

THE ASK

We are requesting a total of **\$1,440,000 IN STATE FUNDING** to cover 18 full-time Child & Family Advocates (1 FTE per member organization). This equates to \$80,000 in state funding per site to fully fund 1 full-time position with a salary of approximately \$56,000 plus full benefits and funding to support a supervisory position. This funding is critical to support the needs of children who experience or witness violence in their homes, including those who have experienced increased exposure during the pandemic.

THE PROBLEM - LACK OF FUNDING & ONGOING IMPACT OF THE PANDEMIC

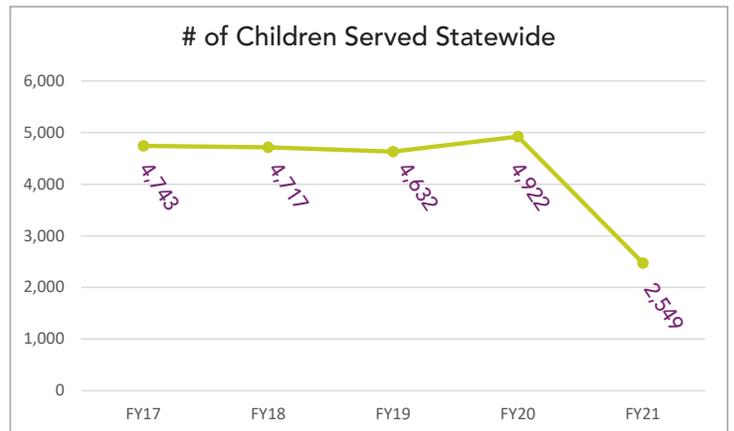
LACK OF FUNDING

- There is currently **NO STATE FUNDING PROVIDED IN CONNECTICUT FOR CHILD & FAMILY ADVOCATES** within the state's 18 local domestic violence organizations (CCADV's 18 member organizations).
- \$11,500 in federal pass-through funding provided by the Office of Policy and Management (OPM) covers approximately .26 FTE Child & Family Advocates at each of the 18 member organizations under the current salary structure.
- Over a 5 year period (FY17 - FY21) there was an average of 4,313 children served annually. Given that each member receives funding for a max .26 FTE Child & Family Advocate, existing funding allows these advocates to provide **2.26 HOURS OF SERVICE TO EACH CHILD PER YEAR.**
- Providing evidence- and strengths-based resiliency services for children and the non-offending parent (e.g. survivor) is paramount to the overall safety and stability of the family, but is not sustainable under the current funding structure.

ONGOING IMPACT OF THE PANDEMIC

The pandemic has caused fewer children to interact with a variety of systems intended to offer safety and support.

- Kids weren't physically present in school for an entire year, severely limiting the ability of teachers and other helping professionals to notice any irregularities in behavior attributable to experiencing or witnessing abuse at home.
- The isolation caused by the pandemic may have itself been used to explain irregularities noticed via online platforms, perhaps inadvertently missing other dynamics present in the home.
- The CT Dept. of Children and Families has reported substantially fewer referrals from educators over the past year.
- Social distancing guidelines caused several community programs within the state's domestic violence service system to go virtual for the bulk of the past year and a half, limiting access to some children who would have otherwise come into our offices for those services.
- Virtual learning and activities, including services provided by human services organizations like the state's 18 domestic violence organizations, are often less accessible to children with learning differences and traditionally underserved and underrepresented communities.
- The isolation of the pandemic has caused all children to miss some of the natural phases of social-emotional development, but this development is even more negatively impacted for children in homes experiencing domestic violence when they have no other outlet or safe place to go during the day.



For questions or additional information, please contact:

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Learn more at www.ctcadv.org

PROVIDING SUPPORT FOR FAMILIES EXPERIENCING TRAUMA

It is important that children who experience family violence in their home are provided a comprehensive and holistic approach that takes into account their different needs. Families benefit from services that incorporate a multi-faceted approach involving both large and small scale change. By working with the family unit, advocates gain greater insight into the level of violence experienced by all members of the family and can assist in the continuous development of age appropriate safety planning and trauma-informed services.

The Child & Family Advocate will support the non-offending parent in identifying protective factors that will enhance the relationship with the child(ren). Child advocacy builds protective factors in children through emotional wellness, conflict resolution, and identifying a network of strong social supports. The work of the Child & Family Advocate also entails building parental resilience and their ability to constructively cope with all types of challenges. While no one can eliminate stress from parenting, building parental resilience can positively affect how a parent interacts with her or his child(ren). The most effective interventions that help children are those that help their parents to increase their own safety and build on their own resiliency.

EVIDENCE-BASED SERVICES PROVIDED BY CCADV MEMBER ORGANIZATION CHILD & FAMILY ADVOCATES

Currently Child & Family Advocates utilize various trauma-informed, evidence-based, and resiliency-driven approaches to their work with children and families:

- Devereux Early Childhood Assessment (DECA)
- Mom’s Empowerment & Kid’s Club Curriculum
- Play, music and art therapy
- Child-specific responses to trauma & violence

ALLOCATE FUNDING TO SUPPORT CHILD & FAMILY ADVOCACY SERVICES

As we begin to come out of the pandemic, we are concerned that there will be a large influx of children presenting with significant need to various systems, including the domestic violence service system. We must be prepared to meet the needs of these most vulnerable victims. This includes reshaping our Child & Family Advocate program to address the multiple layers of need that we expect children to present with in the coming years.

Adequate state funding is needed to properly support a full-time Child & Family Advocate at each of the state’s 18 domestic violence organizations along with the appropriate on-site supervision. The funding must also ensure appropriate compensation that allows providers to attract and retain highly qualified staff to meet the complex needs of children experiencing domestic violence.

Providing dedicated state funding for this critical service will also allow the federal pass-through money available through OPM to fund needed statewide administration, training and technical assistance provided by CCADV. The combination of these local direct services and statewide administrative services will help to ensure a strong network that can step up to the challenges being faced by children across the state.

OUR MEMBERS

Our members, the state’s 18 domestic violence organizations, provide critical direct services to survivors across the state 24 hours per day, 7 days per week.

 ANSONIA/NEW HAVEN	 BRIDGEPORT	 DANBURY	 DAYVILLE/WILLIMANTIC	 ENFIELD	 GREENWICH	 HARTFORD	 MERIDEN
 MIDDLETOWN	 NEW BRITAIN	 NEW LONDON	 NORWALK/STAMFORD	 SHARON	 TORRINGTON	 WATERBURY	