

2021



the children's ADVOCATE

... Leading the effort against child sexual abuse. ...



children's
ADVOCACY CENTER
OF KENT COUNTY

FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Supporting the Whole Family

Sexual abuse may happen to a child in isolation, but the impacts of it are far reaching. While our primary focus is surrounding the child victim with services, this year we are also focused on increasing our commitment to enhancing caregiver and whole family support services at no cost to them.

For so many of the parents/caregivers who come through our doors, their first priority is in supporting their child. So as caregivers do, they push down their own feelings of shock, fear, guilt, shame, sadness, and worry. These same feelings are exponentially increased when the child's offender is someone from within their own family or home. Often in those cases, caregivers are also faced with a loss of income or housing security when the offender was a contributor, or worse- the primary breadwinner. Feelings experienced by caregivers are also made monumentally more complex when the child's offender is a sibling from within the home, as they are then faced with how to navigate support for both a child victim and a child offender. As you can imagine, the impact to the family dynamic is massive and life-altering.

This past year, many of the families who have come through our doors are experiencing many of these more complex outcomes as a result of their child's abuse. These complex outcomes and emotions are paired with the extensive toll of a prolonged pandemic and its economic uncertainty. In an effort to be responsive to this increased need, we have expanded our services to include more holistic wrap-around services that will comprehensively support families in a variety of ways. We have instituted more formal therapy services for non-offending caregivers, expanded the capacity of our care closet, and now provide whole-family support groups, resources, activities and supports.

Coming together to surround child-victims of sexual abuse and mitigate the short and long-term impact of their trauma is why we were founded. As we move into the future with our partners, supporters, and a community behind us, we're committed to improving outcomes further. With our expanded services we hope to ensure children return to a home that is stable and strengthened, despite the secondary trauma their families have endured.

Throughout the last year we have learned the African proverb, "it takes a village to raise a child" does not apply to interactions with children alone. We have witnessed that it encompasses support of an entire family and coming together to continually foster and improve that support. Here at the Children's Advocacy Center of Kent County our village consists of the children and families we serve, our staff, partners, donors, and community advocates like you. 10% of children living in Kent County will be sexually abused before their 18th birthday, so we need the help of supporters like you in expanding and strengthening our village. Together we can support children and families affected by sexual abuse, and work to solve this community-wide problem.

In partnership,



Melissa Werkman
Executive Director



A Caregiver's Experience

"I want to speak from the most sincere of my heart to all those people who are going through this painful process.

I want to share with you that we are not alone, [we have been given] ... professional people who give us that support, that encouragement to move forward. And little by little you will begin to see that light in the midst of so much darkness.

For our family CAC is a blessing and is giving us hope."

- Portions of a letter from a caregiver of a child who has experienced sexual abuse

Quiero hablarles desde lo mas sincero de mi corazón a todas esas personas que estan pasando por este proceso tan doloroso. Quiero compartirles que no estamos solos... personas profesionales que nos dan ese soporte, ese ánimo para seguir adelante y poco a poquito empezamos a ver esa luz en medio de tanta oscuridad.

Para nuestra familia CAC es una bendición y nos está dando Esperanza.



What it Looks Like to Feel Safe

"This painting is an image of scenery with the flow of the wind and land. The colors that surround us all are pictured here. Different people have different ways of feeling safety, and for me it is being calm by breathing and doing activities like yoga or listening to music. This painting is basically just sky and grass. The middle part is land, representing all of the stress and anxiety. The blank scenery represents a person relaxing and that stress and anxiety going away."

-CAC Client Art

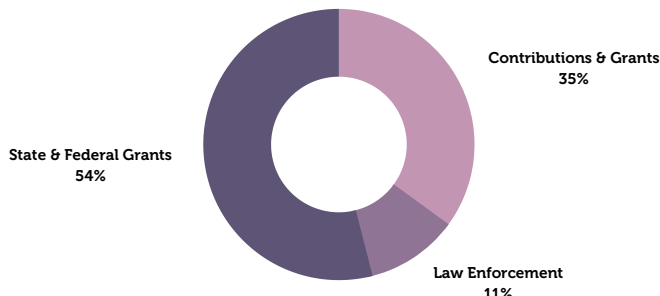
Land Acknowledgment

The Children's Advocacy Center of Kent County is located on the ancestral homelands of the Peoria and Odawa tribes. Throughout time, members of The Council of the Three Fires (Ojibwe, Potawatomi, and Odawa) have also resided here. As part of our commitment to diversity, equity, inclusion, and belonging we wish to honor and preserve the history of these people. We make this land acknowledgment with an understanding that it is one of many steps needed to stand in solidarity with Native nations.

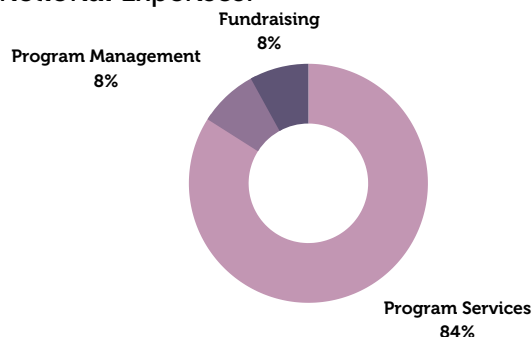
FY21 Finances

Assets	
Current Assets	\$488,474
Property and Equipment (Net)	\$2,674,710
Other Assets (Promises to Give)	\$236,462
Total Assets	\$3,399,647
Liabilities & Equity	
Current Liabilities	\$25,583
Long-Term Liabilities	\$0
Equity	\$3,374,063
Total Liabilities & Equity	\$3,399,647

Revenue:



Functional Expenses:



*State and Federal Grants include funds from Victims of Crime Act (VOCA), CAC Fund administered by Domestic Violence Commission, and Victim Services Continuity & Sustainability through CARES Act.

These statements do not reflect approximately 2,548 hours donated by our volunteers and interns during the fiscal year. The value of their hours leveraged \$631,744 through matching funds from VOCA and is estimated at \$64,796 for the fiscal year.

These financials include income and expenses for FY21 as received through October 1. They are unaudited and unofficial and are presented for information only. Audited financials will be made available in February 2022 on our website.

Giving and its Family Impact

Child sexual abuse has a ripple effect throughout entire families. Children and their caregivers are drastically affected in numerous ways when sexual abuse occurs. Often it leaves children and their families with many needs such as therapy for both the child and caregiver, housing, transportation, basic needs like food and hygiene items, and much more. Trauma does not happen in a vacuum, and for so many of our clients, sexual abuse is just one of the challenges they are facing.

This is where the power of philanthropy comes into play. Through the support of a community, we can provide therapy, our care closet, family advocacy, and other immediate needs at no cost to families. This can help ease some of the hardships they may be experiencing while helping them along their healing.

How can you support our clients and their families?

- Make a financial gift by heading to cac-kent.org, mailing a personal check, or giving us a call at 616.336.4275.
- Make a wish come true: The Center is always in need of toys, books, music and other items that help children feel more comfortable and at ease. Head to our website for a list of current needs.
- Join our Circle of Care: With a gift of \$1,000 or more per year, for five years, you can join the Circle of Care and provide sustaining support to children on their journey to healing from sexual abuse.
- Create a legacy of hope and healing by including the Children's Advocacy Center of Kent County in your will or estate plans.
- Volunteer your time, even from the comfort of your own home.

For more information or questions on how giving impacts our clients and their families, please contact our Communications Coordinator, Kate West, at kwest@cac-kent.org.

ONEinTEN

One in ten children in Kent County will be sexually abused before their 18th birthday. While our team at the CAC works hard to ensure that we are providing the best services to support the nearly 1,000 children that walk through our doors each year, we also know that there are over 14,000 more children in need of our help. Child sexual abuse is a community problem – impacting children and families across socioeconomic, race, and residential demographics – and ending it is going to require a community response.

The ONEinTEN Partners program partners with companies committed to investing in dramatically reducing child sexual abuse in Kent County. ONEinTEN Partners operate under the premise that protecting the children of Kent County from having to experience child sexual abuse will in return develop resilient children and neighborhoods, and benefit our community for generations to come.

Interested in becoming a ONEinTEN partner? Contact our Executive Director, Melissa Werkman, at mwerkman@cac-kent.org.

ONEinTEN Partners



2021 Clinical Impact

October 1, 2020-September 30, 2021

Year at a glance:

547 Forensic Interviews

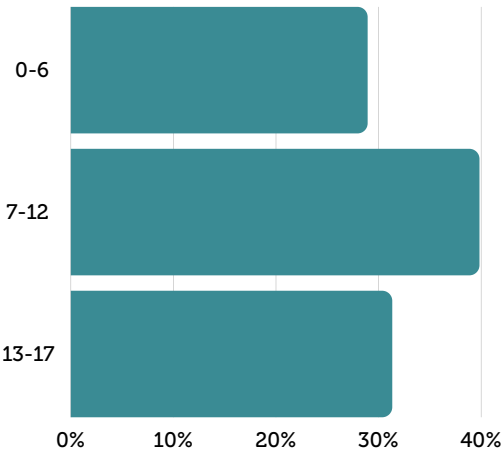
2,226 Counseling Sessions

134 Case management and caregiver counseling sessions

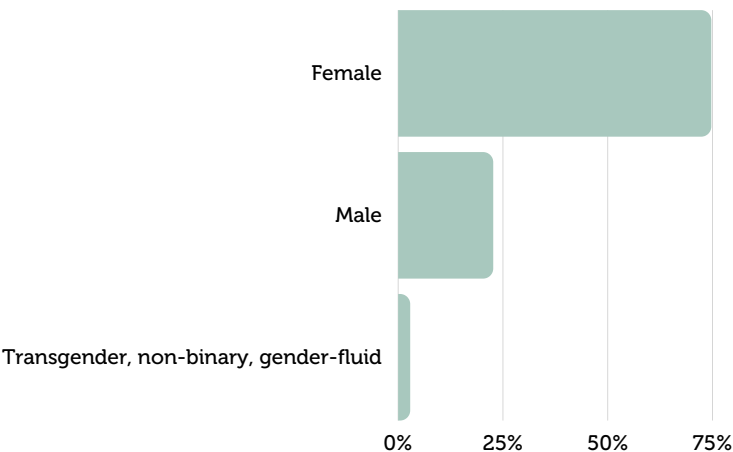
28 Clients accompanied to court

New Client Demographics

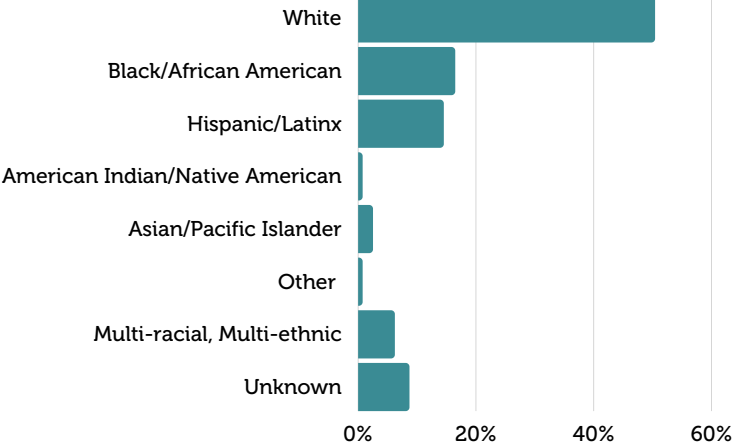
Age



Gender



Race/Ethnicity



Circle of Care members provide sustaining support to children on their journey to healing.

- Robert and Nancy Bierenga
- John Boeschstein
- Tracy Breihof
- Dr. William and Kathy Bush
- Lisa Cicinelli
- Chuck and Barb DeVries
- Lawrence and Jennifer Duthler
- Amanda and Justin Fielder
- Twink Frey
- Jane Gietzen
- David and Michele Hardy
- Linda Hoemke
- Win and Kyle Irwin
- Irwin Seating Company
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- David and Amelia Start
- Ed and Joan Stuursma
- Sandy and Dave Turner
- Diane Turnwall
- Dr. Michael and Rebecca Vredenburg
- John and Vicky Weller
- Bob and Tracy Wolford

The following supporters have committed to a legacy gift in their estate plans.

- Robert and Nancy Bierenga
- John Boeschstein
- Sue A. Kern
- Carolyn Otzman

Thank You

During the 2020-2021 fiscal year, we received \$723,424 in contributions from 722 donors, foundations, and local businesses. Our work to end child sexual abuse continues because of your generosity. A complete listing of donors is available on our website at www.cac-kent.org/documents-reports.



Community Outreach & Prevention

We are proud to partner with Grand Valley State University's College of Education. All GVSU student teachers will now be participating in our mandated reporter training. In addition to this, we will be now offering mandated reporter training to all schools that participate in our Kids Have Rights prevention programming.

Mandated reporters are an essential part of the child protection system because they have an enhanced capacity, through their expertise and direct contact with children, to identify suspected child abuse and neglect. Reports made by mandated reporters are confirmed at nearly double the rate of those made by non-mandated reporters.

Are you a mandated reporter?

Mandated reporters include:

- Teacher, School Administrator, & School Counselor
- Physician, PA, Nurse
- Law Enforcement
- Dentist, Registered Dental Hygienist
- Regulated Child Care Provider
- Social Worker
- Member of the Clergy

The CAC provides mandated reporter training throughout the year. It is imperative that all mandated reporters understand the child protection law and their role in helping to keep children safe from abuse.

To schedule personalized training for your organization or business or to attend a community mandated reporter training, please contact our Prevention and Outreach Director, Misti DeVries, at mdevries@cac-kent.org.

Kids Have Rights 2020-2021 School Year in Review



20,864

children received virtual body safety lessons from our Kids Have Rights team.

95

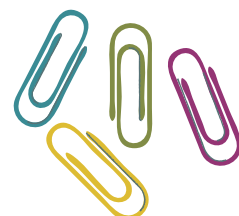
elementary schools participated in Kids Have Rights lessons.

9

children disclosed they had been sexually abused after participating in a Kids Have Rights lesson.

95%

of parents and caregivers reported an increase in their own knowledge and understanding surrounding abuse prevention.



Healing Garden Opened to Clients

We opened our Healing Garden to our clients on June 9. The Healing Garden was the result of four years of planning, hundreds of donors, and the joint vision of the CAC's therapy team and a local philanthropist.

The CAC's Healing Garden offers unique elements that therapists can utilize in the healing process, including:

- Fire Table- each child can burn the written narrative of their trauma
- Sand Plot- children can bury the ashes from the written narrative of their trauma
- Water- flowing through the middle of the garden, it serves as a relaxing way to engage each child's senses
- Bridge- symbolizes each child's journey from trauma to healing
- Drum- allows for children to practice therapeutic drumming
- Fountain- the soothing sound and sight of rippling water encourages grounding and mindfulness, utilizing sensory stimulation

The CAC serves nearly 1,000 Kent County children annually who are victims of sexual abuse. Each of our clients have access to the Healing Garden to utilize with their therapist as they heal from their sexual abuse.



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Consultant and Community Volunteer

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Senior Vice President, Human Resources Director,
Mercantile Bank of Michigan

Tracy Wolford
Community Advocate

Upcoming Events

Virtual Walk in Their Shoes Tours
Hosted virtually the second
Tuesday of every month at 12pm

Thursday, May 12, 12pm
Believe the Child Luncheon

For more information about upcoming
events, contact Kate West at
kwest@cac-kent.org.

Donors



We are sincerely grateful and honored to acknowledge the following donors who have given to the Children's Advocacy Center of Kent County between October 1, 2020 and September 30, 2021. We have made every attempt to ensure the accuracy of this information. If you have any questions regarding the following list, please contact Kate West at kwest@cac-kent.org.

Mr. Matt Abraham
Roger Ackerman
Douglas Adams
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Joseph and Judy Adamski
Nick and Shellie Adamy
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Lance Aidif
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Melvin and Sharon VandeGevel
James Vanden Heuvel

Susie Vander Griend
Aletta Vander Plaats and Daniel
Lorenz
Megan Vanderploeg
Debra VanHevele
Jane VanHoltten
Joan VanSolkema
Shari Veldman
Gret Velting
Venture Real Estate Group LLC
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Christy and William Vierzen
Melissa Vigh
Michael Visser
Vortec Tooling Solutions Inc
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Graham
Dr. Michael and Rebecca
Vredenburg
Sharon Vriend Robinette
Kimberly Waalkes
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Kathleen Walsh
Andrea Ward
Warner Norcross + Judd
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Jason Webb
Dean and Jolan Webster
Wege Foundation
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Weller Family Foundation
Steven and Lynn Wendt
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Wensco Sign Supply
Melissa and Tom Werkman
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Aaron and Wendy Wetzel
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Trent Wieringa
Lonna Wiersma
Rachel Wilcox
Mikhila Wildey
Josh and Emily Wilford
Mary Lee and Bob Wilkinson
Elizabeth Williams
Kim and Neal Wilmore
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Bob and Tracy Wolford

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Kara Wood
Dr. Richard Wood
Tiffani Wood
Dr. Barbara and Gilbert Wynn
Val Young
Bruce Young
Katherine Zago
David Zeemering
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Susie Ziegler
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