

Maryland Children's Alliance: 2022 Annual Report



Maryland Children's Alliance

April 1, 2023

PURPOSE:

The purpose of this Annual Report is to reflect the establishment of Maryland Children's Alliance as the Statewide Organization for Child Advocacy Centers as required in Chapter 50 (HB 1007).

OBJECTIVES:

The objectives of this report are to reflect the training, technical assistance, data collection, and capacity building by Maryland Children's Alliance to meet local, state, and national requirements for its members, Maryland's child advocacy centers.

AUTHOR:

This report was authored by Wendy Myers, State Chapter Director, Meg Marcelli, Program Coordinator, Carly Brownstein, Program Information Coordinator, and Jamie Smith, Training Coordinator. The report was reviewed by the Board of Directors on March 30, 2023.

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MISSION STATEMENT

Maryland Children's Alliance (MCA) asserts that every child throughout Maryland should have access to the highest standards of trauma-informed care to promote healing and health through accredited child advocacy centers (CACs). Maryland Children's Alliance (MCA) is the accredited statewide chapter which serves as convener to Maryland's 24 CACs. MCA is dedicated to ensuring a network which supports and encourages continued learning, training, and professional development by member child advocacy centers' staff, multidisciplinary team members, organizational partners, and the public.

At the end of 2022, MCA distributed a survey to our members to collect information about their needs, values, and perceptions about MCA's role. Below are some of the results from the survey:

- 93% agree or strongly agree that training provided by MCA met the needs of their CAC staff
- 96% agree or strongly agree MCA enabled their CAC to serve children and families more effectively
- 96% agree or strongly agree that training by MCA is high quality
- 96% agree or strongly agree that MCA had the knowledge to effectively respond to their needs or connected them to someone with the right expertise
- 100% of the CACs feel valued by MCA



"I personally appreciate the availability of and communication from the MCA leadership and staff."

"MCA staff is always so friendly and quick to respond--much appreciated!"

"Thank you for all that you do everyday, it is very much appreciated!"

"MCA has become a resource for information and training"

"Wendy Myers visited my CAC and was very interested in learning what would help our mission. This personal visit was much appreciated."



April 1, 2023

Members, Stakeholders, and Donors:

I am proud to share with you the ***Maryland Children's Alliance: 2022 Annual Report*** reflecting the training, technical assistance, data collection, collaborative support, and capacity building by Maryland Children's Alliance for calendar year 2022.

In 2022, Maryland Child Advocacy Centers (CAC) served 5,665 children. Approximately 109 children walked into a Maryland CAC for the first time every week of the year last year. This number of children would fill 114 school buses.

We are on a mission to change this.

About 63% of the time, the CAC visit was the result of suspected child sexual abuse. Our CACs respond to all other types of child maltreatment such as physical abuse, sexual assault, child exploitation, witness to violence and child trafficking. When children experience trauma, the CAC team provides a circle of support to investigate the crime, protect the child from further victimization, provide advocacy, medical services and mental health services. This response occurs in all 24 jurisdictions in Maryland. Children from Western Maryland to Southern Maryland to Baltimore City to the Eastern Shore have a team in their community ready to help.

Our strategy is making a difference.

Maryland Children's Alliance (MCA) is the accredited statewide chapter which serves as convener of these 24 CACs. We help to ensure that every child has access to a team of experts which supports children every step of the way throughout the investigation, prosecution and on the path toward healing. Last year, MCA provided 433 hours of training to 326 Maryland child abuse professionals. We invested more than \$111,000 for professional training and more than \$75,000 on outreach and prevention. We invite you to read the enclosed report to discover how we supported our CACs and how our CACs supported the children in Maryland who needed them last year.

Sincerely,



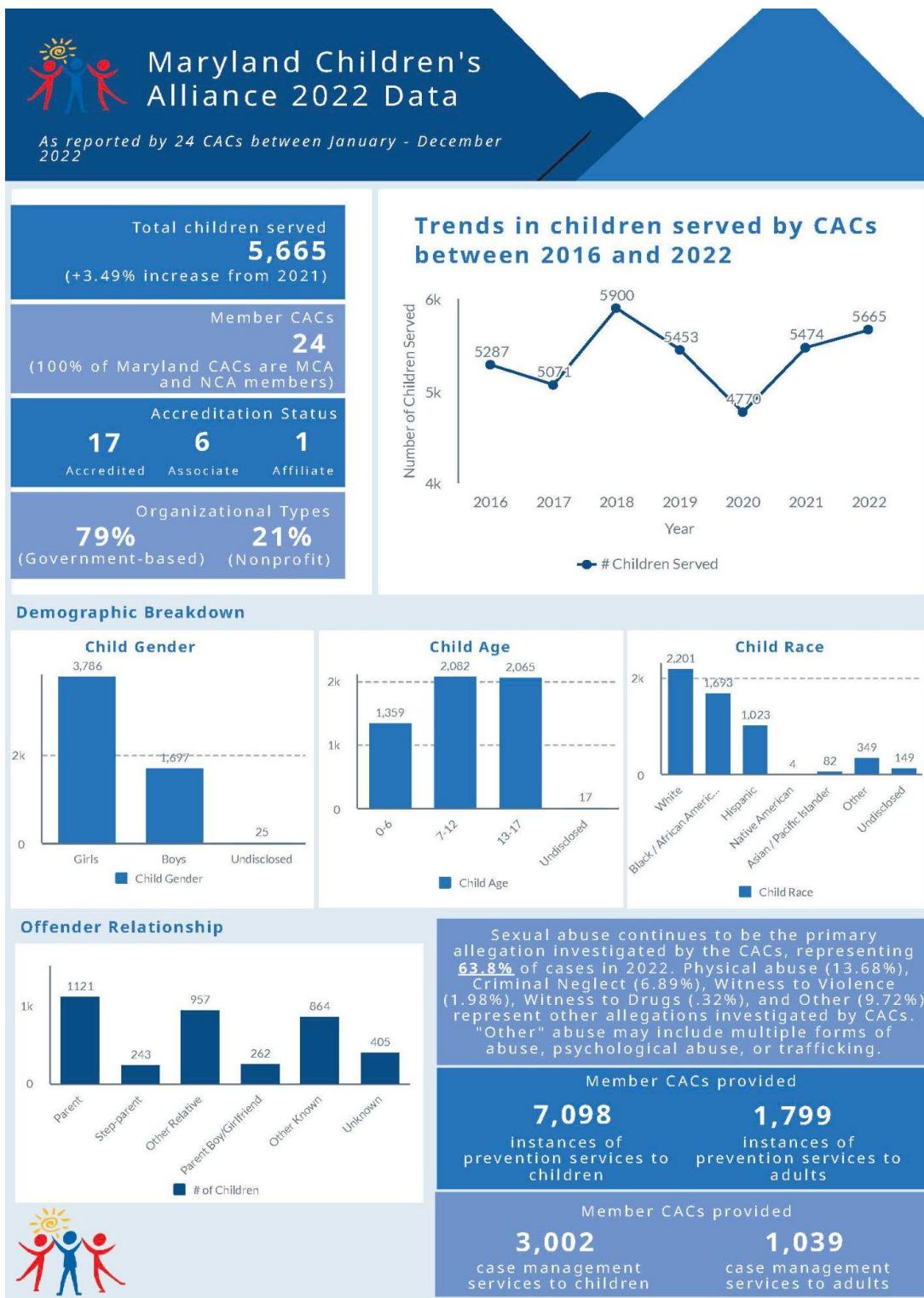
Wendy Myers

State Chapter Executive Director

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2022 CAC STATISTICS



2022 PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS



MCA'S BOARD ATTENDED THE MARYLAND HUMAN TRAFFICKING PROFESSIONALS SEMINAR: MCA is thrilled to have been able to resume some in-person training in 2022, including sending seven Maryland CAC leaders and MCA's Executive Director, Wendy Myers, to the Ocean City Maryland Human Trafficking Professionals Seminar October 16-19. These leaders attended the 4-day seminar where they learned about restoration and transformative justice, trafficking medical conditions, harm reduction, collaboration among service providers, and more. Pictured to the left are 5 members of MCA's Board

of Directors, including MCA Chapter Director (non-voting).

MCA PREPARED CACS FOR NEW NATIONAL CHILDREN'S ALLIANCE (NCA) STANDARDS: In 2022, National Children's Alliance announced that the 2023 Standards of Accreditation would include several changes to existing standards and three new optional standards (physical abuse, trafficking, and prevention). MCA provided two trainings, facilitated by NCA Consultant, Jan Lutz, which included an abbreviated overview of the standards

(1 hour at an MCA membership meeting) as well as a full-day (5 hour) training on the specifics of the new standards. The purpose of these trainings was to educate CAC leaders about how the changes to the standards of accreditation might impact the services provided by CACs, so that there are no gaps in care to children nor delays for CACs in their progress toward accreditation.

National Standards of Accreditation

for Children's Advocacy Centers

2023 EDITION



MARYLAND'S CACS AND MCA PARTICIPATE IN CHILD ABUSE PREVENTION MONTH: Many of Maryland's CACs and MCA hosted and attended events around the State to raise awareness and educate their communities about child abuse. Examples of events that took place throughout April are planting pinwheel gardens to represent the number of children who experienced abuse and community fun runs. Pictured to the left is the Dorchester County DSS team wearing blue for child abuse prevention month. Additionally, Governor Larry Hogan released a proclamation declaring April as Child Abuse Prevention Month in order to raise awareness across the state.



www.marylandchildrensalliance.org

MCA's Investment in our Members 2022



MCA funded
attendance for

17 trainings

3 conferences

MCA provided

433 hours of
training to

326 training
attendees

24 jurisdictions
represented

10 standards of
accreditation

Throughout 2022 MCA spent
\$111,712.57 on training,
conference registrations, and
supplies provided directly to
our members.

\$20,626.30 for conference
registrations

\$29,625.02 for supplies
and equipment

\$61,461.25 for training



PROGRAMMATIC DETAIL

Training & Technical Assistance

In 2022, MCA facilitated 17 trainings and paid for registrations for 3 conferences. Due to the ongoing public health concerns of the Covid-19 pandemic and travel restrictions, MCA trainings remained primarily virtual in 2022 with the exception of a handful of trainings that were facilitated by other organizers. These trainings covered a variety of topics related to NCA accreditation, best practices at CACs, membership networking, and skills training for specific CAC disciplines. Included as Appendix A are uptake reports that MCA completed at the end of 2022 to more closely examine the engagement in trainings across CACs in Maryland.

In order to ensure that Maryland Children's Alliance is meeting its members' training needs, MCA facilitates an annual membership survey, requesting members' feedback regarding their CAC needs. In doing this, MCA is evaluating each Maryland CAC's needs and providing training that is useful and relevant for the CACs. Based on the training needs identified in the surveys, MCA responded by offering the following trainings:

Standard 06

Mental Health

Mental Health Standard of Accreditation: On August 15-19, 2023, MCA utilized the professional services of contractor Stacy Stoddard, LCMFT, of the EMDR Training Institute, for a mental health training. Specifically, Stacy trained 18 mental health professionals in the evidence-based mental health modality, Eye Movement Desensitization and Reprocessing (EMDR) (Appendix B). EMDR is an extensively researched, effective psychotherapy method proven to help people recover from trauma and other distressing life experiences. EMDR is approved by NCA as a therapeutic modality for use at Child Advocacy Centers. The trainer utilized the approved EMDR facilitator method, but tailored the training to individuals who are working with children and families. There were 18 mental health practitioners at this training event, representing 14 Maryland jurisdictions.

Standard 04

Victim Support and Advocacy

Advanced Victim Advocacy Training: On August 18, 2022, MCA utilized the services of NCA Site Reviewer, Janet Fine, for a one-day Advanced Victim Advocacy training to provide specific skills training to Victim Advocates and to address the Victim Advocacy Standard of Accreditation. The agenda (Appendix C) included an exploration of role identity, leadership in advocacy and systemic change, and building individual and organizational resiliency. There were 10 Victim Advocates who attended this training in its entirety, representing 9 Maryland CAC jurisdictions. The evaluation results were positive; one participant wrote “Janet was very knowledgeable about the topics discussed and was so great at staying on top of the chat making for an even more engaging training experience.”

Standard 01

Multidisciplinary Team

Change Systems for Systems of Change: MCA partnered with the Southern Regional Child Advocacy Center in providing a training for CAC leaders and MDT Coordinators for developing healthy, resilient, and effective multidisciplinary teams. The 5.5 hour training agenda (Appendix D) included an introduction to systems thinking, developing an MDT leadership team, identifying barriers to effective MDTs, and a debrief. This training took place on October 4, 2022. There were 20 attendees, representing 14 Maryland CAC jurisdictions. The evaluation results were overwhelmingly positive, with many participants writing that they appreciated the space to share challenging experiences and hearing validation from other CAC leaders who have experienced similar challenges.

Forensic Interview

Forensic Interviewing: In 2022, MCA continued forensic interviewing programming to meet the needs of members. This year, MCA provided three five-day ChildFirst trainings for new forensic interviewers as well as two one-day Child First Refresher courses for interviewers or supervisors who took a ChildFirst course within the last 5 years who would benefit from a “refresher” of the methodology. These courses were facilitated by Zero Abuse Project. Additionally, MCA provided membership with three opportunities for a five-day Forensic Interview Toolbox (FIT) trainings facilitated by the Center for Hope in Baltimore City. FIT is another NCA-approved, evidence-based forensic interviewing protocol. Throughout the year, 107 Maryland CAC staff were trained in forensic interviewing techniques.

- March 2022 ChildFirst: 30 participants attended this training.
- April 2022 FIT: 8 participants attended this training.
- May 2022 ChildFirst: 26 participants attended this training.
- May 2022 ChildFirst Refresher: 10 participants attended this training.
- June 2022 FIT: 4 participants attended this training.
- July 2022 ChildFirst: 21 participants attended this training.
- September 2022 FIT: 5 participants attended this training.
- September 2022 ChildFirst Refresher: 3 participants attended this training.

In the upcoming year, MCA has filled the February 2023 ChildFirst class. In addition, based on the membership survey results analyzed in late 2022, MCA has expanded our forensic interviewing offerings to include an Advanced ChildFirst course for supervisors and MDT Coordinators. All ChildFirst classes will continue to be offered virtually by Rita Farrell, ChildFirst Director at Zero Abuse Project.

Other trainings and conferences not outlined above facilitated in 2022 (Appendix E) included the following:

- March 2022: Membership Meeting: Coalition Manager Program Management System
- March 2022: National Child Advocacy Center’s Symposium
- June 2022: Membership Meeting: An Intro to NCA’s 2023 Standards of Accreditation
- June 2022: National Children’s Alliance Leadership Conference
- July 2022: NCA 2023 Standards of Accreditation

- September 2022: Membership Meeting: Youth with Problematic Sexualized Behaviors
- October 2022: Medical Standard of Accreditation
- November 2022: Membership Meeting: Maryland Human Trafficking Programs

Universal Technical Assistance

Universal technical assistance is information provided to independent users through their own initiative, including one-time, invited or offered conference presentations. This category of technical assistance can also include information or products such as newsletters, guidebooks, or research syntheses, downloaded from the contractor’s website by independent users. Brief communications by staff with recipients either by telephone or email are also considered universal, general training and technical assistance.

Newsletters: During 2022, MCA published ten (10) newsletters that included a letter from the Chapter Director, MCA training opportunities, job openings, and important updates and news. In October, MCA transitioned from monthly newsletters to quarterly newsletters and “training blasts” in the months where there was no newsletter. The training blasts differ from the newsletter in that they contain only information about MCA’s upcoming trainings. Since last year’s annual report, MCA’s newsletter’s subscriber list has nearly doubled. The MCA newsletter recipient list includes 688 individuals who are a part of MCA’s network and our mailings have an average of 42.72% readership rate. MCA is proud of our readership rate as the average open rate in Mailchimp across all industries is 21.3% (Mailchimp Email Marketing Statistics and Benchmarks by Industry, 2022). MCA’s newsletter is a highly valuable resource in that it is a means of connecting MCA to the professionals who provide services to children and families. Examples of two MCA newsletters and one MCA Training Blast from April 2022, September 2022, and November 2022 can be found in Appendix F.



Coalition Manager: This year, MCA has been able to utilize Coalition Manager in new, exciting ways. What began as a trial pilot program to test the program management tracking software evolved into a full roll-out to all jurisdictions in Maryland. Coalition Manager is a program management software and database that allows MCA to facilitate



registrations for training, upload recordings of trainings for CACs to watch at their leisure, provide training evaluations and certificates, and track hours of training attended. In addition, MCA has added several additional modules to Coalition Manager, including the forum module, where CAC staff can collaborate and network with one another across the State. Additionally, MCA has opened the resource module where MCA has uploaded many educational resources, for CACs to access on their own time. Examples of these resources include: “Field Guide to Victim Advocacy,” Sample Medical and Mental Health linkage agreements, and a file for assessing Culture and Climate. These resources are included in Appendix G. Ultimately, the statewide rollout of this software has been tremendously successful.

Surveys: In a continuous commitment to learn from members and be guided by their mutual needs, MCA conducted several surveys throughout the year focused on ascertaining needs and concerns of Maryland’s CAC teams. Specifically, MCA facilitated a survey in May 2022 to CAC therapists to learn about what therapeutic modalities would be most beneficial for them to learn. This survey was tremendously helpful and led to a highly successful, week-long EMDR training. MCA also facilitated a membership needs and values survey in November 2022, requesting CAC input about their training needs and greatest challenges. This survey is instrumental in preparing for our next year of training, as we use data collected from CAC leaders to prioritize our training schedule. A summary of survey results are included in Appendix H. Finally, MCA distributed surveys after all of our trainings to obtain feedback about the agenda, facilitators, and how attendees may be able to use the information they learned to improve services to children and families in their jurisdiction.



Website: In 2022, MCA began a long-term project to update the MCA website. The goal of this project was to make the MCA website more accessible and educational for the general public, legislators, and community partners. Because of our move to Coalition Manager for CACs as described above, our goal was to transition the website into a platform for non-CAC stakeholders. Features of the website include the “Report Abuse” number, google translate widget to increase accessibility, and a “Safe Exit” button. Additionally, the website is integrated with Coalition Manager so that the public can search

for and access CACs publicly available contact information, download educational and prevention resources uploaded in Coalition Manager, and view MCA trainings. MCA launched our new website officially in February 2023.

Intensive Technical Assistance

Intensive technical assistance includes services often provided on-site and requiring a stable, ongoing relationship between the program staff and the technical assistance recipient to support increased recipient capacity of improved outcomes at one or more system levels.

Site Visits: In 2022, MCA resumed in-person site visits with CACs across the State. MCA's Chapter Director, Wendy Myers, conducted site visits with ten CACs across Maryland, including Carroll County, Frederick County, Dorchester County, Caroline County, Cecil County, Harford County, Worcester County, Somerset County, Wicomico, and Talbot County. These site visits were instrumental for MCA to maintain a positive, personal relationship with CAC staff. In addition, the site visits allow the Chapter Director to see first-hand the workings of the CAC and to gain a deeper understanding of each CAC's strengths and challenges.

Intensive TA with CAC Leaders (Virtual): In 2022, MCA leadership met with CAC leaders to discuss issues and provide solutions on an as-needed basis. Excluding the site visits described above, leadership from 12 different CACs participated in a total of 24.5 hours of intensive technical assistance with MCA's Chapter Director. Some examples of Intensive Technical Assistance includes discussing blending forensic interview modalities, attending board meetings, and attending site reviews. A full list of the intensive technical assistance is provided in Appendix I.

Accreditation Mentoring: MCA was able to continue our popular individualized accreditation mentoring program with NCA Site Reviewer Jan Lutz. All Child Advocacy Centers in Maryland had the opportunity to participate in one-on-one accreditation mentoring sessions with Lutz. In 2022, 8 CACs received this mentoring totaling 75.5 hours of intensive technical assistance. Examples of accreditation support topics include the accreditation standards, preparing for site visits, diversity, data collection, tele-services, and facility dogs. The full list of CACs who participated in this intensive technical assistance and the full list of topics discussed during mentoring sessions between Jan Lutz and CAC leaders is included in Appendix J.

Meetings with Community Partners: The Chapter Director participated in regular calls with partnering organizations in MCA's network. These calls include bi-weekly meetings with Southern Regional Child Advocacy Center (SRCAC), bi-weekly meetings with the Child Abuse Medical Professionals (CHAMP) program, monthly board meetings, and a bi-monthly Chapter Huddle meeting with National Children's Alliance. The Chapter Director was able to attend an in-person Chapter Summit in Huntsville, Alabama and an in-person Chapter meeting in Boston, Massachusetts, allowing the Director to meet and network with other statewide chapter leaders. By attending these meetings, the Chapter Director maintained the relationship between Maryland Children's Alliance and partnering organizations in Maryland also working to prevent and treat child abuse.

Professional Development Training

Members Meetings: MCA has provided multiple opportunities for CAC staff to participate in professional development through Membership Meetings in 2022. MCA hosted four Membership Meetings on March 16th, June 15th, September 21st, and November 16th. Each meeting consisted of CAC and Chapter updates as well as an hour of training on various topics.

March 2022: At the March Membership Meeting, Katie Reid, of Coalition Manager, presented to MCA Membership about the Coalition Manager Database System. Katie walked membership through the rollout; specifically, Katie explained the process for creating a login, registering for trainings, downloading certificates, and more. There were 26 members who attended the meeting, representing 20 Maryland jurisdictions. The meeting minutes are included in Appendix K.

June 2022: At the June Membership Meeting, NCA Site Reviewer, Jan Lutz, provided an abbreviated overview of NCA's 2023 Standards of Accreditation. During this 1-hour training, Jan discussed some of the changes to the standards of accreditation and the three optional standards that will go into effect. There were 26 attendees, representing 15 jurisdictions and MCA. The meeting minutes are included in Appendix L.

September 2022: At the September Membership Meeting, Baltimore County CAC leaders, Krista Trahan and Amanda Podbielski, presented on the topic of Youth with Problematic Sexualized Behaviors. This topic is a growing concern for CACs across the State. Krista and Amanda presented on Baltimore County's in-house mental health program to treat children who are experiencing problematic sexualized behaviors and addressed some of the specific membership concerns in this 1- hour training. There were 20 attendees, representing 16 jurisdictions and MCA. The meeting minutes are included in Appendix M.

November 2022: At the November Membership Meeting, Heather Amador of GOCOPYVS, presented on Maryland's Human Trafficking Programs. Heather spoke to MCA Membership about funding opportunities to address trafficking throughout the State, as well as resources available throughout the State to support and serve survivors of trafficking who come through Maryland CACs. There were 22 attendees at this training, representing 16 jurisdictions. The meeting minutes are included in Appendix N.

The professional development opportunities shared through MCA Members Meetings were well-attended and well-received. We observe that by making professional development the focus of the Members Meeting, in addition to CAC and Chapter updates, the environment is collaborative and congenial. In 2023, MCA has planned three virtual Members Meetings on March 15th, June 14th, and November 15th and one in-person Membership meeting in September at the Center for Hope building in Baltimore City. This in-person meeting will be the first gathering of MCA staff and CAC leadership for the first time since 2020.

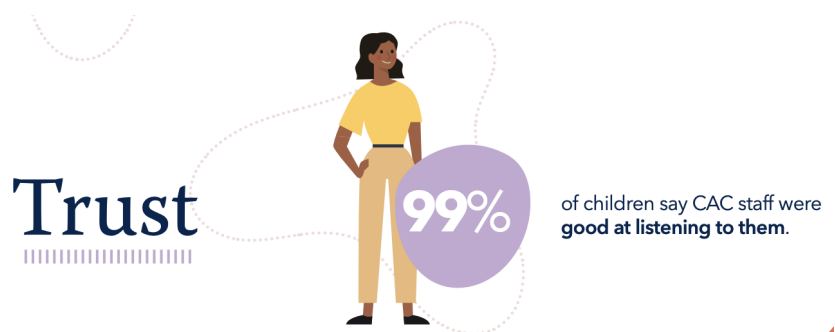
National and International Conferences: MCA is pleased to have been able to provide scholarships for Child Advocacy Center staff and leaders to attend three conferences in 2022 as a result of NCA grant funding. In March 2022, MCA paid for 6 CAC leadership and 4 MCA staff to attend the NCAC International Symposium. The Symposium was held virtually over four days between March 21st-24th. Participants attended sessions such as: “Innovative Approaches in Criminal Investigations,” “Introduction to the Role of Team Facilitator” and “Child Sex Trafficking: NCMEC Data, Response, and Resources.” In June 2022, MCA paid for 14 CAC leaders and 4 MCA staff members to attend the National Children’s Alliance Leadership Conference. The conference took place virtually over four days between June 5-8th. Participants attended sessions such as: “Healing as a Right for all Victims,” “Assessing Problematic Sexual Behavior Using a Comprehensive, Trauma-Informed Approach,” and “Trauma-Informed Practice and Assessment Within Children’s Advocacy Centers.” Finally, MCA sent six CAC leaders and 1 MCA staff member to the Ocean City Maryland Human Trafficking Professionals Seminar. Over the course of this four-day Seminar that took place between October 16-19, these leaders learned about restoration and transformative justice, trafficking medical conditions, harm reduction, collaboration among service providers, and more.



• Other Efforts:

Outcome Measurement System: This year, MCA recognized the statewide need for assistance in data collection from victims and families served at CACs. MCA recognizes that in order to evaluate the effectiveness of services provided at CACs, we need to hear from victims and families themselves. The Outcome Measurement System (OMS) was

developed in Texas in 2009 and is a tool for Child Advocacy Centers to measure their own effectiveness and performance by giving families a voice and identifying strengths and opportunities for growth. To help CACs in doing this, MCA provided each CAC with an iPad, specifically to be equipped with the OMS survey and positioned at the front desk of the CAC where children and families can complete the survey at the end of their visit. NCA published the national results from OMS surveys, which showed, among other measures, that 97% of caregivers believed that the CAC provided them with helpful resources and 99% of children reported that CAC staff were good at listening to them. The full report is available as Appendix O.



Encouraging Evidence-Based Mental Health Treatment: As described above, MCA facilitated a week-long Eye Movement Desensitization and Reprocessing (EMDR) training for mental health



professionals who serve Child Advocacy Center clients. At the end of this training, each participant was fully trained to begin providing treatment to child survivors of abuse. However, EMDR requires specific equipment to successfully administer treatment. MCA was able to provide each CAC with an Advanced Tac Kit (a \$280 value) that provides bi-lateral stimulation to the client as part of the treatment.

MCA's Site Visit: MCA was randomly selected by the National Children's Alliance (NCA) to participate in a site visit to ensure that MCA is meeting standards and responsibilities as set by NCA. The site visit took place over two days, October 21st-22nd. Following the site visit, MCA was provided with a "Monitoring Review Technical Assistance & Compliance Report" (Appendix P) from NCA with key takeaways from the visit. The report summarized MCA's strengths, including that MCA has well-documented policies and procedures, the strong backgrounds, attitude, passion, and enthusiasm of MCA staff, and MCA's meticulous documentation and ability to meet deadlines. The report also summarized items on which MCA has room for growth, including updating policies regarding remote work, digital storage, and e-verify, as well as developing a Signatory Authority Policy. NCA identified no findings of non-compliance during the visit and no items for follow up.

Social Media: MCA expanded its social media presence this year. At the end of 2021, MCA was utilizing only a Facebook page as a way to share information, training opportunities, and news relevant to their work with CACs and the community. This year, with the help of a professional marketing consultant, MCA expanded our social media presence to include Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, and LinkedIn. In fact, in addition to gaining 156 followers on Instagram, 19 followers on Twitter, and 17 followers on LinkedIn in 2022, MCA's Facebook reach has increased by 127%. We hope to continue utilizing social media in 2023 in order to educate the public about the services and resources available at CACs. A social media report is available in Appendix P.

DATA COLLECTION

Maryland Children's Alliance and National Children's Alliance require members to submit two biannual reports. Data shared here reflects information shared by 24 of 24 centers for January through December 2022.

- **Number of Maryland CACs accredited:** As of January 2023, seventeen (17) child advocacy centers in Maryland are accredited through the National Children's Alliance (NCA). Seven (7) child advocacy centers in Maryland are associate members of NCA. All 24 CACS are members of MCA.
- **Total number of children served by CACs:** In 2022, Maryland CACs served 5,665 children. Maryland CACs provided services for 3,616 children who experienced sexual abuse, 733 children who experienced physical abuse, 369 children who experienced neglect, 106 children

who witnessed domestic violence, and 17 children who were exposed to drug use, and 521 children who experienced another abuse or multiple abuses.

- **Type of abuse:** Sexual abuse continues to be the primary allegation investigated and treated at child advocacy centers. In 2022, CACs saw 3,613 cases of child sexual abuse, representing 63.8% of children seen at CACs. CAC providers also saw children who experienced physical abuse (733), neglect (369), domestic violence (106), drug use (17), and other forms of abuse (521).
- **Total number of forensic interviews provided:** Maryland CAC staff provided 3,413 Forensic Interviews in 2022. 3,100 forensic interviews were provided on-site and 313 forensic interviews were conducted off-site. Forensic interviews were provided to 60.2% of children.
- **Number of case management services:** Throughout 2022, 3,002 children received case management throughout the state.
- **Number of children who received mental health treatment:** Throughout 2022, mental health treatment was provided to 1,602 children in the CAC itself. This figure represents 28.3% of children seen at CACs and a 7% increase from 2021. If children did not receive therapy directly from the CAC provider, they may have received a referral for therapy within the community.
- **Number of referrals:** Throughout 2022, Maryland CACs reported to have made referrals for 1,273 victims to receive services outside of the CAC.
- **Number of medical examinations conducted:** Throughout 2022, forensic nurse examiners and child abuse professionals at Maryland CACs conducted 653 medical exams. This figure represents 11.5% of children and a .9% increase from 2021.
- **Number of law enforcement charges:** CACs reported that law enforcement filed criminal charges against offenders in 492 cases throughout 2022.
- **Number of cases receiving prosecution:** CACs reported that prosecutors' offices accepted 365 cases for prosecution. 90 of these cases resulted in conviction, 115 resulted in a plea agreement, and 2 resulted in acquittal.
- **Number of prevention services:** CACs reported providing 7,098 instances of services with the goal of prevention. This may include flyers or educational information provided to children and families.

STANDARDS FOR ACCREDITATION

(annual reaffirmation)

On March 15, 2022, the Maryland Children's Alliance (MCA) Board of Directors moved to uphold the establishment of Standards for Child Advocacy Centers in the State that meet national accreditation standards for CACS and shall include:

- Multidisciplinary teams that include representation from law enforcement, prosecutors, child protective services
- Cultural competency and diversity
- Forensic interviews that are neutral, fact-finding, and avoid duplicative interviewing
- Victim support and advocacy for children and caregivers, including appropriate counseling, legal, and medical services or referrals
- Medical evaluations
- Mental health services
- A formal case review process
- A case tracking, monitoring, and outcomes process
- Organizational capacity
- Creating a child-focused setting that is comfortable, safe, and private
- Any additional necessary standards.

2022 BOARD OF DIRECTORS

President: Robin Grove, Child Advocacy of Frederick County, Frederick County

Vice President: Ericka Heavner, The Listening Place, Howard County

Treasurer: Caryl Ralph, Anne Arundel County CAC, Anne Arundel County

Secretary: Ruby Nelson, Prince George's County CAC, Prince George's County

Member at Large: Krista Trahan, Baltimore County CAC, Baltimore County

Member at Large: Cathy Meyers, Center for Children CAC, Charles County

Member at Large: Kerry Hannan, Center for Hope CAC, Baltimore City

State Chapter Director (non-voting): Wendy Myers, MCA

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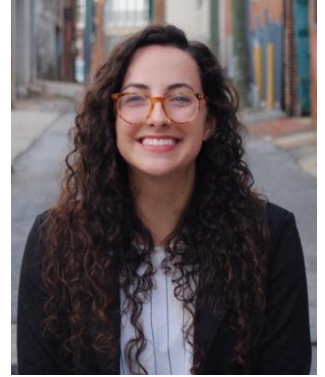
State Chapter Director (non-voting): Wendy Myers, MCA

2022 MCA STAFF



Wendy joined MCA as the Chapter Executive Director in January 2022. She is the founding director of The CRICKET Center, the CAC of Worcester County, Maryland where she worked for more than 15 years. She established herself as a leader in Maryland's CAC movement by serving on the Maryland Children's Alliance Board of Directors as member-at-large, vice president, and president. Wendy is the handler for Josiah, the CRICKET Center facility dog.

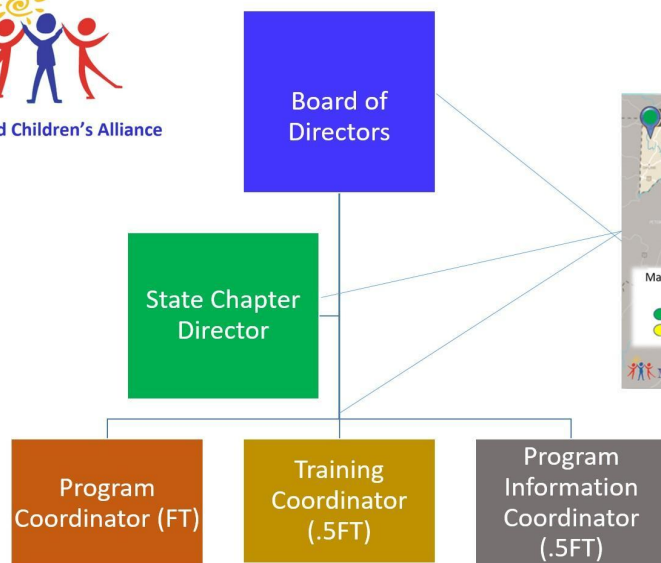
Meg joined MCA as the Program Coordinator in 2021. As a Licensed Clinical Social Worker (LCSW-C) and former Social Worker at Baltimore County CAC, Meg is well-versed in the field of childhood trauma and advocacy. Meg received her B.A. in Psychology and Environmental Studies from St. Mary's College of Maryland and her M.S.W from the University of Maryland, Baltimore.



Carly joined MCA in 2021. She ensures access to training and resources for CACs so they can provide quality care to the children and families they serve. Carly is currently working on her Masters of Arts in Criminology at the University of Maryland, College Park. She intends to use the knowledge and skills she acquires to enhance services to CACs and their local communities.

Jamie began working at Maryland Children's Alliance as the Training Coordinator in January of 2020. Prior to that she worked for Center for Hope (formally Baltimore Child Abuse Center) as the Missing Youth Coordinator. She holds her masters in social work and is a Licensed Clinical Social Worker (LCSW-C). Jamie volunteers for victim-serving organizations in her spare time.





CONCLUSION

Maryland Children's Alliance remains committed to partnering with Maryland's Child Advocacy Centers, the Governor's Office of Crime Prevention, Youth and Victim Services (GOCPYVS), and the National Children's Alliance (NCA) to provide best practice resources to our statewide network. With CACs located in each of Maryland's 24 jurisdictions, every child who experiences abuse in Maryland has access to dedicated professionals who are held to the highest standards for service provision. MCA will continue, in 2023 and beyond, to strengthen teams, train professionals, and support the work of Maryland child advocacy centers.