

Growth and Nutrition Clinic

The team at our Growth and Nutrition Clinic (formerly the Failure to Thrive Clinic) understands that a child's growth and nutrition play an important role in their lifelong health and well-being. Poor weight gain may be associated with developmental delay and cognitive deficiency. Children seen at the Growth and Nutrition Clinic have low weight or poor weight gain for a variety of reasons. Our team of experts includes a pediatrician, nurse, pediatric dietitian, and advocate that helps families provide nutrition to children who are struggling with gaining weight and growing.

Services provided at the clinic include developmental assessment, medical evaluation, dietary evaluation, evaluation for social support, nutritional counseling, ongoing growth monitoring, and intervention. Children up to 18 may be seen at the clinic, and they are followed until they have established age-appropriate growth and the family feels comfortable with meeting the nutritional needs of their children.

It is estimated that **5 in 100 children and infants** in the US are failure to thrive, a medical term associated with low weight and poor weight gain.



Drug Endangered Children Clinic

Children who are exposed to dangerous substances may have developmental, behavioral, or other medical concerns. Our team at the Drug Endangered Children (DEC) Clinic provides developmental assessments and follow-up for children who are prenatally or environmentally exposed to drugs to monitor their health and well-being, and provide appropriate interventions when needed.

Drug Endangered Children is defined as children who are at risk of suffering physical or emotional harm as a result of illegal drug use, possession, manufacturing, cultivation, or distribution. They may also be children whose caretaker's substance misuse interferes with the caretaker's ability to parent and provide a safe and nurturing environment.

Our DEC Clinic's goal is to help each child and family heal and reach their maximum potential through treatment and encouragement. We provide services without punishment or moral judgement for these families.

In Iowa, roughly **12% of confirmed or founded cases of abuse** involved children exposed to the manufacturing of methamphetamine or presence of illegal drugs in the child's system in 2016.



Prenatal Consultation

The Prenatal Consultation is available for pregnant women whose baby may have been exposed to drugs or alcohol during the pregnancy. One of our medical providers will meet with the pregnant woman to discuss the possible effects that certain substances may have on the baby and to provide education regarding follow-up for the baby.



Blank Children's STAR Center
4055 Westown Parkway
West Des Moines, IA 50266
(515) 224-3300

blankchildrens.org/STARCenter



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Blank Children's STAR Center

Committed to increasing
resiliency and improving
health and well-being.



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STAR - Support Teams for Achieving Resiliency

The mission of the STAR Center is to work as a team with experts in child health, development, and welfare to provide services and support to children which increase their resiliency and improve their health and well-being. To fulfill this mission the STAR Center houses a Child Advocacy Center and three specialized clinics designed to meet the needs of children and their caregivers.

The STAR Center is a unique community center designed to be child and adolescent friendly and trauma sensitive. Our staff are experts in child development and have a thorough understanding of how traumatic stress and Adverse Childhood Experiences may impact the health and well-being of children. With these principles in mind, our clinics work to increase a child's resiliency and improve their health and well-being.



Child Advocacy Center

The STAR Child Advocacy Center (formerly the Regional Child Protection Center) opened in 2002 to provide a coordinated response for children who had been abused. Abuse is something that no child should have to experience. However, if concerns arise, the best thing we can do for that child is respond to them in the best way possible. At the Blank STAR Center, we offer a safe and child-friendly place for children to receive the following services:

Forensic Interview

Our Child Advocacy Center team works with law enforcement and the Iowa Department of Human Services (DHS) to provide specialized interviews by trained Forensic Interviewers. Interviews are developmentally appropriate and legally defensible, and they allow our investigative partners to view the interview as it happens to reduce the number of times children have to tell their story.

Medical Examination

Many children or adolescents who come to the Child Advocacy Center need a full medical evaluation because it is important that the child or adolescent is examined to be sure they are healthy. Our specially trained Medical Providers look for any injuries or infections that may need to be treated.

Family Advocacy

To support families of children who come to our Child Advocacy Center, our Family Advocate provides information, education, and support regarding the CAC appointment, criminal justice process, and community resources designed to help meet their needs. Our Family Advocate coordinates with community victim advocates who may be present during the appointment and follow-up with families throughout the criminal justice process.

Mental Health Therapy

To support the children and teens who come to the Child Advocacy Center, our Mental Health Therapist checks in with the child to screen for any mental health or behavioral concerns. Our Therapist works with each child and family to determine the best treatment options, including ongoing therapy at no charge to the family, and referral to community providers for ongoing services.

According to the Iowa Department of Human Services, **6,484 reports of abuse involving 8,892 children** were confirmed and founded in Iowa in 2016. Over half of these children were under the age of five.



Primary Care Clinic

Our team at the Primary Care Clinic offers a specialized team approach to primary care in order to successfully address the health and mental health needs of children who have experienced trauma. The clinic offers both medical and mental health services in one location for children birth to 18, support for their caregivers, and provides collaborative care with other members of the child's care team. Our team of experts has an understanding of the child welfare system and trauma. We will work with families with DHS involvement, children in foster care, after reunification and with adoption support.

Services provided at the clinic include well-child examinations, childhood vaccinations, sick visits, comprehensive health and development assessments, mental health assessment and ongoing therapy, education and advocacy for children and caregivers, care coordination and information gathering. Our appointments follow best practice guidelines developed by the American Academy of Pediatrics and keep the children's needs at the center of all we do.

In 2015, there were a total of **9,585 children in foster care** in Iowa.

According to national research, of the children who enter foster care, up to **80% have at least one unmet medical/mental health care need.**

The American Academy of Pediatrics has classified children in foster care as a population of children with special health care needs.

