



2024 ANNUAL REPORT



TOGETHER, BREAKING THE CYCLE OF CHILD ABUSE

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🌐 www.cacgainesville.org

Dear Friends,

Our Board and staff can't thank you enough for your continued support of the Child Advocacy Center (CAC). Your generous contributions of time, energy, and financial contributions have been critical in helping us protect and serve vulnerable and endangered children. We thank you for your creative and unwavering support!

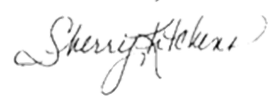
CAC programs have grown to reach more children and families in 2024, providing them with the support and resources they needed to heal and stay safe and healthy. Trauma responsive therapy for children affected by child abuse, as well as education and training for families and professionals to help them prevent child abuse in the future were paramount for the year. Resources for families to help them better understand the signs of child abuse and how to respond when they suspect abuse continued throughout the year.

In 2024, children's needs for services continued to increase. We served 2,356 children and 1,608 caregivers in 2024. 1,131 were new cases, 69 were child trafficking cases, 754 were physical abuse cases, 908 were sexual abuse cases, and 239 required specialized forensic interviews.

The CAC continued to make connections and form new relationships throughout the community. These partnerships will have long lasting effects on furthering the values of the CAC - Together, breaking the cycle of child abuse.

Your support and dedication to protecting children who have experienced the tragedy of child abuse continues to inspire us and improve the lives of children in our community. Thank you for the honor of serving them with you!

With gratitude,



Sherry Kitchens, Ed.S., LMFT
President/CEO

2024 Administrative Staff

Sherry Kitchens, President/CEO

Lisa Sickels, HR/Grants Compliance Officer

Vivian Dobbs, Finance Manager

Jamie Saunders, Lead Therapist

Megan Miller-Neimes, Staff Therapist

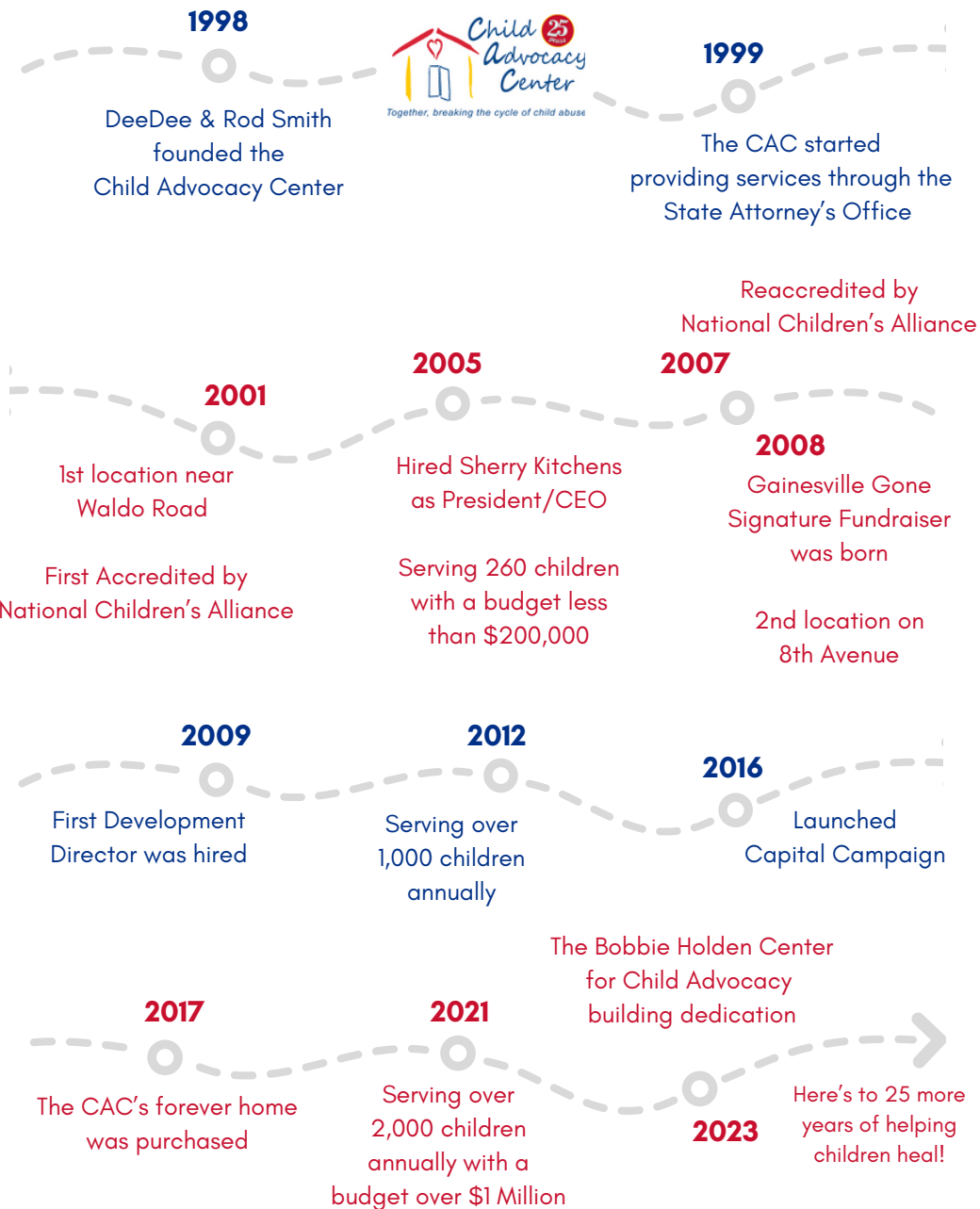
Devon Montague, Victim Services/MDT Coordinator

Brooke Beers, Development Coordinator

Laura Clark, Volunteer Coordinator/Development Specialist



25 YEARS OF HELPING CHILDREN HEAL



25TH ANNIVERSARY SPONSOR

Rays of Hope Foundation, powered by Radiant Credit Union has been a continuous supporter and has been the Title Sponsor for the CAC's Signature Fundraiser, Gainesville Gone, for multiple years. Not only do they provide monetary support, but Radiant Credit Union brings nearly 100 volunteers to the event to ensure it is a successful fundraiser. In 2024, Rays of Hope Foundation became the CAC's 25th Anniversary Sponsor and was included in digital and print material, recognized on social media, as well as in-person events. Wherever the CAC went, Rays of Hope Foundation and Radiant Credit Union went!

The CAC is forever grateful for this amazing partnership!

Learn more at raysofhope.org & radiantcu.org.



Powered by Radiant Credit Union

The CAC's 25th Anniversary Sponsor

Thank you!



2024

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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Board Chair

Tamelia Malcolm
Vice Chair & Secretary

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Jeff Quigley
Past Chair

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Scott Costello
Alan Hitchcock
Liz Jones
Dee Dee Cain Smith
Rod Smith
Jay Herrington*
Bobbie Eubanks Holden*

*Posthumous Dedication

MISSION

A comprehensive, child-friendly facility where professionals from law enforcement, medical, child protection and therapeutic services effectively collaborate to meet the individual needs of child victims and break the cycle of abuse.

PARTNERS



The Child Advocacy Center, Inc. is funded in part by the Alachua County Commission's Community Agency Partnership Program (CAPP) and the United Way of North Central Florida.

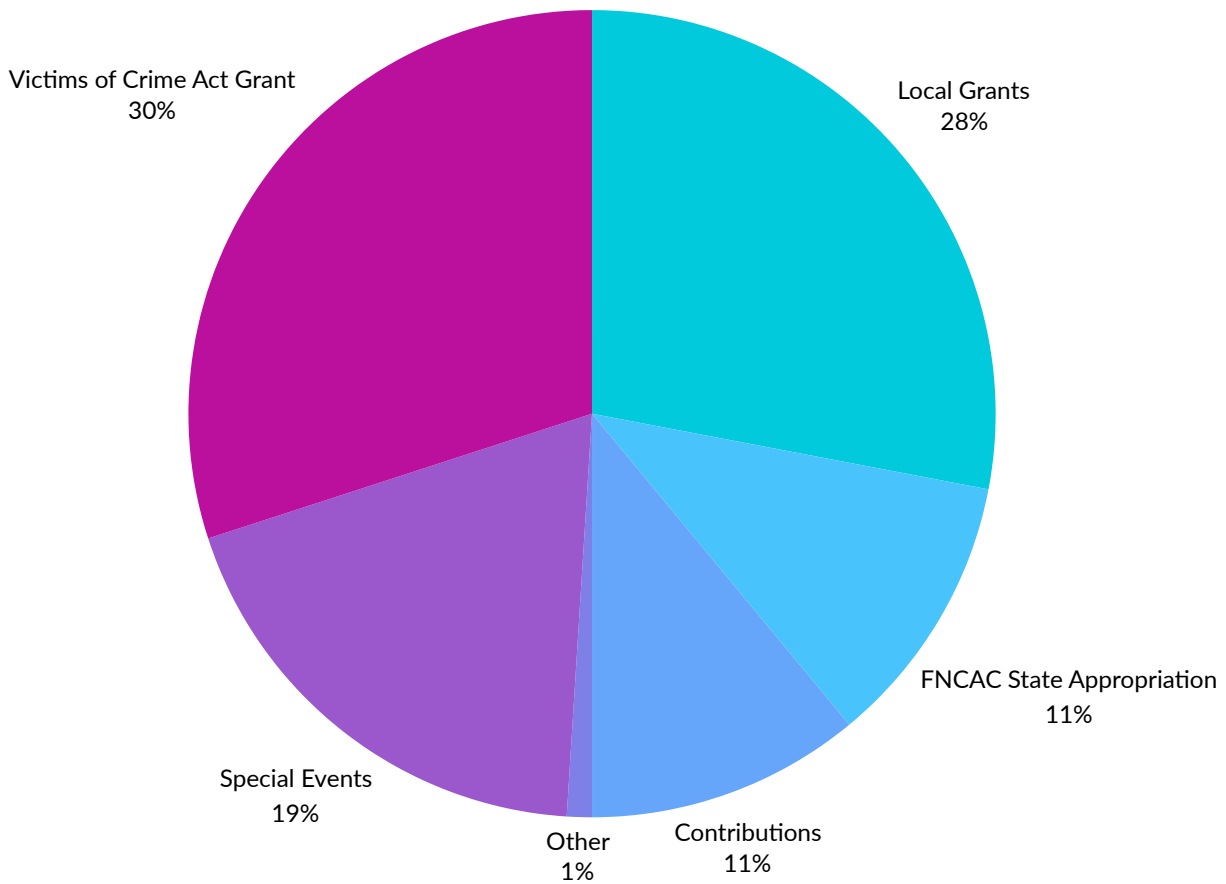
This project was supported by Award No. VOCA-C-2024-Child Advocacy Center, Inc-00193 awarded by the Office for Victims of Crime, Office of Justice Programs. Sponsored by (Child Advocacy Center, Inc.) and the State of Florida.

The Child Advocacy Center, Inc. is an equal opportunity provider and employer.

Thank you to all of the agencies we are affiliated with and funded by.
We could not do what we do without your support!



FINANCES



EXPENSES

Program	\$1,228,899.00	80%
Management & Fundraising	\$299,008.00	20%
Totals	\$1,527,907.00	100%

Better Business Bureau Wise Giving Alliance recommends that organizations spend at least 65% of their total expenses on program activities - the CAC spends 80%.

IMPROVEMENTS

BUILDING UPGRADES - The CAC received an electrical / maintenance grant from Clay Electric allowing the center to perform building maintenance and upgrades to ensure a safe environment. Included in these improvements were new electrical outlets, blinds, and privacy tint on all exterior windows.

Thank you Clay Electric for keeping our clients and families safe!



THERAPY NOTES SYSTEM - CAC's Therapy Department received a grant from Capital City Bank to go paperless! Digitizing will allow the program to intake new clients more efficiently, in addition to saving on paper costs. This new system will increase client engagement, by giving clients access to a client portal which provides continuity of care and increased contact with their therapists.

Thank you Capital City Bank!

GUARDIFY SYSTEM - The CAC received a capacity building grant from the Community Foundation of North Central Florida for the Guardify Digital Video Evidence Management System. This new system allows for forensic interviews to be digitally recorded and shared securely with partner agencies within the multidisciplinary team.

Thank you Community Foundation of North Central Florida!

TRAINING IS KEY

CAC COMMUNITY TRAINING

The CAC received grant funding from Children's Trust of Alachua County (CTAC) focused on providing training for CTAC providers and community members on a variety of topics including Child Abuse Reporting, Human Trafficking, Understanding Complex Trauma, Normative Sexual Development in Children, and Internet Safety. The response of the participants to the trainings was overwhelmingly positive.



Thank you Children's Trust of Alachua County!

CAC STAFF TRAINING

CAC staff attended various trainings and conferences to broaden their knowledge and meet with other professionals with a shared mission of helping child abuse victims.

Events attended in 2024 included:

- National Law Enforcement Training on Child Exploitation - Atlanta, GA
- National Children's Alliance Leadership Conference - Washington, DC
- Florida Network of Children's Advocacy Centers Crimes Against Kids Conference - Orlando, FL
- Florida Play Therapy Annual Conference - Orlando, FL

CAC therapy staff were trained on the following topics:

- Trauma Focused Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (TF-CBT) and TF-CBT for Problematic Sexual Behavior
- Eye Movement Desensitization and Reprocessing (EMDR) and Utilizing EMDR for Attachment Trauma and Dissociation

Members of the CAC therapy team gained the following certifications:

- Parent Child Interaction Therapy (PCIT) Certification
- Board Certification for Forensic Mental Health Evaluator (CFMHE)



Forensic Interviewer

Becca Bernal

Crisis Intervention Specialist

Michael Maloney

Victim Services Support Specialist

Bradley Gillingham

Case Management Team

Devon Montague

Victim Services/MDT Coordinator

Kimberly Gragg

Advocate/Case Manager

Celi Guzman

Advocate/Case Manager

Andrea Morency

Advocate/Case Manager

Lisa Voigt

Advocate/Case Manager

Therapy Team

Jamie Saunders

Lead Therapist

Alannah Barrett

Staff Therapist

Latressia Cox

Staff Therapist

Megan Miller-Niemes

Staff Therapist

Patty Bent-Thurman

Contract Therapist

Passion Lewis

Contract Therapist

Lakesha Lingard

Contract Therapist

Breanna McNeal

Contract Therapist

Callie Reda

Contract Therapist

Nicole Stern

Contract Therapist

Michael Zolondek

Contract Therapist

ADVOCACY & MENTAL HEALTH

With Your Help in 2024...

3,964 Total Victims Were Served



107 were Emergency Cases (an average of 2 per week) that required immediate response from an on-call Victim Advocate, Forensic Interviewer and Therapist.

EVENTS & MEDIA

The CAC participated in three major fundraising events in 2024 - The Amazing Give, Slacker Run, and Gainesville Gone Wild...West!

The CAC also partnered with The Punishers Law Enforcement Motorcycle Club - Swamp Dawgs to host the first ever Helping Kids Heal Poker Run motorcycle ride.

In addition to these fundraising events, the CAC was also the beneficiary of the annual Tioga Town Center Car Show!

Community individuals and groups were also very generous with the CAC in 2024 to include media coverage and interviews, as well as events for CAC clients to include an offsite holiday event and a Help for the Holidays program that provides multiple families with wish list items for Christmas.

Thank you all for the support!



News Interviews:

- WCJB TV20 News
- The Ilene Silverman Show
- Radiant Credit Union

Client Holiday Event:

- Pony Paddock, Newberry, FL

Help for the Holidays:

- 153 clients and caregivers were supported

The CAC was the starting location of the Gainesville leg of Lauren's Kids Walk in My Shoes - a 1500 mile walk to raise awareness and help put a stop to childhood sexual abuse.



CAC Hosted:
**Helping Kids Heal
Poker Run**
\$2,091

The Amazing Give
\$23,026

Slacker Run
\$28,886

**Gainesville Gone
Wild...West**
\$212,067

Third Party Hosted:
Tioga Car Show
\$4,302

Community Tabling Events

**Okito Tech City
Fun Fest**
San Felasco Tech City

Easter Extravaganza
Butler Town Center

Celebrate the Child
Westside Park

**UF Health Bike Rodeo
Health Fair**
UF Health

Boo at the Zoo
Santa Fe College
Teaching Zoo

VOLUNTEERS

The CAC is forever grateful to have so many individuals each year who choose to give their time.

151 Special Event Volunteers assisting with fundraisers and tabling events

44 Child-Life Volunteers visiting weekly to spend time with clients

22 Interns assisting with Advocacy, Forensic Interviewing, Therapy & Development

14 Volunteer Groups (more than one a month) organizing supply drives and projects around the CAC

320

Volunteers

5,000+

Hours



**ONE OF THE
GREATEST
GIFTS YOU
CAN GIVE IS
YOUR TIME.**



The CAC is proud to honor the wonderful individuals who serve on the Board of Directors. Thank you all for your time and commitment to serving the mission.



Thank you!



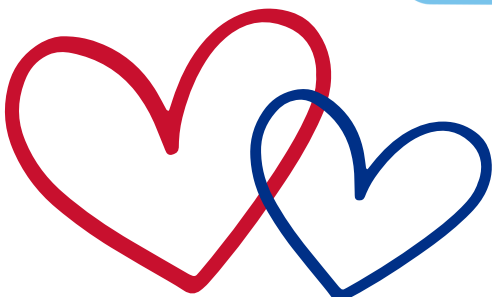
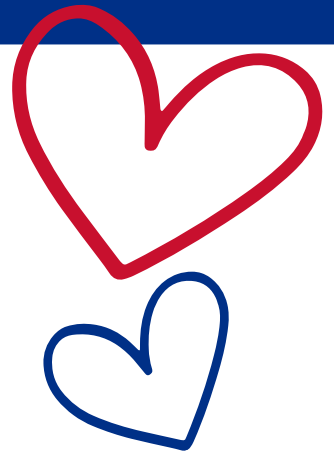
SUCCESS STORY

A very brave and resilient CAC client shared his story and has provided permission for us to share how his life has changed for the better because of the services he received at the CAC.

I would describe the CAC (Child Advocacy Center) as my guardian-angels. The CAC are my guardian angels when I was battling a traumatic incident of being a victim of sexual abuse and being trafficked by a predator at the age of 15 years old. They have helped me be able to be strong enough, and most importantly prepared to express/explain how this situation has affected my life...

I am more grateful and thankful for the CAC because I have been healed and become a stronger young man in life by a big supportive loving family that has successfully helped me to advocate for myself and not be scared to face the individual (predator) or anyone that has hurt me mentally, physically, and emotionally...

And last but not least, I want everyone to know that the CAC is a safe environment to have friendly conversations, safe spaces where children can receive treatment, they have toys and games to make the children feel comfortable, and the Therapists provide recommendations to the parents regarding their child's safety and treatment needs.



...ss to resources or services
their lives. I genuinely
unders (my therapist),
ngs (Oliver & Elliot) by
technique exercises with
mid of all of the negative thoughts, feelings/
Flashbacks about my past trauma.
my favorite 2 exercises are the butterfly
hug and EMDR (Eye Movement Desensitization
and Reprocessing). The Butterfly Hug is a self-
soothing technique that can help with stress,
anxiety, and feeling overwhelmed. EMDR is
children and adults to heal
her distressing experiences.
wasn't involved when
I'd probably be dead
to everything I have
so not receiving the
ounseling I really need.
heavenly father for
step in my life and
better me as a person to grow and
prosper. And last but not least, I
want everyone to know that the CAC
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can receive treatment, they have toys and
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and treatment needs.

(2)

LOOKING AHEAD

2025 GOALS:

- Reaccreditation with the National Children's Alliance
- Revise and Update Multidisciplinary Team Protocol
- Further Develop the Prevention and Training Program to Bring Child Abuse Prevention in Alachua County Schools
- Increase Multidisciplinary Team Activities and Trainings
- Launch the BJ Raskin Legacy Society Through Planned Giving Program
- Celebrate 20 years with President/CEO Sherry Kitchens!



SAVE THE DATES:

- Woman's Club Fashion Show Benefiting the CAC - April 3, 2025
- Lauren's Kids: Walk in My Shoes - April 22, 2025
- The Amazing Give - April 24, 2025
- Helping Kids Heal Poker Run - May 3, 2025
- Gainesville Gone Wild...West - October 23, 2025

THANK YOU FOR MAKING ALL OF THIS POSSIBLE!

Have you seen
our pawsome
space yet?

Therapy Dog Oliver

Call Miss
Sherry to
schedule
your tour!

Therapy Dog Elliott

