



CHILDREN'S ADVOCACY CENTER  
OF SOUTHERN ARIZONA

# Annual Report

2022-2023



PREPARED FOR THE JUNE 2022-JULY 2023 FISCAL YEAR

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# From the Director

## Dear Friends,

Every year, we serve over 1,000 victims of child abuse who are brought to the Children's Advocacy Center for a criminal investigation. This year was no exception, but the stories of abuse were intense as intense as we have ever seen. We learned of terrible acts of cruelty, intentional abuse, horrible neglect, and sadly, sexual abuse of children and teens. It is a testament to this amazing team that they supported one another through it all. We've been doing this for over 27 years, and we are more determined than ever to prevent and address child abuse in our community.

## "How can you do this work?"

People ask me how I can see this suffering and still come into work everyday. The truth is, these kids give me more joy than I can ever repay. When they first come in to the Center, they are broken down by what has happened; afraid of what might happen next. But they transform right in front of me. It's almost like they melt back into kids again, and it's the most fulfilling thing I've ever seen. I leave this building filled with hope, because I know that we made a difference for each of those children.

## How to read this report

This annual report is designed to tell the story of our work in numbers, as much as possible. But the numbers don't show you how a child's face lights up when you offer them kindness. I ask that as you read this, you remember the children we helped are now able to laugh and play, because of what you helped us do for them.

If you haven't come for a tour, please consider yourself invited! I know you will also be inspired and filled with hope once you feel what it's like here where abuse ends and healing begins.



-Marie



# Our Purpose

## Our Mission

**The mission of the Children's Advocacy Center of Southern Arizona is to provide a safe, compassionate, healing environment for children who have been a victim or have witnessed a crime.**

### Vision

Provide each child with the safety they need to tell their story.

Provide each family with healing services.

Hold abusers accountable.

### Core Strategies

The Center provides professionally coordinated services to support families, and to investigate and prosecute child abuse and neglect.

The Center's dedicated, certified professional staff provides forensic interviews, connection to resources, and medical services in one child-friendly location.

The Center promotes awareness and prevention of abuse through community education and outreach.

## Our Values

### Collaboration

We work across sectors with public and private partners to prevent and address abuse.

### Quality

We strive for excellence in all we do, for the sake of the children and families we serve.

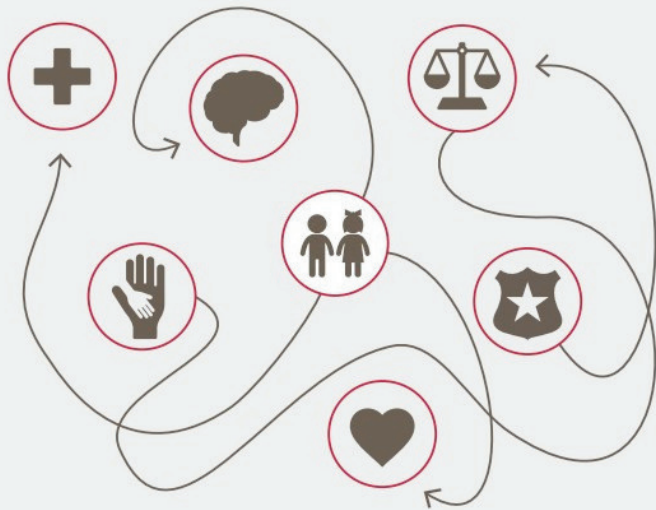
### Impact

We work to change the lives we touch for the community we call home.



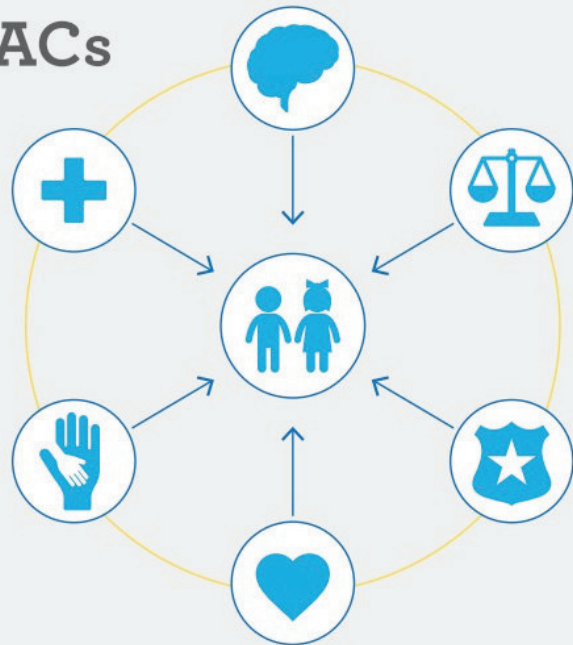
# How CACs Work

## Without CACs



Children's Advocacy Centers (CACs) were developed in the mid-1980s to address systematic problems of coordination and care for child abuse cases. These problems include trauma and revictimization through repeated interviews and examinations in locations that are not child-friendly.

## With CACs



The CAC serves as a coordinated response center. A one-stop, child-friendly environment for: collection of forensic evidence; coordination of multi-disciplinary investigations; case management, crisis intervention and advocacy; referrals to victim assistance and support services; 24/7 on-call response for urgent cases; and long-term family support.



# Our Programs

## 1

### Forensic Evidence Collection

#### Forensic Interviews

CAC Interviewers use an evidence-based interview model that provides forensically sound, non-leading interviews. We are completely neutral, and have no objectives regarding making arrests, filing charges, removing children or keeping families together.

#### Forensic Medical Exams

Exams ensure the health and safety of the child; Diagnose and treat STIs and other conditions; and Collect evidence of child abuse and neglect. CAC's Forensic Examiners are nurses, nurse practitioners, and physicians who can provide expert witness testimony.

## 2

### Child & Family Advocacy

#### Case Coordination

The Advocate answers the 24/7 phone and ensures everyone is involved at the earliest possible stage

Support the investigators in getting the evidence of what did or did not happen

#### Customized Support

Crisis intervention (ABC Model)

Risk assessment and Safety planning

Assess family needs and provide what we can internally, plus community referrals, including for mental health

#### Follow-up

Remain in contact as long as the family needs us to support ongoing healing and to address any new concerns

## 3

### Long-term Family Support

Our innovative, effective programs equip families with knowledge, skills, and resources to improve their safety. Our goal is to support parents and caregivers as they help their children heal. We offer classes, workshops, and even a book club, so every family can find the program that works best for them. Participants leave each class with tools to use at home in their daily life, and are invited to serve on our Family Advisory Board to shape our community response to abuse.

## 4

### Child Abuse Prevention

Our child abuse prevention classes are based on the Protective Factors that prevent child abuse. Parents and caregivers learn about grooming and how to keep their children safe. In addition, outreach efforts and a robust in-school program teach how to recognize and respond to abuse. All outreach is guided by our VOICES Council of youth survivors. They offer a unique perspective on services that helps us improve, even as they empower and inspire other survivors.

# We Did It Together



902

FORENSIC  
INTERVIEWS

609

SAFETY PLANS

181

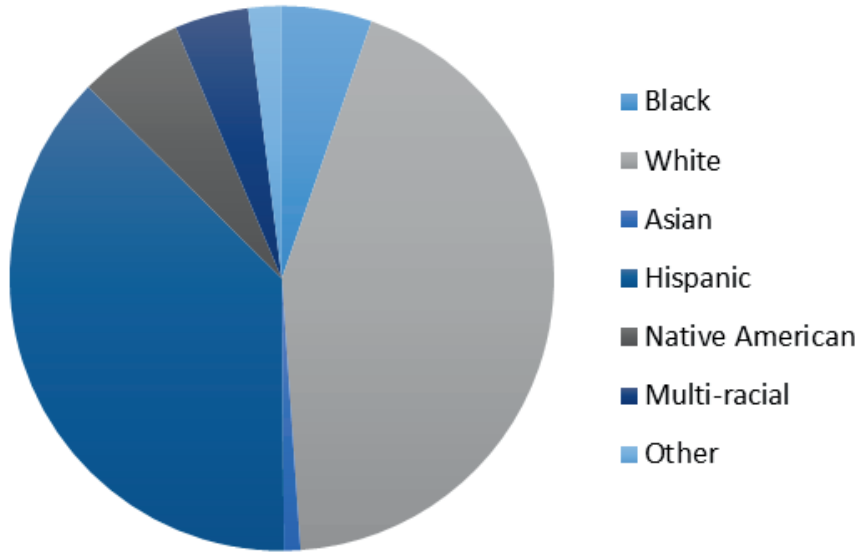
MEDICAL EXAMS &  
CONSULTS

2,031

CHILDREN & CAREGIVERS SERVED



# WHO WE SERVED



**266**  
PERSONS WITH  
DISABILITIES

**67%**  
OF OUR CLIENTS  
ARE UNDER AGE 13

**74% OF OUR CLIENTS  
IDENTIFY AS GIRLS**

## Types of Crime We Helped Investigate

Physical Abuse/Neglect	24%	Sexual Exploitation	2%
Sexual Abuse/Assault	59%	Domestic Violence	13%
Sex Trafficking	1%	Kidnapping	1%

# Special Thanks

## CORPORATE SPONSORS

Cody John Peck  
Desert Toyota of Tucson  
Southwest Gas Corp  
Tucson Electric Power Co

## LARGE DONORS

Lynn Adams  
Misty Colvin  
Desert Skies United Methodist  
Michael & Karen Fisher  
Marlene Fodor Revocable Trust  
Mary Gregory  
Jayne Henninger  
Chan & Angel Lowe  
Michael P. Moyer  
Dale Woolridge  
Ben Palazzo  
Greg & Shelly Peck  
Susan Rogers  
Janae Wheelin  
Pat & Richard Wiedhopf

*90% of funds go directly  
to helping children*

## PRIVATE FOUNDATIONS

Banner Health  
Connie Hillman Family Foundation  
Gila Donor Advised Fund  
In-N-Out Burger Foundation  
MercyCares  
PICOR Charitable Foundation  
The West

## MONTHLY DONORS

Tom & Gail Buick  
Laura De La Torre  
Marie Fordney  
Michelle Hamilton  
Jennifer Holt  
Dan & Karla McMahon  
Deborah Nance  
Alan Schultz  
Lois Weiss  
Pat & Richard Wiedhopf



Nearly

# 2,300

Volunteer Hours  
Supported our Work  
This Past Year

# You Can Help

Join us to make a difference for children



The contribution you can make as a volunteer is invaluable, and we are committed to ensuring your experience helps you become an advocate for children and families in our community. Volunteers love to help with child care, where children begin to heal through play. They also support our prevention and education activities by preparing materials and helping during classes, workshops, and outreach events. Call us to learn about other opportunities, including fundraising events and special projects.

# Thank you for supporting children in our community

## Visit us!

We love the work we  
do, and we want to  
share it with you!  
Schedule a tour to  
learn why the Center is  
*where abuse ends  
and healing begins*

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