

2022



the children's ADVOCATE

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



children's
ADVOCACY CENTER
OF KENT COUNTY

FROM THE PRESIDENT/CEO

Increasing Accessibility

As I approach my four-year anniversary as director of this organization, there is hardly a day that goes by – even in the most challenging moments of my work– that I am not still stunned that I get to be part of this organization. The opportunity to support our committed and incredibly hard-working staff, partners and volunteers is a true honor. Regularly, I am witness to their dedication and seemingly tireless efforts.

It also holds true that I cannot see those things and not be heart-achingly aware of the pain and trauma endured by our clients and families. However, through the efforts of our team, I am also witness to the hope and sanctuary we are able to provide to families who come to us for justice and healing. This past year alone, 874 new children and their families came through our doors for the first time. It is a number that is staggering and difficult for me to comprehend, and particularly because it does not even include those clients who were already engaged with us for counseling, court support and case management services.

Early in my tenure here, I remember learning that we had served close to 1,000 kids the year before. That took my breath away. It is roughly the population of an elementary school in a suburban community. But then I considered the statistic that 1 in 10 children will experience child sexual abuse before their 18th birthday and I did the math. One tenth of the population of kids under 18 in Kent County (at the time) equated to well over 15,600 children. I realized with incredible dismay that while we were doing life-changing work for those 1,000 kids who were coming here, to reach 15,600 more we had so much more to do.

Even during the more restrictive periods of the pandemic, our staff and board began earnestly exploring ways that we might begin to reach them. We estimate that there are likely a significant number of barriers that exist for children across Kent County. Over the next few years, we will:

Lean In.

- Continue to foster partnerships with neighborhood associations, faith-based institutions, schools, and community health centers to collaborate on ways to best support families
- Seek to grow partnerships with Kent County businesses and institutions through a call to action to come alongside us in radically reducing child sexual abuse by leveraging their unique resources, skills, and connections

Listen.

- Work collaboratively with families and communities in finding ways to overcome barriers to service and support by first listening to understand what challenges they face in seeking services

Lead.

- With the support of seed funding provided by the W.K. Kellogg Foundation, convene a team of stakeholders to create a comprehensive plan to understand, address and reduce race-based inequities that heavily contribute to the trauma experienced by victims/families of color
- Expand the accessibility and availability of our services to areas of high need, through partnerships such as the satellite location we launched in June 2022 at Cherry Health – Heart of the City Health Center or to rural communities in Northern Kent County
- Above all: Strive to build families' trust in us and the systems we work in by welcoming and encouraging their partnership in decision making regarding their child's and family's healing journey

It bears repeating, child sexual abuse is a community-wide problem. While we are committed to leading the charge, we cannot move the needle alone. It is imperative that we are joined in this effort. As we turn the corner toward 2023, please consider joining us in our important work. We need participation from individuals, businesses, educational institutions, community-facing organizations, social service agencies, churches, youth serving organizations and the media. Please reach out to us at info@cac-kent.org to explore ways that you can meaningfully engage.

Thank you for choosing to walk alongside us,



Melissa Werkman
President/CEO
Children's Advocacy Center of Kent County



"When our daughter confided in us that our neighbor and trusted babysitter had sexually abused her, our hearts were crushed. Our minds went into an absolute whirlwind of questions on how to proceed while also experiencing such pain and sadness for what our daughter had gone through. We are so grateful that we were directed to the Children's Advocacy Center. From the first time we entered their facilities for an interview we were treated with deep care. The professionalism of the Center was incredible. Our daughter was matched with a counselor and she began an in-depth and effective program for dealing with the trauma she experienced. We utilized CAC programs for our other children as well that focused in on teaching body safety and we as parents received valuable information on how to help her heal and be strong supports for her along the way.

No one ever wants or expects they will need the services the CAC provides. However, unfortunately, there are many families such as ourselves that do. The CAC is an absolute beacon of hope in a very dark situation. The wealth of knowledge they provide for children and families who go through this pain is invaluable. We will forever be grateful for the services that the Children's Advocacy center provides and for our daughter's CAC counselor who helped her tackle her fears head on and grow into the astounding person she is today."

-Caregiver of a survivor

New Accessibility Initiatives

At the CAC we serve on average 1,000 children annually. While this number may seem alarming, it is estimated that there are an additional 15,600 children whose abuse goes unreported each year in Kent County alone. In an effort to reach the children we are missing, we have undertaken two new initiatives to reduce barriers in accessing our services.

We recently started providing mental health services to our clients at a new satellite office, located at Cherry Health's Heart of the City Health Center (pictured right). By partnering with Cherry Health, we're able to provide another option for our clients to receive important therapy services at a location that may be more convenient and in which they already have a trusted medical home.

The CAC was also awarded a grant from the W.K. Kellogg Foundation to reduce race-based inequities for children of color. In collaboration with community partners, we will utilize a victim-centered approach to create a robust plan to reduce race-based inequities for Kent County children of color impacted by child sexual abuse. With this initiative, we can create a more trauma-informed system to serve all child survivors. Through listening and inquiry conducted in partnership with community members, we will ensure services at our CAC are culturally attuned and child and whole family centered for all children in our county.

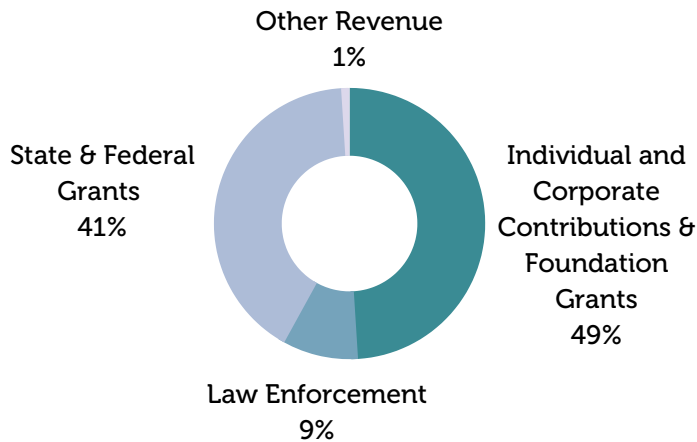


FY22 Finances

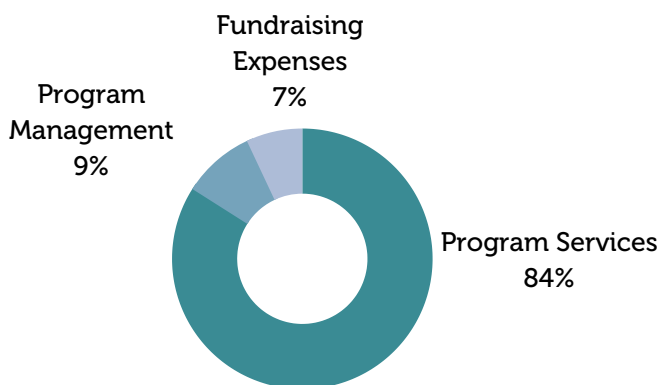
Condensed Statement of
Financial Position*

Assets	
Current Assets	\$468,623
Property and Equipment (Net)	\$2,635,095
Other Assets (Promises to Give)	\$342,167
Total Assets	\$3,445,885
Liabilities & Equity	
Current Liabilities	\$118,612
Long-Term Liabilities	\$0
Equity	\$3,327,272
Total Liabilities & Equity	\$3,445,885

Revenue:



Functional Expenses:



*State and Federal Grants include funds from Victims of Crime Act (VOCA), CAC Fund administered by Division of Victim Services, and National Children's Alliance funds provided by the US Department of Justice.

These statements do not reflect approximately 3,900 hours donated by our volunteers and interns during the fiscal year. The value of their hours is estimated at \$106,764 for the fiscal year.

These financials include income and expenses for FY22 as received through October 1. They are unaudited and unofficial and are presented for information only. Audited financials will be made available in February 2023 on our website.

Accessibility Needs

To help make our services accessible, the CAC takes a variety of steps to make sure any child in need can receive hope and healing. These include:

- Providing our programs and services free of charge to client families
- Providing transportation services and assistance
- Contracting translation services
- Fulfilling immediate family needs through the Yellow Dress Care Closet.
- Assisting families with case management services.

We rely on the help of our community to help ensure accessibility to our services. How can the community help us provide accessibility?

- Make a financial gift by heading to www.cac-kent.org for a one-time or monthly gift.
- 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 estate plans or other planned gifts.
- Help provide sustainability in our services by making a gift to our endowment.
- Make an in-kind donation to our Care Closet. Please head to our website for a list of current needs.
- Volunteer your time, even from the comfort of your own home.

For more information on how you can help ensure access to our services, please contact us at 616.336.5160.

2022 Clinical Impact

October 1, 2021-September 30, 2022

Year at a glance:

874 Forensic Interviews

5,252 Counseling Sessions

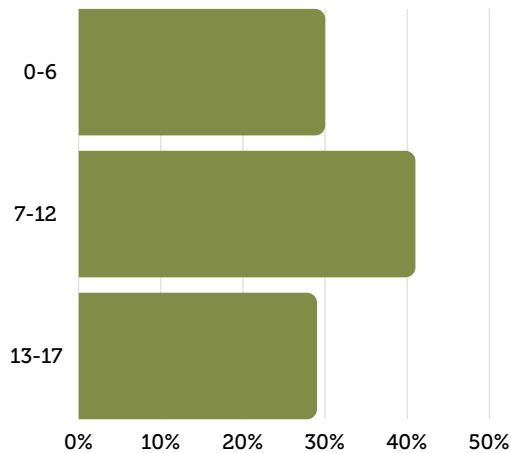
262 Case Management Sessions

471 Caregiver Counseling Sessions

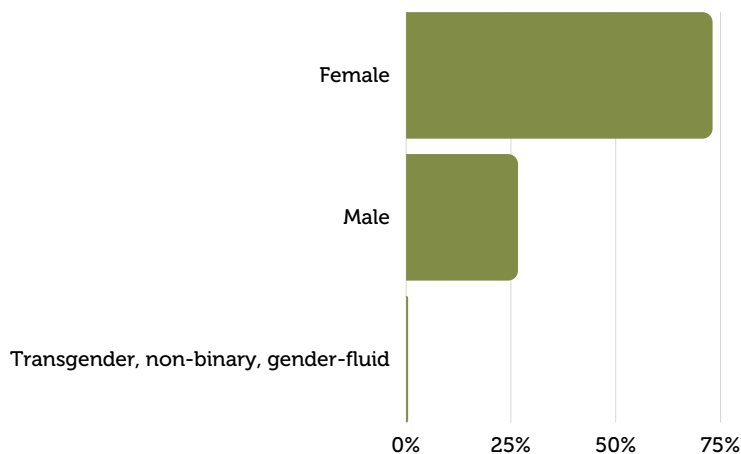
53 Clients Accompanied to Court

New Client Demographics

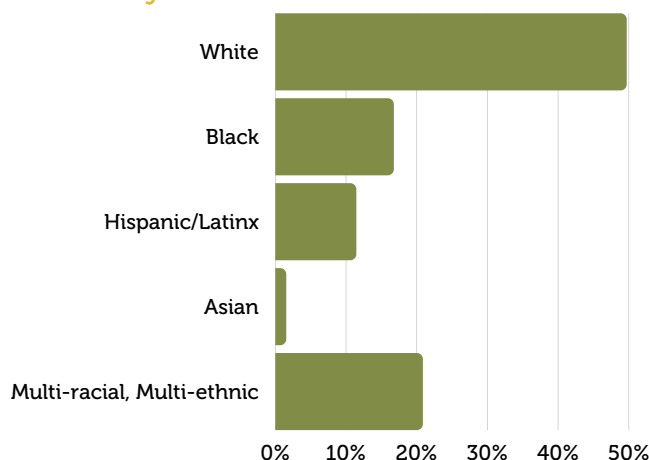
Age



Gender



Race/Ethnicity



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

Doug Bellah
Robert and Nancy Bierenga
Margaret Bloemers
John Boeschstein
Tracy Breihof
Dr. William and Kathy Bush
Lisa Cicinelli
Lawrence and Jennifer Duthler
Amanda and Justin Fielder
Twink Frey
Jane Gietzen
Linda Hoemke
Erin Hoffmann and Elissa Stormo-Hoffman
Win and Kyle Irwin
Karen Kania & Peg McClure
Dawn and Mark Kibben
JD Loeks
Deborah McNabb
Fran and David Miller
Ron and Patty Miller
Walter and Roxann Monroe
Joan Panopoulos
Nate and Sarah Phillips
Tonya Porter
Davin and Rashelle Reust
Scott Souter
David and Amelia Start
Douglas and Alix Thompson
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

Community Outreach & Prevention

Throughout this year, the CAC has collaborated with one of our ONEinTEN partners, Kent Intermediate School District, to help inform and empower the mandated reporters of our community.

Together we streamed the documentary REWIND, and were joined by its director Sasha Joseph Neulinger for a Q&A and panel. Discussions centered around the long-term impacts of trauma, how to recognize and report suspected abuse, and how to serve as an advocate for children.

Other highlights from the past year include:

- Provided 39 trainings covering how to recognize and report child sexual abuse, empowering 957 community members to serve as advocates for children.
- Increased community education on adverse childhood experiences, vicarious trauma, and compassion fatigue.
- Engaged 16 individual volunteers and three groups, providing a total of 476 volunteer hours.

Kids Have Rights

2021-2022 School Year in Review

○○○○○○○

24,497

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

106

elementary schools participated in Kids Have Rights lessons.

97%

of school staff reported that information provided resulted in increased understanding of abuse as well as a greater confidence in reporting suspected abuse.

93%

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



Thank You

Thank you to all donors, foundations, community partners, and volunteers who supported us in the 2021-2022 fiscal year. Our work to end child sexual abuse continues because of your generosity. A listing of major donors is available on our website at www.cac-kent.org/documents-reports.

Board of Directors

John Boeschstein – Board President
CEO, Davalor Mold Company

Gail Scott – Board Vice President
Community Advocate

Tessa Muir – Board Secretary
Senior Council, Springstead Bartish Borgula & Lynch

Dawn Kibben – Board Treasurer
Executive V.P. and Chief Financial Officer,
Frederik Meijer Gardens & Sculpture Park

Christopher Becker
Chief Prosecuting Attorney, Kent County

Tasha Blackmon
President & CEO, Cherry Health

Edward Elsner
CPA, Consolidated Resource Imaging LLC

Amanda Fielder
Partner, Warner Norcross & Judd

Andrew Fuelling
VP of Michigan Operations, RT Specialty

Jane Gietzen
Director of Information Services, Spectrum Health

Damika Houston
Therapist & Owner, Healing Minds Counseling

Kyle Irwin
Community Advocate

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Kimberly Krause
VP & General Manager, FOX17

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Sheriff, Kent County

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Community Advocate

Mary McLoughlin
Owner, McLoughlin Communications

Frances Miller
Community Advocate

Savator Selden-Johnson
Director, Department of Health and Human
Services Kent County

Kelli Smith
Chief Development Officer, John Ball Zoo

Mercedes Toohey
Consultant and Community Organizer

Eric Winstrom
Chief of Police, City of Grand Rapids

Tracy Wolford
Community Advocate

Welcome Bacon, CAC Facility Dog!

In March the Center welcomed a new member to our team- Bacon. Bacon comes to us from Paws With A Cause's facility dog program.

Bacon is trained and certified to interact with our clients in the lobby and in therapy sessions. In his interactions, Bacon's role is to emotionally support clients as they process and heal from their trauma. Having Bacon present helps to remind children that they are not currently in harm and that they are safe.



@the_golden_baconator



Upcoming Events

16th Annual Believe the Child Luncheon

May 11 | 12-1PM

CAC 30th Birthday

Celebrate with us throughout 2023

For more information, please contact us at 616.336.5160 or visit cac-kent.org.

Donors



We are sincerely grateful and honored to acknowledge the following donors who have given \$500+ to the Children's Advocacy Center of Kent County between October 1, 2021 and September 30, 2022. 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.

Nick and Shellie Adamy
AFAB Warehouse
Kristen Aidif
Amway
Applied Imaging
Baldwin Foundation
Sarah Banks
Robert and Nancy Bierenga
Christa and Jason Bird
Mark and Cathy Bissell
Blackford Capital LLC
Margaret Bloemers
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Drew Born
Tracy Breihof
Buist Electric
Walter Bulkowski
David and Angela Burke
Dr. William and Kathy Bush
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CDV5 Foundation
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Grand Rapids Wilbert Burial Vault
Company
Grand River Bank
Jeff Gray
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Alliance
Dan and Kelly Green
Mark and Deborah Greiner
Kirk and Tatum Hawkins
George and Susan Heartwell
Ken and Jane Hilbert
Russell Hines
Linda Hoemke
Erin Hoffmann and Elissa Stormo-Hoffman
Charles Homeyer
Fred Host and Mary Pollock Host
Stephen Hughes
Keith Hustak
Intandem Credit Union
Win and Kyle Irwin
Irwin Seating Company
James and Catherine Haveman Family
Foundation
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Keller Foundation
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Chris Legg
JD Loeks
Shirley Lurtsema
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Bill and India Manns
Lexy McCulloch
Thomas and Dawn McDonald
Dave and Kathleen McEwen
Mary McLoughlin and Martin Quinnan
Deborah McNabb
Members First Credit Union

Mercantile Bank of Michigan
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Fran and David Miller
Miller Johnson Attorneys
Katie Millman
Walter and Roxann Monroe
Scott and Marcy Nicholson
Deborah Nykamp
Keith and Deanne Oosterbaan
Open Systems Technologies
Ottawa Hills High School
Frank and Anna Palazzolo
Joan Panopoulos
Thania Panopoulos
Peter C. and Emajean Cook
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Mary Reagan Shapton
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