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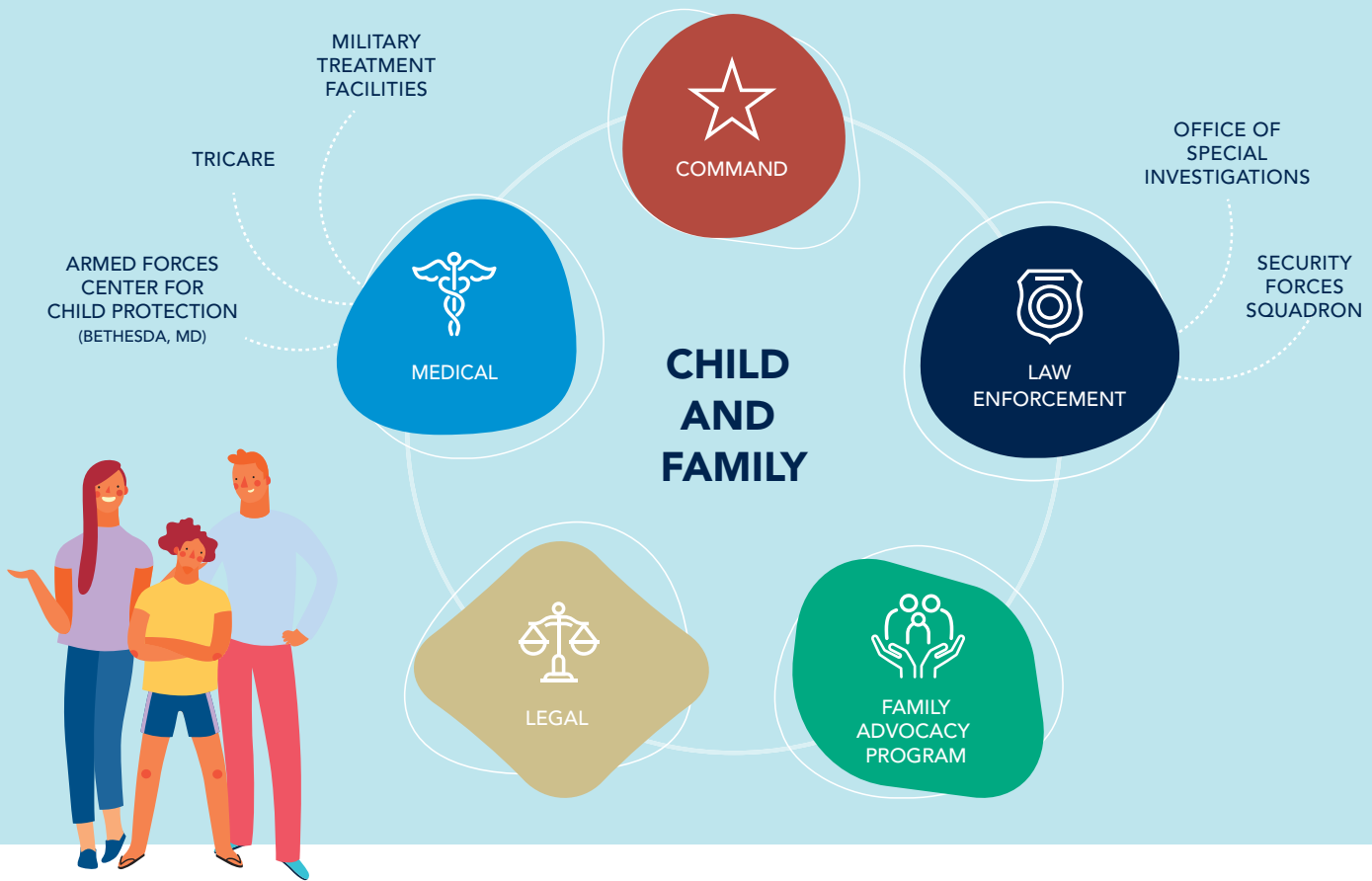
*The Force Behind
Children's Advocacy Centers*



How Key U.S. Air Force Roles Support Children and Families in Child Abuse Response

For Children's Advocacy Centers (CACs), understanding the roles played by key military programs involved in child abuse response is a critical step in providing comprehensive and coordinated services to military families. This resource will introduce CACs to the systems and programs they should be familiar with in the U.S. Air Force.

U.S. Air Force Key Roles and Responsibilities Related to Child Abuse



COMMAND

- Notified by military law enforcement and Family Advocacy Program (FAP) regarding suspected child abuse and neglect
- Responsible for any administrative punishment and some jurisprudence actions not covered by the Office of Special Trial Counsel
- Responsible for active-duty offender's treatment compliance
- Issues military protective orders (MPO)
- Installation commander is chair and voting member of the Incident Determination Committee (IDC)¹
- Service member's command representative is not a core member but is a voting member of the IDC¹



LAW ENFORCEMENT

Security Forces Squadron (SFS)

- U.S. Air Force Military Police (MP)
- Serve as first responders to incidents on base and notify Office of Special Investigations (OSI) for more serious incidents requiring investigation²
- Investigate general assault and misconduct under Uniform Code of Military Justice (UCMJ)
- Core and voting member of the Incident Determination Committee¹



LAW ENFORCEMENT (CONTINUED)

Office of Special Investigations (OSI)

- Military criminal investigation organization (MCIO) for the U.S. Air Force and the U.S. Space Force; on joint bases, other MCIOs may also be involved with investigations, including Naval Criminal Investigative Command (NCIS) and Army Criminal Investigative Command (CID)
- Can investigate any crime with a Department of Defense (DOD) nexus within their investigative purview²
- Primarily investigates serious felony-level offenses and any sexual offense²
- May attend Incident Determination Committee as a non-voting member¹



FAMILY ADVOCACY PROGRAM (FAP)

- Responsible for efforts to prevent child abuse and neglect, domestic violence, and problematic sexual behavior in children and youth³
- Receives child maltreatment, domestic violence, and problematic sexual behavior in children and youth referrals
- Makes mandatory notifications about received reports of child abuse and neglect to command, law enforcement, and local child protective services (CPS)
- Required to establish memorandum of understanding (MOU) with CPS and manages cases in coordination with CPS
- Provides trauma-informed assessment, rehabilitation, and treatment to service members and their families who are involved in alleged incidents of child abuse and neglect, domestic abuse, and problematic sexual behavior in children and youth³
- Provides resource and referral information and trauma-informed support to clients³
- Convenes various multidisciplinary teams to facilitate coordinated community response to child abuse and problematic sexual behavior in children and youth
- Maintains a child abuse/neglect and domestic violence database for cases determined to meet criteria at the Incident Determination Committee, also referred to as a central registry³
- Core and voting member of the Incident Determination Committee¹



LEGAL

Office of the Judge Advocate General (JAG)

- Serves as government and defense counsel at courts-martial²
- Provides legal assistance to eligible personnel on personal, civil, and legal matters²
- Advises commanders on military justice and disciplinary matters²
- Provides legal advice to military investigative agencies²
- Represents victims of child abuse regarding their rights
- Individuals identified as a victim of an offense under the Uniform Code of Military Justice (or a violation of law in another jurisdiction if the investigation is primarily handled by DOD) are notified of their rights under DOD's Victim Witness Assistance Program, informed about the military justice process, and provided other services and support²
- Core and voting member of the Incident Determination Committee¹

Office of Special Trial Counsel (OSTC)

- Responsible for prosecuting cases of sexual assault, domestic violence, child abuse, and certain other serious offenses⁴
- Holds exclusive authority to withdraw or dismiss the charges or refer the charges to a general or special court-martial⁴
- Prosecutorial decisions made by the special trial counsel are binding and are fully independent from the military chain of command⁴





MEDICAL

Military Treatment Facilities (MTFs)

- The core of the DOD Military Health System; provide medical care for service members and their dependents
- Found on military installations around the world; also referred to as direct care or military hospitals and clinics
- Have varying specialties and departments
- Across DOD, there are four child abuse pediatricians certified to conduct pediatric sexual assault forensic exams and seven adult sexual assault forensic examiners who have been certified for pediatric exams—a total of 11 providers to conduct all pediatric sexual assault forensic exams in the U.S. and overseas²
- Outsource medical needs they cannot cover to local civilian facilities
- Core and voting member of the Incident Determination Committee²

TRICARE

- The purchased care program of the DOD Military Health System
- Provides health care benefits to service members, retirees, and their families
- Includes coverage for most child abuse treatments, including mental health, hospital stays, and emergency room visits⁴
- Some CACs are approved providers for TRICARE and bill the program for some services
- In the event of a child abuse-related service member separation, the family may maintain access to TRICARE benefits for a period of time after separation⁵

Armed Forces Center for Child Protection (AFCCP)

- Based at Walter Reed National Military Medical Center in Bethesda, Maryland
- Receives child maltreatment referrals from MCIOs, Family Advocacy Program, military lawyers, and families throughout Department of Defense
- Provides inpatient and outpatient evaluations and forensic interviews by Child Protection Team at Walter Reed National Military Medical Center Bethesda and for patients referred throughout the Washington, D.C., area and from other military bases worldwide on a case-by-case basis
- Provides subject matter expertise and consultation throughout DOD, including courts-martial, medical case review and opinion reports, and child forensic interview reviews





For information on how your CAC can collaborate with these military programs, please visit learn.nationalchildrensalliance.org/military



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¹DOD Manual 6400.01, Vol. 3, Family Advocacy Program (FAP): Clinical Case Staff Meeting (CCSM) and Incident Determination Committee (IDC) (August 11, 2016). Change 1 Effective July 16, 2021.

²GAO-20-110, Child Welfare: Increased Guidance and Collaboration Needed to Improve DOD's Tracking and Response to Child Abuse (February 12, 2020).

³DOD Instruction 6400.01, Family Advocacy Program (FAP) (May 1, 2019).

⁴FACT SHEET: President Biden to Sign Executive Order Implementing Bipartisan Military Justice Reform, The White House (July 28, 2023).

⁵Defense Health Board Report, Healthy Military Family Systems: Examining Child Abuse and Neglect (August 6, 2019).