

# 2025 IMPACT REPORT



## Our Vision

Lifting the burdens for brain tumor patients and caregivers, so they can focus on the fight!

## Our Mission

Uplifting brain tumor patients and their families. **With INTentional Kindness and Support (WINKS)** – no journey is traveled alone!



## A Message from our President and Founder

It is my honor to share this year's Impact Report and to introduce the next chapter of WINKS through our 2026–2029 Strategic Plan: Uplifting Through Uncertainty — CONNECT, BUILD, and STRENGTHEN Together.

What began as a shared journey between a brain tumor patient and her radiation oncologist has grown into a community of compassion, service, and intentional support. As we reflect on this past year, we are proud to share that WINKS awarded \$18,500 in need-based grants and distributed 130 Brain Tumor Power Packs to healthcare facilities throughout Hampton Roads — each one a tangible reminder to patients and families that they are not alone.

While these numbers represent meaningful impact, our new strategic plan ensures that our growth is intentional, sustainable, and patient-centered.

- **CONNECT** – We are deepening partnerships with healthcare providers to reach patients earlier in their diagnosis and ensure they are connected to the right support at the right time.
- **BUILD** – We are strengthening our community of support by expanding educational opportunities, leveraging lived experience, and developing strategic partnerships that fill service gaps for patients and their families.
- **STRENGTHEN** – We are investing in our organizational capacity to ensure long-term sustainability. From improving data systems to expanding our donor base and leadership infrastructure, we are building the foundation necessary to meet rising demand.

As a volunteer-led organization, we recognize that financial sustainability and leadership capacity are critical to amplifying our impact. A key priority in this plan is transitioning to a paid Executive Director model to bridge vision and operational excellence — ensuring that WINKS can continue to grow responsibly and serve more families with excellence. The need continues to rise, but so does our resolve.

I remain deeply grateful for our donors, volunteers, healthcare partners, and community supporters. Your generosity and belief in our mission make this work possible. Together, we are not only responding to a diagnosis — we are uplifting brain tumor patients and their families with intentional kindness and support.

No journey is traveled alone.

Sincerely,

Sam Hunter  
President, Founder, and Survivor

# PROGRAMS

## Encouraging Nods Brain Tumor Support

Our program provides emotional, practical, and peer support to patients and caregivers, helping them navigate the challenges of a brain tumor diagnosis

### *Stronger Together*

WINKS hosted 4 of our quarterly support groups in 2025, with 17 total active support group members.

WINKS volunteers also hold one-on-one peer support calls between support group meetings to provide individualized support to both patients and their families.

### Eye Opener

The WINKS Eye Opener raises awareness and advocates for brain tumor patients in our community, ensuring their needs are recognized and supported.

**WINKS is working hard to be a constant presence in our community to better spread the word about the needs of brain tumor patients and their families. In 2025 alone, WINKS achieved significant outreach and engagement:**

- 4,637 site visitors to the WINKS website.
- Facebook & Instagram posts were viewed 36,065 times
  - 78 Facebook posts with an average of 426 views per post
  - 122 Instagram posts, with an average of 23 views per post



-Mariah, Survivor



# PROGRAMS

## Empathy in Action

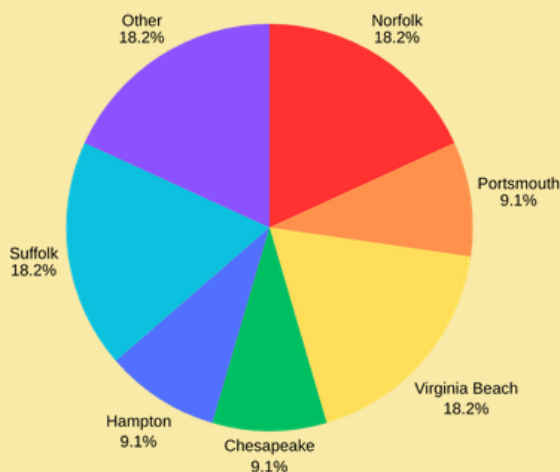
WINKS' Empathy in Action Project is an initiative to provide need-based support for ordinary and necessary living expenses, resource connections, and other tangible assistance for brain tumor patients and their families in the Hampton Roads area.

### WINKS provided the following life-changing support to brain tumor patients and their families in 2024:

- **130 Brain Tumor Power Packs** supplied to newly diagnosed patients
- **15** additional informational packets provided to patients currently in treatment
- **11 Empathy in Action Grants**, totaling **\$12,500**, providing needs-based support for ordinary and necessary living expenses
- **11 EIA Transportation Grants**, totaling **\$6000**, providing the funds for patients to attend specialist appointments and treatment.

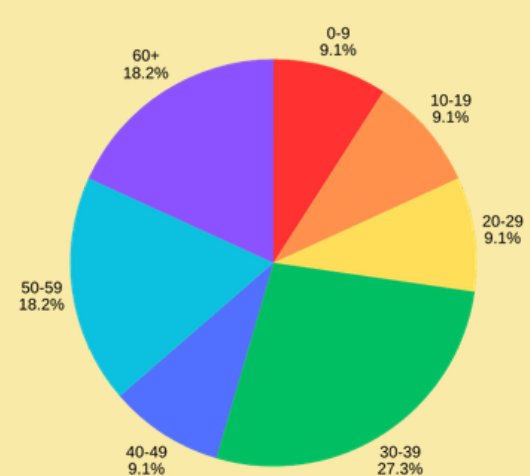
## 2025 - EMPATHY AT A GLANCE

GRANTS BY LOCATION



\*Patient resides outside Hampton Roads, being treated in Hampton Roads

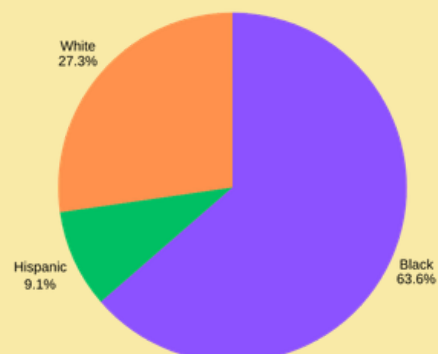
GRANTS BY AGE



GRANTS BY GENDER



GRANTS BY RACE



# IMPACT

## 2025 Statement of Activity

### January - December 2025

<b>Revenue:</b>	<b>Totals:</b>
Donations - Individual & Board	10,483.59
Grant Awards	
Sentara Cares	8,000.00
Langley for Families	5,000.00
Obici Foundation	4,000.00
Chartway Foundation	3,000.00
Other Grants & Corporate Donations	4,038.50
Fundraising Revenue	
2024 Tee Up for Brain Tumors	16,661.50
Miscellaneous Revenue	4.33
<b>Total Revenue</b>	<b>\$51,187.92</b>

<b>Expenditures:</b>	<b>Totals:</b>
Office/General Administrative Expenditures	5,164.42
Empathy in Action	
EIA Grants	12,500.00
EIA Transportation Grants	6,000.00
Brain Tumor Power Packs	4,100.37
Encouraging Nods & Eye Openers	40.39
Fundraising Expenses	4,021.32
EIA Program Management	6,729.26
<b>Total Expenses</b>	<b>\$38,855.76</b>

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Total Revenue:	\$51,187.92
Total Expenditures:	\$38,855.76
<b>Net Revenue:</b>	<b>\$12,332.16</b>

# IMPACT

## WINKS Through the Years



**\$91,970** IN ASSISTANCE TO BRAIN TUMOR PATIENTS

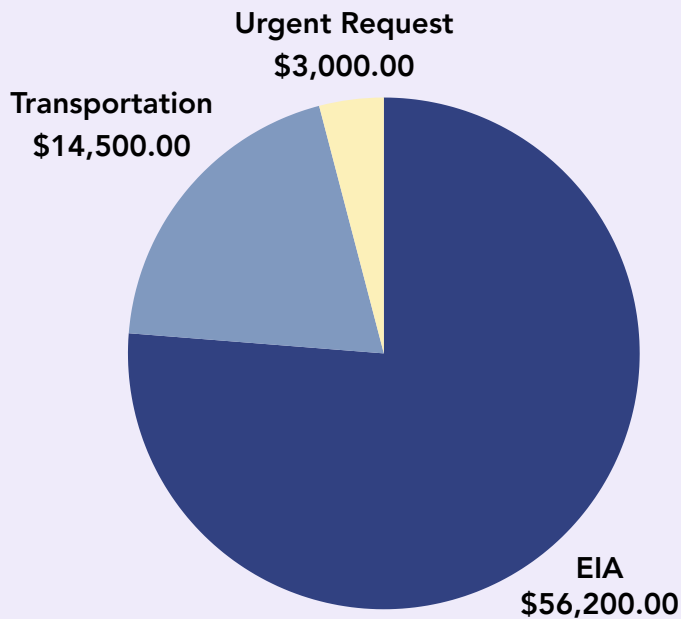


**\$73,700** EMPATHY IN ACTION GRANTS



**603** BRAIN TUMOR POWER PACKS & FOLDERS

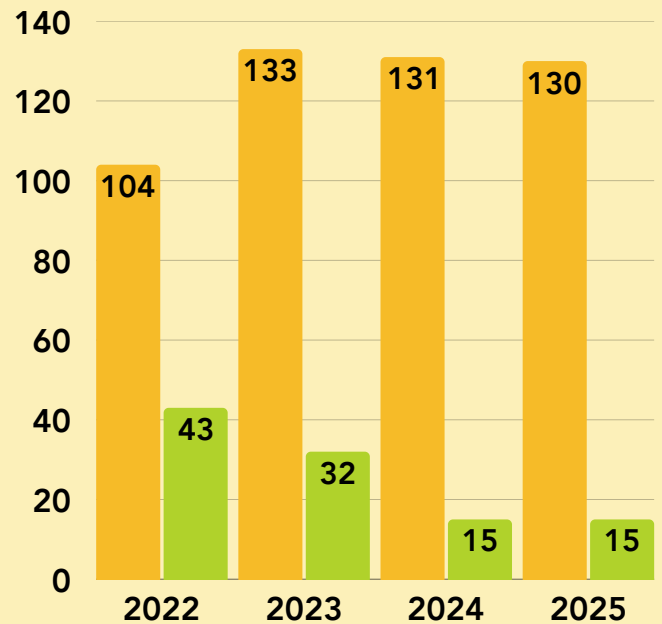
### EMPATHY IN ACTION GRANTS



**85**

Local Brain Tumor Patients Supported

### BRAIN TUMOR POWER PACKS & INFORMATIONAL PACKETS



**\$18,270**

Total Program Cost

# COMMUNITY PARTNERS

## No Journey is Traveled Alone

Everything we do is made possible through partnerships with local organizations.

We collaborate with healthcare organizations across Hampton Roads to provide Brain Tumor Power Packs to newly diagnosed patients and facilitate support groups for patients and their families. Additionally, we partner with local and national organizations to fund our Empathy in Action Grants, raise awareness about the impact of brain tumors, and address the needs of brain tumor patients in the region. **In 2025, WINKS joined forces with over 15 organizations, providing more than \$18,500 in direct assistance, and distributing 130 Brain Tumor Power Packs.**



Children's  
Hospital  
of The King's  
Daughters



HAMPTON UNIVERSITY  
PROTON CANCER INSTITUTE  
Cancer and Research Center



OBICI  
HEALTHCARE  
FOUNDATION



# We couldn't have done it without your generous support

## Kyree's Story

In September 2024, Sam, WINKS President and Founder, had the privilege of meeting Kyree and his mother, Lavonne, to present their Empathy in Action Grant. Kyree is receiving treatment at Children's Hospital of The King's Daughters (CHKD) in Norfolk and at Johns Hopkins Hospital in Maryland. The grant provided meaningful support during a financially challenging time for their family.

While we do not often receive updates during the course of treatment, WINKS had the special opportunity to reconnect with Kyree and his family about six months later at Chartway Promise Foundation Night at Old Dominion University. Kyree was excited and deeply grateful to attend his first basketball game.

Kyree has since returned to school and is navigating challenges, including limited movement in his arm and a speech impairment. Despite these obstacles, he continues to light up a room with his exuberance and resilient spirit. He shared that he met another student with a similar scar on his head, which helped him feel less alone.

At the basketball game, Kyree remembered meeting Sam but was unsure how she knew his family. He asked, "Are you my doctor?" Sam replied, "No, I'm not a doctor." He then asked, "Are you my mom's best friend?" Again, she said no. "How do you know us?" he asked. Sam smiled and responded, "Because of you." She then showed Kyree her own brain surgery scar, and in that moment, an instant bond was formed.

Photo, right, from left to right: Christine Wilson, Executive Director, Chartway Promise Foundation, Kyree's family, and Samaria Hunter, Founder & President of WINKS



## Why Your Support Matters

While brain cancer may affect fewer than 1% of the population, the **impact** on those who face it is profound. WINKS is dedicated to meeting the **urgent needs** of these individuals, ensuring they receive the **resources, care, and support** they deserve.

For patients with **non-malignant** primary brain tumors, the average five-year relative **survival rate is 91.8%**. Many people we help on their journey continue live their lives in our community. **They are friends, neighbors, business owners, and coworkers.**

We are grateful for our **community** of supporters, who help us make a meaningful **difference** in the lives of brain tumor patients and their families.

# Thank you to all our donors, volunteers, and partners



This year, WINKS was thrilled to be able to attend the Strategic Planning Cohort. For 6 weeks we talked about **operationalizing, love, and compassion as part of our strategic plan**, and walked away with not only a strategic plan, but action items to make it happen! Huge thank you to **The Spark Mill** for their guidance, and to **Obici Healthcare Foundation** and **Center for Nonprofit Excellence** for not only bringing us together through this program, but also funding the opportunity to learn, connect, and grow together.



## WINKS Earns Multi-Year Serve Virginia Honor Roll Recognition



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