



**GOVERNOR'S OFFICE OF  
CRIME PREVENTION, YOUTH,  
AND VICTIM SERVICES**

**Child Advocacy Center Services FY 2022 Annual  
Report**

*Criminal Procedure Article, § 11-928(f); Senate Bill 748/Chapter 627, 2020*

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# Introduction

Chapter 453 of 2010 (House Bill 1043) required the Governor’s Office of Crime Prevention, Youth, and Victim Services (Office) to establish and sustain Child Advocacy Centers (CACs) in the State through the allocation of grant funding.<sup>1</sup> The Act also required the Office to submit a report to the General Assembly on or before January 1 of each year as it relates to the CACs.

Chapter 356 of 2011 (House Bill 739) amended the requirement of the Office to establish and sustain CACs from § 11-923(g) of the Criminal Procedure Article to § 11-923(h) of the Criminal Procedure Article.<sup>2</sup> Chapter 659 of 2017 (Senate Bill 734) provided no change to § 11-923(h) of the Criminal Procedure Article.<sup>3</sup> Chapters 51 and 50 of 2019 (Senate Bill 739/House Bill 1007) amended the requirement of the Office to establish and sustain CACs from § 11-923(h) of the Criminal Procedure Article to § 11-928(f) of the Criminal Procedure Article.<sup>4</sup>

Chapter 627 of 2020 (Senate Bill 748) repealed and reenacted, without amendments, § 11-928 of the Criminal Procedure Article to ensure that every child in the State has access to a CAC.<sup>5</sup> In addition, and in accordance with § 11-928(d) of the Criminal Procedure Article:

- (1) The Office shall contract with a nonprofit organization that is qualified under § 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code and represents urban, rural, and suburban CACs in the State to establish a Maryland Statewide Organization for CACs.
- (2) The purpose of the Maryland Statewide Organization for CACs is to provide training, technical assistance, data collection, and capacity building to meet local, State, and national requirements for CACs.
- (3) The Maryland Statewide Organization for CACs shall establish standards for CACs in the State that meet national accreditation standards for CACs and shall include:
  - (i) Multidisciplinary teams that include representation from law enforcement, prosecutors, child protective services, the medical and mental health fields, and victim advocacy;
  - (ii) Cultural competency and diversity;

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<sup>1</sup> Maryland General Assembly. (2010). *Chapter 453 of 2010 (House Bill 1043), Criminal Procedure - Child Advocacy Centers*. <https://mgaleg.maryland.gov/mgawebsite/Search/Legislation?target=/2010rs/billfile/hb1043.htm>

<sup>2</sup> Maryland General Assembly. (2011). *Chapter 356 of 2011 (House Bill 739), Sexual Assault Crisis Programs and Domestic Violence Programs - Transfer to the Governor's Office of Crime Prevention, Youth, and Victim Services*. [https://mgaleg.maryland.gov/2011rs/chapters\\_noln/Ch\\_356\\_hb0739T.pdf](https://mgaleg.maryland.gov/2011rs/chapters_noln/Ch_356_hb0739T.pdf)

<sup>3</sup> Maryland General Assembly. (2017). *Chapter 659 of 2017 (Senate Bill 734), Sexual Assault Victims Resources Act of 2017*. [https://mgaleg.maryland.gov/2017RS/chapters\\_noln/Ch\\_659\\_sb0734T.pdf](https://mgaleg.maryland.gov/2017RS/chapters_noln/Ch_659_sb0734T.pdf)

<sup>4</sup> Maryland General Assembly. (2019). *Chapters 51 and 50 of 2019 (Senate Bill 739/House Bill 1007), Child Advocacy Centers - Expansion*. [https://mgaleg.maryland.gov/2019RS/chapters\\_noln/Ch\\_51\\_sb0739T.pdf](https://mgaleg.maryland.gov/2019RS/chapters_noln/Ch_51_sb0739T.pdf)  
[https://mgaleg.maryland.gov/2019RS/chapters\\_noln/Ch\\_50\\_hb1007E.pdf](https://mgaleg.maryland.gov/2019RS/chapters_noln/Ch_50_hb1007E.pdf)

<sup>5</sup> Maryland General Assembly. (2020). *Chapter 627 of 2020 (Senate Bill 748), Annual Curative Bill*. [https://mgaleg.maryland.gov/2020RS/chapters\\_noln/Ch\\_627\\_sb0748T.pdf](https://mgaleg.maryland.gov/2020RS/chapters_noln/Ch_627_sb0748T.pdf)

- (iii) Forensic interviews that are neutral, fact-finding, and avoid duplicative interviewing;
- (iv) Victim support and advocacy for children and caregivers, including appropriate counseling, legal, and medical services or referrals;
- (v) Medical evaluations;
- (vi) Mental health services;
- (vii) A formal case review process;
- (viii) A case tracking, monitoring, and outcomes process;
- (ix) Organizational capacity;
- (x) Creating a child-focused setting that is comfortable, safe, and private; and
- (xi) Any additional necessary standards.

Furthermore, and in accordance with § 11-928(f) of the Criminal Procedure Article, the Office shall submit an annual report to the General Assembly by June 1 of each year, as it relates to CACs.

## **Child Advocacy Centers**

As a nationally recognized model, CACs provide a comprehensive, multidisciplinary, community response to child abuse and neglect. These centers coordinate the prevention, investigation, prosecution, and treatment of child abuse and neglect at the local level, and through a multidisciplinary team comprised of law enforcement, state's attorney's offices, child protective services, medical providers, mental health practitioners, and victim advocates. Research shows that children who receive services from a CAC are more likely to have:

- Access to medical evaluations and other forms of medical care;
- A referral to therapeutic services; and
- Greater access to community resources needed to help them recover.

CACs also help to reduce existing gaps in services and foster collaboration among partner agencies and stakeholders. Through a multidisciplinary team approach, the centers successfully coordinate investigative and intervention services to ensure children are not traumatized by the very system designed to protect them. In addition, these centers promote and provide specialized training for professionals, and extend efforts to promote public awareness and prevention. These efforts support the Office's objective to reduce victimization in Maryland's children by protecting them from abuse or neglect.

The CAC model is also effective at addressing Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs). A landmark study by the Centers for Disease Control and Kaiser Permanente revealed that, left unchecked, a high

number of ACEs can have a significant negative impact on an individual well into adulthood.<sup>6</sup> Access to specialized mental health services is critical for abused children and their families to move forward in the healing process. At the CAC, children and families are connected with counseling and other mental health resources.

## **Child Advocacy Center Services Grant Program**

In accordance with § 11-928(f) of the Criminal Procedure Article, this *Child Advocacy Center Services FY 2022 Annual Report* includes information on the Child Advocacy Center Services (CACS) grant program which helps to establish and sustain CACs in the State.<sup>7</sup> Through a formula agreed on by the Maryland Statewide Organization and the Office, this program makes funding available to law enforcement, child protective services, social workers, and all who work to protect Maryland's vulnerable child victims of crime and abuse.

The primary purpose of this program is to coordinate the investigation of child abuse and neglect and to provide services to children and their non-offending family members without causing further trauma. Funds are used to assist subrecipients in providing victim assistance, advocacy, support, and other coordinated justice system responses. Funds are also used to assist CACs become accredited by the National Children's Alliance (NCA).

Maryland currently has 24 CACs operating in 23 of its 24 jurisdictions. As of January 2023, 17 CACs in Maryland are accredited through the NCA, and seven are associate members of NCA. All 24 CACs are members of the Maryland Children's Alliance (MCA).

All CACs (accredited and those working towards accreditation) work with comprehensive multidisciplinary teams as a requirement for accreditation. Unique to Maryland, government entities oversee and administer most CACs and employ staff through these entities, including the local department of social services and local law enforcement entities. In order for a CAC to become accredited through the NCA, they must meet the criteria for the standards of accreditation, which fall under the following broader categories:

- Multidisciplinary Teams
- Cultural Competency and Diversity
- Forensic Interviews
- Victim Support and Advocacy
- Medical Evaluation
- Mental Health

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<sup>6</sup> Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. *About the CDC-Kaiser ACE Study*.

<https://www.cdc.gov/violenceprevention/aces/about.html>

<sup>7</sup> Governor's Office of Crime Prevention, Youth, and Victim Services. *Child Advocacy Center Services (CACS)*.

<http://goccp.maryland.gov/grants/programs/cacs/>

- Case Review
- Case Tracking
- Organizational Capacity
- Child-Focused Setting

In accordance with Md. Criminal Procedure § 11-928(d)(1), the Office entered into a Memorandum of Understanding with the MCA which will remain in effect through June 30, 2023. The Office anticipates continuing to work directly with the MCA to provide these necessary services. To that effect, a new Memorandum of Understanding is in the process of being executed.

In 2022, a total of 5,665 children were served by Maryland CACs, including 3,616 children who experienced sexual abuse, 733 children who experienced physical abuse, 369 children who experienced neglect, 106 children who witnessed domestic violence, 17 children who were exposed to drug use, and 521 children who experienced another abuse or multiple abuses (*as illustrated on the following page*).<sup>8</sup> In addition, 60.2% of the children served (n = 5,665) received a forensic interview— 3,100 received an on-site forensic interview and 313 received an off-site forensic interview. Of the 5,665 children, 11.5% (n = 653) received medical exams from forensic nurse examiners and child abuse professionals at Maryland CACs which represents a 0.9% increase from 2021.

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<sup>8</sup> Maryland Children's Alliance. (2023). *Maryland Children's Alliance: 2022 Annual Report*. <https://www.marylandchildrensalliance.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/04/2022-Draft-Annual-Report.pdf>

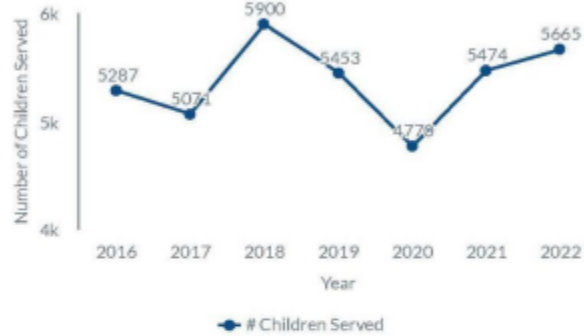


# Maryland Children's Alliance 2022 Data

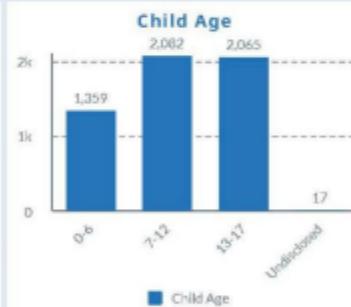
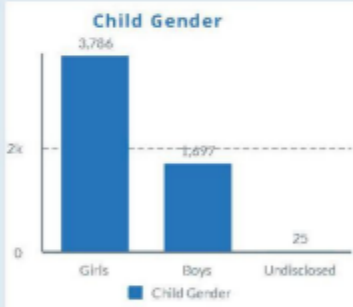
As reported by 24 CACs between January - December 2022

Total children served <b>5,665</b> (+3.49% increase from 2021)	
Member CACs <b>24</b> (100% of Maryland CACs are MCA and NCA members)	
Accreditation Status	
<b>17</b> Accredited	<b>6</b> Associate
<b>1</b> Affiliate	
Organizational Types	
<b>79%</b> (Government-based)	<b>21%</b> (Nonprofit)

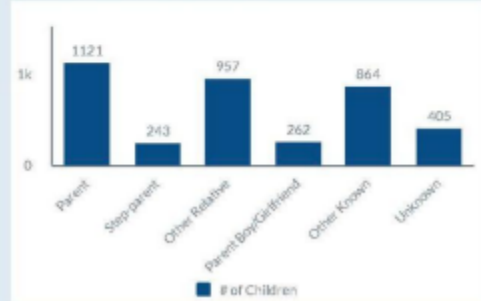
## Trends in children served by CACs between 2016 and 2022



## Demographic Breakdown



## Offender Relationship



Sexual abuse continues to be the primary allegation investigated by the CACs, representing **63.8%** of cases in 2022. Physical abuse (13.68%), Criminal Neglect (6.89%), Witness to Violence (1.98%), Witness to Drugs (.32%), and Other (9.72%) represent other allegations investigated by CACs. "Other" abuse may include multiple forms of abuse, psychological abuse, or trafficking.

Member CACs provided	Member CACs provided
<b>7,098</b> instances of prevention services to children	<b>1,799</b> instances of prevention services to adults

Member CACs provided	Member CACs provided
<b>3,002</b> case management services to children	<b>1,039</b> case management services to adults



MCA and Maryland CACs continue to serve children and families to the best of their abilities while adapting to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic. Part of MCA’s ongoing COVID-19 response is to accommodate staff who are vulnerable to the virus or those that became sick and could not work in an in-person setting. MCA adapted a hybrid workplace by providing staff an opportunity to obtain an “Owl Lab” - a 360-degree camera, mic, and speaker. This allows multidisciplinary teams to participate seamlessly in meetings with in-person and remote staff.

The majority (79%) of CACs are affiliated with a government organization, including the local department of human services, county government, the state’s attorney’s office, and local law enforcement agencies. The remaining 21% are nonprofit agencies. Sexual abuse continues to be the primary allegation investigated by CACs, representing 63.8% of cases.<sup>9</sup> Almost all CACs reported that they do not work with acute cases. In addition, most CACs stated that the medical examinations that occur through their center fall under the non-urgent category of the NCA Standards, which means that exams are scheduled at the convenience of the family and provider, and are typically performed within one to two weeks.

## Grant Awards

In FY 2022, the annual State budget provided \$300,000 in general funds for the CACS grant program. Through this program, the Office made funding available to accredited CACs or those seeking accreditation by the NCA. This funding supported a broad range of services, to include, but not limited to, the following:

- Counseling and psychological services for children who have been physically, sexually, and/or emotionally abused;
- Services to help child victims overcome trauma;
- Counseling and support for families of children who have been victimized and abused;
- Forensic and medical evaluations;
- Specialized equipment;
- Specialized personnel to include child protective service workers;
- Support for successful prosecution of all child abuse cases;
- Training; and
- Public outreach.

In FY 2022, 24 subrecipients received CACS program funds to continue to coordinate the investigation of child abuse and neglect, and to provide services to children and their non-offending family members without causing further trauma (*as illustrated below*).

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<sup>9</sup> Ibid.



Award Number	Award Amount	Implementing Organization	Jurisdiction	Project Summary
CACS-2022-0003	\$8,984.55	Anne Arundel County Department of Social Services	Anne Arundel	The program provided for the investigation of allegations of child sexual abuse/assault in collaboration with child protective services, law enforcement, state's attorney's office, and victim advocacy. It also provided forensic interviews for child sexual abuse/assault victims; crisis intervention services; forensic medical evaluations; and victim advocacy services. Program funds provided contractual services and other expenses.
CACS-2022-0019	\$12,500	Cecil County Department of Community Services	Cecil County	The program provided contracted medical services to child victims served through the Cecil County CAC. The Medical Provider performed direct services on-site to include examination, treatment, and consultation; and served as a member of the multidisciplinary team. Program funds provided membership fees, registration fees, and office furniture.
CACS-2022-0022	\$12,500	Center for Hope, Inc. (formerly The Baltimore Child Abuse Center, Inc.)	Baltimore City	The program assisted in developing and implementing strategies specifically intended to provide assistance to child sexual abuse victims and their families. The program supported the multidisciplinary response to child sexual abuse and maltreatment in the Baltimore region. Program funds provided personnel support.
CACS-2022-0020	\$12,500	Garrett County Department of Social Services	Garrett County	The program provided services to include a multidisciplinary system of care through a CAC which utilized various methods of treatment for individuals and groups as well as ancillary child and family support services. These services included child abuse investigation, forensic interviewing, medical services, and therapeutic services. Partners included representatives from the disciplines of child welfare, law enforcement, medical, and prosecution as well as multiple community partner agencies. Program funds supported operating expenses, contractual services, and other expenses.
CACS-2022-0007	\$12,412.89	Frederick County	Frederick County	The program assisted in developing and implementing strategies specifically intended to provide assistance to child maltreatment victims and their families in Frederick County. The program met national accreditation standards and worked closely with law enforcement, child protective services, medical, and prosecution partners to provide a child-focused approach and trauma-informed multidisciplinary team response to allegations of child maltreatment. This response helped reduce trauma to child victims, proactively addressed exposure to adverse childhood experiences (ACEs), expedited the sharing of information, and enhanced resources needed to support and protect the children and families of Frederick County. Project funds supported activities to maintain national accreditation standards through membership in the NCA, MCA, and American Professional Society on the Abuse of Children; enhance communication capabilities between CAC staff, multidisciplinary team partners and clients; provide mental health service provision options to CAC clients; manage case and client data; and provide interpreting services to Spanish speaking CAC clients.
CACS-2022-0006	\$9,300.50	Queen Anne's County Department of Social Services	Queen Anne's County	The program enhanced the team's expertise in investigating, prosecuting, and treating cases of child sexual abuse, offering specialized, advanced level training in core concepts around child sexual abuse and the CAC model. Program funds provided travel and other expenses.
CACS-2022-0012	\$11,146.86	Howard County Police Department	Howard County	The program helped to ensure detectives assigned to the CAC have the training and equipment necessary to conduct efficient and thorough child fatality investigations in Howard County and helped maintain a comfortable and child-friendly environment within the waiting areas of the advocacy center. The main functions of the

				program include: (1) to provide investigators with training specific to death/homicide investigations; (2) provide investigators with the tools necessary to respond to cases and perform vital investigative functions in the field, such as crime scene processing and documentation; and (3) improve the ability to offer a comfortable and child-friendly environment for clients visiting the CAC. This benefits the victims and families served by the CAC by ensuring detectives are building solid criminal cases against offenders in order to hold them accountable for the abuse they commit and preventing offenders from committing abuse against other children. Program funds provided training, travel, crime scene processing supplies, and investigative equipment,
CACS-2022-0008	\$12,500	Harford County Child Advocacy Center	Harford County	The program improved public safety by supporting technological advancements, equipment enhancements, and updated training. The program improved the CAC's ability to investigate crimes and present evidence in court for child abuse and exploitation cases. Program funds provided travel and other expenses.
CACS-2022-0011	\$12,173.17	Kent County Department of Social Services	Kent County	The program provided comprehensive and direct services to child victims of sexual and/or severe physical abuse and to children who have witnessed violence. The program collaborated with an established multidisciplinary team, to include: local law enforcement, state's attorney's office, victim witness coordinator, family advocates, child protective services, forensic interviewers, and mental health and medical professionals. The approach to crisis intervention, investigations, medical referrals, mental health referrals, advocacy, and judiciary services operated from a continuum of care lens to reduce revictimization and aid in the healing process. Program funds supported personnel, professional training, and other service expenses.
CACS-2022-0010	\$12,500	Life Crisis Center, Inc.	Somerset County	The program assisted in developing and implementing strategies specifically intended to provide assistance to child sexual assault victims and their families throughout the Lower Shore, and ensured that the CAC model was followed. Program funds provided travel, contractual services, and other expenses.
CACS-2022-0014	\$11,287.32	Wicomico County Department of Social Services	Wicomico County	The CAC provides a safe, trauma-informed, child focused response to child abuse and neglect through assessment, investigation, prosecution, and treatment; and promoted public education and prevention. The CAC applies a nationally recognized best practice model to offer a multidisciplinary team approach representing child protective services, law enforcement, medical and mental health services, prosecution, and victim/family advocacy. The program provided services to child victims of physical and sexual abuse and neglect, and their non-offending parents/caregivers and families. Program funds provided operating, contractual, and other needed costs.
CACS-2022-0013	\$12,305.03	Talbot County Department of Social Services	Talbot County	The program assisted in developing and implementing strategies specifically intended to provide assistance to child sexual assault victims and their families in the Mid Shore Region of the Eastern Shore of Maryland. The primary purpose of this program is to coordinate the prevention, investigation, and prosecution of child abuse and neglect, and to aid in the treatment of the victims and their non-offending family members by providing best practice services. Program funds provided registration fees, travel, accreditation fees, membership fees, and contractual.
CACS-2022-0024	\$12,172.00	St. Mary's County Department of Social Services	St. Mary's County	The program helped to ensure that all child victims and their family members receive assistance through services that recognize their unique circumstances and needs. It also ensured that St. Mary's County CAC utilized best practices and followed national standards. In addition, the program provided ongoing, specialized training for

				members of the multidisciplinary team to ensure that child victims and their family members receive assistance provided by highly skilled professionals who utilize evidence-based practices. It also provided access to trauma-informed interventions for child victims and their families. Program funds provided contractual and other needed services.
CACS-2022-0005	\$12,499.00	Prince George's County Department of Social Services	Prince George's County	Program funds made certain that services that were previously put in place to collect client data continued to provide high quality recordings for law enforcement and state's attorneys to keep multidisciplinary team members abreast of best practices. It also ensured that children who allege sexual abuse or severe physical abuse received the opportunity to tell their experience and to be heard. Program funds utilized the NCATrak database to collect important data to ensure the proper recording of interviews with the iRecord maintenance agreement; and to ensure the use of best practices through professional development and peer reviews. Program funds provided contractual and other related needs.
CACS-2022-0009	\$12,484.82	Washington County Department of Social Services	Washington County	The program provided a child-friendly environment during collaborative investigations, therapeutic/medical interventions, and criminal prosecutions of child maltreatment. Program funds provided operating expenses, travel, and other expenses.
CACS-2022-0021	\$12,500	The Cricket Center, Inc.	Worcester County	The program assisted in developing and implementing strategies specifically intended to provide assistance to victims of child sexual assault and abuse in Worcester County. The program helped to reduce existing gaps in services and foster collaboration and cooperation among partnering agencies. This model provided a mechanism for the child victim and his/her family to be referred to additional mental health or trauma-based therapy expeditiously. Program funds provided family advocate salary support.
CACS-2022-0017	\$9,897.03	Calvert County Department of Social Services	Calvert County	The program provided a professional and child-friendly environment to lessen the traumatic impact to children during the course of an investigation of physical abuse, sexual abuse, serious neglect, and assessments of "at risk" youth. Program funds provided for operation expenses, equipment, and training.
CACS-2022-0018	\$12,500	Jane's Place, Inc.	Allegany County	The program assisted in developing and implementing strategies specifically intended to provide assistance to child sexual abuse/assault victims, severe physical abuse, and neglect victims and their families. The program provided forensic interviews, trauma assessments, trauma therapy, child advocacy services, access to medical exams, and referrals to community partners. Program funds covered a portion of the rent on the facilities where forensic interviews occurred, trauma therapy, and victim advocacy.
CACS-2022-0015	\$12,500	The Tree House Child Advocacy Center of Montgomery County MD Inc.	Montgomery County	The program provided child victims and their family members: crisis intervention and prevention; information and support during investigation, prosecution, and treatment; and guidance as cases move through the justice system. Program funds provided personnel support.
CACS-2022-0016	\$12,500	Caroline County Department of Social Services	Caroline County	The program supported training for the multidisciplinary team and CAC staff to attend specialized training for CAC Leadership and specialized child abuse training for the multidisciplinary team. Program funds supported travel, contractual services, and other expenses.
CACS-2022-0004	\$12,500	Carroll County Sheriff's Office	Carroll County	The program provided a friendly environment committed to reducing trauma as it investigates allegations of sexual and physical abuse and sexual assault, assesses and protects the victim, and provides resources for the victim. Program funds supported travel and other expenses.

CACS-2022-0001	\$12,500	Center for Children, Inc.	Charles County	The program provided multidisciplinary child abuse investigation, prosecution, and treatment, as well as training and support to allow the CAC to retain accreditation with the NCA and foster collaboration among inter-agency team members. Program funds provided salary support, travel, and other expenses.
CACS-2022-0002	\$12,500	Baltimore County	Baltimore County	The program provided advanced educational opportunities to CAC personnel in the investigation of crimes against children, victim advocacy services, and mental health treatment to victims of crime. Program funds provided travel and other expenses.
2021-CH-0002	\$12,500.00	Maryland Children's Alliance	Maryland Children's Alliance	The program supported the agency's next vital steps to develop and implement strategies specifically intended to strengthen the response to child victims of crime in Maryland through professional development, training, and technical assistance to member CACs and their multidisciplinary team partners. With all 24 jurisdictions in Maryland now members of MCA, it was imperative that MCA continued to strengthen the training and technical assistance provided to CACs and their multidisciplinary team members. Program funds supported personnel.
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$286,980.47</b>			

Through the CACS grant program, awarded funds were used to build upon existing efforts to coordinate the investigation of child abuse and neglect, and to provide services to children and their non-offending family members without causing further trauma. In addition, and based on the quarterly submission of performance measure data, awarded subrecipients reported the following outcomes in FY 2022 (July 1, 2021 - June 30, 2022):

- 5,665 victims served
- 3,613 investigations
- 365 prosecutions
- 90 convictions
- 433 training hours

## Conclusion

The Office will continue to support the prevention and mitigation of ACEs through the CACS grant program. Program funds will continue to be used to assist subrecipients in providing victim assistance, advocacy, support, and other coordinated justice system responses throughout Maryland.