

CHILD ADVOCACY CENTRES

Building Better Services for Children and Youth who are Victims or Witnesses of Crime in Canada



CENTRES D'APPUI AUX ENFANTS

Prestation de services améliorés aux enfants et aux adolescents qui ont été victimes ou témoins d'actes criminels au Canada

BUILDING BLOCKS: UPDATE ON CANADIAN CACs/CYACs - SPRING 2014

PROGRESS TO FULL MULTIDISCIPLINARY TEAMS? IT'S COMPLICATED

In phone interviews, leaders at both long-established and still-in-development CACs and CYACs talked candidly about the challenges of building full MDTs (multidisciplinary teams). Many Centres are experiencing similar challenges.

CHALLENGES

- Reluctance to share info across agencies can be due to the fact that different legislations apply.
- Organizations are reluctant to commit to a collaborative project with no predictable, sustainable funding.
- It can take from 5 to 15 years from first meetings to being fully-operational and serving children and their families.

[MORE INFO](#)



from info video by The SeaStar Centre, Halifax, NS

SOLUTIONS

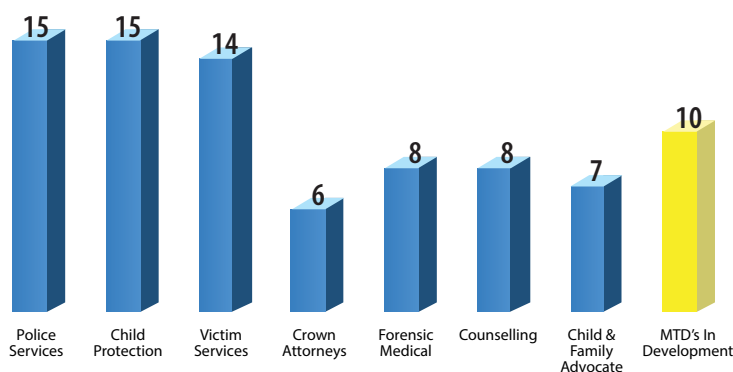
- Go straight to top management level - in any potential partner organization.
- Any product-oriented task - however small - will build trust with potential partners.
- People listen to professionals like themselves. Bring in MDT professionals (e.g. police or crown) who are experienced in working in a CAC/CYAC, somewhere else - to talk to their cohorts in your community.

[MORE INFO](#)

15 CACS OPEN AND SERVING CHILDREN AND FAMILIES - ALMOST DOUBLE SINCE ONE YEAR AGO

It's been a busy - and fruitful - year. While 6 centres were open in April 2013, there are now 15 up and running and providing various levels of services in Spring 2014. As the graph shows, bringing on crown attorneys, medical forensic examiners, counselling and child advocates continues to be a work-in-progress for some centres. Some communities (especially rural and remote) are exploring models that will not include all services under one roof.

CACs THAT HAVE THIS SERVICE AS A PART OF THEIR MDT



SEE BELOW FOR MORE ON:

- Resources
- Videos
- Upcoming Conferences

CACs and CYACs across Canada are experiencing these kinds of challenges - and trying these solutions - to develop full multidisciplinary teams.

CHALLENGES

- Many community organizations are reluctant to commit to a collaborative project that has no predictable, sustainable funding.
- Reluctance to share information across agencies can be due to the fact that different legislations apply.
- Some groups can take from 5 to 15 years to get from first meetings to being fully operational and serving children and their families.
- Potential partners are reluctant to allocate time to something new - that has no committed funding.
- It is very difficult for someone who already has another full-time position to devote the necessary time to the many tasks required to development a new CAC.
- Lack of agreement about which agency should take the lead... territorial issues.
- Hours of operation – the “9 to 5” schedule, typical of many child protection and victim services agencies, may not be in sync with police shift hours. Also, it can be challenging to accommodate families who need after-hours services.
- Some interested community partners may be a poor fit for the CAC model... They may not really be the right agency to be doing this sort of work.
- Staff turn-over at all the partner agencies.
- In small communities - not enough people to do the work.
- When do you know if you're ready to move ahead to request funding?... to move from feasibility study to operational?... Which elements have to be in place?... MOUs?... a building?... or should you just start?
- The crown role on MDTs continues to be limited, in some jurisdictions.
- Travel time to meetings about potential collaboration with other agencies is a big deterrent.

SOLUTIONS

- Going straight to the top management level - in any potential partner organization - early on, is crucial.
- Potential partners become more committed when they work together on any real, hands-on project - a small pilot project, a training workshop, or just writing a brochure together. Any kind of product-oriented task brings the team together.
- People listen to professionals like themselves. Bring in MDT professionals (e.g. police and crown) who are experienced in working in a CAC/CYAC, somewhere else - to talk to their cohorts in your community. People who are hesitant about the CAC model will pay attention to their colleagues from elsewhere.
- Engage with organizations that are mandated to provide these services to children.
- Develop early buy-in from essential partners... by having them participate in the early visioning process.
- Executive-level leaders - if they buy-in - will want to move quickly to process the essential MOUs.
- Recognize that the full MDT co-located model may not work for your community... But police and child protection services must be on-site.
- Donors like to see many organizations signed-on to work together.
- Fundraising gets much easier after MOUs are in place.
- Make sure that the responsibility for training new people after staff turn-overs is written in the MOUs. Putting this obligation in the MOU will help to ensure continuity.
- Bring staff from other -- not-yet-committed - but wanted - agencies to the CAC/CYAC site for on-site tours.
- Offer training events at the CAC site that will appeal to not-yet-committed - but desired - partners.
- Hire a dedicated project manager to negotiate better info-sharing and development of community partnerships.
- Making a service delivery flow chart helps people to recognize gaps.
- If the crown cannot be on the MDT team, in some jurisdictions... they can act as consultants.
- Remember to check-in with other CACs/CYACs, from time to time. Don't get lost in your own work.
- Instead of traveling to group meetings - meet by Skype.
- Regular meetings and case discussions build team cohesion.



RESOURCES - PRACTICAL FORMS, REPORTS, LESSONS LEARNED FROM OTHER CACs

Several Canadian CACs/CYACs are willing to share (at no cost) well-researched and practical materials that they have developed. Contact each organization directly for more information. Email, phone and other contact info for each CAC can be found under the [Organizations](#) tab on the website, <http://cac-cae.ca>

Here are some tools and resources that are available. The list does not reflect all resources developed by all CACs. Those shown in **BLUE** are available on the website and can be clicked to access.

Evaluations

- **Halifax, NS (SeaStar)**
(evaluation of demonstration project, 2013)

Reports on needs assessments, feasibility, service gaps, models for inter-agency collaboration.... and other lessons-learned... in progress to opening a CAC/CYAC

- **Brampton, ON - Safe Centre of Peel**
(final needs assessment report, 2013)
- **Nelson/ West Kootenay region, BC**
(preliminary model development report, 2012)
- **Victoria, BC - Orca**
(development of MDT protocol, 2013, PowerPoint)

Memoranda of Understanding (MOUs) and governance

- **Maple Ridge / Pitt Meadows, BC - Alisa's Wish**
(MOU, 2013)
- **Toronto, ON - BOOST**
(PowerPoint on governance and Board of Governors structure)

Guidelines, terms of reference (on info sharing, etc.)

- **Maple Ridge / Pitt Meadows, BC - Alisa's Wish**
- **Yukon - Lynx**

Practical tools / forms

(consent, confidentiality, inter-agency referral, client satisfaction, etc.)

- **Cornwall, ON - Koala Place**
(statistical report form)



- **Halifax, NS - SeaStar**
(intake and consent forms)
- **Maple Ridge / Pitt Meadows, BC - Alisa's Wish**
(brochure, client satisfaction forms - different forms for youth, families and younger children)
- **Department of Justice, Canada (English/Francais)**
(data collection indices)
- **St. Catharines, ON - Niagara CAC**
(client satisfaction forms)
- **Yukon - Lynx**
(info sharing guidelines, terms of reference, referral steps)

Education, professional development

- **Toronto - BOOST**
(PowerPoint on trauma)

Research

- **Department of Justice, Canada**
(Canadian national statistics on child abuse, 2013)
- **Ministere de la Justice, Canada**
(Nouveaux produits de recherché, enfants et jeunes, victimes de crimes, 2013)

VIDEOS

Several CACs or CYAC now have videos online. These may be useful to other centres - especially in communities that are still trying to build support for the multidisciplinary team model.



Zebra Child Protection Centre Edmonton, AB

WATCH VIDEO

Explains the services offered at the Centre – there are three dramatic re-enactments of neglect and abuse - the CAC staff and MDT members play themselves. The image here shows a forensic interview with a child actor.



ORCA Child Advocacy Centre Victoria, BC

WATCH VIDEO

ORCA is in development. Representatives from police, child protection and other potential CAC partners explain why such a centre is needed. A mother describes her negative experience in the justice system, after her child became a victim, and asks why a better way can't be found.



BOOST Child Abuse Prevention & Intervention Toronto, ON

WATCH VIDEO

The video linked above explains the multidisciplinary services offered at the Centre. For other videos from BOOST, including dramatizations about abuse and prevention, and TV news coverage of BOOST, see their [YouTube channel](#).



Sophie's Place Surrey, BC

WATCH VIDEO

Explains the multidisciplinary services offered at the Centre.



CAC Niagara St. Catharines, ON

WATCH VIDEO

Explains the multidisciplinary services offered at the Centre.



SeaStar Halifax, NS

WATCH VIDEO

Explains the multidisciplinary services offered at the Centre.

UPCOMING CONFERENCES

- **Joining Together: An International Conference on Child Maltreatment**

sponsored by Canadian Child Abuse Association
May 4 - 7, 2014, in Calgary, Alberta

[EVENT LINK](#)

- **14th Annual Missing and Exploited Children Conference**

sponsored by The Canadian Centre for Child Protection
May 13 - 15, 2014 in Winnipeg, Manitoba

[EVENT LINK](#)

- **National Children's Alliance Leadership Conference**

May 4 - 7, 2014, in Calgary, Alberta

[EVENT LINK](#)

- **31st National Symposium on Child Abuse**

Sponsored by the National Children's Advocacy Centre
March 23 - 26, 2015, in Huntsville, AB

- **San Diego International Conference on Child and Family Maltreatment**

Check back for details for the 2015 conference

[EVENT LINK](#)

BUILDING BLOCKS: UPDATE ON CANADIAN CACs/CYACs - SPRING 2014

This newsletter continues the impetus of the first Knowledge Exchange (Ottawa 2011) and the Next Steps Meeting (Toronto 2013), to encourage on-going information and knowledge sharing among CACs and CYACs across Canada. Contact information for each Centre can be found under the ORGANIZATIONS tab on the website <http://cac-cae.ca/organizations/>

