CHILD VICTIMS AT RISK

lorida's Children's Advocacy Centers across the nation have historically depended on financial assistance from federal grants. Among these, the Victims of Crime Act (VOCA) has stood out as a pivotal source of funding for services that directly benefit children who are victims of abuse, neglect, and other crimes. Recent cuts to VOCA are therefore ringing alarm bells within Florida.

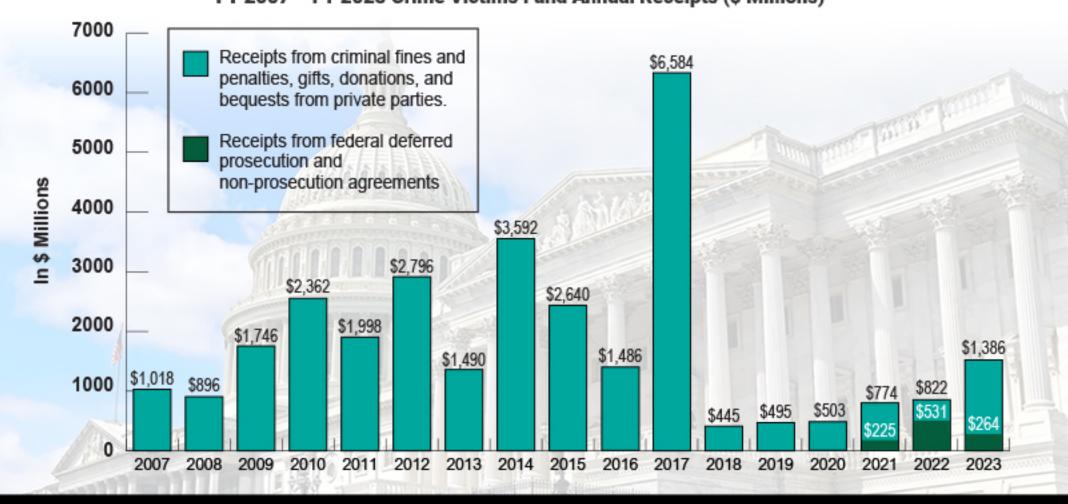
The immediate implications of these cuts are deeply concerning. For many children and their families, services like therapy, crisis counseling, and intervention programs have been lifelines. A reduction in funding means fewer service providers, longer waiting lists, and ultimately, more children falling through the system.

This not only delays healing and recovery for the young victims but also places immense strain on already overwhelmed caregivers and professionals in the system. Moreover, the ripple effects of such cuts are far-reaching. A weakened system can exacerbate societal issues, from higher rates of crime to overburdened mental health systems, as untreated trauma can manifest in various adverse ways in later life.

Advocates and policymakers must rally to prioritize the needs of Florida's most vulnerable citizens, recognizing that the health and well-being of our children today will significantly shape our state's future. GFNF4Kids I Children's Advocacy Center needs your help and support during these troubling times.



FY 2007 - FY 2023 Crime Victims Fund Annual Receipts (\$ Millions)







Stephanie Castellanos

Greetings,

As we approach the close of another year, it is both a moment to reflect and an opportunity to move forward. At GFNF4Kids | Children's Advocacy Center, we've had our share of challenges and victories, all underscored by our unwavering mission to advocate for the welfare of children. I'm excited to share some good news about the changes happening at the CAC under my role as Executive Director. Our team is working together seamlessly, and we've seen a noticeable improvement in our work culture. Processes are flowing smoothly, and it's been a pleasure to witness the positive impact we're making.

A major concern for us and many organizations across the state has been the recent cuts to the Victims of Crime Act (VOCA). This has placed a strain on our resources, but our resolve to support children remains undeterred. That said, the necessity for community funding has never been more pronounced. Excitingly, we are currently in the process of seeking other funding sources as well as accreditation for our advocacy center. This monumental step promises to elevate the quality and range of our services, and we are hopeful for positive outcomes in the coming months.

Our Annual Treasure Coast Child Summit was a resounding success, drawing engagement from numerous attendees and fostering enriching discussions. We were also thrilled to introduce new members to our team, whose expertise and passion have already made a significant impact.

Lastly, as we compile our end-of-year recap, I am immensely proud to share that we have served over 760 children and families this year. This milestone would not be possible without your support and the dedicated efforts of our team and Debbie Butler's continuous effort in advocating non stop for the Treasure Coast as president of the board for Guardians For New Futures.

Wishing you a wonderful holiday season and looking forward to even greater achievements in the coming year.

Warmly,

Stephanie Castellanos
Executive Director



Reporting Period: Feb 1st 2022 - Nov 13th 2023

Data contains preliminary baseline numbers completed by the CAC





Total number of children served at the CAC during the reporting period:

766



Age of children at first contact with center:

Children served from each county



467



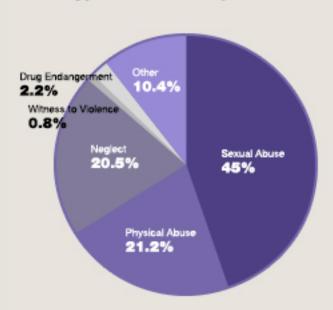




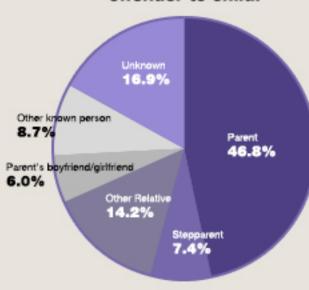
Gender of children: Female 483

Male 262

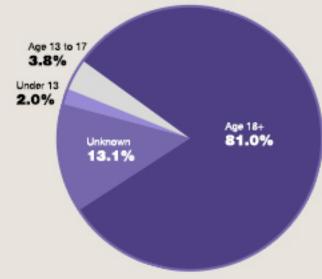
Types of abuse reported:



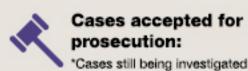
Relationship of alleged offender to child:



Age of alleged offenders:



Total number of alleged offenders: 685



Cases accepted for prosecution:

Medical Exam/Treatment: 325



Prosecution rate: 50%



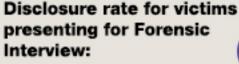
Onsite forensic interviewing:





Referral to in house Mental Health Provider:









TREASURE COAST CHILD ISSUES IMPACTING YOUTH & STRATEGIES SUMMIT TO FURTHER PROTECT CHILDREN

he annual Treasure Coast Child Summit recently concluded with a resounding success, bringing together professionals, advocates, and community members passionate about the welfare of children. One of the standout attendees was the formidable group, Bikers Against Child Abuse, an organization committed to creating safer environments for children. Their presence added a robust sense of advocacy and support, underlining the event's aim to protect the youngest members of our society.

Beth Dudjak, from Monique Burr Foundation, delivered an impactful talk titled "Resilience: Why Prevention Education and Personal Safety Matters". Emphasizing the importance of early education in preventing potential harm, Beth shed light on how informed children can be their own best protectors, making communities safer as a result.

Equally enlightening was Lauren Young-Work's discussion on "Mental Health Considerations for Children and Teens Living with a Family Member Who Has A Substance or Alcohol Use Disorder". Nova University's Social Drama Club masterfully addresses child online safety through an engaging, thought-provoking skit. A must-see for all! Dr. Kelly Everson's deep dive into "Autism Spectrum Disorder: Diagnosis and Treatment Trends" was a significant highlight, offering attendees an updated understanding of autism and the current trends in diagnosis and treatment.

Rounding off the summit were Amy Gregory and Thomas Schmidt from the Department of Children & Families with a crucial presentation on "Everyone is a Mandated Reporter - How to Recognize and Report Signs of Child Abuse and Neglect". They emphasized the collective responsibility of society to recognize and report any potential harm to children. The summit encapsulated a holistic approach to child welfare, ensuring that attendees left better informed and equipped to make a difference.



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WELCOMING NEW MEMBERS TO OUR THRIVING TEAM!

FNF4Kids | Children's Advocacy Center is experiencing a significant expansion, marking a new chapter in our journey towards creating a world where children live free from harm. With newly skilled individuals joining our ranks, we're enhancing our ability to nurture and protect the most vulnerable among us.

Leading this evolution is our new Executive Director, whose strategic vision will steer our multidisciplinary efforts towards greater efficacy and impact. Their role is crucial in harmonizing the expertise of our expanding team with the center's overarching goals.

To improve the way we address each child's needs, we've introduced a new Multidisciplinary Coordinator, a role that will ensure seamless coordination across departments. This role is supported by the Victim and Family Advocates, who provide unwavering support to families facing adversity.

Our outreach initiatives are gaining momentum with a new Community Outreach Coordinator, tasked with child abuse prevention training and deepening our ties with the community through proactive engagement and educational events.

Our Case Coordinators and Forensic Interviewers are the meticulous guardians of our advocacy, ensuring every child's case is handled with the utmost care and expertise. Further bolstering our capacity are two additional Nurse Practitioners, whose medical insights are critical in the holistic care of our children.

And as we enhance our investigative prowess with additional Child Protection Investigators, our goal is to build a stronger relationship with all of our stakeholders, and to do the same with law enforcement as well.

Alone we can do so little, but together we can do so much to be the leading innovators in the fight to end child abuse.

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Please consider a End of Year Donation to Guardians for New Futures (GFNF) to support the Children's Advocacy Center (CAC). Any amount of donation, large or small, will go a long way to help abused children. All donations are tax deductible! We have served over 766 abused children since opening July 2022, and expect to serve even more next year. The Center provides all the needed resources for a sexually or physically abused child in this child-friendly location. There's even a therapy dog, Autumn, who greets the children when they arrive. The CAC also launched a Child Abuse Prevention Program this summer which will significantly help reduce child abuse!

A donation is wonderful way to support abused children while highlighting your business in a very positive way. All donations received from you and/or your business before the end of the year will be included on our website and included in our newsletter in January. Our newsletter reaches over 5,000 local individuals. Your donation will help us provide even more mental health programs and services for the children.

Now more than ever, we need your support and that of the community to help the children begin to heal and change the trajectory of their lives. A major funder of the CAC, Victims of Crimes Act (VOCA) cut funding for our Children's Advocacy Center leaving a \$300,000 funding gap for the coming year!

Please join us in this fight to end child abuse.

All my best,

Debbie Butler, President Guardians for New Futures, Inc.

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GFNF4KIDS | CHILDREN'S ADVOCACY CENTER

CORPORATE PARTNER

Support Guardians for New Futures in our mission to aid victims of child abuse and underserved youth in our community. Your generous contribution can make a significant impact in the lives of children who have suffered. By donating to our cause, you will demonstrate your corporate social responsibility and actively contribute to building a future where every child is protected. Your company can create a lasting change and inspire others to join this important mission.

Join us in the fight against child abuse by committing to one of these giving levels:

All donations are tax-deductible

PARTNERSHIP OPTIONS	Hero \$3,500	Defender \$5,000	Warrior \$10,000	Crusader \$25,000	Torchbearer \$50,000	Victor \$100,000
Corporate partnership posting on all GFNF4Kids social media platforms quarterly and a link on our website.	•	•	•	•	•	•
Recognition on all GFNF4Kids email blasts and CAC quarterly newsletters.		•	•	•	•	
Complementary Stewards of Children child abuse prevention training for your staff.			•	•	•	•
Press releases highlighting your organization's contributions to GFNF4Kids and certificate of recognition.				•	•	•
Name and logo on the knee wall of the Children's Advocacy Center building and a certificate of recognition.					•	•
Permanent plaque with your business name and logo on the Children's Advocacy Center building and certificate of recognition.						•

For more information contact: Debbie Butler, dbutler@gfnf4kids.org or 772-807-3868, ext. 102

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These children are in the foster care system under the supervision of the State of Florida and cared for by Case Managers from Communities Connected for Kids (CC4Kids). They live in the Treasure Coast and often had traumatic experiences and need everyone in the

TO SPONSOR A CHILD, EMAIL AGOMEZ@GFNF4KIDS.ORG OR CALL 561-445-4508.

community to come together to support the Holiday Gift Drive.

TO MAKE A
FINANCIAL DONATION, VISIT
WWW.GFNF4KIDS.ORG

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