

Children's Advocacy Centers Take Action

Building on past progress, CACs are poised to take big strides forward in their partnerships with their services to military families



National Children's Alliance®

The Force Behind Children's Advocacy Centers



National Children's Alliance (NCA) and our military partners reached an exciting milestone in 2024: jointly launching seven memorandums of understanding (MOUs) to serve military kids and families through Children's Advocacy Centers (CACs).

These MOUs open the door for CACs to work collaboratively with Department of Defense programs and organizations including Army Criminal Investigative Command, Naval Criminal Investigative Services, Air Force Office of Special Investigations, and Family Advocacy Programs of the U.S. Army, Marine Corps, Navy, and Department of the Air Force.

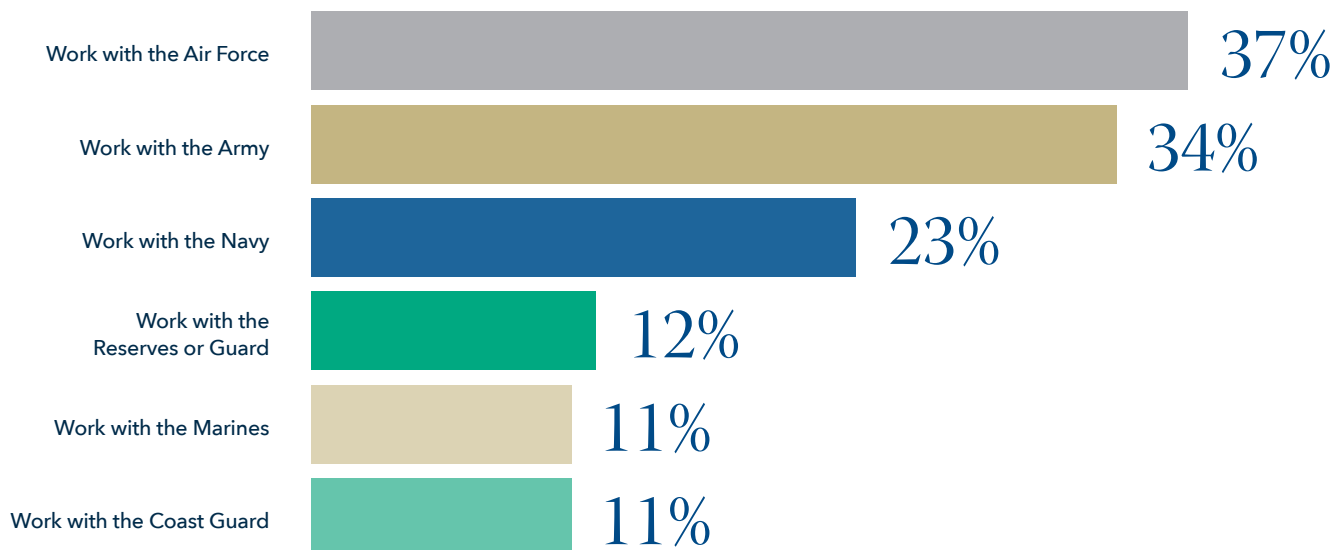
These military programs are responsible for investigating, assessing, and treating cases of child abuse within military families, and the MOUs help ensure that military-connected kids receive CAC services and coordinated care that meets their unique needs. Participating CACs will be added to a map that is provided to our military partners. When military partners have a case or need services for a family, they'll go to that map to see which CACs are willing to work with them. By participating in the MOUs, CACs are taking a powerful step in ensuring that military families have access to coordinated care and CAC services, no matter where they live.



Collaboration successes

The exciting launch of the MOUs comes on the heels of years of progress as a movement in strengthening services to military families. CACs across the country already partner with all branches of the military.

Share of CACs with current military partnerships



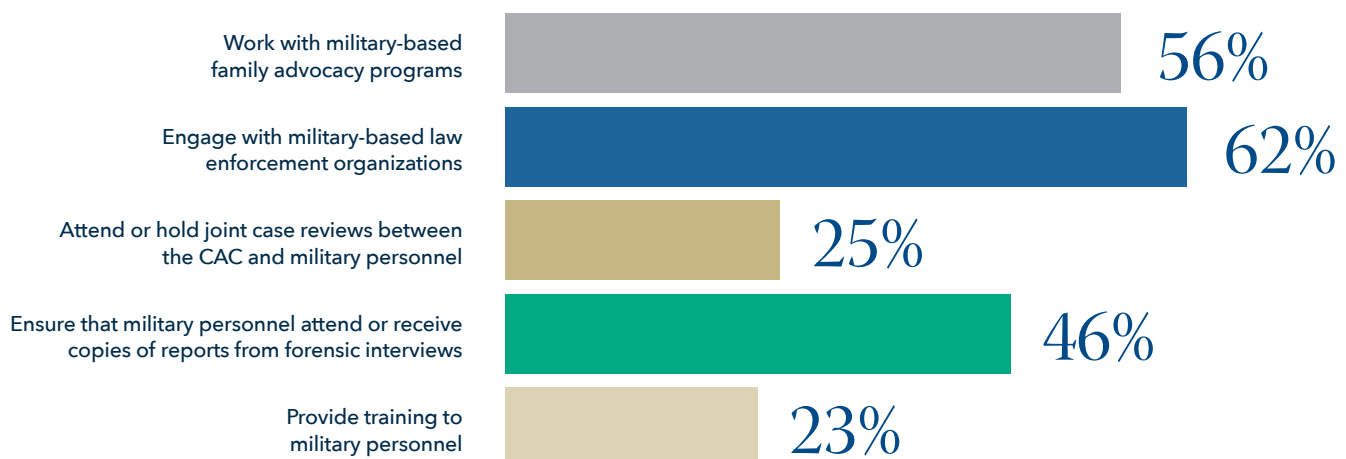
Additionally, the 2023 CAC Census survey demonstrated that there has been an increase since 2020 in the proportion of all CACs that have partnerships with military installations, in the proportion of those who carefully track when a child has a military affiliation, and in the number of documented cases specifically involving a military-affiliated child. All of this signals that CACs are increasingly taking action to ensure their programs meet the unique needs of military families.

CACs Have Increased Their Degree of Collaboration With Military Installations

Nature of Collaboration	Percent Increase in the Number of CACs Reporting These Practices From 2020 to 2023
CAC partners with local military installation	↑ 13%
CAC assesses for military-dependent status at intake	↑ 11%
CAC specifically tracks military-affiliated cases	↑ 50%
Number of military-affiliated cases tracked	↑ 37%

Finally, CACs also report engaging with a number of more specific programs within military branches.

According to 2023 CAC Census data, of CACs with active military partnerships:





Maintaining momentum

Now that the MOUs are in place and provide a foundation for formal collaboration between CACs and military installations, there is more work to be done. While a majority of CACs have signaled an interest in working more closely with military institutions (according to the 2020 CAC Census), **about 74% of CACs that responded to the 2023 CAC Census reported that they do not assess for military affiliation or have practices in place to respond to military-connected families.**

Some challenges persist even for CACs situated in close proximity to military installations. For example, based on 2023 Census data, of CACs with current military partnerships:

18%

Report challenges with screening for and identifying military-affiliated cases

19%

Report facing limitations related to sharing information with partners

12%

Report training and technical assistance needs related to working with military partners.



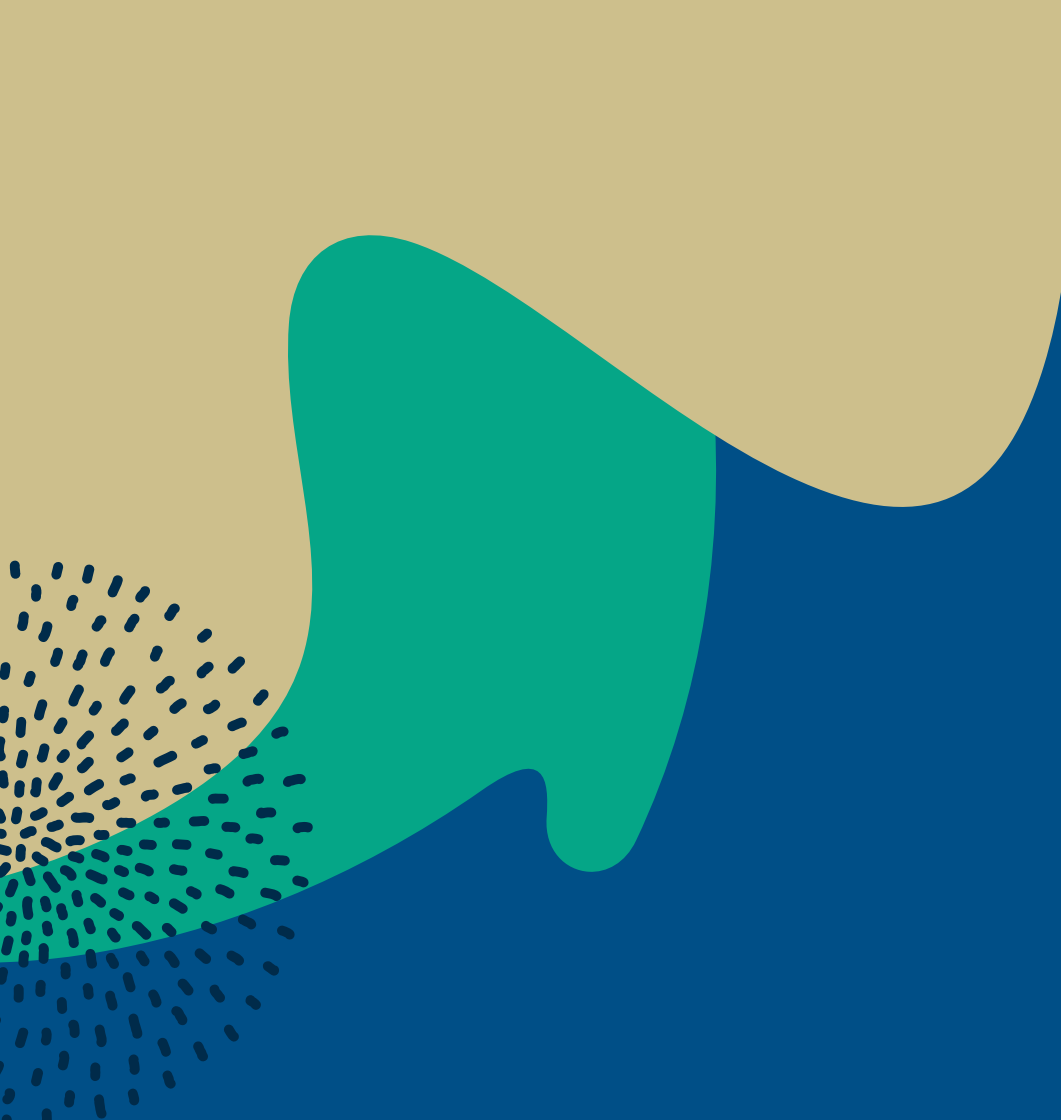
How can CACs capitalize on their momentum?

Accredited CACs can build on the momentum of strengthening partnerships with military organizations by:

- **Learning about the national military MOUs and signing-on to participate.** Please visit the [Military-NCA MOU page](#) on NCA Engage to review the MOUs, view informational webinars, and access other resources to support CAC participation in this effort. All Accredited CACs are urged to sign on to the MOUs even if there is no military installation close by, as military families live in all of our communities.
- **Strengthening services to military families, with steps such as developing an intake screening practice and tracking military affiliation.** Visit the [CAC-Military Partnerships page](#) on NCA Engage for resources about working with military partners. In particular, the webinar *Preparing for CAC-Military Collaboration: Identifying military Families and Tracking Military Affiliation* provides practical advice on how to get started.
- **Developing partnerships with military service providers in your area.** Check out NCA's [Getting Started With Military Partnerships: A Guide for Children's Advocacy Centers](#), a resource that outlines seven steps that CACs can take to strengthen services to military families through partnerships and collaboration.
- **Reaching out to NCA staff for more information, consultation, and resources.** NCA is here to support your efforts to meet the needs of your team as you work to expand access to coordinated care for military families!

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