CHILD ADVOCACY CENTRE of Kelowna

2022-2023

# ANNUAL REPORT

CACkelowna.com

# 2022-2023

## *CONTENTS*


About the Child Advocacy Centre of Kelowna 03

A Message from our Leadership 04

Highlights of Transformational Change 05

Our Impact 06

Research and Evaluation 08

Multi-Disciplinary Response Program 09

Child and Family Advocacy Program 10

Resilient Families Program 12

Emergency Services Program 14

Building Brighter Futures Program 15

The Year in Fund Development 16

Leadership Team 18

Financials 19


"All our **dreams** come true, if we have the **courage** to pursue them."

Walt Disney

## /// OUR VISION ///

***A community of hope, where all children feel safe, believed, and nurtured.***

# /// ABOUT ///

## THE CHILD ADVOCACY CENTRE OF KELOWNA

CHILD ADVOCACY CENTRE of Kelowna

**In a perfect world there would be no need for a Child Advocacy Centre because every child would be safe, loved, and nurtured. Until that time we are here to ensure that children who have experienced abuse, neglect, or emotional harm receive the compassionate and trauma-informed care they deserve.**

The CAC of Kelowna is one of more than 40 such Centres across Canada and is part of the growing best practice in the response to child abuse and neglect. We facilitate a coordinated response to child maltreatment that includes both community and government agencies working together to prioritize the needs of vulnerable children. We support the investigation of child abuse cases and go beyond investigation to focus on healing through the direct provision of onsite services and referrals.

## WORKING IN PARTNERSHIP

Westbank First Nation · central okanagan elizabeth fry society · Interior Health · British Columbia Ministry of Children and Family Development

# A MESSAGE FROM OUR /// LEADERSHIP ///

## dream BIG

I can hear my mother's voice in my head from the time I was a very small child: "Dream, big". She believed that anything was possible given the right level of commitment, perseverance, and patience. Throughout my lifetime, these words have proven true time and again, but never more so than over the past three years in leading the Child Advocacy Centre from a big idea through to this extraordinary reality.

What I've come to learn is that while a dream may begin with one person, making that dream a reality takes many. Every child who walks through our doors has the right to their own big dreams. When their hopes for the future are weighed down by the reality of their experience, it is our great privilege to hold space for those dreams until they are ready to carry them forward themselves.

There are so many things necessary to be successful in such a significant effort as the development of a Centre like this one, but chief among them has been a persistent commitment to big vision, big thinking, and big dreaming. Along the way, I can't even recall the number of times people have told us that something wasn't possible, that it couldn't be done, that it was not the way things were done. Every time, we have refused to see these as barriers, but merely speed bumps – obstacles that needed creative thinking to find ways up and over, around, under, or sometimes straight through.

2022/2023 was a year of transcendent system change: ideas we had held fast to, dreams we refused to let go of for children started to unfold. But not by accident, never by accident. Our partnership and our team have relentlessly pursued these monumental system changes and through the power of collaboration, we are succeeding. As you will read in the pages to come, we are transforming longstanding criminal justice processes, advancing healthcare for vulnerable children, and delivering life-changing services to children in ways never before seen in our community.

**Dream big. Anything is possible.**

**Ginny Becker**
Executive Director

# /// HIGHLIGHTS ///
## OF TRANSFORMATIONAL CHANGE

*dream* BIG . . .

## ...AND BIG THINGS WILL HAPPEN

Days at the CAC are busy. On any given day children come to us for forensic interviews, medical appointments, clinical counselling, court preparation, victim support, testimony, and more. What links all of these children together is their experience of child abuse. This, we cannot change. We cannot undo the abuse they have endured but we have the profound responsibility of changing what comes next, ensuring the system that responds does so in a trauma-informed and compassionate way. So, in the background of all of these busy days, we are also working relentlessly to change and evolve those systems. We dream big about what these children deserve and we fight hard to make it happen. In this past year, those purposeful moves have paid off in some powerful ways.

### REMOTE TESTIMONY

On January 1, 2023 we launched our Remote Testimony room for child witnesses. This represents transformational system change by empowering children to tell their truth to court from the warmth and safety of the CAC.
*(Page 11)*

### A FRAMEWORK FOR MENTAL HEALTH

With support from the KGH Foundation *We See You* campaign, we have developed a comprehensive assessment protocol and care development framework for families accessing services at the CAC.
*(Page 12)*

### CHANGING HEALTHCARE PATHWAYS

Through our partnership with the Interior Health Authority, this past year we have transformed the way children impacted by abuse access care within our community.
*(Page 13)*

# /// OUR IMPACT ///

**Within every child there exists a world of potential, resilience, and hope. At the CAC we serve to protect that world, fueled by the belief that every child deserves safety, justice, and the chance to reclaim their childhood – to dream, big.**

**TOTAL**

**667**

**INDIVIDUALS SERVED**

- **251** CHILD VICTIMS
- **115** SIBLINGS
- **301** CAREGIVERS

Activations of service include forensic interviews, medical care, clinical counselling, court preparation, victim services, testimony, and more. Our holistic wrap-around services are tailored to meet the unique needs of each child who walks through our doors. Depending on the needs of the child, some or all of our programs and services will be activated.

**3105**

**TOTAL ANNUAL ACTIVATIONS**

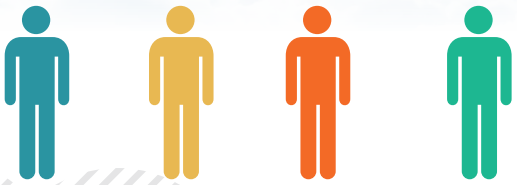
- **390** MEDICAL APPOINTMENTS
- **669** COUNSELLING APPOINTMENTS
- **248** INTERVIEWS CONDUCTED
- **88** DIRECT COMMUNITY INQUIRIES
- **1710** ALL OTHER SERVICES

# /// OUR IMPACT ///

While some children may come to us for only a few short weeks, others will be engaged with us for years depending on the criminal justice process and their ability to journey forward toward healing and resilience. Until then, we hold space for their hopes and dreams as we work to respond to the unique needs of each child.

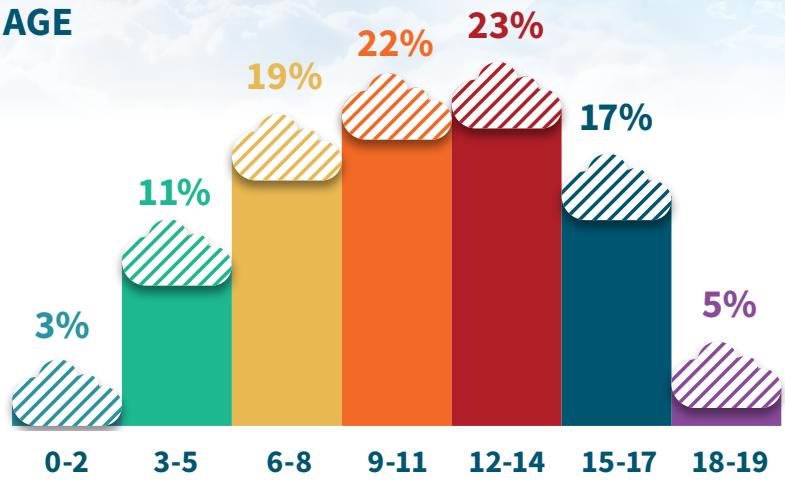
When a child walks through our doors, it catalyzes a response that includes an entire team; multiple activations of services; as well as countless hours of investigation, support, and advocacy. Together, we stand as a force for change as we continue to dream big and do better for children, families, and community.

## GENDER

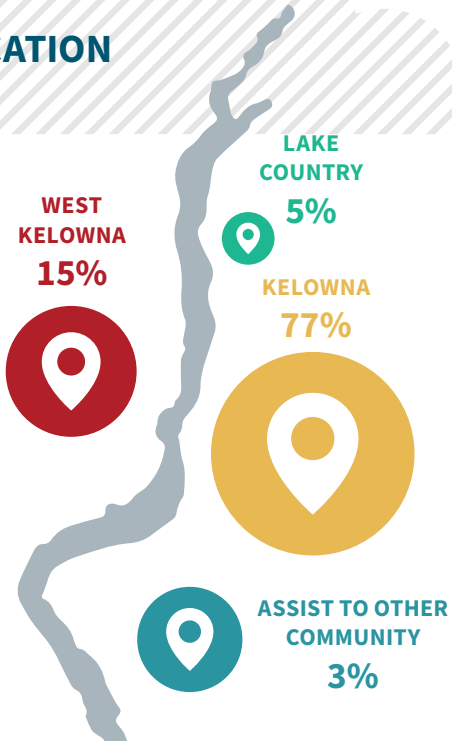


26% MALE
70% FEMALE
3% NON BINARY
1% TRANSGENDER

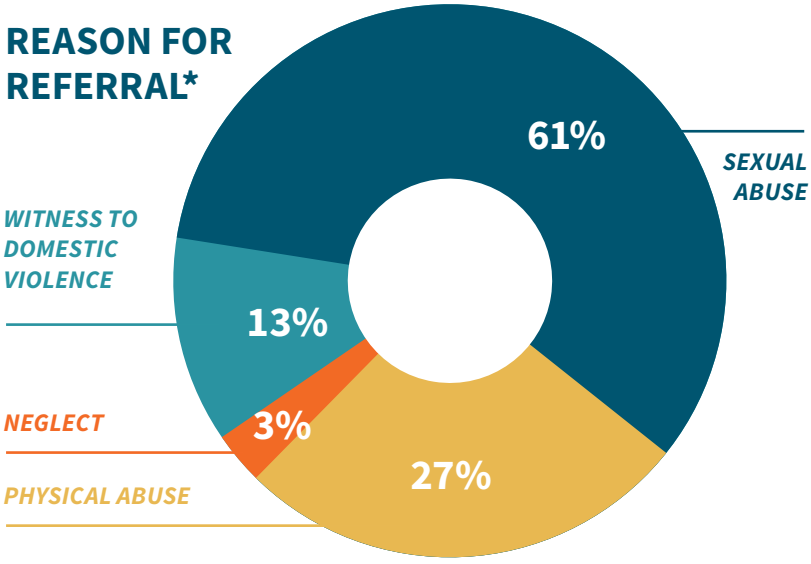
## AGE




## LOCATION




## REASON FOR REFERRAL*




* It is important to note that each type of abuse does not occur in isolation – children referred to the Child Advocacy Centre often experience more than one type of abuse.

# RESEARCH AND EVALUATION

"Ultimately, research and evaluation are indispensable in advancing our collective efforts to create safer environments for children, providing them with the protection and care they deserve."

**Cassidy Biener,** Ph. D. Candidate

**Research and evaluation are critically important to furthering the understanding, prevention, and response to child abuse and neglect in our community and beyond. Through systematic study and analysis, researchers can shine a light on the underlying causes of abuse; risk factors; as well as the physical, emotional, and psychological impacts survivors experience as a result of these crimes. This data is what drives our big dreams as we relentlessly pursue a brighter path forward for the vulnerable children and families we serve.**

## RESEARCH

In partnership with UBC Okanagan, our Centre has been involved in key research that will help to inform the evolution of the work of CACs across Canada and internationally. Publications include:

SCAN ME

**Non-offending caregiver support in cases of child sexual abuse:** An examination of the impact of support on formal disclosures.

*Wallis and Woodworth, 2021*

SCAN ME

**Child sexual abuse:** An examination of individual and abuse characteristics that may impact delays of disclosure .

*Wallis and Woodworth, 2020*

## EVALUATION

Ongoing assessment and evaluation empower our team to make informed decisions to support the health and wellbeing of those we serve. As part of our commitment to excellence in the delivery of child abuse services, we have incorporated rigorous evaluative processes into everything we do at the CAC, including:

- Our multi-disciplinary team model
- The use of Remote Testimony
- The Resilient Families Program

Multi-disciplinary team members representing the agencies that make up our partnership are regularly surveyed on the impact of our collaborative model:

**82%** of MDT members agreed that the CAC model helped provide a timely response

**96%** agreed that the CAC model resulted in a coordinated planning process

**100%** agreed that the CAC model resulted in a collaborative approach

**96%** of MDT members agreed that the CAC model helped them better serve the child

# /// MULTI-DISCIPLINARY RESPONSE PROGRAM ///

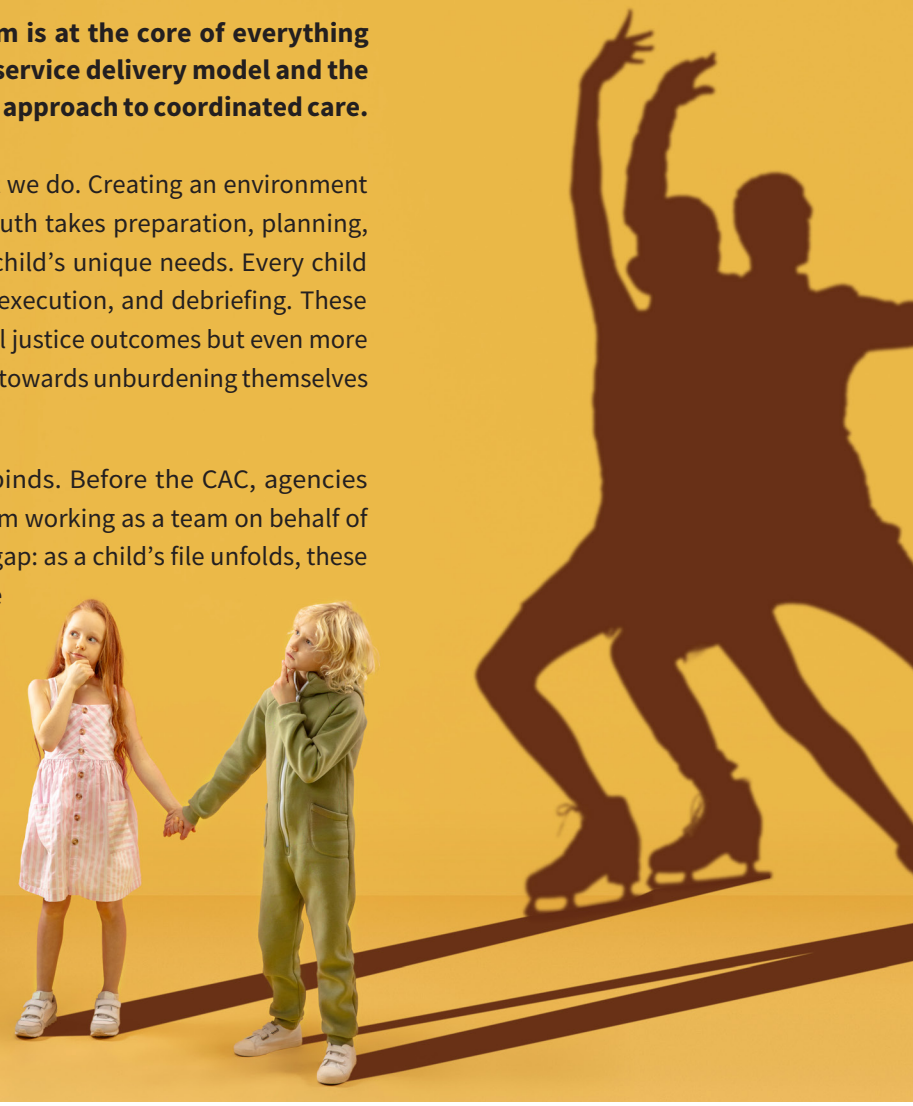
**The Multi-Disciplinary Response (MDR) Program is at the core of everything we do here at the CAC. It is the backbone of our service delivery model and the very essence of our collaborative, partner-based approach to coordinated care.**

**CHILD INTERVIEWS** lie at the heart of what we do. Creating an environment where a child can find the courage to speak their truth takes preparation, planning, specialized training, and careful attention to each child's unique needs. Every child interview requires hours of planning, coordination, execution, and debriefing. These interviews play a crucial role in the pursuit of criminal justice outcomes but even more importantly they provide children with their first step towards unburdening themselves and moving forward.

**CASE CONFERENCES** are the glue that binds. Before the CAC, agencies traditionally worked in silos that prevented them from working as a team on behalf of a child's best interest. Case conferences bridge that gap: as a child's file unfolds, these working sessions bring their team together to ensure that the needs of the child are being met and that the file is moving forward.



**MDR MEETINGS** kick off each week at the CAC. Every member of the CAC team from police, child protection, health care, victim services, child advocates, and community service agencies gather to advance the work of serving and protecting children. This is where we learn together, drive change, and transform the system through collaboration and dedication to our shared vision.



**154** CHILD INTERVIEWS

**95** CASE CONFERENCES
406 ATTENDEES PARTICIPATING

**50** MDR MEETINGS

**Thank you to the following funders for their generous support of this program.**

VANCOUVER FOUNDATION

DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE

# /// CHILD AND FAMILY ADVOCACY PROGRAM ///

**The CFA program serves three critical functions here at the CAC:**

The first is to act as a **single point of contact** and provide continuity for the families we serve. Ultimately, this places an Advocate beside each family for the duration of their journey, a trusted face who they can count on to walk alongside them and support them. Where before families were left to navigate these systems alone, they now have their Child and Family Advocate to act as an ally and advocate for what is best for the child.

The second critical function of the CFA program is to ensure that for each file there is one person who acts as the **bird's eye view**. These are incredibly complex files that require participation from multiple agencies and services from within the Centre and across communities. The Advocate works with all the necessary agencies and service providers to ensure that system gaps don't open up: historically, these are the gaps that children fall through. The CFA program ensures a **seamless wrap-around model of care** built on collaboration and communication.

Additionally, the CFA program works as an extension of the existing service agencies allowing us, as a partnership, to build capacity and better support families by working together. Where partner agency mandates end, the Advocate role can often step in to offer a **continuation of service** or a next layer of support as well as referrals to appropriate services for children and families.

**ADVOCATE SERVICE ACTIVATIONS**

**1471**

**SERVICE DEMAND INCREASE**

**67%**

**REFERRALS TO THE COMMUNITY**

**94**

**Thank you to the following funders for their generous support of this program.**

**MINISTRY OF PUBLIC SAFETY & SOLICITOR GENERAL**

**TELUS FRIENDLY FUTURE FOUNDATION**

**COMMUNITY GAMING GRANTS BRANCH - MINISTRY OF MUNICIPAL AFFAIRS**

LAUNCHING

# /// REMOTE TESTIMONY ///

Child testimony is paramount to the prosecution of child abuse cases, as there is often little evidence of these crimes and no witnesses other than the child and the offender. Tragically, this means we need to call on the courage of these young survivors once again to tell their truth in a courtroom when the time comes. Like most institutions built within the justice system, courtrooms are simply not designed for children. In cases that make it to trial, this means children must be prepared for the reality that they will likely come face to face with their offender if not in the courtroom then in the hallway, parking lot, or restroom. It is a devastating and traumatizing experience for any child working to recover from an experience of abuse.

After six years of advocacy, a little help from COVID, a strong partnership with our colleagues at Central Okanagan Elizabeth Fry Society, the backing of Kelowna's legal community, and the extraordinary courage of one eight-year-old girl we have changed this story for children in our community who are required to provide testimony. Effective January 1st 2023, the CAC is now one of a few spaces available in the province to host remote testimony for children. This change represents another monumental shift in systems long overdue for transformation and it is further evidence that if you Dream Big… Big Things can happen.

By enabling children to testify from the comfort and security of the Child Advocacy Centre, we support their right to participate in the legal system in a safe and trauma-informed environment, helping them to speak their truth in court proceedings without fear of encountering their offender.

**Thank you to the following funders for their generous support to develop this unique space.**

**DAVIDSON LAWYERS LLP**

**PUSHOR MITCHELL LLP**

**RUSH IHAS HARDWICK LLP**

**ASCENT EMPLOYMENT LAW**

**EYFORD PARTNERS LLP**

**PIHL LAW CORP.**

## TIMELINE

**MARCH 2022**
HOSTED INTER-PROVINCIAL REMOTE TESTIMONY

**APRIL 2022**
CASE STUDY PRESENTED TO BC CROWN

**JULY 2022**
RECEIVED GREEN LIGHT TO MOVE FORWARD WITH DEVELOPMENT OF SPACE

**OCTOBER 2022**
RAISED FUNDS THROUGH THE LEGAL COMMUNITY TO OUTFIT A REMOTE SPACE

**DECEMBER 2022**
REMOTE TESTIMONY ROOM COMPLETE

**JANUARY 2023**
REMOTE TESTIMONY LAUNCHED

# /// RESILIENT FAMILIES PROGRAM ///

With the addition of a Clinical Child Psychologist the RFP team worked to develop and implement an evidence-based standardized framework of care. The goal... to understand the strengths, challenges, and barriers to healing of each child and family attending the Centre. Through these **Family Formulations** the team is better positioned to work directly with clients to create a unique care plan and take on the impacts of trauma in the early stages of recovery.

With each child and family who take part in this process, the RFP team gain insight about what works to address which challenges, when. By dreaming bigger to create an evidence-based continuum of care for children and families, we are transforming mental health services for children impacted by abuse and neglect.

"Our hope for the *We See You* campaign was to inspire new ways of collectively tackling some of the most complex issues facing our community. The evolution of the CAC's Resilient Families Program exemplifies the power of collaboration to drive innovation by challenging existing systems in pursuit of a common goal. Thanks to the trust and commitment of our donors, new doors of possibility are opening for children, families, and community."

**Allison Young** (she/her) | Chief Executive Officer KGH Foundation

**323** RFP COUNSELLING SESSIONS

**26** FAMILY FORMULATIONS SESSIONS

**320** SAIP COUNSELLING SESSIONS

Delivered in partnership with:

central okanagan elizabeth fry society

**Thank you to the following funders for their generous support of this program.**

**KGH FOUNDATION – KIWANIS LEGACY FUND**

**KGH FOUNDATION – WE SEE YOU CAMPAIGN**

**BELL LET'S TALK**

**INTACT FOUNDATION – INTERIOR SAVINGS INSURANCE**

Through our partnership with the Interior Health Authority, we have transformed the way children impacted by abuse and neglect access healthcare in our community. At the CAC, we put the needs of children at the center of everything we do: the goal by which we measure ourselves is their wellbeing. With the establishment of an onsite medical clinic, we are working in partnership to provide a clear pathway for vulnerable children to access the care they need to heal and move forward.

## MEDICAL VISITS

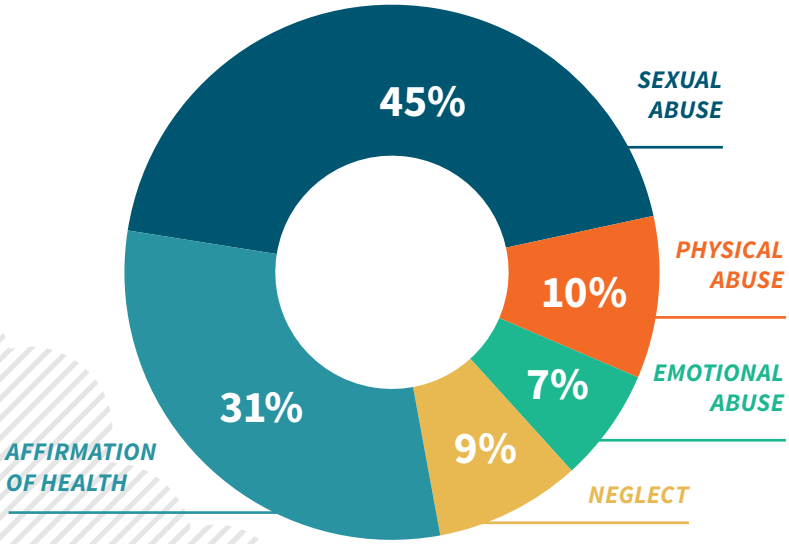
**390 TOTAL**

| 101 | 254 | 35 |
|---|---|---|
| INITIAL APPOINTMENTS | FOLLOW-UP APPOINTMENTS | CONSULTATIONS |

## REFERRAL SOURCE

- 68% CAC
- 22% MCFD
- 11% HEALTHCARE

## PRIMARY REASON FOR REFERRAL




## INTERVENTIONS

| | |
|---|---|
| 24 | FORENSIC |
| 48 | CONSULT |
| 50 | AFFIRMATION |
| 1 | DISCLOSURE |
| 220 | PHYSICAL HEALTH |
| 237 | MENTAL HEALTH |

Delivered in partnership with: Interior Health

# /// EMERGENCY SERVICES PROGRAM ///

"Children impacted by abuse deserve every possible chance to move forward: everyday barriers should not stand in their way. We are incredibly proud to support this program and play a role in their healing. The chance to put a smile on a child's face, help them get a sound sleep, and get them where they need to go in order to feel better… it fills our hearts."

**B Family**

**The Emergency Services Program (ESP) is designed to be flexible and is activated based on the input and recommendations of the multi-disciplinary team. Ultimately, this program was established to respond to the observed need to remove barriers to healing for vulnerable families.**

Though our work always begins with an investigation, from there it evolves into a journey focused on providing the best possible opportunity for children and their families to move forward. Along the way, there can be obstacles that get in the way of that journey; part of our job is to help families move past those obstacles.

To address these issues, we work closely with many service providers from across the Central Okanagan to meet the comprehensive needs of each child and family we serve. Often, though, there are gaps between the services children and families need and those that are available through existing systems. This is where the ESP comes in.

## REMOVING BARRIERS TO HEALING

**Specialized Counselling**

The mental health needs of children and families impacted by abuse can be highly complex and may require experience and expertise not found in our embedded multi-disciplinary team. In these cases, our team digs deep to locate these services elsewhere in the community. Through the ESP we can ensure families have access to the services that meet their unique needs.

**Access to Community**

The experience of abuse can be isolating. By helping children and their non-offending caregivers find new ways to build healthy connections to community, we can support families to build resilience. The ESP makes it possible for vulnerable children to build safe community through camps or recreational programs that may not otherwise be accessible.

**Transportation**

For those without access to a vehicle, just getting to the CAC can be a difficult and complicated process. Lack of transportation should never prevent children and families from accessing the services they need to move forward and heal. The ESP ensures that every child who needs to attend the CAC can find their way here safely.

**Beds/Bedding**

For children impacted by sexual violence, moving forward can be difficult if they are sleeping in the same place they were harmed. Sometimes their bedding and mattresses are removed and taken into evidence as part of the investigative process. Either way, we cannot expect a child to find rest in a place where they don't feel safe: the ESP allows children to find peace in the comfort of their new bedding and linens.

**Physiotherapy**

Children who have experienced abuse may require additional health care services to recover from acute injuries and disabilities. Physiotherapy can help them to manage the physical impacts of abuse while also supporting their long-term physical and mental well-being. The ESP ensures that every child impacted receives the care they need to heal and build resilience through physical activity.

**Thank you to the B FAMILY FOUNDATION for their generous support of this program.**

# ///BUILDING BRIGHTER FUTURES PROGRAM ///

**In a perfect world there would be no need for the CAC because every child would be safe, loved, and nurtured. Through the Building Brighter Futures Program, we are working towards this vision through community prevention and education. Every member of the community plays a role in responding to, and ultimately, stopping child abuse.**

This past year, we took an important step towards this goal with the creation of a forever platform for online learning: a place where everyone from parents to professionals can learn how to create safer communities for children.

With this platform in place, we were able to develop the **Creating Safer Communities Course**, a 90-minute webinar for service providers working directly with children and youth. Through this course, participants learn tools to effectively navigate and support children and youth through abuse and neglect, helping to turn unimaginable situations into success stories.

Now, we are dreaming even bigger to create trauma-informed resources for specific professional groups and look forward to developing a course for the legal community on Remote Testimony.

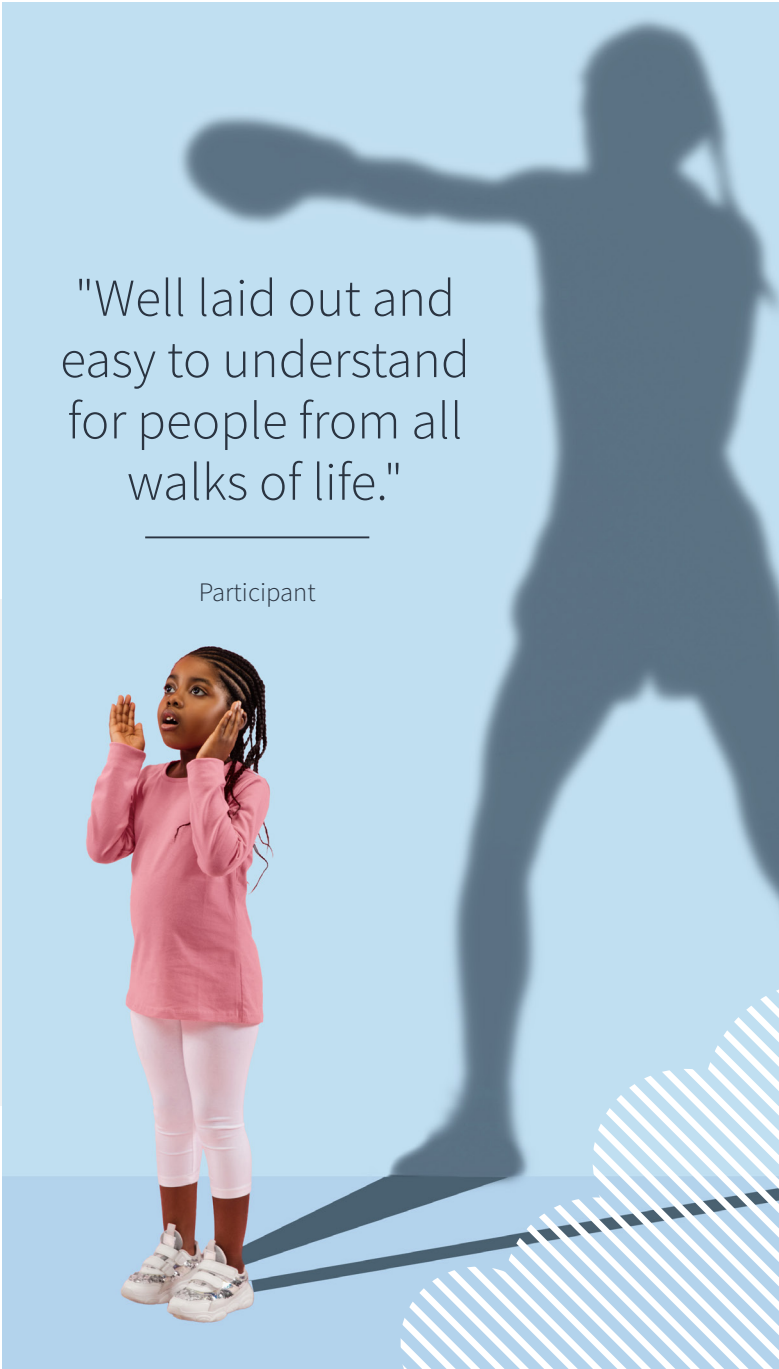
## TAKE THE COURSE

### STATS

**92**
TOTAL PARTICIPANTTS

### PROFESSIONS

TEACHERS, POLICE, COUNSELLORS, ECES, YOUTH WORKERS, SPORTS COACHES, CHILD PROTECTION WORKERS




**Thank you to the TRAINE CHARITABLE FOUNDATION for their generous support of this program.**

# /// THE YEAR IN FUND DEVELOPMENT ///

**For the first time since launching services at the CAC, during our 2022 – 2023 operating year we were able to look beyond the immediate impacts and limitations of COVID-19 to fund development. The resilience we developed through that adversity deepened as we built on relationships first established over the phone and on Zoom calls and forged new partnerships in person.**

As demand for our programs and services continues to increase, our community remains steadfast in their support of our most vulnerable. We are incredibly grateful to those who have been by our side since the beginning and those who have joined us along the way. Individuals, families, businesses, foundations, and government each play an integral role in our ability to serve and support those in need and dream big about how to serve them better.

To every person, agency, and organization who stands alongside us in this difficult but essential work, thank you. We are here for children and families at their most vulnerable moments by virtue of your support. Thank you for allowing us to dream big, so that they may dream big, too.

## SUPPORT FROM GOVERNMENT

- Ministry of Public Safety and Solicitor General
- Community Gaming Grants Branch - Ministry of Municipal Affairs
- Department of Justice Canada
- City of Kelowna

## FOUNDATION SUPPORT

- Bell Let's Talk
- B Family Foundation
- Central Okanagan Foundation
- Frank J. Flaman Foundation
- Gateway Foundation
- Intact Foundation
- KGH Foundation – Kiwanis Legacy Fund
- KGH Foundation – We See You Campaign
- RBC Foundation
- Stober Foundation
- TELUS Friendly Future Foundation
- Vancouver Foundation

## FUNDING PARTNERS

Special thanks to our dedicated funding partners who help create this sustainable path forward through their multi-year agreements.

- Matt & Lori Butler
- Paul & Cathy Douglas
- Tom & Debra Mauro
- Stober Foundation

# /// COMMUNITY SUPPORT ///

"The CAC is an amazing organization, and our club is passionate about raising money and awareness in support of their work. What they do at the CAC is as tough as you could imagine. For them to provide help to all the kids who need it, our whole community must rally around them."

**Klaus Naumann** Rotary Club of Kelowna Ogopogo

**We are deeply grateful to the many businesses who rallied to support our work over the past year. More than fifty unique businesses donated through gifts in kind, financial resources, and volunteerism.**

**50+**
**UNIQUE BUSINESSES DONATED**

## SOME HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE PAST YEAR

**INVESTMENT INDUSTRY PING PONG TOURNAMENT**

Raymond James Ltd.

**RAISED**
**$12,275**

**FATHER'S DAY CAR RAFFLE**

Boyd Autobody & Glass

**RAISED**
**$61,000**

**SEASON OF GIVING CALENDAR**

Rotary Club of Kelowna Sunrise

**RAISED**
**$77,000**

**CIRCLE OF FRIENDS**

Monthly Donors

**RAISED**
**$18,350**

**OES GOLF TOURNAMENT**

Okanagan Electrical Systems

**RAISED**
**$9,315**

**FANCY PANTS GOLF TOURNAMENT**

Rotary Club of Kelowna Ogopogo

**RAISED**
**$30,400**

# LEADERSHIP TEAM

## BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Andrew Prior | Board Chair

Alison Yesilcimen | Vice-Chair

Jackie Gidda | Director

Debra Mauro | Director

Gary McEwan | Director

Dr. Rick Oliver
Director

Ken Carmichael
Director

Steve Thomson
Director

Nathan Flavel
Director

## EXECUTIVE TEAM

**Ginny Becker** | Executive Director

**Sarah Armstrong** | Director of Operations

We are deeply honoured to serve alongside one another as the Board of the CAC.
This work is vital to the wellbeing of children, families, and the future of our community.

**CAC Board of Directors**

# /// FINANCIALS ///

**We launched the operations of the Child Advocacy Centre almost four years ago, unbeknownst to us on the cusp of an international pandemic. On that first day, we never could have known what would unfold in the weeks and months to come. Needless to say, this made for a difficult and complicated start up phase for this work. In the first two years, everything about the traditional world of fundraising changed as traditional funding streams closed and granting agencies began re-allocating their funds to new priorities. We learned all of this as we went, and all while simultaneously launching a full scale operational multi-disciplinary environment.**

Where we are today is truly remarkable when you consider all that has transpired. We have steadfastly continued to build diverse funding streams; develop strong and lasting partnerships with private funders, corporate supporters, and foundational organizations; and remain committed to careful stewardship of every dollar entrusted to us. Those Big Dreams we had to build a place where children impacted by abuse would feel safe, believed, and important are coming true one child at a time.

"The future depends on what we do in the present."

Ghandi

## STATEMENT OF OPERATIONS

**APRIL 1, 2022 TO MAR 31, 2023**

| REVENUES | |
|---|---|
| From Donors | $1,860,911 |
| Amortization of Deferred Capital Contributions | $489,951 |
| Grants and Subsidies | $343,709 |
| Sponsorships | $3,362 |
| Other Income | $610 |
| Interest Income | $227 |
| **TOTAL REVENUE** | **$2,698,770** |

| EXPENDITURES | |
|---|---|
| Amortization | $496,037 |
| Contracted Service | $34,780 |
| Insurance | $14,980 |
| Interest and Bank Charges | $3,331 |
| IT/ Tech | $67,762 |
| Marketing / Communications | $75,911 |
| Office and General | $70,579 |
| Professional Development | $27,344 |
| Professional Services | $15,738 |
| Rent and Utilities | $295,803 |
| Staff Appreciation | $9,068 |
| Travel | $4,089 |
| Wages and Benefits | $524,118 |
| **TOTAL EXPENSES** | **$1,639,540** |

CHILD ADVOCACY CENTRE of Kelowna

## SERVING THE COMMUNITIES OF

**PEACHLAND** **WEST KELOWNA** **KELOWNA** **LAKE COUNTRY**

We acknowledge and respect that we do this work on the traditional and unceded territory of the ńsyilxcn speaking people (syilx/Okanagan) who have resided here since time immemorial and will continue to be here for many generations.

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**CACkelowna.com**

Charitable Registration Number 73661 2680 RR0001