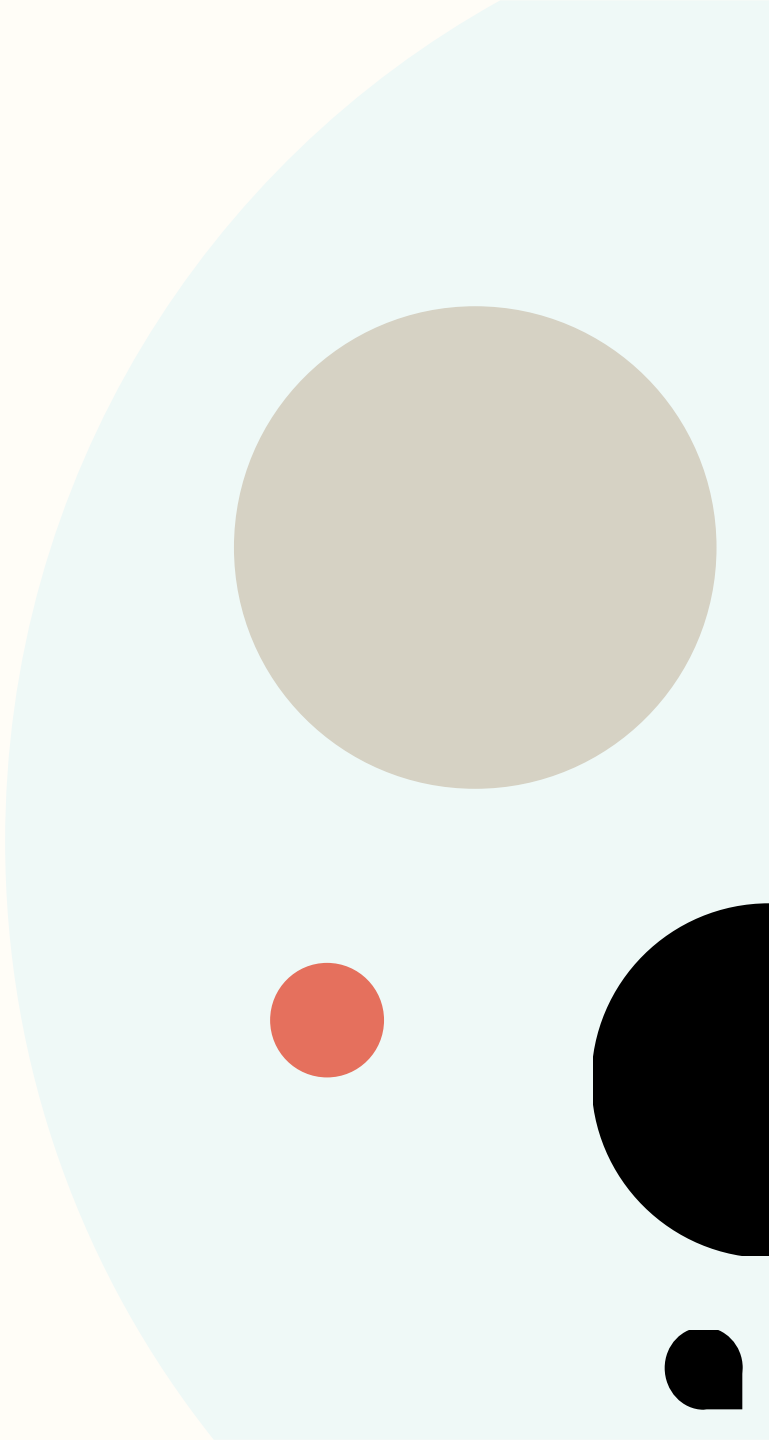
- Effective supervision of children
- Child proofing of all electrical plugs
- Sanitizing of playrooms on a regular basis
- Hot water faucets maintained at a non-scalding temperature
- Furniture and/or appliances securely held to walls
- Poisonous plants or chemicals stored out of child's reach
- Safety and evacuation plans in place



# Gender Inclusive Space



# A Warm Welcome

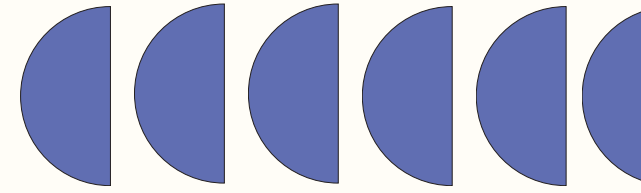


# Our Space





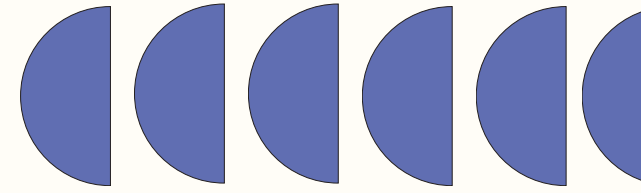
Child Focused Setting



# Sacred Space



Child Focused Setting



# Sacred Space



# Child Life



Luna's Child Life Specialist helps minimize the stress faced by children and families when they visit Luna using:

- Therapeutic play
- Self-expression activities
- Age-appropriate education and medical preparation



# Child Space App



officers are not wearing a uniform. How can you tell they are police officers?

# Medical Exam Preparation



## Lights

**Ear Light**

🔊 Say: **oto-scope**

This special light was built so the doctor can look way down into your ears, because it's really dark in there. What does the inside of an ear look like? Try the light on the doll first to see.

**Eye Light**

🔊 Say: **oph-thal-mo-scope**

The doctor will use this little light to check your eyes. It's very bright! When you shine a light into someone's eyes, their pupils—that's the small, black circle in the middle—shrink. Ask if you can use the light on the doll first.

↑ CHECK IT OUT

An illustration of two medical instruments: an otoscope (ear light) and an ophthalmoscope (eye light). The otoscope is a long, thin device with a small lens at the end. The ophthalmoscope is a larger device with a handle and a lens. The background is decorated with colorful flowers and leaves.



# Separation of Victims & Offenders



## Child-Focused Setting

# Key Component

*The CYAC must have policies and procedures that address the separation of victims and [alleged] offenders during the investigative process, and as necessary throughout delivery of the full array of CYAC services in order to provide a service that is physically and psychologically safe for children.*

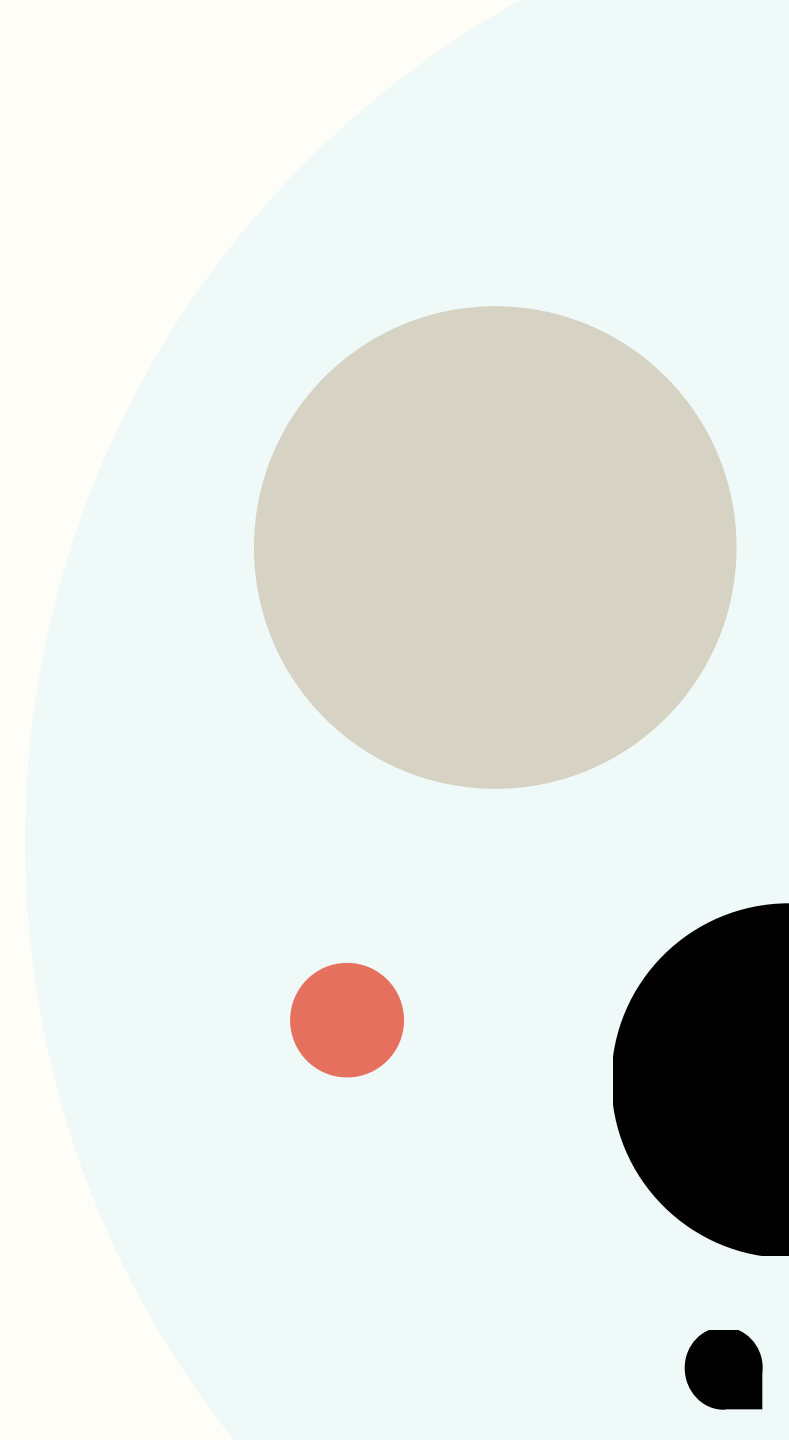
*If a CYAC shares a building location with an existing agency that provides services to [alleged] offenders, there should be a separation between children, non-offending caregivers, and [alleged] offenders, for example, arranging to meet with [alleged] offenders on different floors or at different times of day.*

*(Source: National Guidelines for Canadian CACs/CYACs, 2021)*

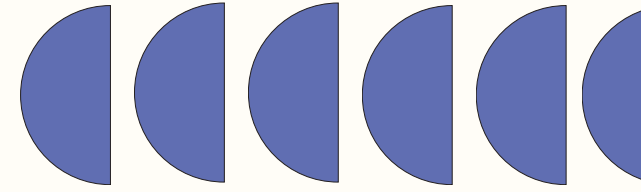
# Luna's Policy

Luna does not permit alleged perpetrators to be on the premises at any time and prohibits the delivery of services to alleged adult perpetrators.

If any known or alleged perpetrators are found to be on the property, including those who may have accompanied the child or youth to Luna, they will be asked to leave the premises immediately in an appropriate manner by predetermined law enforcement personnel.



Child-Focused Setting



# Remote Testimony Room



## Child-Focused Setting

# Key Component

*CYACs that serve children with problematic sexual behaviours should also make provisions to ensure the physical and psychological safety of all children and youth who visit the Centre.*

*(Source: National Guidelines for Canadian CACs/CYACs, 2021)*

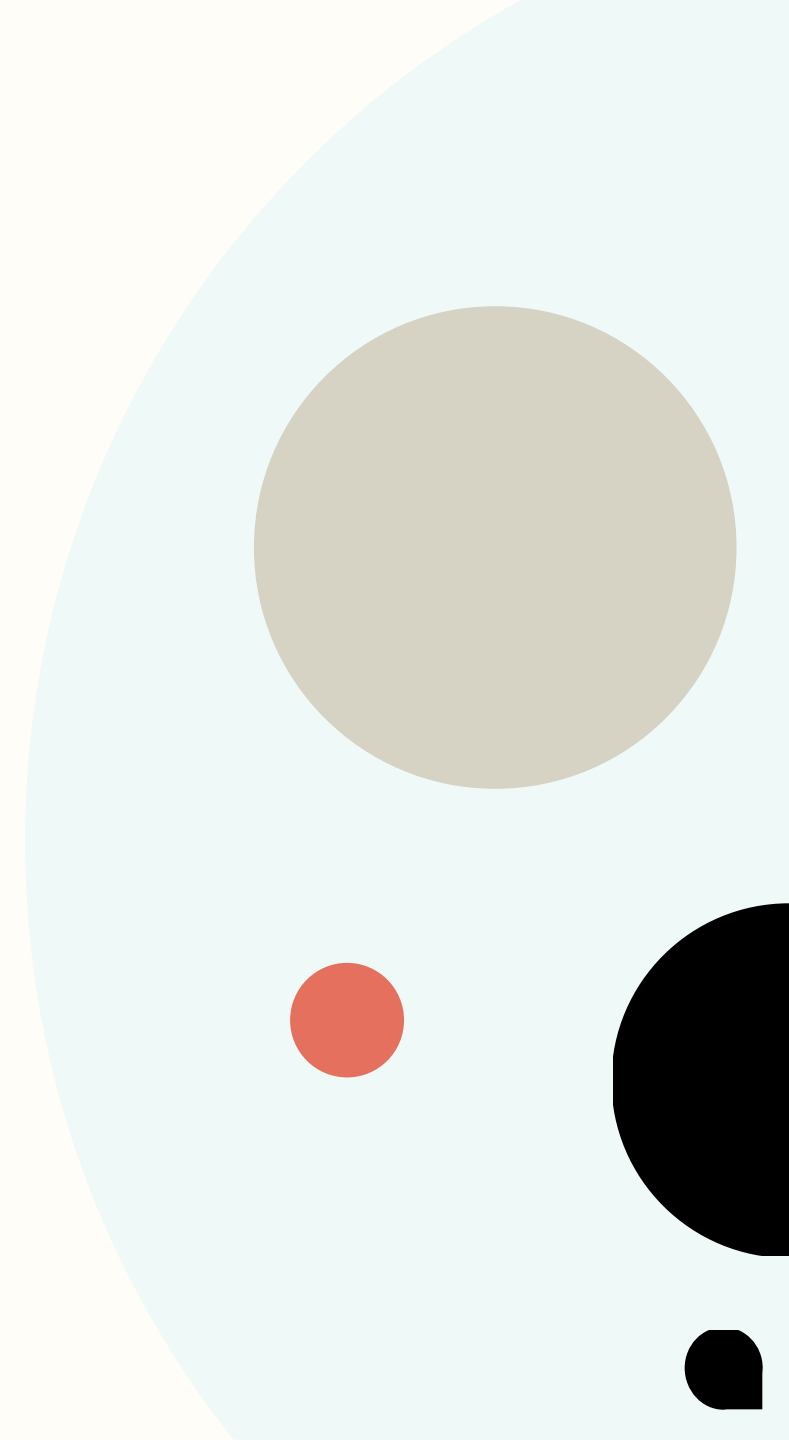




# Youth with PSBs

Luna provides services to youth with problematic sexual behaviours, and appropriate safety protocols and practices have been developed and implemented to protect other children receiving services at the Luna.

Youth with PBSs who are accessing therapy through Luna's partnership with Alberta Health Services Child Abuse Service are within line-of-sight supervision while in the Child Space. Scheduling of therapy appointments for youth with PSBs intentionally ensures separation between children and family members and youth who have engaged in PSBs.



# Supervision and Observation of Children & Youth



## Child-Focused Setting

# Key Component

*Children and youth should be within sight and/or hearing distance at all times by CYAC staff, multidisciplinary team (MDT) members or volunteers when caregivers are not with the child (e.g., the caregiver is in an interview).*

*(Source: National Guidelines for Canadian CACs/CYACs, 2021)*



# Supervision Supports



# Separation of Clients Involved in Different Investigations



## Child-Focused Setting

# Key Component

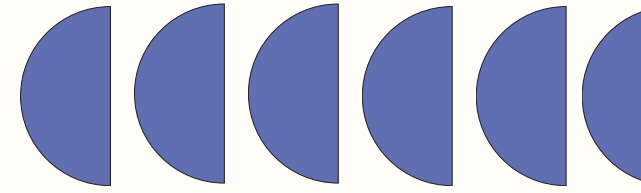
*Whenever possible, clients involved in different investigations should be kept separate to respect the confidentiality of children, youth, caregivers and investigations.*

*(Source: National Guidelines for Canadian CACs/CYACs, 2021)*



Child-Focused Setting

# Investigation



**Confidentiality Must Be  
Maintained At All Times**





## Child-Focused Setting

# Key Component

*Confidentiality must be maintained at all times, except as permitted or required by law, including sharing subpoenaed documents with the court, reporting suspicions of child abuse to a child protection agency, and identifying safety risks to a child, self or someone else.*

*(Source: National Guidelines for Canadian CACs/CYACs, 2021)*



# **Responsiveness to Accessibility Needs of Children & Families**



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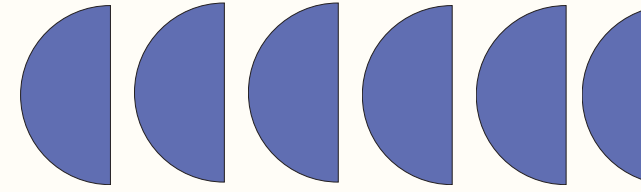
## Child-Focused Setting

# Key Component

*The CYAC should be responsive to the accessibility needs of children and their families.*

*(Source: National Guidelines for Canadian CACs/CYACs, 2021)*





# Accessibility

Examples of Accessibility accommodations:

- MDT members are co-located on site which is very important for clients who may need to return on several occasions for follow-up meetings
- Program location is wheel-chair accessible
- Bus stop in front of the facility
- Taxis are provided for families without transportation
- Families are provided with a parking pass for their visit
- Interview suits include access to felt board, papers and markers for children with diverse communication needs (i.e.select mutism)
- Access to a language line through one of the MDT partners and partnership with local newcomer agency for additional translation support
- Intake process invites families to identify any accessibility needs in advance of their visit to Luna and where needs are identified, a Specialized Care Plan is developed

# Thank you!

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