



FY2024

Annual Impact *Report* Tennessee

Childhelp Tennessee Programs

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Where there's love, there's a way.

While the year brought many challenges, Childhelp remained committed to providing help, healing, and hope to every child who endured abuse or neglect in our region.



The year in review



EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR REPORT

Fiscal year 2024 has been a terrific year for Childhelp Tennessee. We saw tremendous growth in our programs and were able to serve more children and families in need.

Our Clinical Services program grew from providing more than 4,800 therapy hours to children in 2023 to more than 7,400 therapy hours. The exciting part about this is that we stayed true to our mission and provided every one of those therapy hours at no cost to our families. We implemented and grew our Speak Up Be Safe program and serve nearly 5,000 children in preschools, day cares, schools, and after-school programs across Knox County.

Our Relative Caregiver (RCG) program doubled in size in terms of staff, and area and children served — we now serve 16 counties in East TN. The program went from serving 214 youth last year to 447 in 2024.

Our Child Advocacy Center and Foster Care Services continue to be the foundation of the services we provide, and both programs serve as pillars of hope and provide high-quality care to the most vulnerable children. I am proud to report that we served more than 7,000 children this year, which is a 46% increase from last year — and our work isn't done.

We executed our growth plan and will continue to strategically grow, but this upcoming year our focus will be on ensuring our high-quality services are in place to serve the increased number of children and families. Growth without quality is just expansion, and our children and families deserve excellence in quality.

Our Foster Family Services and RCG program began implementing evidence-based models of care to enhance quality and better meet the varying and diverse needs of children. These programs will continue focusing on the model application and work towards completing the full model implementation in the upcoming year.

Childhelp Tennessee accomplished a lot this year and we could not have done it without our partners, supporters, donors, and board members. The amount of support Childhelp received has been overwhelming and is a blessing.

I want to express my gratitude to all who have supported Childhelp in any way this year and say THANK YOU for your dedicated support of the work we do. You are allowing us to provide HELP, HEALING and HOPE, and transforming the lives of the children in our community.

Kenneth Bender
Tennessee Executive Director



"The smartest thing we ever did was to dedicate this organization to God from its inception."

– Sara & Yvonne

7,036

Total children served in FY 2024

5

Total programs

3

East TN locations

TENNESSEE IMPACT

Programs

Ways helped

Impact

Child Advocacy Center

Child Protective Services

Forensic interviews conducted

1,148
495

CHILDREN SUFFERING
SEXUAL ABUSE
72%



KNOX COUNTY DATA
ON CHILDREN WHO
KNOW THEIR ABUSER
90%

Childhelp
Speak Up Be Safe

Research studies have found that Childhelp Speak Up Be Safe is statistically effective as a universal prevention program and suited for a diverse student body. It's used with confidence by schools, districts, advocacy centers, faith-based organizations, and other groups in the U.S. and more than a dozen other nations.



133

Locations SUBS
was taught



4,969

Children reached by
the program

CHILD ADVOCACY CENTER REPORT

2023-24 has been a year of growth for the Childhelp CAC staff. A CAC supervisor was recruited and trained and an additional forensic interviewer joined our staff. Childhelp staff has conducted 495 forensic interviews (FI) during this reporting period and the multi-disciplinary team processed 1,148 cases of suspected abuse and neglect. We continue to collaborate with our community partners to investigate, process, and refer these cases of abuse and neglect. We are continuously working with our partners, including the Department of Child Safety, county and city law enforcement, the juvenile justice system, and the Knox County District's Attorney's office, to ensure the victims of child abuse receive the services they need. Childhelp continues to provide a child-friendly, trauma-informed environment, and the forensic interview rooms are equipped with a state-of-the-art recording system to produce the highest quality of records for use during prosecution.

SPEAK UP BE SAFE REPORT

Childhelp Speak Up Be Safe program (SUBS) has seen incredible growth in Tennessee. This program reached more than 5,000 students with the message of speaking up and being safe. Childhelp partnered with 142 schools, daycares, and afterschool programs to reach these students. A second trainer was hired due to the number of requests for services and the interest in the program continues to grow. The curriculum has been updated this year and is an evidenced-based prevention curriculum that addresses students directly in an age-appropriate way, engaging and effectively helping children learn how to be safe.

MENTAL HEALTH REPORT

2023-24 has been a year of tremendous growth for the Childhelp Clinical Mental Health program. We have served 392 children this fiscal year and have expanded our staff of mental health clinicians to 10 therapists, who are all working toward certification in Eye Movement Desensitization and Reprocessing Therapy, Parent-Child Interaction Therapy, Trauma-Focused Cognitive Behavioral Therapy, or Trauma-Focused Play Therapy. All therapists maintain a caseload of 25-28 clients, resulting in more than 200 children being seen weekly. This increase in services is a result of the Development Team who work tirelessly to find diversified funding to support these therapists so we can meet the needs of our families. Childhelp has completed an expansion of the mental health clinic this year to include three locations to better meet the needs of our clients closer to the areas in which they live.

While we have been successful in achieving our goal of increasing services to children, there is a rise in the referrals of victims who are being traumatized and need therapy. We currently have a wait list of 86 children who need immediate trauma therapy. These victims deserve the opportunity to access services when they need them the most, at the time of disclosure.

VONDA MCGILL, LCSW

Director of Child Advocacy and Clinical Services



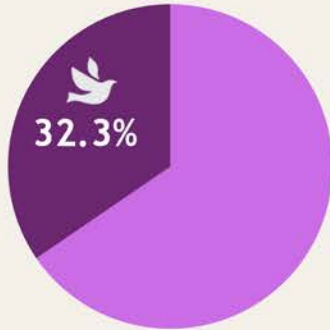
Programs

Ways helped

Impact

Relative Care Program

% OF TN KIDS IN
CHILDHELP RELATIVE
CARE VS OTHER
PROVIDERS



Families served

222
473

Children kept out of foster care

1.6% Needs Improvement
0.8% Dissatisfied
3% - Satisfied

CLIENT SURVEY
RESULTS



This program is grant funded by:



Mental health services



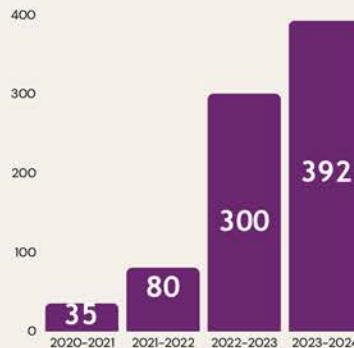
7,465

THERAPY
HOURS
PROVIDED

AVERAGE NUMBER OF
CHILDREN ON THE
WAITLIST

86

NUMBER OF CHILDREN
SERVED EACH YEAR



AVERAGE LENGTH
OF STAY FOR KIDS

10.9
MONTHS

Foster Family Services

Children served

81

Children adopted

12 Adoptions

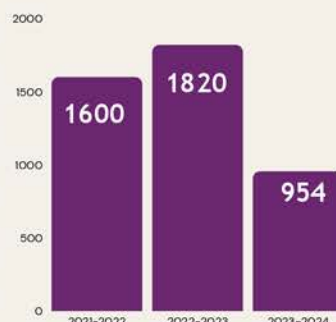
Children reunified

14 Reunifications

SUCCESSFUL
DISCHARGES



REFERRALS BY YEAR OF
KIDS NEEDING HOMES



LEARN HOW TO BECOME
A FOSTER FAMILY



RELATIVE CARE PROGRAM REPORT

Studies show that children who are placed with relatives when they can no longer stay with their parents typically do far better, and suffer fewer challenges, than children in nonfamilial foster homes. The Relative Caregiver Program aims to prevent children from entering state custody by providing resources to the family to help stabilize them. Last year Childhelp's Relative Caregiver Program served 222 families and kept 473 children from the East, Smoky, and Knox regions from entering state custody last year. In total, Childhelp's Relative Caregiver Program accounted for 32% of the children in Tennessee who are enrolled in a relative caregiver program. Client satisfaction surveys showed 94% of the caregivers in the program were extremely satisfied with the program.

In November, each family in the program was provided with Thanksgiving Dinner as part of the annual "Turkey Basket Brigade". Over 50 volunteers delivered meals to all the families in the program, covering 17 counties. Every child in the program was provided with a new winter coat in December as well as Christmas gifts during the annual "Hope for the Holidays" event. Caregivers also participated in monthly support group meetings in which they were able to come together to build their informal support networks and learn more about resources available to them. With a growing demand for services in the area, the Relative Caregiver Program has grown to a total 20 Care Coordinators with five of those Care Coordinators now operating out of our new Morristown Office which opened in June.

FOSTER CARE PROGRAM REPORT

When a child is removed from their home, they experience a great deal of trauma. Children in our care have typically experienced significant trauma that can affect their mental, physical and behavioral health with long-term and life-altering consequences. Our therapeutic approach to foster care has helped us address trauma but also help heal families. Last year our Foster Care Program served a total of 81 children. 97% of the children discharged from the program last year were either adopted or reunified with their birth family.

Childhelp's continuum of care allowed for children in the program to receive therapy through our Clinical Services free of charge with various modalities to address a wide range of needs. We attended various events in the community in efforts to recruit new foster families. In December each child in the program received Christmas gifts as part of our "Hope For the Holidays" event. From the date of placement to the discharge date, our Foster Care team makes sure the children in the program are safe from harm and the families we work with are supported to increase their likelihood for success.



LAWRENCE BUDGET
Senior Director, Programs

The challenges ahead

Mental health waitlist:

Over the last few years, Childhelp in Tennessee added eight additional therapists to meet the community's needs. As of July 1, 2024, the waitlist for children seeking help has grown to more than **80 children** — even with 230 children receiving services weekly. If you or your company would like to know how to help reduce the waitlist, please reach out to Eddie Smith at jsmith@childhelp.org today.



Community trends on abuse:

Drug-endangered infants and children are an increasing trend in Tennessee. According to the TBI, there were 42,581 allegations of drug-endangered children in Tennessee in 2022. During our last fiscal year, Knox County alone saw 496 cases of drug-endangered children. Children's Advocacy Centers of TN reported a total of 1,668 drug-endangered children in Tennessee in 2021.

We are also continuing to see an increase in "kid on kid" abuse due to the ever-increasing availability of cell phones and unrestricted use of the internet among young children

The last concerning trend that is continuing to rise is the increase in trafficking cases that are being brought to the Childhelp Child Advocacy Center for investigation. As awareness of this issue continues to improve, we see a corresponding increase in cases reported and investigated.

The need for volunteers

Throughout the year, Childhelp in Tennessee conducts events, community engagement activities, and workdays; all of which are helped by our volunteers. There are dozens of volunteer opportunities for you, your civic group, co-workers, churches or friends. If you would like to learn more about how you can share your time, please contact us at infoTN@childhelp.org.

Why Relative Care supports children and their families

Children who have been removed from the care of their parents can experience less disruption and stronger family ties than children in foster care placements. Caregivers in our program are at least 200% below the national poverty rate. In addition to lower incomes and limited access to resources and support, including financial assistance, financial hardships are all too common for many family members who have taken on caregiving responsibilities. While we assist families in the program to meet their basic needs through resource linkage and skill development, many of our families still face economic hardships. The rising cost of housing, food, and clothing often leaves many of our caregivers scrambling to make ends meet each month. Each family in the program is assigned their own care coordinator who assists the family through resource linkage and skill development to help the family meet the ultimate goal of stability to keep the children in the home.

The need for foster homes

Foster parents play a critical role in helping children heal. They show children stability and teach them life lessons and skills. Currently, the state of Tennessee has more than 8,000 children in foster care. As numbers continue to rise, the need for more foster homes is a major challenge. The shortage in foster homes has resulted in at times in children needing to sleep in DCS offices, hotels, or overcrowded foster homes which can be counterproductive to the development of any child. Foster parenting can be incredibly challenging and might be the most difficult "job" a person tackles — and the most rewarding. We provide a unique approach to childcare by implementing an evidence-based model with all of our foster parents and children, as well as providing the family with a care coordinator who visits the home at least twice per month for support.



Tennessee Finances

EXPENSES & DEDUCTIONS

Salaries and benefits	\$3,814,545.57
Direct assistance to families	\$1,438,445.66
Insurance	\$281,475.41
Rent	\$315,312.93
Utilities, telephone, internet	\$101,932.55
Travel for family care meetings	\$122,993.30
Fundraising expenses	\$112,081.04
Other operating expenses	\$680,746.52

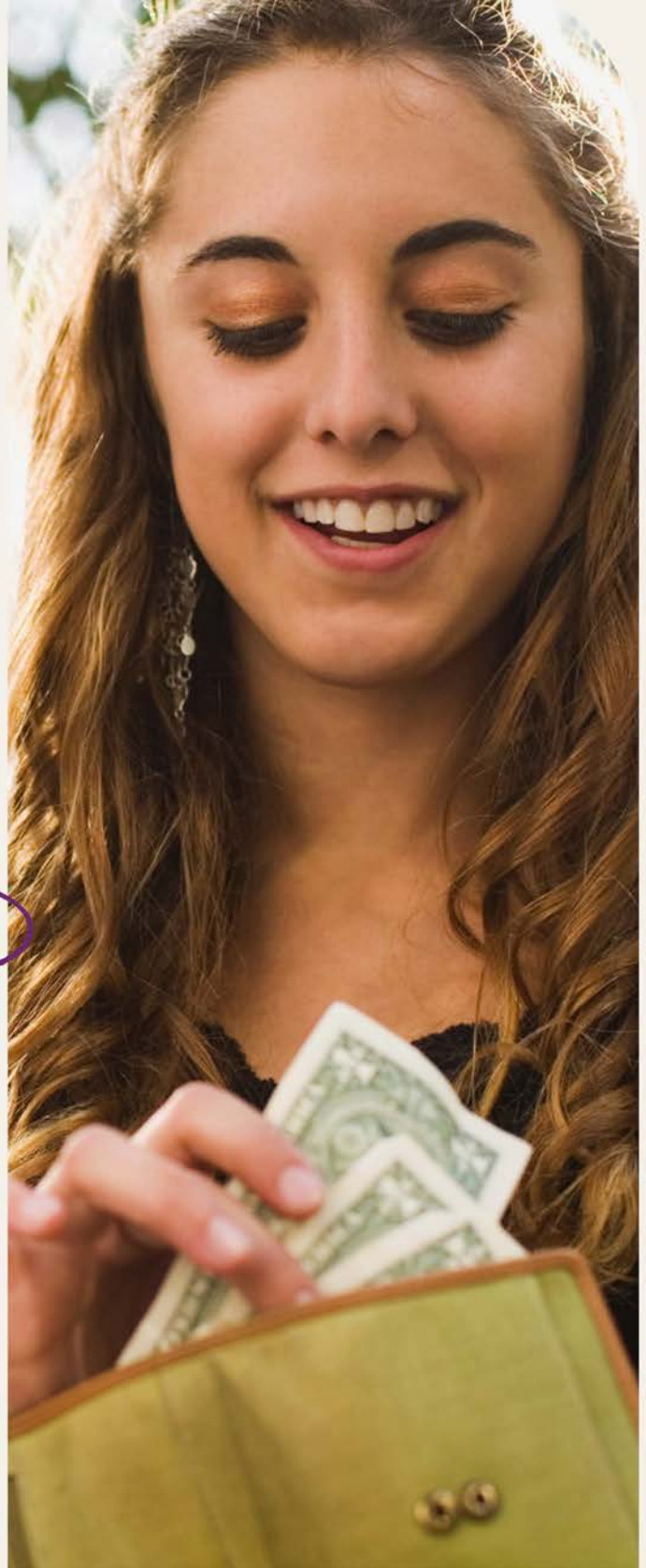
Total expenses

\$6,867,532.98

Dollar breakdown: From your hand to their hearts

At Childhelp, our financial overhead is low, particularly when compared with other direct human service organizations. We do all that we can to ensure the money goes directly to helping children of abuse and neglect.

For each dollar expended, **\$0.89 is invested into serving the children** needing our program services and only using **\$0.11 for administration**.



Funding summary

\$525,851

Fundraising &
donations

\$2,843,679

Government contract
funding

\$3,708,295

Public and
private grants

A note from our founders

I, Sara O'Meara, am extremely proud of the impact Childhelp has made in Tennessee — Knoxville being my hometown. I have seen the difference Childhelp has made to thousands upon thousands of children over the years. The organization has made a difference in saving and transforming lives that otherwise would not have been helped.

Childhelp has always been in the forefront in the movement to help abused children, with many firsts, such as our Childhelp Advocacy Centers, our 24/7 National Child Abuse Hotline with licensed counselors, and our evidence-based Childhelp Speak Up Be Safe prevention education program for grades pre-K–8. In recent years, we have led the way in Tennessee with our exemplary advocacy center and foster care program, and we are breaking ground with our Relative Caregiver program, setting a sterling example for the rest of the nation to follow. I could not be prouder of the magnificent work Childhelp has done to save children.

I, Yvonne Fedderson, though not born in Knoxville, was met with welcome arms by Sara's parents, family and friends since Sara and I became fast friends in our early 20's. I have felt like Knoxville is my second home since I was first surrounded by the love of her wonderful citizens. I, too, am so proud of the work Childhelp has done in the beautiful state of Tennessee through the years, and I would like to give a shoutout to our dedicated Tennessee staff who are doing such outstanding work and accomplishing so much for the children. I would like to thank all of our wonderful volunteers for their countless hours of service and contributions. We can honestly say that Childhelp would not be here without our volunteers. We love each and every one of you very much!

For the love of a child,



Sara O'Meara

Sarah O'Meara
CEO & Co-Founder

Yvonne Fedderson

Yvonne Fedderson
President & Co-Founder



We'd like to thank all our donors for their *generous support*

This work could not have been completed without the time, talent, and treasure of every donor listed here. Your sacrificial giving has ensured that we have been able to meet the needs of every child that entered our facility. You truly live out the famous quote from Dr. Suess, "A person's a person, no matter how small." Thank you for giving so sacrificially in this past year.


Eddie Smith

Director of Organizational Advancement



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Tennessee General Assembly and TN CAC
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Knox County Mayor and County Commission

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\$5,000 and up

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