

BEAUTY FROM ASHES



CHILDREN'S ADVOCACY CENTER OF BENTON COUNTY IMPACT REPORT 2019

A Message From Our Executive Director

On March 30th, 1996, a one-bedroom home went up in flames when an electrical fire broke out and spread up the walls leaving nothing behind but ashes of what once was. The transitional house belonged to Restoration Village, a long-term residential facility and ministry that exists to provide a safe haven for women, and sometimes their children, who are in crisis. Oftentimes, these women are survivors of childhood abuse and are just beginning the difficult task of healing and restoration, moving from victim to empowerment. But what would come of this home that had previously housed many women and families as surely this was not in the plan? Four years later, the Children's Advocacy Center of Benton County was opened to serve children and families in our area, one of the first in the state of Arkansas. The fruit of praise, failure to be discouraged and a new vision - "to give them **beauty for ashes**, the oil of joy for mourning, the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness; that they might be called trees of righteousness, the planting of the Lord, that He might be glorified," Isaiah 61:3 - had been achieved.

The Children's Advocacy Center (CAC, hereafter) will soon enter its 20th year of providing hope and healing to the most vulnerable population that our community has - our children. Over 11,500 children have entered the front doors of the CAC due to allegations of childhood trauma and abuse. They have been met with an advocate to provide them support, a forensic interviewer to listen to their story, a sexual assault nurse examiner to assure their body is healthy, and a counselor to help heal their soul.





BEAUTY FROM ASHES

The fact that the CAC is even needed in our community is heartbreaking – that children fall victim on a daily basis to the poor choices of someone else, especially right here in our own beautiful and amazing Northwest Arkansas community. The reality is that 1 in 3 girls and 1 in 5 boys will be sexually abused before their 18th birthday. These statistics are based on what we know from what is being reported, understanding that only 1 in 10 children tell due to fear and lack of understanding of what has actually happened to them. This also doesn't account for the vast amount of physical abuse and neglect that our children are facing.

As we enter this milestone year, our mission remains the same: to empower children to find their voice. For the two-year-old boy being neglected of his basic needs, the four-year-old boy being sexually abused by his uncle, the nine-year-old girl being physically abused by her father, the sixteen-year-old girl experiencing sexual assault by an acquaintance – they deserve to be heard, to be believed, and a chance to heal. As our community continues to grow, the CAC will continue to serve and meet the needs of child abuse victims and their families. Our vision to eliminate child abuse may seem unrealistic—the possibility, however, requires a community to come together and understand that children are life's greatest blessing. **The beauty of a child's life can be found in the ashes of their experiences from the past** – and together, we can create a world that cherishes children.

Natalie Tibbs, Executive Director



1996

The original building burns to the ground and is rebuilt on the same property.

1998

The need: A case involving a child at Restoration Village illustrates the need for a local CAC when the family is forced to travel to Tulsa, OK for services.

January 10, 2000

Doors open for the **Children's Advocacy Center of Benton County**, serving **79 children** in its first year.

2001

The CAC holds its inaugural **Cherishing Children 5K** in Little Flock - now known as the Cherishing Children Glow Run.

2003

The CAC serves **297 children** and holds its inaugural **Pinwheel Rally**.



2005

The CAC establishes its **Mental Health Component** and holds its inaugural **Cherishing Children Dinner**.

2008

The CAC is awarded **\$14,000** for construction of an outdoor playground.

2016

The CAC completes its most recent of **seven expansions**, bringing the total facility size to **over 10,000 square feet**.



20 YEARS

OF EMPOWERING KIDS

2017

The CAC adds a **sensory room** and is **the only CAC in the state** who has implemented this therapeutic resource onsite.

2019

1,007 children received services at the CAC.

2020

The CAC celebrates **20 years** in the community, serving **over 11,500 children**.





2019 STATISTICS

Total Advocacy

1,007

Total Forensic Interviews

941

Total Therapy Hours

2,127

Total Medical Exams

144

Total Individuals Educated

9,692

Total Individuals Impacted by Community Events

4,369

Forensic Interviews

The CAC Forensic Interview Team consists of specially trained forensic interviewers who work with our Multi-Disciplinary Team (MDT) by conducting specialized and unique comprehensive interviews of children. The goal of forensic interviews is to gather pertinent information from children in a neutral, nonleading, developmentally sensitive and legally defensible manner.

**941
Interviews**

**998
Therapy
Clients**

**2,127
Mental
Health
Sessions**

Mental Health Services

The Mental Health Team at the CAC is committed to providing a safe place for children to begin the healing process after they have experienced abuse. Our Mental Health Team provides quality, holistic counseling by using specialized evidence-based, trauma-focused therapy to treat the whole child systemically so children can cope with the trauma and counselors can assist them throughout the healing process.

Medical Examinations

Specialized medical evaluations are offered for the purpose of cultivating healing and offering reassurance in order to instill hope in children during times of need.

**144
Medical
Exams**

**268 Children
Served
Through
Christmas
Program**

**9,692
Individuals
Educated**

**308 Tours
31 Community
Events**

Advocacy

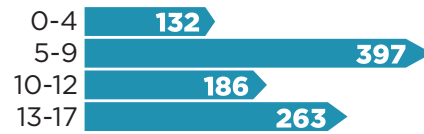
The Advocacy Team is committed to helping each child and non-offending family member in the aftermath of their crisis and trauma. As each case moves through the investigation and prosecution, the team is there to help the family begin their healing process, learn about their rights, and successfully access resources in the community.

Education

The CAC's Education Team helps empower parents, community members and professionals working with children on how to recognize and report child abuse by providing tools and resources necessary for protecting children. In 2019, 5,108 adults and 4,584 youth were trained. Thirty-one community events impacted a total of 4,369 people. After receiving a training in Your First Response, 79% of people felt more confident in identifying and recognizing signs of child abuse and 99% of people better understood their role and rights as a mandated reporter.

TOTAL CHILDREN SERVED: 1,007

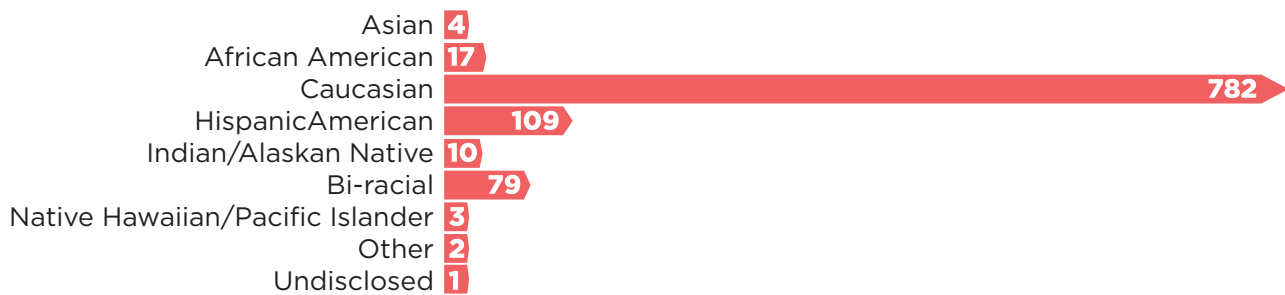
AGE OF CHILDREN RECEIVING SERVICES



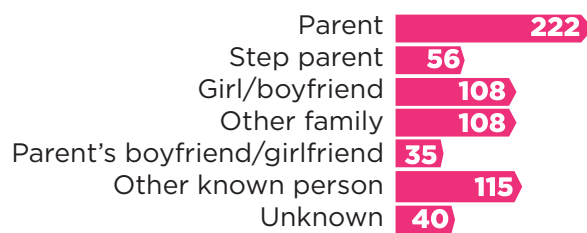
GENDER OF CLIENTS



ETHNICITY OF VICTIMS



RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN ALLEGED OFFENDER AND THE VICTIM



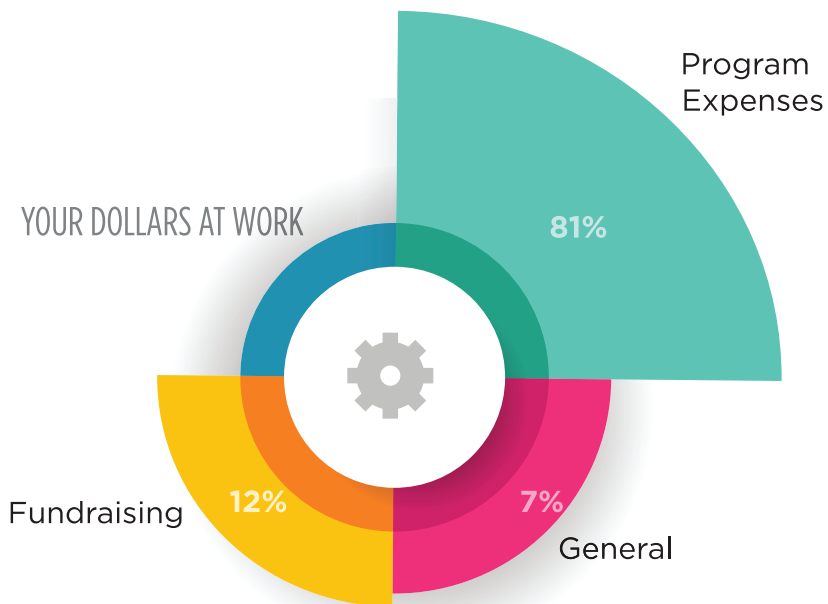
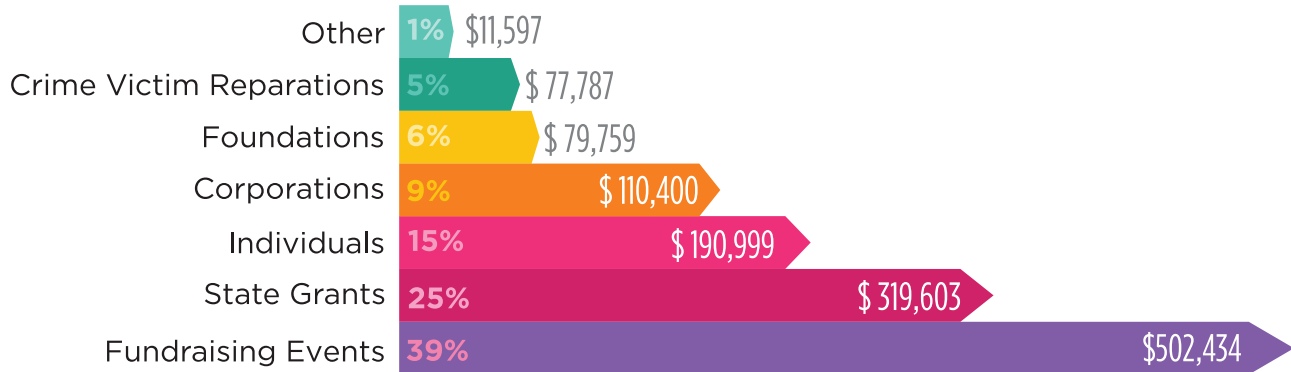
PRIMARY ALLEGATIONS



*Disclosed more than one form of abuse

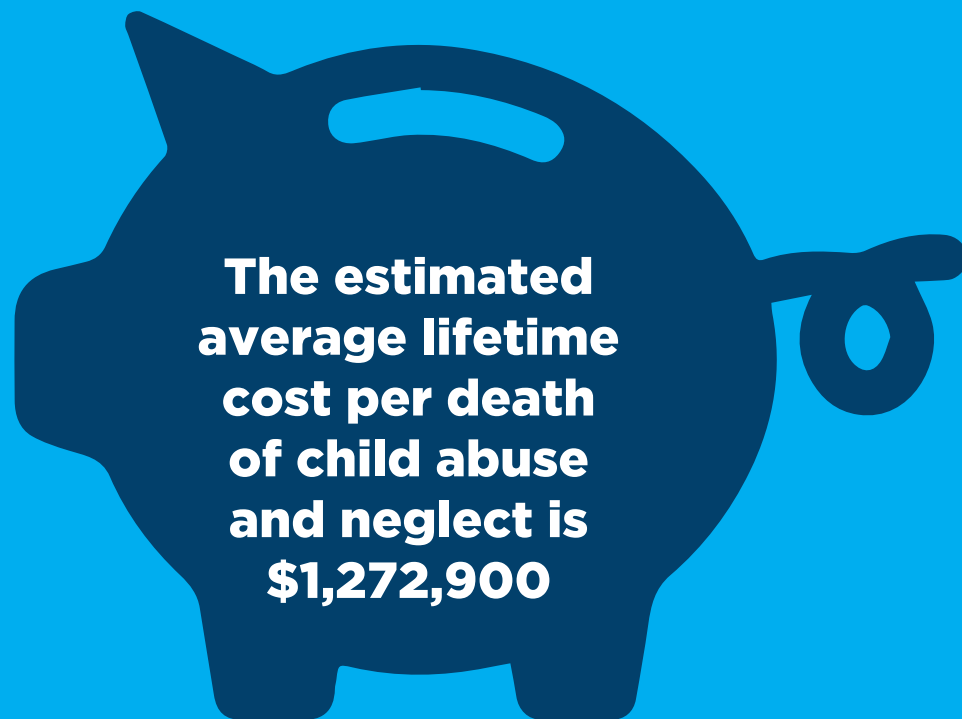
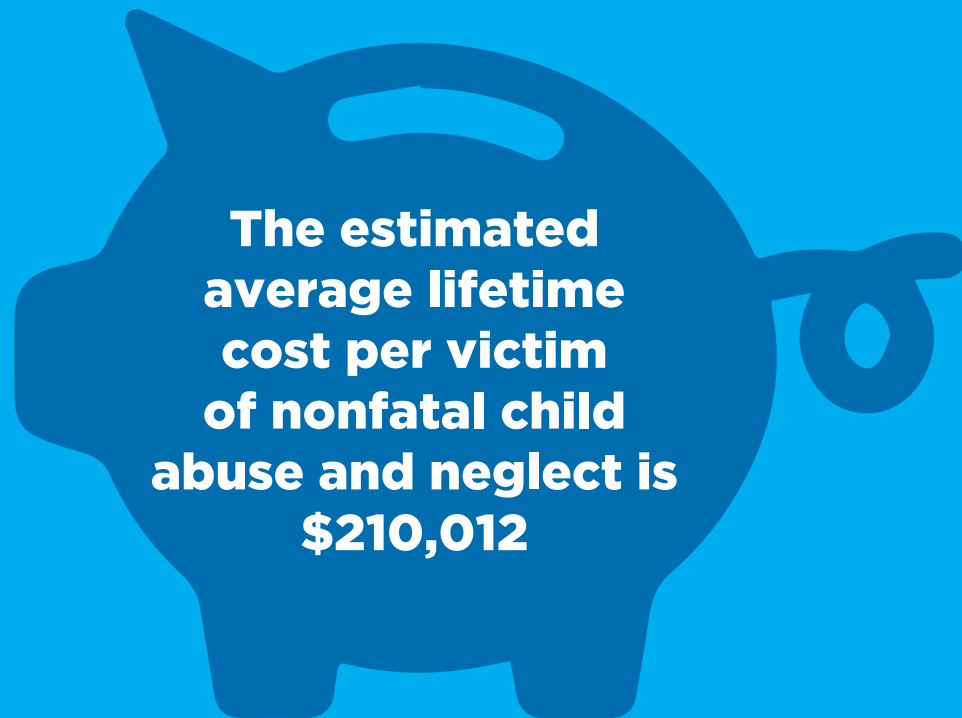
FINANCIALS

TOTAL INCOME: \$ 1,292,579.00



The CAC of Benton County relies on community support to fulfill our mission. Each year, many individuals and businesses help us provide services to abused children. Nearly 320 volunteers provided over 1,588 hours of service during the 2019 fiscal year. Others provided monetary help through corporate sponsorships, annual fund donations, or attending special events. On behalf of the children and staff, thank you for supporting the work we do each day.

THE COST OF CHILD ABUSE



Fang X, Brown DS, Florence CS, Mercy JA. The economic burden of child maltreatment in the United States and implications for prevention. *Child Abuse Negl.* 2012;36(2), 156-165.

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CAC STAFF

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Lulu Burkhauser, Counselor
Holly Clarke, Office Coordinator
Rachel Toomer, Mental Health Team Lead, Counselor
Amber O'Malley, Contract Sexual Assault Nurse Examiner
Kacie Parrish, Contract Sexual Assault Nurse Examiner
Christi Turnage, Contract Sexual Assault Nurse Examiner
Regina Welch, Contract Sexual Assault Nurse Examiner
Emily Black, Contract Sexual Assault Nurse Examiner
Crystal Eckhardt, Contract Sexual Assault Nurse Examiner



2020 SIGNATURE EVENTS

Visit cacbentonco.com for additional information and sponsorship opportunities.

Cherishing Children 5k Glow Run, 1-Mile Fun Walk, & 400-Yard Super Hero Dash

Friday, April 17, 2020 | Downtown Rogers

The 20th Annual Cherishing Children Glow Run features family-friendly nighttime events including a chip-timed 5k Glow Run, 1-Mile Fun Walk, and 400-Yard Super Hero Dash beginning in Downtown Rogers.



Cherishing Children Dinner & Awards Presentation

Thursday, September 10, 2020 | John Q. Hammons | Rogers

Each year, CAC staff, community supporters, law enforcement and others who work with victims of child abuse are invited to hear an inspiring message from a guest speaker. This year, Christina Meredith will share her personal story to raise awareness about the issue.



Sweetest Day

Saturday, October 24, 2020 | Venue 718 | Rogers

This event brings like-minded individuals together to socialize, have fun, and raise awareness and funds for the CAC.





20 YEARS



OF EMPOWERING KIDS



THE CHILDREN'S ADVOCACY CENTER

Our Vision: Eliminate Child Abuse

Our Mission: Empowering Children To Find Their Voice

www.cacbentonco.com | 479-621-0385 |    