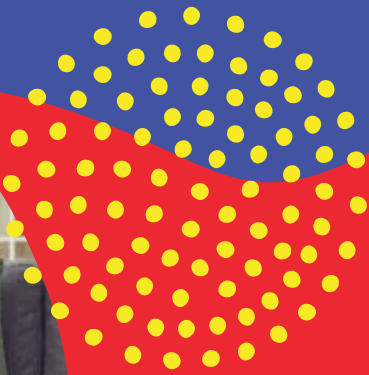


VERMONT CHILDREN'S ALLIANCE

# 2022

ANNUAL REPORT



# a message from the **EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR**

The Vermont Children's Alliance (VCA) has had a busy and exciting year in 2022. When change and uncertainty felt like the norm, VCA has remained consistent and strong in its mission to provide support for Child Advocacy Centers (CACs) and Multidisciplinary Teams by continuing to offer education, training, consultation, and support across Vermont.

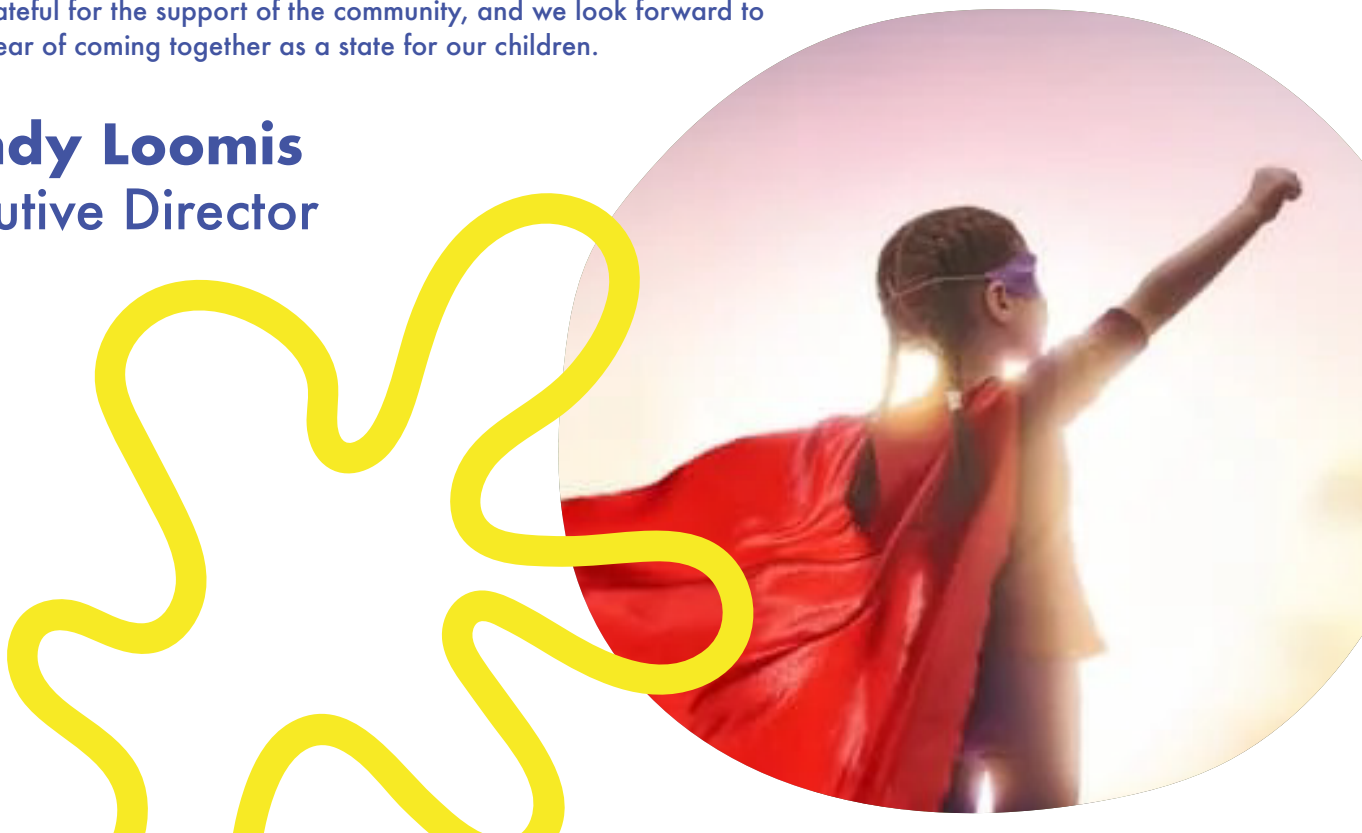
In 2022, the VCA again went through the comprehensive reaccreditation process through the National Children's Alliance (NCA) and had our site visit in November. Reaccreditation with NCA happens every five years, and Accredited Chapter membership of NCA requires compliance with the following Accreditation Standards: Organizational Capacity; Membership; Growth and Development; Training and Technical Assistance; and Awareness and Education.

VCA was able to strengthen our organizational capacity by securing additional funding to increase staffing to provide stronger prevention and programming. We have added a part-time Community Education and Outreach Coordinator to focus on building awareness of child abuse and the role of the CACs throughout Vermont. Additionally, a part-time Training and Special Projects Coordinator was hired to further expand the VCA's continued efforts to provide education and high-quality training to multidisciplinary team members. Through this growth, the VCA and its membership can support more of Vermont's children affected by child abuse by supporting child abuse professionals in Vermont.

We brought Basic as well as Extended Interview Training to Vermont and continued to contract with a specialist to offer statewide Forensic Interview Peer Review. Additionally, we teamed up with Zero Abuse Project and offered LGBTQIA+ Children in the Forensic Interview training to our statewide partners on top of supporting attendance at various training and conferences like the International Symposium on Child Abuse, Crimes Against Children, and International Forensic Nurse Conference.

VCA is grateful for the support of the community, and we look forward to another year of coming together as a state for our children.

**-Wendy Loomis**  
Executive Director

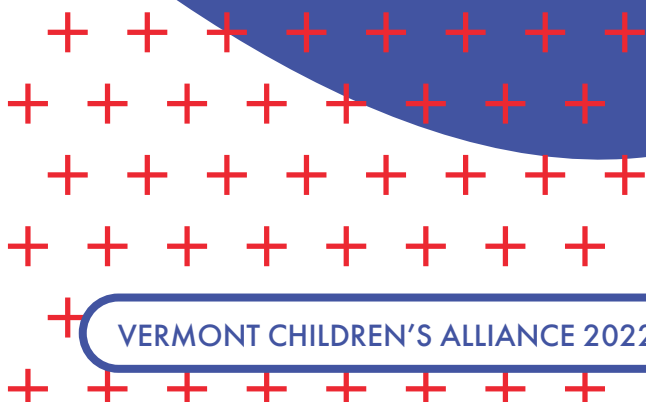


# table of CONTENTS



Backed by  
National Children's Alliance®  
Accredited Chapter

- 04 ~~~~~ WHAT WE DO
- 06 ~~~~~ MEET THE STAFF
- 07 ~~~~~ BOARD OF DIRECTORS
- 08 ~~~~~ WHAT IS A CAC?
- 09 ~~~~~ 2022 FINANCIALS
- 10 ~~~~~ LOOKING AHEAD



# WHAT WE DO

The Vermont Children’s Alliance (VCA) is a non-profit network of child advocacy centers committed to working together to improve the way Vermont supports and responds to victims of child abuse and child sexual abuse. Our 13-member organization serves all 14 counties in Vermont.

Our goal is to provide every child victim in the state of Vermont, along with their non-offending caregivers, with a friendly and safe space where allegations of child sexual and physical abuse can be investigated while appropriate supporting resources and services are being provided.

At a CAC, a coordinated team of experts in health and human services, law enforcement, victim advocacy, mental health, and other disciplines holds offenders accountable and helps children and families heal in a comprehensive, seamless way. This team of experts is called a multidisciplinary team or MDT.



## WITHOUT CACs



Kids and families must often find mental health, medical, and other services on their own.

## WITH CACs

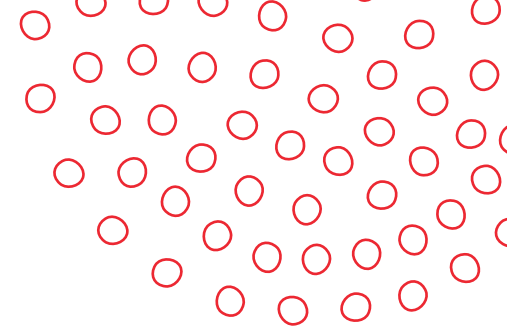


CACs bring the services to the kids and families need to them, all in one place.



what we do

# 2022 SNAPSHOT

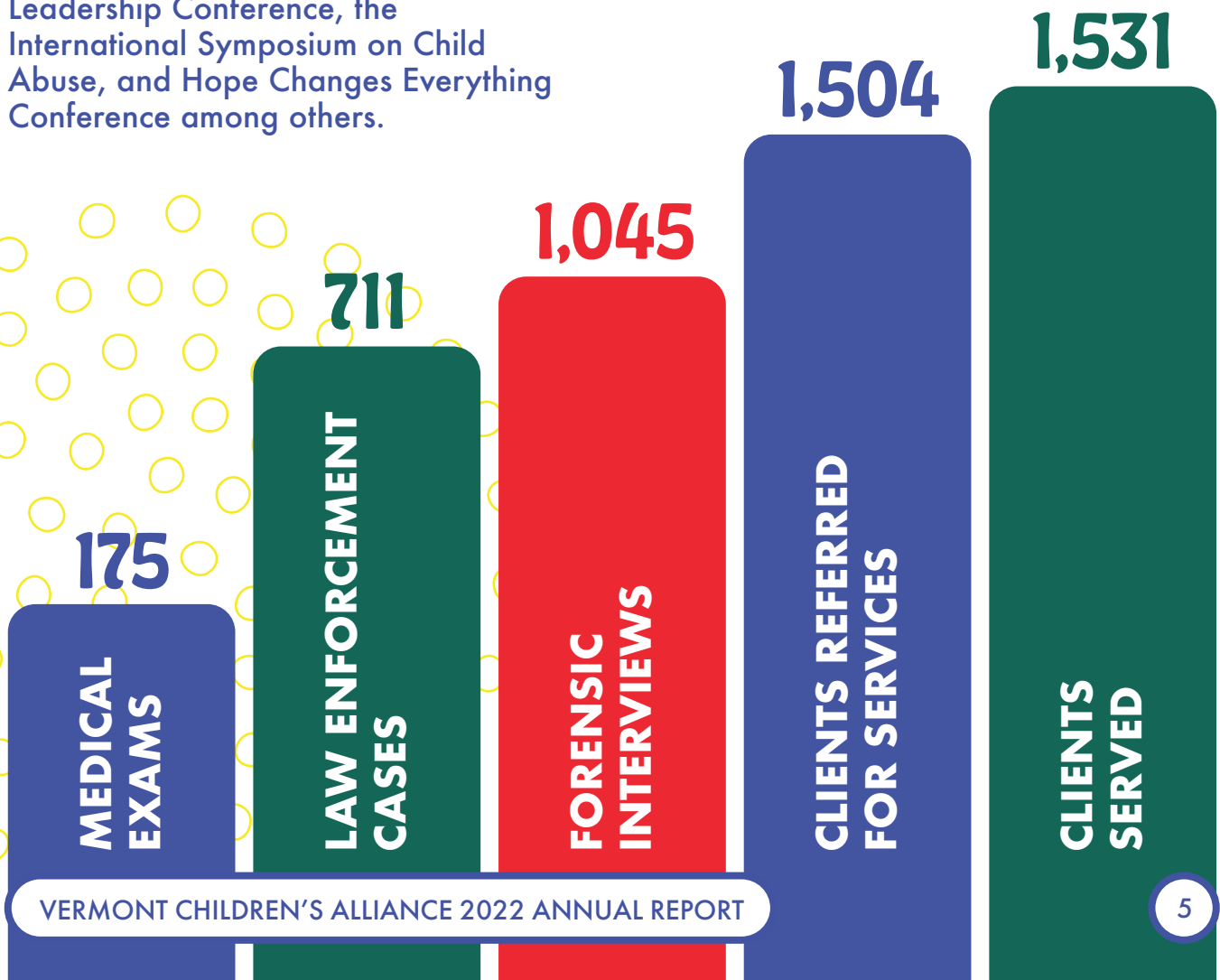


## TRAINING

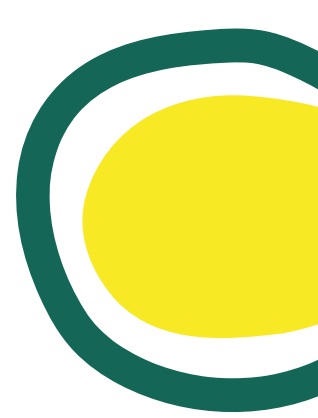
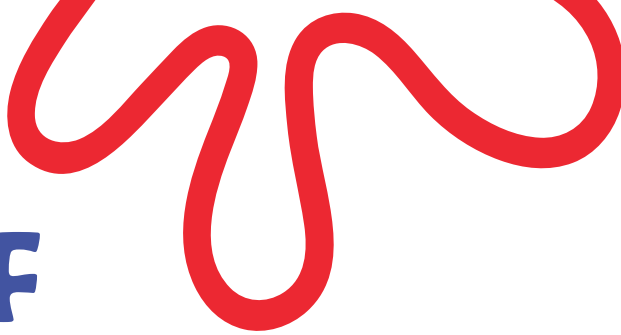
In 2022, the Vermont Children's Alliance provided or supported specialized training for over 200 professionals. These trainings included Basic Forensic Interview training; CAC Management Training; Extended Forensic Interview training; Physical Abuse training; Forensic Interview Peer Review and Forensic Nurse Sexual Assault Training as well as others. Additionally, the Vermont Children's Alliance supported attendance at the Crimes Against Children Conference, the National Children's Alliance Leadership Conference, the International Symposium on Child Abuse, and Hope Changes Everything Conference among others.

## TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

VCA provided administrative support in helping our 13 member programs to meet the National Children's Alliance standards for accreditation. Additionally, we distributed over \$22,000 in equipment and technology directly to our CACs, including forensic interview equipment, digital intelligence equipment and statewide video conferencing. We facilitated 6 bi-monthly membership meetings and on the off months, held full board meetings with our membership



# meet the VCA STAFF



## **Wendy Loomis, Executive Director**

Wendy has been leading the Vermont Children's Alliance since 2017 and serves as Vermont's representative of the National Children's Alliance (NCA), providing technical assistance, training, and organizational resources to the thirteen CACs throughout Vermont. She has been part of the CAC movement since 2009 when she was hired as the Victim Advocate and Outreach Coordinator for the Child First Advocacy Center and Rutland Unit for Special Investigations. In 2010, Wendy was promoted to the Executive Director and still holds that role.

Born and raised in Rutland County Vermont, Wendy graduated from Castleton University with a BA in Health Science and spent fifteen years in healthcare before getting involved in the non-profit world. Wendy enjoys spending time with her two children and grandson, as well as family, friends who became family, woodworking, baking and any new creative adventure she can find.



## **Patti Randall, Assistant Director**

Patti has held the role of Assistant Director of the Vermont Children's Alliance since 2012 with her main focus being financial and grant management of the Chapter. Previously, she held the position of Executive Director of the Bennington County Child Advocacy Center and Special Investigations Unit from 2009 until 2012 when she joined the VCA.

Prior to her work in the CAC movement, she was an office assistant in the Trust & Estate Administration Office at William's College. Besides spending as much time as she can with her husband, three kids, and three grandchildren, she enjoys reading and writing contemporary fiction.

## **Samantha Prince, Training and Outreach Education Coordinator**

Sam has been providing outreach to Vermont CACs and communities since 2022. Her goal is to provide statewide cohesive information, training, and education. In addition to her work with the Vermont Children's Alliance, Sam is also the Executive Director and Dedicated Interview Specialist for Windham County. She has held that role since 2020.

Sam is a Vermont native and holds a bachelor's degree in forensic psychology and a master's in clinical psychology. Prior to working in the non-profit world Sam spent time working in mental health and investigating abuse allegations. Sam enjoys spending time with loved ones, enjoying her home, traveling and looking for the best donuts, and exploring alternate worlds through reading.

2022 VCA

# BOARD OF DIRECTORS

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

## **PRESIDENT**

**Tracy Patnoe**

Executive Director, Lamoille County Special Investigation Unit/Child Advocacy Center

## **VICE PRESIDENT**

**Chris St. Cyr**

Executive Director, Caledonia Children's Advocacy Center

## **TREASURER**

**Fred Saar**

Community Member

## **SECRETARY**

**Caroline Melish**

Executive Director, Addison County Special Investigations Unit/Children's Advocacy Center

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

### **Jenna Caslin**

Executive Director  
Bennington County Child  
Advocacy Center/ SIU

### **Meghan Gyles**

Executive Director The  
Orleans County Child  
Advocacy Center

### **Vickie Rathgab**

Executive Director  
Chittenden Unit for Special  
Investigations

### **Rebecca Duranleau**

Executive Director OUR  
House of Central Vermont,  
Inc. CAC/SIU

### **Betty Lavoie**

Executive Director  
Northwest Unit for Special  
Investigations NUSI/CAC

### **Samantha (Sam) Prince**

Executive Director Windham  
County Safe Place CAC/ SUSI

### **Julie Gaudette**

Director The CACs of the  
Family Place/ Windsor  
County SIU

### **Wendy Loomis**

Executive Director Child  
First Advocacy Center

### **Michele Thurston**

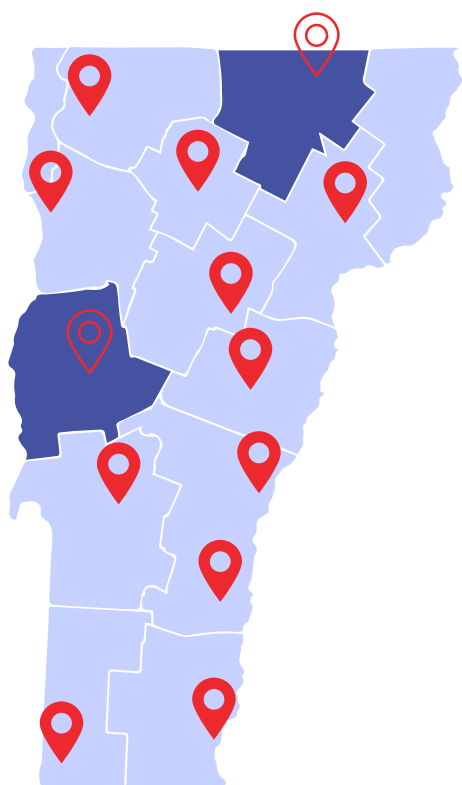
Program Director Orange  
County Special  
Investigations Unit & Child  
Advocacy Center

# what is a CHILD ADVOCACY CENTER

At a Child Advocacy Center, or CAC, a coordinated team of experts (multidisciplinary team or MDT) in health and human services, law enforcement, victim advocacy, mental health, and other disciplines holds offenders accountable and helps children and families heal in a comprehensive, seamless way. The child meets once with a trained interviewer who knows the right questions to ask.

Then, based on the interview, the MDT makes decisions together about how to help the child. Finally, CACs offer a wide range of services like therapy, medical exams, courtroom preparation, victim advocacy, case management, and others to help produce better outcomes.

To really understand what a CAC is, you must understand what children face without one. Without a CAC, the child may end up having to tell the worst story of his or her life over and over again, to doctors, law enforcement, lawyers, therapists, investigators, judges, and others. They may have to talk about that traumatic experience in a police station where they think they might be in trouble, or may be asked the wrong questions by a well-meaning teacher or other adult that could hurt the case against the abuser.



## VERMONT CHILDREN'S ADVOCACY CENTERS

CAC LOCATIONS, COVERAGE AREAS BY NCA MEMBERSHIP STATUS LEVEL, CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICTS

**100% of Counties (14 of 14)  
Covered by CACs**

85.7% (12) Accredited CACs  
14.2% (2) Associate / Developing CACs



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National Children's Alliance®  
Accredited Chapter

### National Children's Alliance Membership Status



**ACCREDITED MEMBER**



**ASSOCIATE /  
DEVELOPING MEMBER**



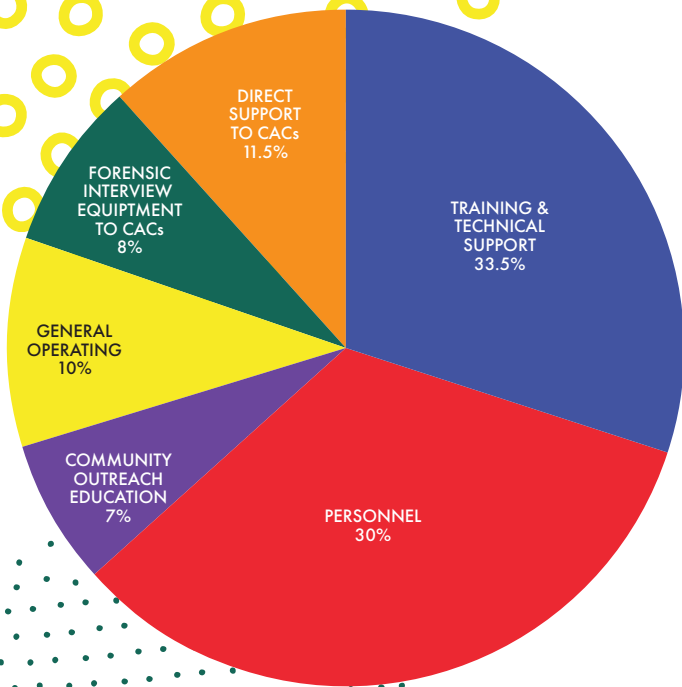
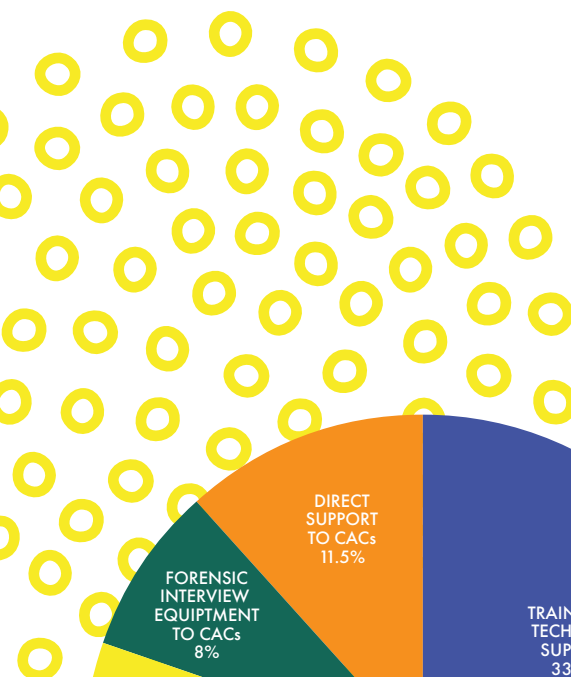
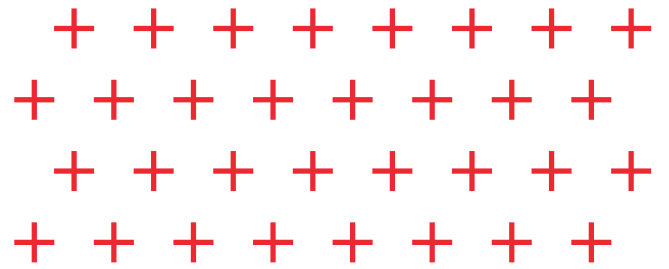
**COUNTY SERVED BY  
AN ACCREDITED CAC**



**COUNTY SERVED BY  
AN ASSOCIATED /  
DEVELOPING CAC**

2022

# FINANCIALS



## REVENUE

Grants	\$228,763
Contributions	\$2,029
Other	\$25,811

**TOTAL** **\$256,603**

## EXPENSES

Community Outreach Education	\$17,559
Direct Support to CACs	\$28,249
Forensic Interview Equipment to CACs	\$19,722
General Operating	\$23,768
Personnel	\$72,919
Training & Technical Support	\$81,931

**TOTAL** **\$244,148**



# LOOKING AHEAD

Looking ahead to 2023, we expect the Chapter to be reaccredited by the National Children's Alliance for another five years. Additionally, 11 of the 13 child advocacy centers in Vermont are accredited, and both of the remaining Associate members submitted their accreditation application to NCA. We are on track to have all 13 CACs accredited in 2023.

We are proud of our CAC and multidisciplinary team members in continuing to provide a dedicated response to child abuse across the state of Vermont. Our member centers are providing services to hundreds of children each year and more recently have noticed an increase in more involved critical incidents of child abuse than seen in previous years.

Our collective professional dedication to mitigating these traumatic events through the constellation of services provided at each CAC across the state remains constant. The support VCA provides to the professionals working with CACs statewide is more important than ever before.

It is our intention to continue to support the development and growth of the CACs across our state as well as promote system improvements for children and families affected by child abuse. We will identify and coordinate more funding opportunities, expand professional networking and peer support opportunities, and promote the growth and continuation of the multi-disciplinary team approach to intervention in child abuse cases.

**THANK  
YOU.**

**-The Vermont  
Children's  
Alliance**

