



**njcoalition**  
against sexual assault

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**ANNUAL REPORT  
2021**

## Dear Friends,

2021 was a year of transformation for the New Jersey Coalition Against Sexual Assault (NJCASA). It marked our 40th Anniversary and afforded opportunities for deep reflection and growth. The NJCASA team spent months working with a broad range of stakeholders and organizational leadership experts to learn new ways of approaching our work and to gain deeper insights about our impact.

During this time, we delved into how to do this work better and with increased accountability and commitment—particularly to survivors from marginalized communities who often face the greatest barriers to accessing services. We conducted a stakeholder survey with support from Mathematica—top data collection and analysis experts—updated our mission and vision statements, developed an anti-oppression training program with our partners at Sunflower Strategists, expanded our work with a cohort of culturally specific partners, and ended the year with a three-day free virtual conference centering the needs of marginalized communities and expanding our vision for what it means to be a leader in this space and at this time.

Along with our colleagues, partners, and a group of field experts from New Jersey and beyond, we used this time together to discuss the kinds of programs and services we need to offer survivors in our home state. We also examined approaches to upend racism and other forms of oppression that are the root cause of sexual violence. Together, these sessions were much more than a time for learning and self-reflecting; they served as a bold call to action, one that we're prepared to heed!

With renewed resolve and an unwavering commitment to those we serve, we're ready to embrace what 2022 will bring—a new executive director to lead our team, a growing staff to support our membership and other allies through provision of trainings and technical assistance, special programs and events to encourage our communities to come together and learn how to be better advocates, and much more. If 2021 was our year of transformation, then we know 2022 will be our year of new beginnings, and we are here to welcome each with open hearts, willing minds, and a spirit of care and respect for our communities!

We hope you'll join us in welcoming them too!

Yours,

**The Team at NJCASA**

## Envisioning a New Era for NJCASA

In 2021, board and staff at NJCASA collaborated to develop new mission and vision statements, along with a set of guiding principles. These actions were essential to laying a strong foundation for the work that commenced in 2021 around racial equity. NJCASA's new vision and mission statements and guiding principles are as follows:

### Our Vision

We envision a world free from all forms of oppression, where sexual violence does not exist, and the dignity of every person is valued and respected.

### Our Mission

NJCASA centers anti-oppression and anti-racist principles to eradicate sexual violence and support survivors and their loved ones by working collaboratively to promote equity, justice, and healing.

### Our Guiding Principles

- Uprooting Oppression
- Dismantling Racism
- Centering Survivors
- Promoting Healing



## Promoting Racial Equity

Our anti-oppression work commenced in 2021, first with a partnership with the Anti-Oppression Resource Training Alliance (AORTA), which provided a series of both guided and independent sessions to our staff and 21 county-based member programs, and later with the introduction of the Liberating Communities Collective, a project of Sunflower Strategists. Both of these consulting firms are experts in organizational leadership with a focus on anti-racism/anti-oppression principles to move organizations in a direction of greater equity. The sessions developed with Sunflower Strategists came about after months of meetings and research. The series created is intended to be shared with both NJCASA staff and our membership programs, as we continue to strive toward creating more equitable practices and services for survivors of marginalized communities across the state.

In addition to these trainings, NJCASA has supported work conducted by Tamu Lane, an anti-oppression and sexual violence expert who is working with our membership programs to create anti-racism plans. These plans were originally drafted and submitted for review in July of 2021 and are in the process of being updated. Creating an anti-racism plan is one important way that we can promote greater equity in our programs and beyond.

## Promoting Accessibility

As part of our commitment to building greater equity and reaching marginalized communities across the state, in 2021, NJCASA created the role of an Accessibility Specialist. The overall purpose of this position is to assist in providing quality services and function as a resource to New Jersey's 21 sexual violence service programs to ensure equitable access to program staff regarding training and organizational work culture, as well as to build program staff's capacity to serve survivors at the margins. The Accessibility Specialist assists with the planning and coordination of accommodations for NJCASA, such as alternative format accommodations (including, but not limited to, closed captioning, translation/transcreation services, and assistive technology accommodations), promotes programs and initiatives to sexual violence service programs and the community, provides ongoing technical assistance to program staff, and enforces NJCASA's compliance with the ADA.

Thus far, our increased focus on accessibility has enhanced practices among NJCASA's staff and our membership programs. For example, accessibility played a key role in our conference, including the provision of captioning, document transcreation, Sign Language interpretation, and Spanish interpretation. We have also continued a partnership with Mendoza Group, which provides high quality translation/transcreation services, and we have increased the number of documents translated/transcreated into Spanish that are now available on our website. Beyond our own use of this service, we are providing our membership and culturally specific partners the opportunity to have important resources transcreated into priority languages for their agencies. In 2022, we will continue to prioritize accessibility through the provision of TA and other guidance that can help reduce the serious barriers that some survivors face.





## Supporting Staff

NJCASA recognizes that we need to model the practices and approaches we encourage our partners to promote. This is why we are investing in building greater support for our own staff. We recognize that this work is both incredibly rewarding and challenging. We want to build a strong culture of self-care, collaboration, and collegiality. To facilitate, in 2021, NJCASA partnered with an external HR firm, Extensis, and hired an HR Specialist.

This role has been essential to making important updates that benefit staff, including: changing benefits policies to increase equity; working on updates and revisions to our employee manual; vetting job postings to review for equity; researching equitable PTO policies; and working closely with our external HR firm, to ensure our internal and external HR components remain in alignment. In addition, this role has provided critical support to staff during a time of organizational transition, as well as TA to our board regarding updated processes and HR guidelines.



## Supporting Communities

NJCASA continues to value our community allies and to partner with and support them whenever possible. In September, we partnered with Esperanza United to provide training on language access and, in October, with Just Detention International (JDI) to provide a training on meeting the needs of survivors who are incarcerated. In November, we provided a comprehensive training to the League of Municipalities at their annual conference in Atlantic City. Additionally, we held trainings for our allies at the New Jersey Coalition to End Domestic Violence, the National Association of Social Workers—New Jersey, and a cohort of culturally specific community-based organizations (named in section below).

At this time, we also launched a new [post exposure prophylaxis \(PEP\) awareness initiative](#), with support from the CVS Foundation. We know that, among the many concerns a survivor may have following a sexual assault, the fear of HIV infection is one that many share. This resource is intended to build awareness about the use of PEP after a sexual assault and answer common questions related to accessing and using the drug, as well as to connect service providers and survivors to other available resources. Community partners on this project included: Robert Wood Johnson Barnabas Health Community Health Center (Toms River), Ocean County Health Department, and the Visiting Nurses Association of New Jersey.



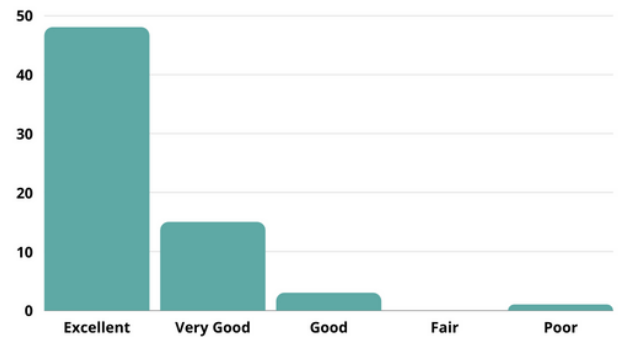
Finally, we closed out the year with a free, three-day virtual conference entitled **Centering the Margins**. This dynamic event was open to anyone who wanted to learn more about how to make services to survivors with marginalized identities safer and more accessible. The event featured a dynamic keynote address, a total of seven panels, and four workshops led by subject leaders and field experts across a series of topics related to serving survivors of sexual violence from marginalized communities. Reduced rate continuing education units (CEUs) were provided by the Rutgers School of Social Work for anyone interested. We are excited to share that the recordings of our Centering the Margins Conference can now be viewed on our [YouTube channel](#)— with English closed captioning, ASL interpretation, and Spanish subtitles available for all videos.



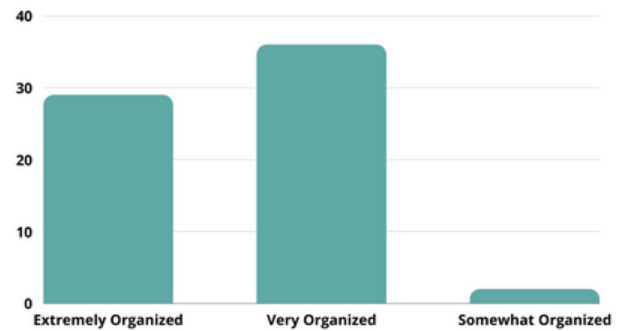
*Image of our "Building a Culturally Responsive Coalition" panel featuring Daunielle Munir (moderator), Gabriela Celeiro, Sonia Ron, and Cheyenne Garstad at Centering the Margins.*

## Attendee Survey Data

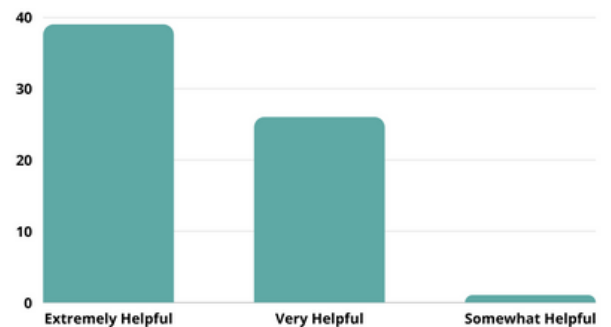
### Overall, how would you rate the event?



### How organized was the event?



### How helpful was the staff?



## Supporting Our County-Based Membership Programs

As the statewide advocacy and capacity building organization that represents New Jersey's 21 county-based sexual violence programs and the Rutgers University – New Brunswick Office of Violence Prevention and Victim Assistance, NJCASA is always looking for ways to increase support to our membership programs. In 2021, we adopted a membership-wide listserv policy to promote greater safety and collaboration for those who participate in our listservs and to create a baseline of community expectation for our members. Additionally, we re-introduced our membership newsletter to promote more visibility about our programs, services, and events. We also expanded channels of communication with a total of three listening sessions hosted by our Interim Executive Director, as well as facilitated conversations and anti-oppression learning sessions. Our monthly Prevention and Confidential Sexual Violence Advocate (CSVA) meetings also continued to offer colleagues from across the state opportunities for trainings and rich conversation about the issues impacting survivors and providers.

Our service delivery statistics track programmatic success among all our membership programs, including resiliencies demonstrated during the COVID-19 pandemic. This data informs our collaboration with the membership on an ongoing basis, and it underscores the impact of our collective work. In 2021, our programs served over 12,000 survivors and responded to the needs of these individuals as follows:



- Over 8,000 Hotline Calls
- Over 750 SART Activations
- Over 4,500 Counseling Sessions

## Supporting Culturally Specific Programs

In 2021, NJCASA had an opportunity to engage with a cohort of eight (later nine) culturally specific partners who received funding through the new Victim Expansion Fund: Community Affairs and Resource Center, Harambe Social Services, Hispanic Family Center of Southern New Jersey, Jewish Family Services, Legal Services of New Jersey, Manavi, Mercy Center, Partners for Women and Justice, and Wafa House. These organizations provide comprehensive services to at-risk populations across the state.



As part of this partnership, NJCASA conducted interviews with each organization and compiled a report about the importance of their work and the challenges they face as smaller community-based organizations. In addition to learning more about each partner and their important contributions to the field of sexual violence services in New Jersey, the goal of this undertaking was to promote more collaborative practices that would help build capacity, strengthen programs, and increase overall impact. Through this process, we identified a set of goals for ways that NJCASA can increase our support of each organization. These included: establishing a community council, promoting opportunities for cross training, creating opportunities for collaborative fundraising, and, ultimately, expanding our membership.

## Successful Policy Advocacy

In 2021, NJCASA continued to advocate for strong survivor-centered policies to help end sexual violence and provide comprehensive services to those impacted by it. On Monday, April 12th, 2021, Governor Murphy signed seven key pieces of legislation into law, representing significant strides in addressing the needs of sexual violence survivors across the Garden State:

- (S3070), which establishes a three-year “Sexual Violence Restorative Justice Pilot Program” in North, Central, and South Jersey to bring survivors and their abusers together to seek collective healing solutions outside the judicial system.
- (S3071), which requires police departments to provide a copy of the rape complaint and a form the victim could submit that makes corrections or additions. A county prosecutor’s office staffer will be named to help victims complete the forms.
- (S3072) which mandates that victims get an information packet explaining their rights, the law, the court process, and available counseling services. They would also get a phone number to call for updates on their case.
- (S3073) which requires county prosecutors to notify victims whether charges will be filed.
- (S3074), which mandates the attorney general to track sexual assault cases and issue an annual report with statistics on how many complaints were filed, prosecuted, or led to plea agreements.

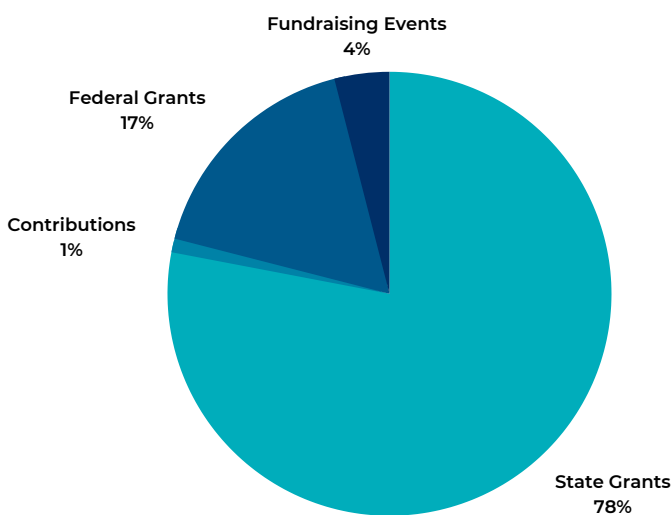
- (S3075) which obligates the State Police and local police departments to train sexual violence liaison officers to serve as the in-house experts and primary points of contact on sexual violence cases.
- (S3076) which requires county prosecutors and assistant prosecutors who handle sex crimes to undergo periodic training developed by experts in trauma-informed care. This codifies a directive State Attorney General Gurbir Grewal announced three years ago.

## Successful Budget Advocacy

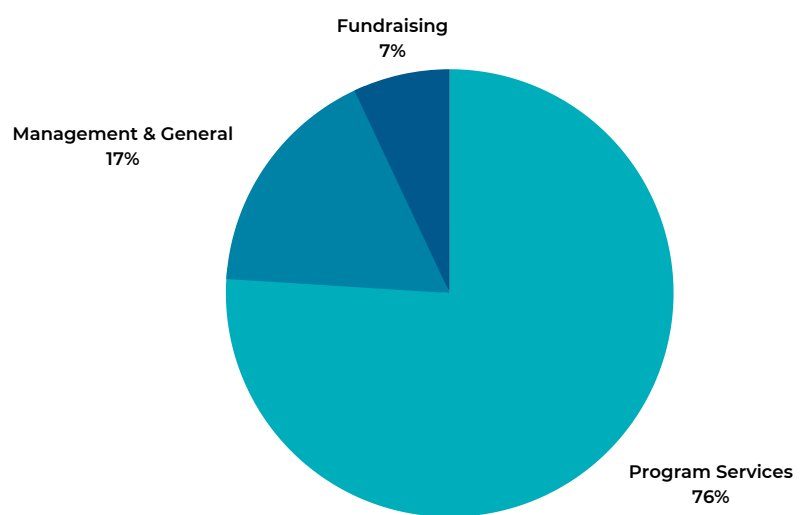
In 2021, NJCASA continued to advocate for robust funding on behalf of sexual violence service providers across New Jersey, particularly in the aftermath of COVID-19. As a result, the new state budget included \$12.6M for survivor services. This reappropriation of state monies signals that lawmakers in Trenton continue to prioritize funding for survivors and those who serve them. Additional funding means that NJCASA can continue to shore up service infrastructure across the state to build safer and stronger communities.

## Financial Highlights

### Revenues & Support



### Expenses



*Our work continues. Our vision lives on. And this year, like every year, we end by thanking all of our supporters for believing in us and for showing survivors across New Jersey that you care!*

# THANK YOU TO OUR 2021 SUPPORTERS!



Robert Wood Johnson Foundation



Planned Parenthood of Northern,  
Central, and Southern New Jersey



Horizon Blue Cross Blue Shield of New Jersey



Domestic Abuse  
& Sexual Assault  
Crisis Center  
of Warren County

