



Collaboration Leads to Legislation to Protect Children and Families

Every year in Colorado, thousands of children are impacted by maltreatment. Expertise to conduct medical evaluations and behavioral health screenings for suspected child abuse or neglect and a readily available way to get resources to at risk families were extremely limited.

In May 2019, House Bill 1133 became law, creating Colorado's Child Abuse Response and Evaluation (CARE) Network to build local capacity to provide quality assessments for suspected child abuse and neglect and to identify family stresses and challenges that may lead to child maltreatment and abuse.



The Kempe Center and Foundation applaud our legislative sponsors for helping to pass this bipartisan law to help Colorado's children and families

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County: Adams

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District: 65
Counties: Cheyenne, Kit Carson, Logan, Morgan, Phillips, Sedgwick, Yuma

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RHONDA FIELDS
District: 29
County: Arapahoe

How it Works

The CARENetwork aims to increase local capacity by building appropriate infrastructure to provide technical assistance and resources through a state-funded program that develops and maintains a standardized, coordinated response to suspected child abuse and neglect through a network of designated healthcare providers.

By recruiting designated providers from communities across the state and training them about the signs of child abuse, the CARENetwork's goal is to ensure all children for whom physical or sexual abuse or neglect may be suspected receive access to high quality medical evaluations and behavioral health assessments. It also ensures that designated providers will be equipped to provide families information about resources available to help address risks that may lead to abuse or neglect. The Kempe Center will serve as the Resource Center for the CARENetwork.

Under contract with the Colorado Department of Public Health & Environment, The Kempe Center will serve as The Resource Center for these designated CARE Network providers to offer the following support:

- Training conducted by board-certified Child Abuse Pediatricians on how to identify signs of risk for maltreatment
- Streamlined referral process for designated providers
- Ongoing education and mentorship opportunities
- Access to available resources to ensure continuing care
- Direct access to comprehensive evidence based medical and behavioral health assessments for suspected physical & sexual abuse
- Enhanced reimbursement for evaluations for providers that join the CARE network (Reimbursement pricing structure and process has not been finalized)
- Expert consultation when direct access is not possible

The CARE Network also will serve as a bridge for families who need continuing care by ensuring coordinated hand-offs and referrals to available providers and coordination with multi-disciplinary teams. Engaging health care and behavioral health providers and providing them the best education and training about the signs that children may be at risk of maltreatment, and about resources available to families to mitigate those risks, will greatly expand the safety net for children.

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