



# 2023

## ANNUAL REPORT

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*a year's overview*

# A LETTER FROM OUR FOUNDERS



Dear Cor Defense Community,

Reflecting on 2023, we are filled with immense gratitude and joy. This year brought significant transitions, both personally and professionally. In March, we welcomed our sweet child into the world, marking a personal milestone that mirrored the evolution needed at Cor Defense.

In October, with the support of our board and advisory committee therapists, we implemented specific rules for our Children's Program to ensure the psychological safety essential for their healing journey. November saw the launch of our pilot Trauma-Informed Care Certification Program for martial arts instructors, a groundbreaking, revenue-generating initiative equipping instructors with the knowledge and tools to effectively support individuals who have experienced trauma.

We are thrilled to share some incredible achievements:

- We received our largest grant to date, \$28,880, from the Larimer County Behavioral Health Services Impact Fund! This generous support highlights our shared commitment to addressing Larimer County's critical behavioral health needs with innovative solutions.
- In December, we raised nearly \$10,000 through a peer-to-peer fundraising campaign! We are deeply grateful for the enthusiasm and generosity of our supporters.
- We have strengthened our partnerships with local nonprofit organizations, ensuring referrals are more seamless and focused on the survivor's experience.

2024 marks a pivotal year for Cor Defense! After months of collaboration with nonprofit referral partners, our advisory committee, and key stakeholders, our Board has proudly updated our mission statement to: **"Empower people to heal from interpersonal violence through defense training."** This change will enable us to expand our reach and eliminate the confusion many referral partners have expressed.

These milestones mark significant growth and success, and we are excited to continue this momentum in 2024. None of this would be possible without your unwavering support.

All the very best,

*Andrea Person* 

Andrea & Lonnie Person  
Co-Founders, Cor Defense

## INTRO

# ADDRESSING HEALTH INEQUITIES

## Centering the experience of survivors of interpersonal violence for long-term recovery

The Prevention Institute's "Making the Case" fact sheets state that "violence is a health inequity." This inequity stems from the **loss of power and control** experienced by victims, leading to numerous negative multigenerational health outcomes, such as increased need for and decreased access to health care for mental illness, substance misuse, unintended pregnancy, cancer, diabetes, other chronic illnesses, and early death.

Cor Defense's programs address the root cause of these violence-based health inequities, providing an opportunity for survivors to engage in an empowerment-focused healing modality which not only supports their confidence and comfort when engaging in daily activities, but also directly targets the part of the brain in which trauma is processed and stored and creates **a strong foundation for long-term recovery**.

Interpersonal violence affects everyone, but disproportionately impacts certain groups. The CDC reports that Black, Indigenous, and People of Color (BIPOC) and LGBTQ+ individuals experience sexual and intimate partner violence at significantly higher rates than their white, cisgender, and heterosexual peers.

This disparity is **not just a statistical anomaly** but a reflection of deep-seated societal inequities. BIPOC and LGBTQ+ individuals often face systemic barriers, including discrimination, racism, homophobia, and transphobia, which exacerbate their vulnerability to violence. These barriers also limit their access to crucial support services and resources, making it harder for them to seek help and recover from trauma.

Cor Defense's trauma-informed approach fundamentally seeks to acknowledge and honor the identities and experiences of all participants. However, we understand **there is no "one-size-fits-all" way to create an inclusive environment for everyone**, and that equity isn't a box that can be checked at the end of an annual training with our staff and board.

### OUR PRIORITIES

To address this need, we have identified the following steps to make our programs more inclusive and accessible:

- **Partnerships:** Build and strengthen partnerships with culturally specific organizations to establish trust and make our services more accessible.
- **Classes and Open Gym Hours:** Providing regular classes and open gym hours for flexible access, accommodating varied schedules and increasing engagement.
- **Language Inclusivity:** Enhancing accessibility for Spanish-speaking participants by recruiting consultants for translation and interpretation services, translating program materials, and training staff in inclusive language practices.
- **Feedback and Continuous Improvement:** Regularly collecting and analyzing participant feedback to measure progress and make necessary adjustments, ensuring our programs remain relevant and effective.

By addressing the root causes of violence-related health inequities and implementing an empowerment-focused healing approach, we establish the foundation for long-term recovery and contribute to a safer, more resilient society.



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# ADULTS' PROGRAM



Cor Defense's programs are designed to help survivors heal from trauma and regain a sense of control in their lives. By focusing on self-empowerment and healing, we are cultivators of courage, helping participants move forward to overcome their fears and live life on their own terms.

## SURVIVORS ARE HEALING

**27%**  
decrease in post-traumatic stress symptoms

**33%**  
increase in confidence & comfort

**How do we capture this data?** During the intake, survivors review a list of symptoms and report a percentage of how many they experience. They also report a percentage of comfort and confidence in public spaces. Then in 3 months, they review the same list and report new percentages.



**We held 78 adult's program classes in 2023**

We're committed to ensuring that all survivors have access to the resources they need to heal. Recognizing that financial constraints should not prevent access to these valuable resources, Cor Defense uses a "suggested fee" approach to make our programs accessible to everyone.

*"For over a year, I've been attending Cor Defense Krav Maga classes. When I have a bad day, attending Cor Defense lifts my spirits and makes the next day better. It's not just the exercise; in class, we are reminded to identify our needs and inform the instructors if we are triggered. These reminders help me recognize when I'm triggered in daily life and **enable me to ask for help before I become overwhelmed.**"*

*While there may never be justice, the practices in Cor Defense **give me the courage to be out in the world.***

*Thank you to all who make Cor Defense possible."*



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# CHILDREN'S PROGRAM

Cor Defense's Children's Program teaches defense techniques to help kids develop important skills and social connections. We focus on three key areas: sense of agency/independence, self-regulation, and problem-solving. These skills serve as protective factors for children who have experienced interpersonal violence, reducing the risk of chronic health problems, mental health issues, suicide, and substance abuse.



We held 102 children's program classes in 2023



**Healing with Play:** Cor Defense provides children with an age-appropriate way to heal from trauma, allowing them to play, laugh, and connect with others who have had similar experiences.

**Confidence and Self-Regulation:** Parents report significant increases in their children's confidence and self-control through our programs. Therapists and teachers have observed significant improvements in both school performance and trauma recovery.

## CHILDREN ARE HEALING



**30% 20% 20%**

increase in a sense of agency after 3 months

increase in self-regulating skills after 3 months

increase in problem-solving skills after 3 months



A parent whose child attends our Children's Program shared that his son has experienced a remarkable transformation, describing it as "night and day." Despite attending regular therapy, **his son previously felt a great deal of shame** about his abuse. Six months into our training, his son said,

*"My trauma doesn't define me. I am not responsible for what happened to me."*

His dad said this was a significant breakthrough in his healing journey, attributing this positive change to Cor Defense.

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# FINANCIAL OVERVIEW

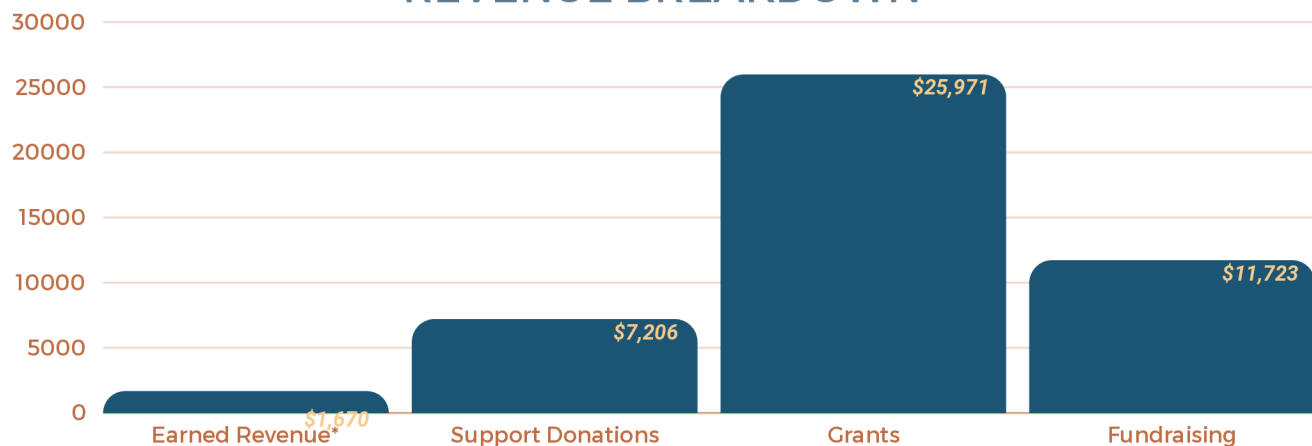


Larimer County Behavioral Health Service's generous support through the Impact Fund underscores our shared commitment to addressing critical behavioral health needs with innovative solutions in our community.

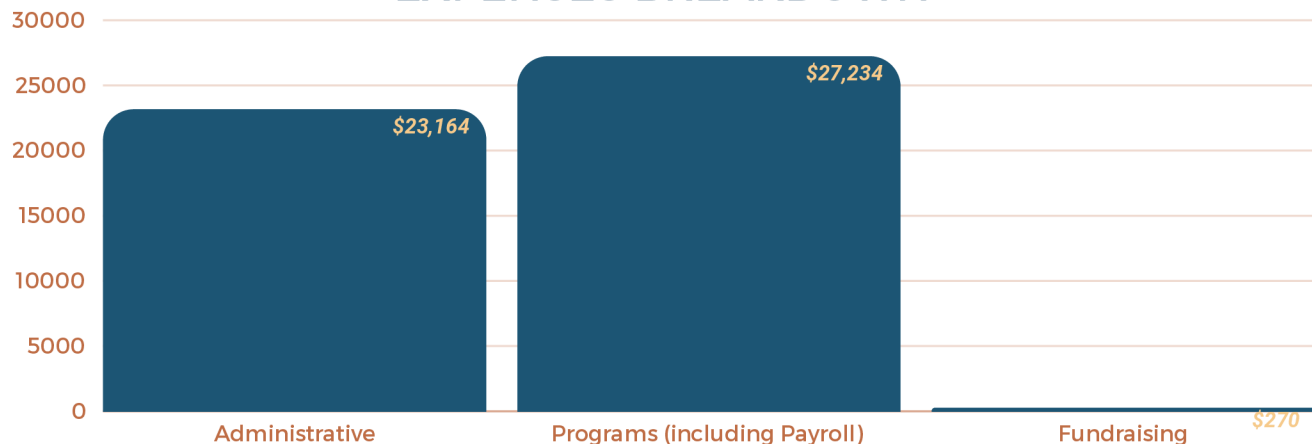
In 2023, Cor Defense received an increase in grant revenue from Larimer County Behavioral Health Services Impact Fund. Our End of the Year Peer to Peer Fundraiser was incredibly successful, drawing on the support of our incredible network. While grants continue to be our largest source of income, we are blown away by the support of our donors and local community, which enables us to provide body-focused treatment of trauma with flexibility and efficiency.

**Earned Revenue:** While payment is not required or expected, some survivors feel empowered to invest in their healing by paying for their training.

## REVENUE BREAKDOWN



## EXPENSES BREAKDOWN



**Administrative Costs:** We hired a nonprofit consultant to support us with grant writing and board training. This was a majority of our administrative cost for the year, totaling \$15,000.



Thank you to our incredible sponsors!



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**SHAWN H. SMITH**

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