

Victoria Child and Youth Advocacy Centre



Advocacy

The needs of children and youth come first



Victim Service Support

Professional, trauma-informed support and information for children, youth, and families



Forensic Interviews

Investigators specialized in working with children and youth



Multidisciplinary Team Approach

Law enforcement, child protection, and victim services work together to support children, youth and families



Safety Planning

Ensuring children and families are safe



Follow-up

Ongoing information and support after the interview



Support Referrals

Connecting with community supports and counselling



Court Preparation, Support, and Accompaniment

Victim Service Workers will help you before, during, and after court



What is a Child and Youth Advocacy Centre?

Child and Youth Advocacy Centres (CYACs) are child-focused centres that provide a coordinated approach to cases of reported child abuse. A team of professionals, including law enforcement, victim services, and child protection workers, work together to support children, youth, and caregivers who access the centre to ensure that they feel safe, informed, and supported.

The Child and Youth Advocacy Centre provides safe, welcoming, child-friendly, and trauma-informed environment. The Centre connects children, youth, and caregivers with a Victim Service worker immediately who will support them throughout the process.

The Victoria CYAC model is based on the principle that the needs of children and youth should come first when cases of child abuse are investigated and prosecuted.

For questions about the CYAC and services available, email the CYAC Manager: Mattie Walker at mattie.walker@vcapcc.com

What can I expect at the Child and Youth Advocacy Centre?

When you arrive at the centre, you will be greeted by your Victim Service worker. Your Victim Service worker is here to support you and answer any questions you may have. You will wait in the soft room ~ a comfortable space to get settled before your interview. Parents and caregivers can wait here too. The detective working on the case will meet you in the soft room, introduce themselves and invite you to the interview room.

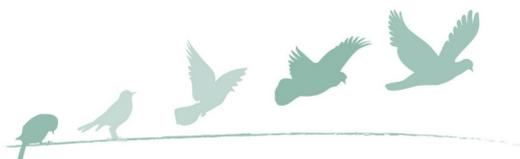
You can expect a safe space with people to support you and answer any questions you may have. There are snacks, water, and washrooms available if you need.

After the interview, the detective and your victim service worker will meet with you to tell you the next steps. You may also meet with a child protection worker. If you have any questions at any time, ask your victim service worker.

What happens after the interview?

When the interviews are complete, the detective will let you know what the next steps are. Your victim service worker will make a plan with you to connect again soon if you want for further support or to talk about referrals to counselling or other resources. You will leave with contact information for the detective, victim service worker, and child protection worker (if applicable) and a plan for follow-up if needed.

Coming to an interview can sometimes feel overwhelming, try to plan something relaxing or fun afterwards to take care of yourself – watch your favourite show, eat something, go for a walk, take a nap, talk with a friend, play your favourite game. Whatever feels good for you.



What can my Victim Service Worker help me with?

Victim Service workers have specialized expertise in supporting children and youth involved with the criminal justice system. Services are available for all child/youth victims and witnesses of violent crimes, abuse, and assault, including family violence and child protection cases.

Your victim service worker can assist with:

- Information and support for police interviews, including accompaniment to interviews at police stations and CYAC
- Accompaniment to hospital medical exams related to reported abuse
- Support and information about the criminal justice system
- Court preparation for child and youth witnesses in criminal court cases
- Liaison with police, crown, criminal justice system personnel, and child protection workers
- Court support and accompaniment
- Referrals to community resources including counselling
- Forms and applications for counselling funding such as Crime Victim Assistance Program
- Support registering for Victim Safety Unit and notification
- Information about child and youth rights

For any questions about Victim Services Support contact your worker or Kelly Montgomery (Victim Services Coordinator) at: kelly.montgomery@vcapcc.com or (250) 385-6111.

How do I find out what is happening with the investigation?

For information about the investigation you can contact your Victim Service Worker or contact the investigating officer directly. Both your Victim Service worker and the investigating officer will give you their contact information before you leave.

I'm worried about safety – who can help me?

If you have immediate concerns about your safety or the safety of someone in your family tell the investigating officer as soon as possible at the CYAC. Talk with your Victim Service worker about safety planning and registering with the Victim Safety Unit. If you have concerns for your safety or the safety of someone in your family after you leave the CYAC call 911 or your local police department for support.

I need counselling or other resources – where can I go?

Your Victim Service Worker can help you find resources in the community including counselling for children, youth, and families. There are several resources in Victoria and the Western Communities that offer supports for children, youth and families. The Victoria Child Abuse Prevention and Counselling Centre offers counselling support for children and youth in the Greater Victoria Area, your Victim Service can refer you the counselling intake or help you find another resource to fit your needs in the community.

