



Canopy Center

ANNUAL REPORT

2020



ABOUT CANOPY CENTER

In 1977, a young mother who had experienced abuse as a child noticed the impact her past trauma was having on her own parenting. This led her to start a parent support group in Madison, and Canopy Center was born. Today, Canopy Center serves hundreds of people annually, providing trauma-informed therapy, advocacy, and support to families and children who have experienced neglect or abuse. We are proud to offer the highest quality human services with the vast majority of services provided free of cost to clients.

Our Mission

Our mission is to help strengthen families and support children, teens and adults impacted by trauma and adversity.

Our Philosophy and Beliefs

Every person has worth, dignity and potential for growth.

Every person is unique and deserves to have a voice in identifying and addressing their needs.

Every person needs positive social connections to fully develop their sense of self and community.

Anti-Discrimination

Canopy Center will provide equal services and not discriminate against clients or prospective clients on the basis of gender, race, ethnicity, color, religion, sexual orientation, national origin, age, disability, marital status, cultural differences, ancestry, physical appearance, political beliefs, arrest or conviction record, or military participation.

a year's overview

2020



2020 started as a year to make our agency strong and enjoy our wonderful space. Then, COVID-19 happened. Without much notice or warning the agency closed our doors in mid-March to spend “the next couple of months” working from home. Nine months later we are closing out the year with no specific date for when we will return to the office. Thanks to technology we were able to offer most of our services remotely, but we knew that we couldn’t do everything we normally do in person.

Dane County CASA normally has their trained volunteers meet their assigned child each week in-person so they are able to develop a relationship with the child and advocate for their best interest. While the in-person part ended, volunteers still met with their child every week by phone or teleconference. The program staff worked to assist their volunteers in providing services in this new way. For example, a child was sent a book so they could read it with the volunteer during their weekly meetings – it strengthened the child’s reading ability, created a special experience between the child and volunteer, and helped to provide some normality and stability during this year.

The Oasis program shifted to teleconferencing for their therapy services. They became Google experts and took virtual training to learn how to provide remote services and utilize technology to engage with their clients. They bolstered one another and shared their ideas to help make the program stronger. It was a challenge and it took a lot of energy to provide services in this way, but they did what it took to serve their clients well. Also, during 2020, the program and agency worked toward applying to be a mental health clinic. This will allow the program to provide services that can be paid for by insurance carriers.

The Parent to Child program was first established to assist Dane County Human Services with providing supervised visitation services, and that continues to be the largest user of this service. At the beginning of 2020, the program also opened up to serve families who needed this service due to personal agreements or ones made in family court to utilize an independent supervised visitation provider, by privately paying for services. As the first social service agency to provide this service in Madison, we found the need to be great. We were looking forward to growing this area of the program and still managed to serve some of these families during the year. In the summer, the program took advantage of the large green space outside of our agency to hold safe visitation sessions. Other sessions were provided by teleconferencing.

Technology and infrastructure became a focus for us in 2020. It is our hope that by shoring up in these areas we will be able to do our jobs more efficiently in the future. We started with a new phone system to allow us to be better connected in our “work from home” environments. We signed on for Zoom for Healthcare to make sure we had a HIPAA-compliant platform for providing our telehealth services. We worked with a vendor to create a database for us to track all of our data for greater efficiency.

It was in large part due to our Payroll Protection Plan loan that we were able to retain our staff and invest in our infrastructure. Staff morale throughout the year was bolstered by a multi-level system of support – within the programs, with the whole agency, and individually. More than ever, this year taught us to be grateful for those in your life and the staff was my number one priority. Monthly staff meetings became a time to laugh, play and enjoy each other’s company – even if it was over Zoom. We did manage one in-person outdoor gathering in the summer that was so enjoyable. If 2020 teaches us nothing else, it is to be kind and supportive of one another. We are all doing the best we can.

Sincerely,
Donna Fox
Executive Director

2020 At A Glance

287
Clients
Served



with over 5,500 hours of service

4,113 **Volunteer**
Hours



valued at
\$125,006



\$470K
Donated

from more than 250 businesses
and individuals

WHAT IS CASA?

CASA is part of a nationwide organization of Court Appointed Special Advocates with 950 chapters in 49 states, and more than 93,000 volunteers. CASA volunteers are everyday people – teachers, business people, retirees, stay-at-home parents, and grandparents – who are committed to making a difference for children. In 2020, CASAs volunteered 790 hours of their time to serve 66 children.



WHAT DOES A CASA DO?

Our volunteer advocates are appointed by a judge and assigned to a case where they spend time getting to know the child(ren) involved. Their purpose is to gather as much information about the child(ren), as well as all the stakeholders in their life, such as family of origin, foster placement, doctors, teachers, CPS

workers, etc. All of this information is then compiled into a report for the court. CASA volunteers also identify and address risks, work with supportive people in the child's life, and ensure appropriate physical and mental health assessments are completed to ensure the

child's safety and well-being. They also make sure that educational assessments are completed and educational supports are in place. CASA volunteers provide a consistent presence in a child's life and work to ensure they are safe during their time in foster care.



Training & Support

Advocates with the CASA program must be 21 years old and pass a background check. The CASA staff then step in to provide the training and support needed to be successful in this role. This begins with 30 hours of initial training. In 2020, this training began in-person,

before needing to move to an online platform. The advocates in training adapted, and learned all they needed to know before being assigned their first CASA child.

Once in the role, advocates are supported by their case coordinator. Case coordinators help advocates understand the court process and their role, including navigating the changes of having court hearings held virtually, and how to safely connect with families during the pandemic. CASAs often serve the same child for over a year, some for a few years, and are the foundation of the program's success.

WHO DOES OASIS SERVE?

Children

Oasis therapists provide individual therapy to children (from birth to 18 years old) who have experienced incest and sexual abuse using quality trauma-focused evidenced based treatment. For the youngest children (birth to 5 years old) Oasis provided therapy for those who had experienced any type of trauma, including sexual abuse, physical abuse, drug endangerment and neglect. Parents and caregivers are included in treatment.

Pictured right is our "Jungle Room" which provides a sensory space for therapy.



Parents

Non-offending parents and caregivers of children who have been sexually abused can be served by Oasis through individual, family, and/or group therapy. Parents and caregivers are encouraged to be active participants in their child/teens individual therapy process. Therapists meet regularly both individually with parents and caregivers and together with the parent-youth dyad. Group therapy helps caregivers learn how to respond to the particular trauma-based needs of their children as well as to learn effective and protective strategies to parent their child in the aftermath of abuse. Groups, in particular, are beneficial for caregivers to see that they are not alone, this has happened to other families, and that there are others who understand from a very personal perspective.



Sand tray pictured. Sandplay therapy is a therapeutic intervention that makes use of a sandbox, toy figures, and sometimes water, to create scenes of miniature worlds that reflect a child's inner thoughts, struggles, and concerns.

"Since joining the group, I feel less alone and more supported by others in the group."

-Caregiver group member

Adult survivors

Adult survivors of childhood sexual abuse can attend group therapy to build skills to help survivors manage trauma symptoms that have continued from childhood trauma. Education about the impact of trauma is a focus throughout the group curriculum. This group offers space for group members to share their personal experiences in a safe environment with others who can relate to a topic that is often very isolating.

Oasis served 142 clients in 2020

HOW DOES PARENT TO CHILD SUPPORT FAMILIES?

Parent to Child (P2C) program provides supervised visitation in a family-like setting on evenings and weekends. These are valuable times within the week for families to spend time together, and Parent to Child works hard to ensure the space is set up in a welcoming and comfortable way.

The program was able to adapt to a virtual environment in March 2020, continuing to support families in a new setting, in a new way. It was great to get back to in person services mid-year, while also navigating healthy ways to be able to do that. The program utilizes a beautiful outdoor space for writing with chalk, rolling down hills, or tossing a ball. When inside the rooms are set up for a specific age group in mind, from toddler to teen.



In 2020, P2C provided 788 hours of successful supervised visits to 79 families. The program was able to provide this service with the help of 20 interns and volunteers. Primarily this service is offered for parents working with the Dane County Department of Human Services, though also is able to support families from the community in need of supervised visitation services.

Supervised visitation has been shown to greatly reduce the amount of time a child is in out-of-home care. We know from research that the trauma of being removed from the home can be nearly as bad as the trauma that caused the removal. Parents and children (and siblings) need regular contact to reduce the effects this separation is having on each member of the family.

"We strive to help these families grow in their relationships and attachment, while also creating memories they can hold as a family. Our work at Parent to Child is to help these families thrive." - P2C intern



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OASIS

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Cecilia Goldschmidt, Latino-Families Therapist

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Amy O'Brien, Therapist

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PARENT TO CHILD

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Noelle Cornell, Case Coordinator

Noelle Hoppe, Intake Coordinator

Volunteers

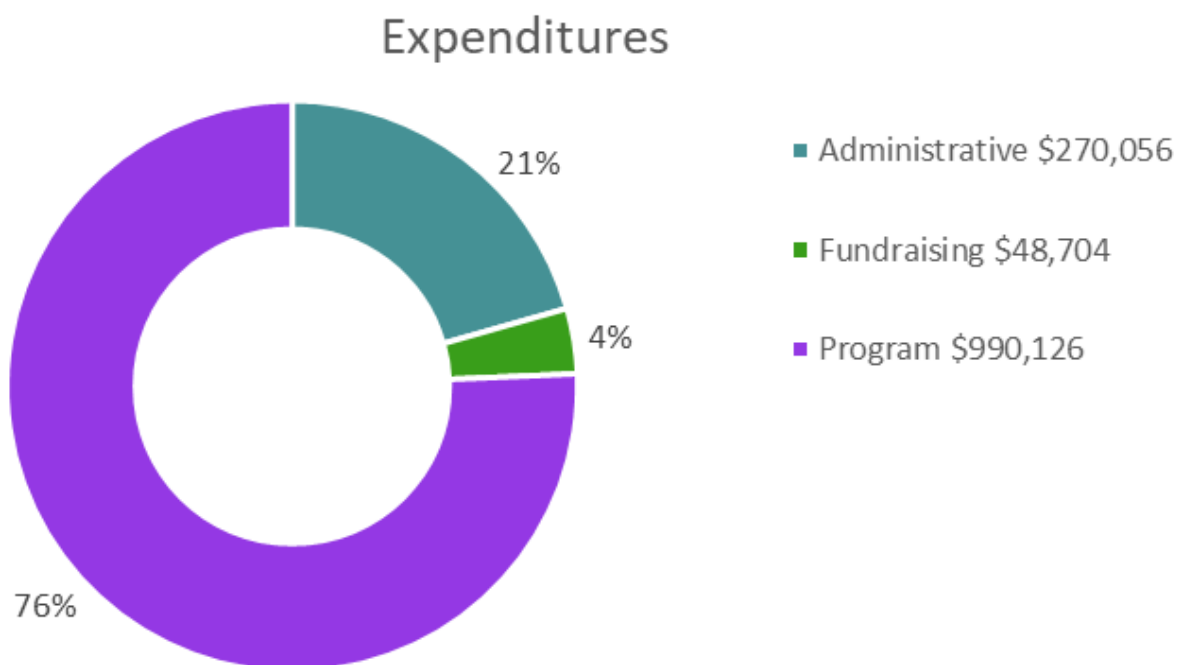
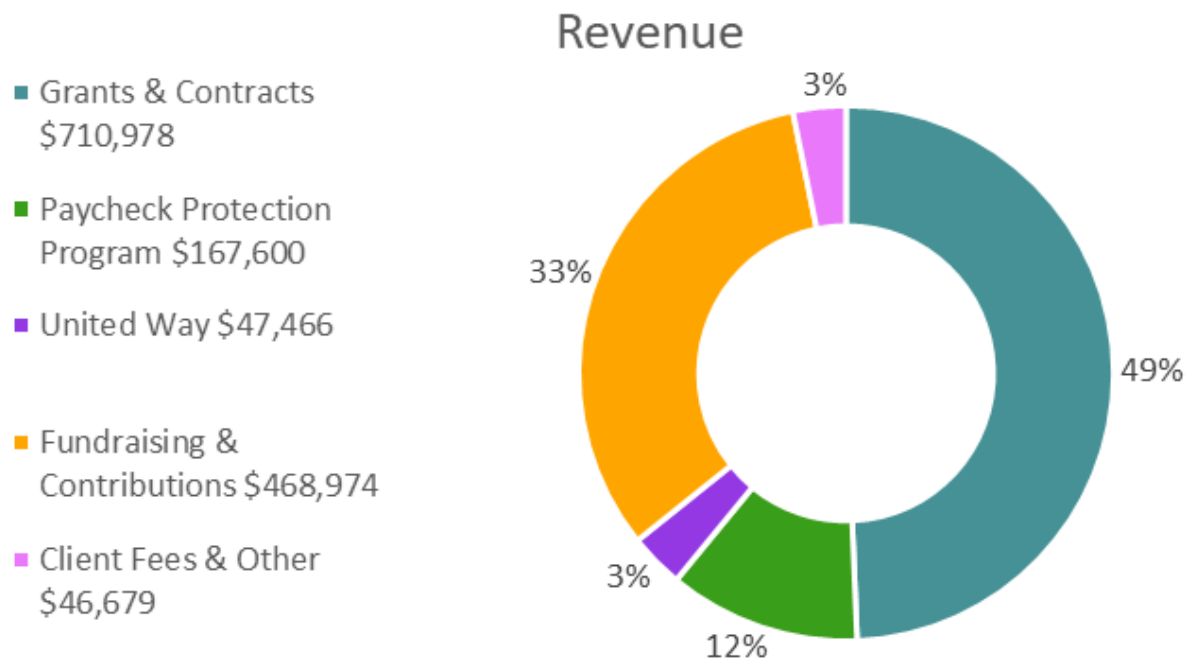
The Canopy Center has a strong history of supporting many amazing volunteers who help us do the important work of the agency. Because we provide services for 14 hours a day every single day of the year, we rely heavily on the efforts provided by people in our community. Our volunteers: support a safe environment for family interaction; co-facilitate support groups; provide child care; advocate for children in court and educational settings; participate in special events; or assist in the office.

We are so grateful for the efforts of our volunteers!

Lindy Agate	Aaron Decker	Frank Koss	Sheree Rice
Elise Ahn	Frank Delaney	Rathila Kottrathil	Alice Ripberger
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Claire Blau	Cambria Gerritts	Sinéad McHugh	Emily Souder
Haley Borgrud	Robert Goff	Erin Miller	Melissa Spero
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Nicole Brys	Cassidy Grell	Kelsey Mullins	Susan Sunde
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Dominique Christian	Catherine Hazeltine	Lillian Nimmer	Nicole Trethewey-Rawling
Jessica Collins	Jessica Hermsen	Melanie Nolden	Robert Trim
Meghan Conlin	Nathaniel Houghtaling	Wendy Novitzke	Elizebeth Voell
Raquel Contreras	Mamadou Jawo	Anna O'Donnell	Kassie Walsh
Debbie Craig	Hannah Johnson	Mona Queoff	Mengyuan Wang
Tim Culver	Brenda Joyce	Laurel Quinlan	Karla Weber
Clifford Cunningham	Paige Kassner	Patricia Raffel	Marcy Weiland
Clarice (Claire) Danen	Joseph Kluber	Sarah Rasmussen	Steven Yule
Nicolet Davis	Cheyenne Koeppel		

We remember Nancy Buckwalter, an amazing volunteer of the Canopy Center. Nancy lost her battle with cancer in 2020. In the years before that she volunteered as a CASA, and then to support the admin work of the agency. She brought amazing stories, made everyone smile, and was an all-around wonderful person. She will be missed.

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Canopy Center

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