

Child Focused Facility Checklist

No two CACs are alike and there are many approaches to ensuring that your CAC is child focused. This checklist is intended to help ensure that your CAC provides a welcoming and safe setting for children, families, and team members. This list is for guidance only and is not an exhaustive list nor are all items required. Please review the NCA Standard, as well as your insurance and licensing requirements and federal, state, and local regulations and guidance.

Psychological/Emotional Safety

- Artwork, decorations, toys and reading material are age-appropriate and reflect the diversity of the community. You can find a quick checklist for assessing the physical and material environment of your CAC [here](#).
- Consistent with written policy, alleged perpetrators are not allowed on premises.
- Scheduling of appointments with youth with problematic sexual behaviors provides for separation from victims.
- Lobby and separate meeting rooms are available to ensure privacy and confidentiality of children and caregivers.
- Access to the CAC is clearly marked.
- Windows and doors with windows have covering to allow for confidentiality.
- Doors to rooms where children are present with adults have glass or other way to provide for observation or interruption (children not alone with child in room with no way to observe).

Physical Safety

- Children and family members are observed at all time.
- Rooms are cleaned regularly.
- Floor is free of small or sharp objects (no paper clips, staples, toys, or other items a small child might put in their mouth/ingest).
- Counters and side tables do not have breakable or heavy objects that could be pulled over by a toddler.
- Furniture does not have sharp edges or has corner guards.
- Furniture, such as bookcases, are secured to the wall so they cannot be pulled over or toppled in an earthquake.
- Electrical outlets are covered or are safety designed.
- Area rugs are non-skid.
- Electrical cords are tucked away and do not present a tripping hazard.
- Waste baskets are emptied regularly and do not have items that could pose a hazard to children.
- Visible trash cans have secure covers.

- Windows are locked with safety latches (especially on upper floors). Large windows and glass doors have decals at both adult and child height.
- Hot liquids and smoking are prohibited
- Cupboards with cleaning supplies or other hazardous materials are locked or have child locks and are stored in a different area than food/snacks.
- Parents/caregivers are consulted before any beverages, food or snacks are offered to a child and effort is taken to prevent food allergy reactions.
- All plants are non-poisonous. Typical houseplants that are poisonous include:

Plant	Toxic to Humans	Toxic to Dogs	Toxic to Cats
Philodendron	Mildly	Yes	Yes
Pathos	Yes	Yes	Yes
Arrowhead	Mildly	Mildly	mildly
Lily	Moderately	Moderately	Yes
Peace Lily	Yes	Yes	Yes
Dieffenbachia	Moderately	Moderately	Moderately
Oleander	Extremely	Extremely	Extremely
Caladium	Yes	Yes	Yes
Mother-In-Law's Tongue	Moderately	Moderately	Moderately
Ivy	Mildly	Yes	Yes

from: dengarden.com

If you are going to include live plants in areas where children (and facility dogs or other animals) are present, check online to see if there are any concerns in terms of toxicity. One site to check is dengarden.com

- Safety and evacuation maps are posted. Staff have been trained on protocols for evacuation of clients, team members and staff.
- A first aid kit is available and fully stocked (and only accessible by staff or team members).
- Staff have had CPR training.
- The number for poison control is posted.
- Smoke detectors are functioning, and batteries have been replaced.
- A fire extinguisher is present, and staff has been trained on how to use it.
- Gates are installed for stairs (not accordion style). Special gates are required at the top of stairs.

- Exits are clearly marked and visible in low-light or darkness.

Toys and art supplies

- Toys are age appropriate and meet safety standards for children (see [Children's Product Certificate](#)), are in good condition, and sanitized regularly.
- Art supplies are non-toxic.
- Scissors do not have sharp edges (safety scissors).
- Items that may be hazardous to small children have been put away after an activity is complete.

Bathrooms

- Cleaned and restocked regularly.
- Water temperature is set at 120 degrees or lower to prevent scalding.
- Bathrooms are child friendly so children can safely access sinks and toilet.
- Children are accompanied to the bathroom. Small children cannot access the bathroom on their own.
- Cleaning and other supplies are secured and not accessible by children.
- Cabinets are secured so they cannot be tipped over or topple during an earthquake.

Facility/Location

- Easily accessible by clients, team, volunteers, and staff.
- Adequate parking including lights after dark.
- Public transportation is available nearby or other options are convenient and available.
- ADA compliant (or other arrangements are available as needed).
- Soundproofing or other measures are in effect to ensure confidentiality and families do not hear confidential information regarding other clients.

Forensic Interview Room

- Free of distractions.
- Age-appropriate furniture.
- Observable by team members (mirror, video, etc.).

- Sound-proofed or noise canceling efforts.
- Team members can communicate with interviewer in a way that is unobtrusive to the child.
- Observation room is accessible and stocked with any needed supplies.

Facility Dogs (or other animals)

- Families are advised prior to arriving that a facility dog is present and may opt out of having the dog present during their visit.
- Supplies for the dog are out of sight/reach of the child and family.
- Dog is accompanied by its handler.
- Dog is healthy and well-maintained.

Special Considerations for COVID-19

NCA has published guidance for protecting the safety of your clients, team members, and staff (NCAEngage access required): <https://learn.nationalchildrensalliance.org/covid>