

ANNUAL REPORT

Fiscal Years 2024 & 2025

July 2023–June 2025



Connections for Abused
Women *and their* Children
Rebuilding Lives, Renewing Hope.



Dear Friends, Supporters, and Community Partners,

We are pleased to present this combined annual report covering fiscal years 2024 and 2025 (7/1-6/30), a period that has been marked by organizational growth, meaningful leadership transition, and impactful responses to community needs at Connections for Abused Women and their Children (CAWC).

For this two-year span, we made the decision to combine our annual reporting to provide you with a comprehensive view of our evolving impact and the continuity of our mission during a time of immense change—for CAWC, our partners, and our city. As we transitioned leadership, with Hillary Douin stepping into the role of Executive Director, we remained steadfast in our commitment to serving survivors of domestic violence in our community and advocating for better protections when crucial legislation, like Karina's Law, was struggling to get passed.

The achievements highlighted in this report reflect the dedication of our entire team and the unwavering support of our community. We are proud to share that our impact has grown substantially across all program areas:

- **Shelter Services Expansion:** Our Greenhouse Shelter demonstrated remarkable growth, *increasing impact by 45% and providing over 5,000 additional nights of safe shelter* compared to the previous year. This expansion means that more survivors and their children found safety when they needed it most.
- **Legal Advocacy Excellence:** Our Legal Advocacy and After-Hours teams maintained an exceptional *93% success rate in securing emergency orders of protection for survivors, averaging 80 emergency orders filed each month*. This critical work provides survivors with the legal protections they need to begin rebuilding their lives in safety.
- **Sustained Community Impact:** Throughout both fiscal years, CAWC continued to *serve over 1,000 clients annually*, ensuring that our comprehensive services remained accessible to all who needed them.

These achievements represent more than statistics, they reflect lives saved, families protected, and survivors empowered. Each number tells a story of courage, hope, and the transformative power of comprehensive wrap-around services.

As we look toward the future, we remain committed to expanding our reach, enhancing our services, and strengthening our community partnerships. The work ahead is significant, but with your continued support and the dedication of our exceptional staff, we are confident in our ability to meet the growing needs of our community.

We invite you to read the full report to learn more about the programs, partnerships, and progress that define our work. Together, we are building a community where everyone can live free from violence.

With gratitude,



David Levine, MD
Board Chair



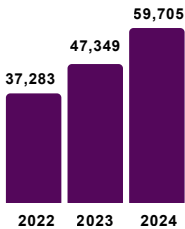
Hillary Douin, LCSW, CDVP
Executive Director



In Spring 2024, CAWC was announced as one of MacKenzie Scott’s Yield Giving awardees, **receiving \$1 million** to fortify our work in the domestic violence arena and enable women and children to achieve substantive improvement in their well-being.

Domestic violence is a pervasive epidemic, affecting countless adults and children across the world.

Domestic violence (DV) and intimate partner violence (IPV) are forms of relationship abuse identified by patterns of power and control perpetrated by one partner against another. This abuse can take many forms, including physical, emotional, psychological, sexual, financial, and digital violence. Additionally, DV and IPV are cyclical, often affecting individuals and families for years on end. Many times, individuals who have experienced abuse directly or indirectly as children will find themselves in abusive relationships later in life. **It is up to us to end the cycle and put a stop to the growing rates of violence.**



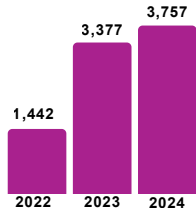
The number of requests the Illinois DV Hotline receives continues to **rise by 25%** year-over-year.



Illinois saw a **126%** increase in requests for crisis intervention in 2023 and an additional **60%** increase in 2024.

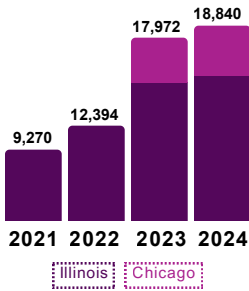


Legal advocacy was **the third most requested service** by survivors in 2023.



Shelter and housing support is essential.

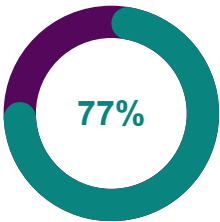
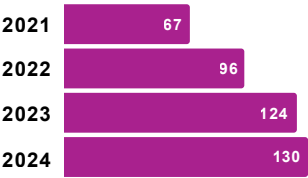
Requests for emergency shelter have seen a **record-breaking four-year trend** across the state of Illinois and city of Chicago.



There was a **45% increase** in requests for shelter in 2023. Chicago accounted for **36%** of Illinois' requests in 2023 and **34%** in 2024.



Chicago **cannot meet the need**. The number of days without a bed or crib available has been rising each year.



In 2024, Illinois received **2,325 requests for affordable or transitional housing**, a **77%** increase from 2023.

The Network: Advocating Against Domestic Violence, (2022). Measuring Safety: Gender-Based Violence in Illinois Data Report 2021. Chicago, IL.
The Network: Advocating Against Domestic Violence, (2024, May). Measuring Safety: Gender Based Violence in Illinois 2023, Volume 1 Illinois Domestic Violence Hotline. Chicago, IL.
The Network: Advocating Against Domestic Violence, (2025, June), Measuring Safety: Gender Based Violence in Illinois 2024, Illinois Domestic Violence Hotline Report. Chicago, IL.



Ronnica Anderson
*Greenhouse Lead Resource and
Information Advocate*

“Many survivors rely on the After-Hours Court Program. Sometimes their abusers work night shifts, so they cannot safely leave their homes to file for an order of protection during the daytime.

This program has enhanced survivor safety significantly simply by increasing the availability of resources and court hours.”

In September of 2022, CAWC partnered with the Circuit Court of Cook County to pilot and later launch the After-Hours Court Program, effectively increasing the city’s response to survivors’ requests for emergency court orders of protection by extending the court’s hours of operation and designating a primary hotline to walk survivors through the filing process.

Officially launched in August 2023, the program gained momentum and officially extended available court hours to weeknights and weekends, protecting survivors during crucial times. A year later, with the support of our secondary partner agency, The Network: Advocating Against Domestic Violence, CAWC helped survivors file almost 2,000 orders of protection.



This program **averaged 80 emergency orders** per month in 2025.

Advocacy in Action: Illinois Passes Karina’s Law

On July 3, 2023, Karina Gonzalez and her 15-year-old daughter, Daniela, were shot and killed by Karina’s husband when he violated an order of protection. But according to existing Illinois law, he should not have had access to a gun in the first place. This devastating loss underscored the gaps in our legal system, igniting agencies like CAWC and advocates across the state to band together and demand change.

Karina’s Law, effective May 2025, clearly closes the existing legislative gaps and defines procedures for law enforcement to remove firearms from individuals subject to a domestic violence protective order.

JULY 2023

Karina Gonzalez and her daughter Daniela are shot and killed by Karina’s ex-husband.

House Bill 4144 is named after Karina and her family. CAWC joins collective movement of advocates, non-profits, and legislators to begin sweeping campaign to pass Karina’s Bill.

AUGUST 2024

After-Hours Court Program helped file almost 2,000 emergency orders of protection.

FEBRUARY 2025

Karina’s Bill is officially signed into law.

AUGUST 2023

City of Chicago launches After-Hours Court Program in partnership with CAWC.

JUNE 2024

SCOTUS upholds federal law prohibiting individuals subject to domestic violence protective orders from possessing firearms in US vs. Rahimi court decision.

JANUARY 2025

Karina’s Bill is officially passed during the 103rd General Assembly.

MAY 2025

Karina’s Law goes into effect, ensuring better protections for survivors granted an order of protection.

Learn more about Karina’s Law and the intersection of domestic and gun violence at CAWC’s blog.



Our Mission

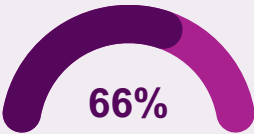
Connections for Abused Women and their Children (CAWC) is **committed to ending domestic violence**. Using a self-help, empowerment approach, we provide a shelter for adults and children, counseling, advocacy, and a 24-hour hotline for people affected by domestic violence. We work for social change through education, service collaboration, and institutional advocacy.

Our Services

All our services are free, confidential, trauma-informed, and client-led.



By providing **services at no cost**, we make **safety and independence possible** for those who have lost hope.



have no income source



live below the federal poverty level



CAWC served 1,334 adults and children in 2025, an 18% increase from the previous year.

Greenhouse Shelter

Houses around 30% of Chicago’s available domestic violence shelter beds and a 24/7 resource hotline. Survivors find both immediate sanctuary and comprehensive support for long-term healing here.



2,500

Average number of hotline calls every year



19,000+

nights of shelter were provided in FY 2025. This is a 6,000 night increase from FY 2024.

Legal Advocacy

Crucial legal support for survivors and their families, providing a lawyer and legal advocates to assist during orders of protection cases.



93%

Success rate of filed emergency orders of protection in FY 2025

Children’s Services

Individual and group counseling for children to address safety issues as well as negative impacts on emotional, psychological, and behavioral health.

98%

Children receiving services were able to identify **strategies to protect themselves** in a domestic violence situation. It was 97% in FY 2024.



13,300 children witnessed a domestic crime in 2024. We continue to learn about the impact as more incidents are reported.

Training & Education

Professional training and community education for industry advocates, businesses, organizations, schools, and other community professionals, to increase awareness and available resources for survivors.



70 high school students reached through presentations and workshops in FY 2024.



7,127

people reached through advocacy, professional trainings and educational offerings in FY 2024 and FY 2025.

Ramos, E., Youngerman, M., & Perlman, M. (2025, July 13). Children Harmed: The Children Left Behind and the Hidden Toll of Domestic Violence in Chicago. CBS News. <https://www.cbsnews.com/chicago/domestic-violence-children/#dv-resources-box>

Humboldt Park Outreach Program (HPOP)

364

survivors received counseling support and education in FY 2025, a **47% increase** from the previous year.

CAWC’s HPOP services are available on a walk-in or appointment basis, providing culturally sensitive, bilingual counseling and education to survivors and families in need.

Hospital Crisis Intervention Project (HCIP)

95%

Health care providers who reported an increased comfort level with routine IPV screening after receiving training.

Located at both John H. Stroger, Jr. and Northwestern Memorial Hospitals, advocates provide bedside assistance to patients experiencing DV and educate health care providers to identify abuse and provide support.

Domestic Violence Services at Haymarket Center

Targeting the intersection of domestic violence and substance use disorders, CAWC brings our transformative services to Haymarket Center to provide quality support in-house and train their staff to better support trauma from abuse.

FY 2024 and FY 2025 Impact



336

Domestic Violence Groups



2,688

Haymarket Residents

Volunteer



5,775 hours

*of volunteer service accomplished in
FY 2024–FY 2025.*

We’re looking for passionate, dedicated individuals or community groups to support our staff in providing services, cooking meals, and maintaining a prosperous work environment. Direct service volunteers, who perform tasks like answering hotline calls and assisting clients, require a 40-hour domestic violence training.

To get involved, email volunteer@cawc.org or call (773) 489-9081.
We would love for you to join our mission!

Donate

Donations reinforce CAWC’s transformative work in protecting survivors' lives and strengthening our communities. You can make meaningful contributions by donating funds online, through your donor advised fund, transferring appreciated securities, through your estate plan, and providing essential items.



 development@cawc.org

 (773) 489-9081

 www.cawc.org/donate

Attend an Event



Throughout the year, CAWC hosts outreach events to bring our community together and raise awareness toward the prevalence of domestic violence. You can join our staff, volunteers, board, and community members at awareness initiatives such as our **annual March & Rally** during Domestic Violence Awareness Month!

Stay in touch with the latest happenings at CAWC by signing up for our email communications and monthly newsletters at www.cawc.org/signup.



Follow CAWC on Social Media

 @CAWCChicago

 @cawc_chicago

 Connections for Abused Women and their Children



Every year, CAWC brings our most dedicated supporters together for Sounds of Silence (SOS), a premier fundraising gala and night they will never forget!

Sounds of Silence 2023

Champion Awardees

To celebrate and honor the hard work poured into CAWC and the mission to end domestic violence, we bestow a Champion Award to companies, foundations, or individuals who have put in **outstanding effort and service** to assist survivors of abuse.



Dennis Deer
Cook County Commissioner

For his extensive leadership in Illinois’ and Chicago’s domestic violence support and prevention systems. After his passing in June 2024, we continue to honor Dennis Deer’s joyful and courageous energy.



Natalie Martinez
NBC5 Reporter/Anchor

For being an influential voice for survivors of domestic violence through her unwavering compassion, sensitivity, and support on air.



Thank You to Our Sounds of Silence Sponsors

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NORDSTROM

vizient.

 Crowell



William Everett
Ujamaa Construction
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NBC5 Chicago
Ada Dolph
Kate & Dave Gosse
Margaret Jones & Mike Ferro
Sarah & Adam Krauszer
Reginald Patterson, Sr. &
Stephanie Love-Patterson
Gil Reid & Ryan Endress

The Wine Toss is a signature SOS activity! Attendees throw rings at a display of unique wines to win a bottle to share at home.



WEAVE Awardee

The WEAVE Award is an honor presented to an advocate who fortifies the mission to end domestic violence through remarkable achievement.

Traci Kurtzer, MD

Medical Director, Trauma Informed Care and Education for the Department of Obstetrics and Gynecology, Northwestern Medicine



For her relentless work in women’s issues education and awareness across Illinois and the nation, spanning from topics including domestic violence, trauma-informed care, human trafficking, and the intersection of gun violence and gender-based violence.

Champion Awardee



The Network: Advocating Against Domestic Violence

For their incredible leadership and sweeping advocacy across Illinois to successfully pass Karina’s Law, securing life-saving protections for survivors in our state.

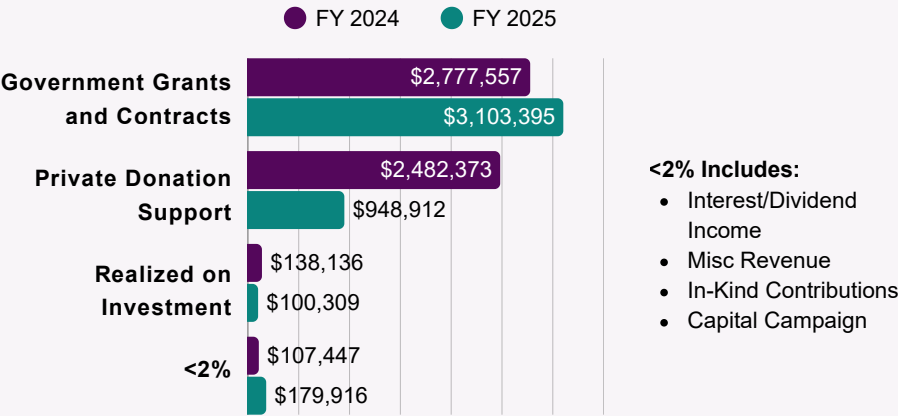
Thank You to Our Sounds of Silence Sponsors



- Margaret Jones & Mike Ferro
- Northern Trust
- Ada Dolph
- Kate & Dave Gosse
- Nurture Architects
- Gil Reid & Ryan Endress
- Seyfarth & Shaw

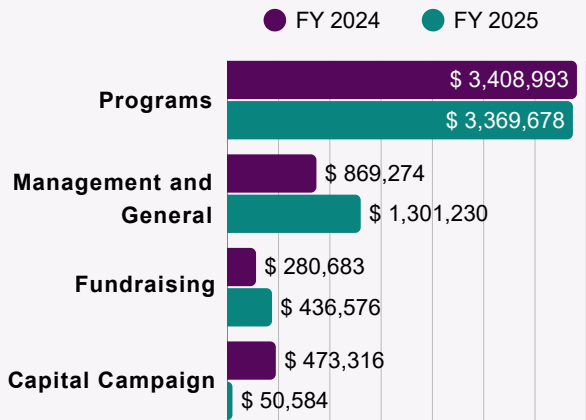


Revenue



Totals **\$5,505,513** **\$4,331,842**

Expenses



Totals **\$5,032,266** **\$5,271,988**

Our Donors Over \$250

Thank you to the individuals, families, foundations, and companies who made gifts in support of our mission. We are truly grateful for your support and help to make a meaningful difference in the lives of survivors.

Amy Abraham	Giorgio Bortolotto	Phil Caruso
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**A name in this color indicates that they made a donation of \$250+ during both FY 2024 and FY 2025.*

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This list is our best representation available of donor support over fiscal years 2024 and 2025 (July 2023-June 2025). If you do not see your name or notice an error, please reach out to us at development@cawc.org and we will remedy the digital copy of the report.

Thank you to the companies listed below for making matching gifts in support of our mission. We are truly grateful for their support and help to make a meaningful difference in the lives of many.

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- Hillary Douin, *Executive Director*
- Judi Golemba, *Development and Communications Director*
- Chana Harden, *Finance Director*
- Courtney Herrera, *Program Director*

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Leadership

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- Gianne James, *Treasurer*
- Virgil Reid, MD, *Secretary*

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- Betsy Covell
- April Hughes
- Margaret Jones
- Sherry Nordstrom, MD
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- Cordelia Pottinger-Walters
- Varun Vemula
Elected 7/2025

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- | | |
|--|--|
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<i>Served until 12/2024</i> | Sarah Krauszer
<i>Served until 1/2024</i> |
| Ada Dolph
<i>Served until 12/2024</i> | Gregory Leos
<i>Served until 6/2024</i> |
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<i>Served until 2/2024</i> | Ian Mayer-Marszalek
<i>Served until 11/2023</i> |
| Kate Gosse
<i>Served until 12/2024</i> | Michelle Robinson
<i>Served until 1/2024</i> |
| Linda Haynes
<i>Served until 5/2025</i> | Jasmine Shaw
<i>Served until 12/2023</i> |
| Carl Jenkins
<i>Served until 10/2025</i> | Charlotte Toerber
<i>Served until 2/2025</i> |
| Gretchen Kaplan
<i>Served until 2/2024</i> | |

Associate Board

- Shannon Casserly, *President*
- Maggie Alessi, *Vice President*
- Kali Newlen-Burden, *Events Chair*
- Cassie Bradley, *Membership Chair*



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