

**NEW YORK STATE CHILDREN'S ALLIANCE**  
**2021 Annual Report**

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# Children are our #1 priority.

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### Dear NYSCA Friends,

As I left my role as Board Chair in December 2021, I felt an overwhelming sense of honor as I reflected back on all of the achievements that Linda and her staff, with the support of the Board, have accomplished over the last several years.

The NYSCA staff have proven to be dedicated to the mission of empowering, providing support, and restoring hope to local communities by supporting Child Advocacy Centers throughout New York state. During the Pandemic, the financial strength of the Chapter was increased by the creation of the “One Too Many” campaign that signifies one child abused is one too many. Coalition Manager was implemented to provide CACs with one location for accessing new outreach and educational materials, training opportunities, public policy changes, and for NYSCA to track information. Collaborate was implemented for CACs to enter and track cases and produce reports that are sent to funders. Huddle calls were created as a way to provide support to Directors, Mental Health Providers, and Victim Advocates during the Pandemic. These calls continue to be held monthly and are a great way for CAC staff to connect and assist one another.

With 45 CACs in NYS, these programs and supports, along with the campaign and funding initiatives, have transformed the way CACs now recognize NYSCA as that main source of support for empowering CACs to provide the services to victims in their own communities. Please join me in congratulating NYSCA on another tremendously successful year!

Best Regards,



Kristen Beard  
NYSCA 2021 Board Chair

### Dear Friends,

It was yet another year of Zoom meetings, WebEx meetings, and Team meetings in 2021. Another year of virtual trainings, a virtual membership meeting and a virtual conference. Like most, I missed seeing colleagues in person, missed the networking opportunities, and often just the fun of being together. But one thing stayed constant, even in the virtual world we were living in, and that was the welfare of our children was always priority number one.

While the continued restrictions of the pandemic impacted how we all operated, I often tried to find the positives in this new “normal.” One of those positives was that our team got to “see” and get to know our members on regular monthly Zoom calls for CAC Leadership, Advocacy, Mental Health, and Outreach and Education peer calls. As we begin returning to in-person events, we know these peer calls will remain to allow for continued relationship-building and networking across the state.

I cannot state strongly enough how proud our team is of the Child Advocacy Centers for the tremendous work they have done during the continued challenges of the pandemic. Children are always #1 and CAC/MDT members certainly proved that with the caring and compassion they showed over 23,500 children in 2021.

As the Executive Director of the Chapter, I am also incredibly proud of the work of NYSCA’s team. They are always there to assist our members with questions, data support tickets, technical assistance, trainings, resources and more. Teamwork isn’t just a word for them. They truly are a team that works together, cares about each other, and has fun together. A huge thank you goes out to them as they continued to adapt to the ever-changing needs of our membership, while still staying focused on the Chapter projects.

I hope 2022 brings peace to everyone, a sense of pride for all that you do, and good health and happiness as the year unfolds. Please know that NYSCA is always here for you.

Warmly,



Linda Cleary,  
NYSCA Executive Director



WHO WE ARE

The New York State Children’s Alliance, Inc. is a 45-member organization serving 59 counties and 6 tribal nations.

We are committed to improving the community response to children and families impacted by abuse.

OUR MISSION

The mission of the New York State Children’s Alliance, Inc. (NYSCA) is to promote the development, growth and continuation of Multidisciplinary Teams (MDTs) and Child Advocacy Centers (CACs) throughout New York state in order to provide healing and justice to abused and neglected children and their families.

DEI MISSION

In the Fall of 2021, NYSCA began Phase Two of our DEI Strategic Planning. Phase One focused on an organizational assessment of diversity, equity, and inclusion policies and workplace culture. Phase Two involved a 3-month strategic diversity planning process, where NYSCA’s staff engaged in in-depth learning and development with consultants, Tangible Development. The team drafted and recommended the organization’s DEI strategic plan to the Board of Directors and was approved.

Our comprehensive plan includes a DEI mission statement, common language created to establish a shared understanding of DEI across our membership, as well as three organizational focus areas with identified goals. Collectively, these goals take a comprehensive approach to addressing diversity, equity, and inclusion at NYSCA.

NYSCA’s DEI Tagline:

Everyone deserves to be treated with kindness, respect, and acceptance.

NYSCA’s DEI Mission Statement:

We at NYSCA recognize that structural inequities and individual biases impact everyone’s lives. We are invested in doing the necessary work to weave the principles of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion into our policies, practices, and procedures. We are committed to learning through continued dialogue so that we may be a model for our members, who serve diverse children and families in New York state.

NYSCA’s Approach to DEI:

NYSCA is dedicated to supporting DEI efforts among our members by providing resources that promote culturally safe and equitable services for all children and their families throughout NY state. We aim to empower our members, staff, and constituents to enhance their DEI knowledge and skills so that we may collectively build a more just and inclusive world.

Focus Area 1: Structure & Processes

The aim of this focus area is to begin to align NYSCA’s organizational practices with the newly established DEI mission. The goals under this focus area will embed/connect/support and operationalize/integrate/actualize DEI into NYSCA’s everyday work and develop metrics to hold ourselves accountable to our commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion.

Focus Area 2: Education & Training

This focus area aims to raise the knowledge, skills, and abilities of NYSCA staff within diversity, equity, inclusion (DEI) to support the DEI goals of NYSCA as well as supporting the evolving DEI needs of CACs. The ultimate goal is to ensure DEI knowledge and skills become operationalized into NYSCA’s everyday work.

Focus Area 3: Storytelling & DEI Capacity Building for CACs

The aim of this focus area is to share NYSCA’s commitment to DEI to our stakeholders and community members. We strive to support NYSCA’s membership as they develop and/or enhance their center’s own DEI efforts.

“Children are our most valuable resource.”

- Herbert Hoover







“Children make your life important.”  
— Erma Bombeck

OUR VALUES

We will work tirelessly to realize our vision by drawing on our values.

- Children deserve to be safe from abuse
- Communities are where our work will, and should, have the greatest impact
- Respect for all is paramount in everything that we do
- Leadership builds change that lasts, and lasts through change

NYSICA serves as a unified voice advocating in the best interest of our membership at the local, state and national levels on matters related to child abuse and childhood trauma.

SERVING THE COUNTIES OF:

Albany	Oneida
Allegany	Onondaga
Bronx	Ontario
Broome	Orleans
Cattaraugus	Orange
Cayuga	Oswego
Chautauqua	Otsego
Chemung	Putnam
Chenango	Queens
Clinton	Rensselaer
Columbia	Richmond
Cortland	Rockland
Dutchess	Saratoga
Erie	Schenectady
Essex	Schoharie
Franklin	Schuyler
Fulton	Seneca
Genesee	Steuben
Greene	St. Lawrence
Hamilton	Suffolk
Herkimer	Tioga
Jefferson	Tompkins
Kings	Ulster
Lewis	Warren
Madison	Washington
Monroe	Wayne
Montgomery	Westchester
Nassau	Wyoming
New York	Yates
Niagara	

OUR TEAM

NYSICA STAFF

- Linda Cleary**  
Executive Director
- Clare Robinson-Henrie**  
Director of Public Policy and Advocacy
- William Starliper**  
Director of Finance
- Patricia Maio Mullin**  
Director of Communications
- Jami Bolton**  
Director of Training and Development
- John Kelly**  
Statewide Multidisciplinary Team Director
- Tebo Cossa**  
Director of Data Services and Analytics

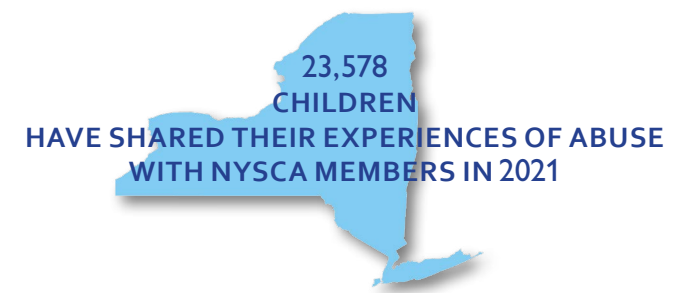
2022 BOARD OF DIRECTORS

- Richard Neal**  
*Board Chair, The Neal Group*
- Joshua Hanson**  
*Board Vice Chair, The Safe Center LI*
- Kimberly Haight**  
*Secretary, Center for the Prevention of Child Abuse*
- Ann Marie Tucker**  
*Treasurer, Community Volunteer*
- Kristen Beard**  
**Past Board Chair**  
Cortland County  
Child Advocacy Center
- Kathy Colgan**  
Colgan Consulting, Inc.
- Dr. Twylla Dillion**  
HealthConnect One
- Stephen Forrester, Esq.**  
Community Volunteer
- Helene Gold**  
Community Volunteer
- David Mann**  
Buffalo Police Department
- Luanne Mansfield**  
Three Brothers Wineries and Estates
- Joseph Muroff**  
Office of the District Attorney,  
Bronx County
- Michael Polenber**  
Safe Horizon
- Deb Rosen**  
Bivona Child Advocacy Center
- Allison Spaulding**  
Elmcrest Children’s Center



OUR SERVICES

A comprehensive investigation is initiated with each new case of abuse referred to a Child Advocacy Center. With the safety and protection of the child as its highest priority, a highly skilled team including advocates, forensic interviewers, law enforcement, child protective services, prosecutors, medical and mental health professionals assess each case with sensitivity and care.



16,427 FORENSIC INTERVIEWS

Specially trained Forensic Interviewers work with the MDT to ensure victims are not interviewed unnecessarily and allow them to do so in a safe, legally sound and neutral setting.

341,770 VICTIM ADVOCACY CONTACTS

CACs stand in the gap for the healing of child abuse victims, focusing on reduced trauma for the child. Victim Advocates provide resources, support and training with a compassionate, listening ear, so that each child gets the care they deserve.

3,924 MEDICAL EXAMS/TREATMENTS

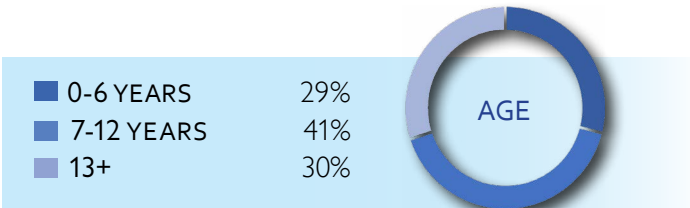
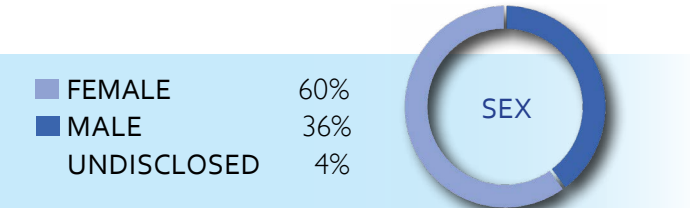
A medical exam, similar to a pediatrician’s check-up, may be offered to a child to determine the nature and extent of the abuse. These exams provide the team with valuable information to prosecute the offender and help the child heal.

10,981 REFERRALS TO COUNSELING  
6,107 INTIATED COUNSELING/THERAPY

Each child and their family are offered specialized evidence-based, trauma-focused, mental health services, proven to be effective in coping with the trauma of sexual and physical abuse.

WHO WE SERVE

One in every 10 children in New York state will be a victim of sexual abuse by their 18th birthday. The New York State Children’s Alliance exists to change the numbers listed below and lead the fight against the cycle of child abuse through a stronger, more approachable model.



TYPES OF ABUSE

SEXUAL	58%
PHYSICAL	19%
NEGLECT	11%
WITNESS TO VIOLENCE	3%
DRUG ENDANGERED	2%
OTHER	7%

RACE OR ETHNICITY

WHITE	39%
BLACK/AFRICAN AMERICAN	17%
HISPANIC/LATINO	17%
ASIAN/PACIFIC ISLANDER	1%
AMERICAN INDIAN	1%
ALASKA NATIVE	1%
OTHER/NOT REPORTED	25%

RELATIONSHIP OF ALLEGED OFFENDER TO CHILD

PARENT	47%
STEPPARENT	7%
RELATIVE	17%
PARENT’S PARTNER	4%
OTHER KNOWN PERSON	16%
UNKNOWN/NO SUSPECTS	9%



“There can be no keener revelation of a society’s soul than the way in which it treats its children.”  
-Nelson Mandela



“Anyone who does anything to help a child is a hero to me.”

-Fred Rogers



OUR IMPACT ACROSS THE STATE

The Outcome Measurement System (OMS) is a standardized, research-based set of surveys designed to measure Child Advocacy Center (CAC) performance based on feedback from families. All participating CACs measure the same core items, allowing CACs to benchmark their performance against state, regional, and national results. OMS is designed to capture two measurable outcomes:

- 1. the CAC facilitates healing for children and caregivers
- 2. the MDT approach results in more collaborative and efficient case investigations

I believe my child felt safe at the Center. 97.6% AGREE	The process for the interview of my child at the Center was clearly explained to me. 98.4% AGREE
When I came to the Center, my child and I were greeted and received attention in a very timely manner. 99.5% AGREE	I was given information about possible behaviors I might expect from my child in the days and weeks ahead. 89.8% AGREE
I was given information about the services and programs provided by the Center 98.9% AGREE	The Center staff provided me with resources to support my child and respond to his or her needs in the days and weeks ahead. 96.6% AGREE

HERE’S WHAT CAC CLIENTS ARE SAYING:

“I felt everyone cared about our situation and wanted to help.”

“Everyone has shown compassion and been supportive through this process.”

“I feel relieved and thankful that we can get the help we have been seeking.”

“I most appreciate the respect, care, and empathy shown towards my child and the professional and private way in which everything was done.”

2021 FINANCIAL STATEMENT

REVENUE:		EXPENSES:	
Government Grants	934,830.90	Administrative	84,355.88
Membership Dues	11,500.00	Program Service	852,824.87
Donations and Fundraising	30,998.81		
<b>TOTAL REVENUE</b>	<b>977,329.71</b>	<b>TOTAL EXPENSES</b>	<b>937,180.75</b>





A huge thank you to our conference sponsors: NYS Office of Children and Family Services, V2 Advocate, Collaborate by Network Ninja, The Neal Group, Legacy Wealth Advisors of NY, Element 74, Continuum and Suwanee River, Area Health Education Center

In 2021, NYSCA again hosted its annual Leadership Conference virtually. It was attended by 172 CAC staff/MDT members with representation from every discipline! Knowing that Zoom fatigue was a real issue for most folks, we opted for a different kind of keynote. Ron Culberson kicked off the one-day virtual conference with his keynote title, "Do it Well, Make it Fun." Drawing on his own experiences from working both in the social work field and as an EMS first responder, Ron had the audience laughing (we think!) while driving home some poignant messages about the importance of positivity in the workplace.

Following Ron's keynote, we had a variety of speakers for 12 breakout sessions covering a range of topics including Cultural Considerations for TF-CBT, Ethical Challenges Facing CACs, The Privileged Advocate, and Women Who Molest Children. Dr. Ashely Cross ended the conference by bringing everyone together to discuss The Science of Hope. Feedback included,

"After over a year of this pandemic,  
it felt good to hear  
we were not the only ones  
experiencing what we are and,  
that there really is HOPE."

"Great presenters make difficult topics  
bearable, engaging, & incredibly informative.  
This conference was very useful and  
enjoyable, especially since  
it was forced to be virtual."

New for 2021, NYSCA added "selfie prizes" and presented three recognition awards to deserving CAC/MDT members. We received great submissions from the membership making the selection of award recipients a difficult decision. The following awards were presented:

Leading Edge Director Award

Jennifer Brownell, Executive Director of the Child Advocacy Center of the Finger Lakes, as an outstanding Child Advocacy Center director who has demonstrated exemplary leadership skills, fostered outstanding team dynamics and team management.



Hero for Children Award

Detective Matt Kachermeyer from the Chautauqua County Child Advocacy Program recognizing an outstanding Multidisciplinary Team (MDT) member who has made significant contributions toward promoting the best interests of abused and neglected children throughout the state of New York.



Standing Ovation Award

Jane Barker Brooklyn Child Advocacy Center recognizing a Child Advocacy Center who in the past twelve months implemented a creative and/or innovative idea or project.



"Kid, you will move mountains!  
Today is your day!  
Your mountain is waiting.  
So get on your way!"  
-Dr. Suess





“...for children, play is serious learning.”  
-Fred Rogers

STATEWIDE | OUTREACH



A huge thank you goes out to our sponsors for the 5K: Montage Wealth Management, The Neal Group, Bivona Child Advocacy Center, Guthrie Clinic, Wegmans, Stewart’s Shops, Josie’s Journey, CNY Marriage and Family Therapy Place, PLLC

The One Too Many NY virtual 5K was a huge success in 2021. Child Advocacy Centers across the state participated in a virtual 5K run/walk to raise some funds for the tremendous work that they do. Nineteen CACs, along with the New York State Children’s Alliance, participated in the event raising \$34,350.

Participants in the 5K selected any day between Friday, September 17th and Sunday, September 19th to run/walk, selecting any route – their neighborhood, a local park, even their treadmill. The One Too Many NY 5K brought out 779 participants including family members, colleagues, children and 117 “canine companions!”

NYSCA provided several statewide awards, including ones for the Best Time, Best View on the Run, “Dogs Need a 5K Too”, Best Celebration, and Best Decorated Race Bib.

The Child Advocacy Center with the most participants was the Center for the Prevention of Child Abuse in Poughkeepsie, NY, with the Cortland County Child Advocacy Center and the CAC at the Westchester Institute for Human Development coming in with an impressive number of participants as well.

VIRTUAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING

When COVID-19 hit in 2020, NYSCA cancelled its annual Membership Meeting. With so much uncertainty, and the meeting just around the corner, we pivoted to huddle calls with our members instead. In 2021, while still living in a virtual world, we were pleased that we could still hold the annual Membership Meeting, even if it had to be on Zoom. Over forty CAC/MDT members attended the virtual meeting.

NYSCA presented its annual report, showcasing the work of the CACs, as well as an overview of the Chapter’s year in review. A training by Gerry Altamirano, Inclusion Strategist, from Tangible Development on “Connecting Your WHY with DEI” was presented as the Chapter continued its Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion efforts.

One ChildAbused  
is  
#OneTooManyNY



Board member and CAC Director, Deb Rosen, presented NYSCA’s Public Policy Priorities for the upcoming year. The meeting ended, after Q&A time with our members.



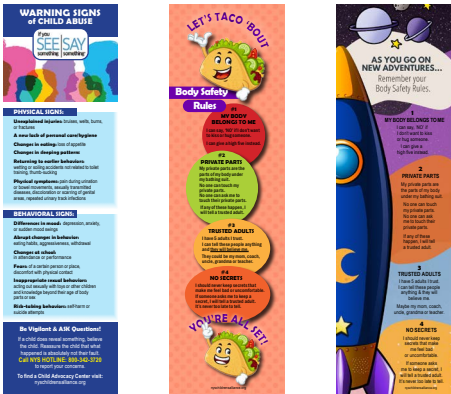


NYSCA's communication efforts remained at a high level in 2021. Our mission is to continue supporting Child Advocacy Centers with resources, individualized technical assistance, and virtual networking opportunities. Virtual and electronic options continued in the way we communicated in 2021.

NYSCA stayed in touch this year with monthly Peer Calls for various disciplines including CAC Leadership, Victim Advocacy, Mental Health, and Outreach and Education. Also, new for 2021 were New CAC Leader Conversation Calls, monthly NYSCA Updates, quarterly NYSCA newsletters, email campaigns, and social media posts. We continued to create prevention education resources for the CACs distributing over 18,000 pieces in 2021. Two resources we are highlighting are educational bookmarks and a "Welcome to the Child Advocacy Center" video.

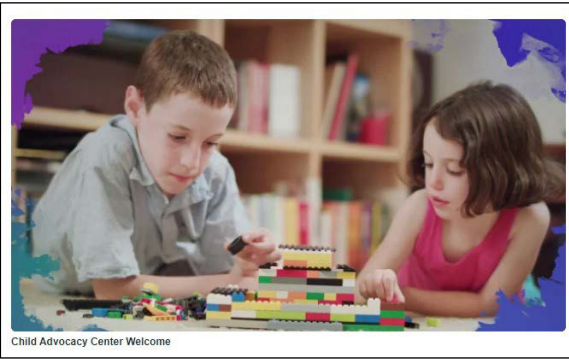
Bookmarks

NYSCA designed bookmarks for both adults and children. These bookmarks were distributed throughout the year in swag bags for the One Too Many NY 5K, at tabling events, and as take home materials to distribute at CACs.



Welcome to the Child Advocacy Center Video

This video was developed for CACs to help children and families know what to expect when they arrive at the CAC. Watch the video here: <https://vimeo.com/user96742532>



NYSCA MDT ENHANCEMENT INITIATIVE REPORT

NYSCA has continued with its OVS funded project in 2021 which has allowed us to work with 3 pilot site CACs: Cortland Child Advocacy Center, EAC Suffolk and CAC of Northern NY. The goal of the project was for NYSCA to work with the 3 sites to identify possible best practices, address issues and solutions, and share the information to help other CACs adopt and develop models that may be useful to their teams.

One project that was completed at the end of the year is our Courtroom 360 project. The project involved cameras that are typically used for real estate and virtual walk throughs of homes that are for sale. Using the same technology, we reached out to photographers that were local to the CACs and asked if they could produce a virtual walk through of their local courthouse.



Our pilot sites felt it would be a wonderful tool if a child and their family could see a courtroom video prior to testifying by simply clicking a mouse and looking all around the room virtually. The courtrooms are from Onondaga County (Syracuse), Cortland County (Cortland) and Jefferson County (Watertown). Courtroom 360 videos will be available in Coalition Manager and available to all CAC/MDT users.

MEDICAL WORKGROUP


As NYSCA continued to focus its efforts on the medical shortage in the state, two sub-committees were created in 2021. An Outreach Committee was created which developed a presentation on best practices for handling emergent sexual abuse exams that was geared toward emergency department staff. The other was a Training Committee tasked with developing strategies to increase the capacity of medical providers already in or joining the child abuse field. This committee developed plans for a SANE-P Preceptorship Program for NYS with plans to roll it out in 2022.

“A child’s youth is fleeting – be their pillars while you are still strong enough to support them.”

-childinsider.com





A person is captured in mid-air, jumping joyfully on a grassy hill. The background features a warm sunset with orange and yellow hues, and distant hills. The person is wearing a dark t-shirt, black shorts with a bright green stripe, and black sneakers. Their arms are raised high, and their legs are bent in a playful jump.

“I continue to believe that if children  
are given the necessary tools to succeed,  
they will succeed beyond their wildest dreams.”

– David Vitter

## TRAININGS | LEGISLATIVE UPDATES

Having finally figured out how to navigate the virtual training world, NYSCA really got rocking and rolling with opportunities. In partnership with NRCAC, NYSCA offered a monthly Trauma Informed Care webinar series addressing new topics each month. We had presentations from NY CAC folks who had been implementing this work already, as well as heard from professionals across the country. This webinar series was incredibly successful, and served as a pilot project, which is now being implemented for the Northeast Region.

Another popular training was Child Sexual Assault 360, presented by Larry Braunstein, Graham Hill, and Jim Tanner. With each trainer offering different input as it relates to understanding grooming offenders, how to interview pedophiles, and prosecution efforts, the natural discourse between the 3 presenters was so engaging and at times quite humorous. Due to the fantastic feedback we received, we decided to bring the trio back and offer the training again in the fall.

NYSCA offered a variety of other trainings including both basic and advanced TF-CBT training, NCAC’s Forensic Interviewing, Trial Preparation, Jury Selection, Responding to Disclosures, and part of wrapping up the year, Serving LGBTQIA+ Children and Families in the MDT Response.

## 44 STATEWIDE TRAINING OPPORTUNITIES OVER 1,200 PROFESSIONALS TRAINED

“By far the best LGBTQIA+ training I have ever attended, and I have attended dozens. I am continually trying to gain knowledge and perspective to better serve this population. This training was AMAZING!!” -SERVING LGBTQIA+ CHILDREN AND FAMILIES

“I truly enjoyed this training and the knowledge it afforded me. I was able to really absorb what I was hearing and discussing with others. I will definitely continue educating myself on the foundations this training afforded me.” -RACIAL 101 TRAINING

## PUBLIC POLICY

In 2021, NYSCA added **Child Poverty Reduction** to our Public Policy Platform. This represents a shift to include more upstream child abuse prevention and family-strengthening strategies in our advocacy. We know that abuse can tragically happen to any child and poverty does not cause abuse.

NYSCA partnered with several other child-oriented organizations to support the Child Poverty Reduction Act, which committed the state to cutting child poverty in half in ten years, with attention to racial equity. The Act establishes a Child Poverty Reduction Advisory Council to develop a plan to achieve this goal and directs the Advisory Council to evaluate policies proven to sharply cut child poverty. It passed the Legislature with broad support and was signed into law in December 2021 by Governor Hochul. NYSCA looks forward to seeing the Advisory Council come to fruition and to supporting advocacy campaigns designed to advance the child poverty reducing strategies identified.

For the past several years the **Crime Victims’ Fund**, which funds the crime victim’s grants through the Victims of Crime Act (VOCA), has been growing smaller and smaller. This means that the grants to states, including New York, have decreased and the Office of Victim Services funding for service providers has been in jeopardy. In 2021, the VOCA Fix to Sustain the Crime Victims Fund Act of 2021 (“the VOCA Fix Act”) was introduced and thanks in large part to tireless efforts by NYSCA members and our NYS Congressmembers, passed in the summer. Among other things, the VOCA-Fix creates sustainability by directing federal criminal settlements from non-prosecution and deferred prosecution agreements, currently deposited into the General Treasury, into the Crime Victims’ Fund.





## *Creating a Better Response Across New York State*

EMPOWERING COMMUNITIES | PROVIDING SUPPORT | RESTORING HOPE

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Backed by  
National Children's Alliance®  
Accredited Chapter



northeast regional  
children's advocacy center



Office of  
Victim Services



Office of Children  
and Family Services