

njcoalition
against sexual assault

**ANNUAL
REPORT
2023**



A WORD FROM OUR TEAM

Dear friends,

The New Jersey Coalition Against Sexual Assault (NJCASA) is pleased to present our “2023 Annual Report” highlighting the strides we’ve made in cultivating community, forging stronger partnerships, and enhancing our responsiveness to the needs of the state’s sexual violence survivors and those who serve them.

Throughout the past year, we remained steadfast in our commitment to fostering compassion, empathy, and resilience. Through collaborative efforts with our member programs, government agencies, and dedicated advocates and allies throughout the state, we achieved important goals, such as conducting a hotline evaluation and our “Staff Experiences Study,” hosting our biannual Movement for a Safer NJ Walk, growing our Community Council, laying the groundwork for membership expansion, issuing our “COVID-19 Impact Report,” and launching a community-level primary prevention program with a health equity focus.

There is always more work to be done, and we look forward to 2024 as we continue on our path toward liberation, justice, and healing with dedicated supporters like you at our side.

With Thanks,

The NJCASA Team





PROMOTING RACIAL EQUITY

Eradicating racism and the myriad ways it's experienced by survivors and those most at risk for sexual violence is not only a part of our work – it is our work. A world without sexual violence will be achieved only when we upend the insidious systems of oppression that allow sexual assault and other forms of interpersonal violence to persist. In 2023, we continued our work with Sunflower Strategists, consultants

and facilitation experts committed to uprooting hierarchies and other harmful dynamics that perpetuate systemic inequities. With a focus on transformative justice, we began to think more deeply about how we can challenge barriers to justice and healing while promoting community-based alternatives that center the needs, values, and preferences of diverse survivors.

EXPANDING ACCESSIBILITY

We recognize that making programs and services more accessible is essential to serving more survivors, particularly since those most at risk for sexual violence often face the greatest obstacles to accessing care. With this in mind, NJCASA continued to promote accessibility practices in 2023 by launching a comprehensive accessibility audit of all internal practices and

procedures, from our physical space to our organizational practices. This project, supported by congressionally directed funding from Senator Cory Booker's office, will serve as a foundation for improving our programs and service delivery and is informed by the 10 Principles of Disability Justice, universal design, and other equity-based best practices.



SUPPORTING OUR STAFF



In 2023, Interim Co-directors Denise Rodriguez and Robert Baran were named the new co-directors of NJCASA and have committed themselves to embracing a culture of collaboration and transparency along with the full NJCASA team. In addition to enhancing self- and community-care practices and growing the staff, we moved to a new location: 400 Riverview Plaza, Suite 413, in Trenton, New Jersey. This space reflects NJCASA's organizational values of promoting comfort, inclusion, and opportunities for collaboration.



SUPPORTING OUR MEMBERSHIP

We recognize the vital role of service providers in supporting survivors and facilitating their journeys toward healing and justice. In 2023, the state's sexual violence programs served more than 25,000 survivors, representing an increase of over 15% from prepandemic figures.

OUR MEMBERSHIP:

- Answered over **12,350** hotline calls
- Offered **counseling services** to more than **10,340** survivors and their loved ones
- Responded to over **1,200 crisis accompaniments** to emergency rooms and police stations as part of county-based sexual assault response teams (**SART**)
- Fulfilled **1,385 outreach requests to approximately 21,840 individuals**, including many from underserved communities.



SUPPORTING OUR MEMBERSHIP CONT.

Supporting advocates is an essential part of our work. Beyond offering our members training, technical assistance, and empowerment opportunities, NJCASA focused on elevating their voices in 2023. We know we need to stop treating burnout as a given and “advocate for our advocates” to help keep them in this important work. By strengthening their capacity and resilience, we are ultimately better equipping them to meet the diverse needs of survivors. With this in mind, we partnered with the New Jersey Coalition to End Domestic Violence (NJCEDV) and contracted with Mathematica, a nationally recognized research and data analytics consultancy, to conduct a comprehensive statewide “Staff Experiences Study” that shed light on our colleagues’ needs. The study’s findings have enabled us to roll out a series of recommendations, including areas in which NJCASA can improve its efforts to support staff across the state to meet challenges like vicarious trauma and attrition. Additionally, we have remained fierce and vocal advocates of pay equity to ensure our colleagues are well compensated for their critical work.

In 2023, we collaborated with our 22 member programs to conduct a comprehensive 24-hour hotline evaluation assessing responsiveness to survivors’ call-ins for emergency services. As with the “Staff Experiences Study,” this process created an opportunity for NJCASA to better address the needs of our programs as they continue to improve service provision to ensure that each survivor who reaches out receives the best, most trauma-informed care possible. Also in 2023, NJCASA’s membership engagement specialist and leadership team “hit the road” as part of a summer and fall tour across 21 member programs. The conversations engendered by this tour were inspiring, informative, and a great way to connect with each program to learn more about challenges and successes, particularly in the aftermath of COVID-19.

EXPANDING PARTNERSHIPS

As a movement, we cannot rely on the very institutions and structures that have failed us and those we serve. While we continue working to improve these systems so that they become more responsive to survivors, particularly those with historically marginalized or minoritized identities, we are also partnering with more organizations making strides in offering holistic support and exploring alternative paths to healing through a range of modalities.

In 2023, for example, we continued our ongoing work with our Community Council, opened an application process for eligible programs to expand our membership, and hired a new community engagement specialist to help us extend our reach to statewide programs and organizations that share our commitment to uproot oppression and support those affected by sexual violence.



SECURING ADDITIONAL FUNDING

Given increased demand, inflation, attrition rates, and other factors impacting sexual violence services, in 2023, NJCASA advocated for additional state funding for these critical services, receiving a commitment for \$1 million more. With support from the Department of Children and Families (DCF), NJCASA also laid the groundwork for a new initiative that provides funding for

survivors of sexual violence across a range of needs, such as housing, legal services, transportation, and utilities. Finally, with support from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), NJCASA launched a new community-level rape prevention and education program (RPE), beginning with a statewide assessment of community readiness around primary prevention.



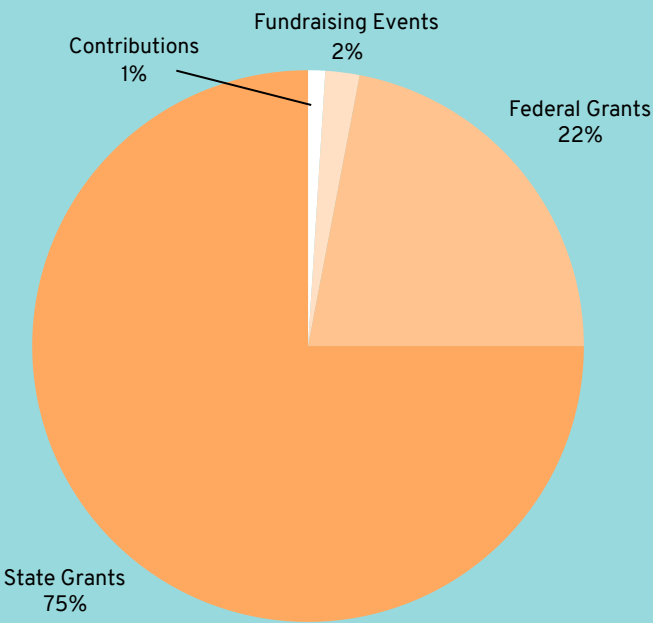
HOSTING SPECIAL EVENTS

In 2023, NJCASA hosted its second annual Movement for a Safer NJ Walk/Roll/Stroll, featuring art, music, yoga, and a 1.8-mile walk to honor the CDC's estimated 1.8 million survivors of contact sexual violence. Despite inclement weather, supporters turned up for a day of advocacy and camaraderie, allowing us to raise over \$40,000. The campaign had nearly 300 donors and participants, 21 sponsors, and 11 in-kind sponsors.

Additionally, we released our "COVID-19 Impact Report," conducted with generous support from congressionally directed funding from Senator Cory Booker's office. The project was completed in collaboration with our Community Council and featured a panel discussion and live Q&A. The full report can be accessed [here](#).

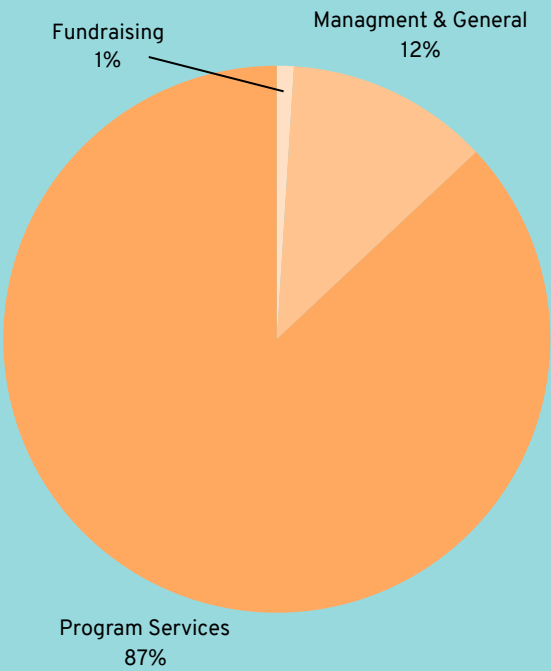


FINANCIAL HIGHLIGHTS



REVENUE & SUPPORTS

EXPENSES



NJCASA

YEAR 2023

THANK YOU TO OUR 2023 SUPPORTERS!

