



ANNUAL REPORT

2020-2021



OUR MISSION: The Women's Center of Jacksonville improves the lives of women through advocacy, support and education and provides rape recovery services for individuals of all genders in Duval, Baker and Nassau Counties.



To Our Stakeholders:

In the past year, we've talked a great deal about resilience—not just for our clients, but also for the organization. Often people come to us in the midst of their greatest moments of crisis. It's the heart and mission of our entire team to empower every individual who walks through our doors to overcome their personal challenges and live their best lives, despite the trauma they have endured. However, it's their own courage to persevere and determination to fight back that allows them to leave us as survivors.

The work of the WCJ is to help guide them on this journey towards healing through advocacy, support and education.

Despite the practical difficulties of the ongoing coronavirus crisis, we have continued to work tirelessly to meet the increased demand for our life-saving services. This past year, we answered a record-breaking 4,064 calls to our crisis hotline and provided mental health counseling to 422 clients. In January 2022 we created a unique partnership and referral initiative with the Literacy

Alliance of Northeast Florida, allowing us to extend the reach and breadth of one of our most established educational programs, *Expanded Horizons*.

Looking to the year ahead, we are certain of two things – the challenges are likely not over, and more importantly, we remain committed to delivering our vital services to those who need us most.

This simply wouldn't be possible without the generosity of our valued donors and partners. Because of you, we're here 24-hours a day to help all survivors of sexual violence, providing mental health and educational services to women in need. We're so grateful for your continued involvement and support and are immensely proud of the hard work of our dedicated Board of Directors, volunteers and staff.

Thank you for investing in the WCJ. Together, we'll continue to improve the lives of women and their families as well as the at-large community.



Kellie-Ann Kelleher Smith

Kellie-Ann Kelleher Smith
Board President



Teresa G. Miles

Teresa G. Miles
Executive Director



“I don’t know how I survived without getting help for so long. I am beyond grateful for the help I was given through the Women’s Center. I am actually looking forward to building a healthy life. I would not have been able to have that outlook without getting the help I did.”

—WCJ client



Who We Are

OUR VISION:

A community with gender equity, where women are empowered and safe.

OUR VALUES:

- *Dignity:* We value women, take pride in their greatness, and honor their worth.
- *Integrity:* We have the courage to make ethical decisions, even when faced with difficult choices.
- *Balance:* We encourage women to make choices which bring harmony and balance to their lives.
- *Advocacy:* We work for and support social change that empowers women.
- *Respect:* We honor the collective wisdom of women and celebrate the feminine spirit.
- *Passion:* We are passionate about who we are and what we do.

Advocacy

If someone is affected by sexual assault, we're here for them. They aren't alone.

As the certified rape crisis center for Duval, Nassau and Baker Counties, the WCJ is here seven days a week, 24-hours a day for all survivors of sexual assault.

Our team of advocates provide full wrap-around care to survivors of sexual assault and their families. This includes crisis intervention and emotional support, advising survivors of their rights and options, and providing information, referrals and long-term follow-up care. Advocates also assist survivors, who have reported the assault to police, with navigating the criminal justice system — from helping them with filing affidavits and injunctions to court accompaniment.

Our Sexual Assault Nurse Examiners (SANE) provide free sexual assault forensic exams, including a head-to-toe medical check, with injury documentation and collection of physical evidence. This service is available to all survivors of sexual violence, ages 18 and older, within 120 hours of the assault, whether or not they report the crime to police.

The WCJ's rape recovery services are entirely based on empowering survivors to make the

decisions that are best for them. This could even include providing information and guidance to help them leave a violent environment. Many survivors of sexual assault choose to start over, so we can help with the next steps: obtaining new identification documents; helping with deposits for water, power and gas in a new home and even help with immediate support, like food and clothing.

The stigma our society has created around sexual assault has irresponsibly placed a feeling of shame and blame on survivors, instead of perpetrators. Because eight out of 10 survivors will know their attacker, this discourages many survivors from coming forward. Despite this, the need for our rape recovery services continues to grow with the 24-hour rape crisis hotline receiving a record number of calls during the year.

It's important that when a survivor does come forward, they feel safe and listened to. When appropriate, the rape recovery team works alongside of law enforcement, hospitals and other service-based professionals to make sure survivors receive a trauma-informed response.

All of our rape recovery services are provided, so people can leave the WCJ as a survivor when they may have come to us a sexual assault victim.



“My advocate helped me understand what assistance was available and gave me the space to think about what I wanted to do next.”

— *Advocacy client*

“Access to counseling that I can afford has been difficult to find, and I’m so thankful that the Women’s Center has made it possible for me to access mental health care. I find my sessions with my counselor very beneficial.”

— *Counseling client*



Support

WCJ’s team of counselors provide support for life’s many challenges and we help people find the answers that are best for them. This includes providing a trustworthy space to speak freely about their feelings and problems.

Our no cost trauma-informed therapy for all sexual assault survivors and their families means we acknowledge an individual’s trauma and the impact it can have on their mental health. It’s important we’re here when a survivor is ready—this could be in the immediate aftermath of an assault or it can be later in their healing journey. We support survivors and their emotional response to a sexual assault as long as they need us.

The team of licensed mental health counselors provide a supportive place where they listen and help people work through issues and learn how to make productive changes. This includes individual and group-therapy sessions and our counselors practice a wide range of therapies: Cognitive Processing Therapy, Cognitive Behavior Therapy (CBT), Trauma Focused-CBT, Interpersonal Process Therapy and Rational Emotive Behavior Therapy.

The pandemic has disproportionality impacted women in our community and this disparity has resulted in an increased need for mental health services. Growing our capability to provide counseling sessions both in-person and via tele-health during the first year of the pandemic has meant we’ve been able to support nearly 20 percent more clients this past year. This support covers gender specific, trauma informed therapy for women coping with depression, anxiety, stress, grief and PTSD.

The WCJ is a community-based resource center that relies on both grant funding and private donations to deliver our life and community changing programs.



Education

The community education programs at the WCJ cover sexual assault prevention, as well as providing women with specialized support in the areas of literacy, breast cancer and a new addition to our area of work that includes helping the community with trauma-informed and resiliency-focused skills.

Our prevention facilitators are active in the community, providing bystander intervention and prevention training on college campuses, in schools and with businesses. They also work alongside the victim advocates in the community, sharing what our services are about and raising awareness of the issues and myths surrounding sexual assault. Rape is preventable and our team of advocates work diligently to share this message, helping to support those communities most at risk of sexual violence.

Expanded Horizons, our longest-standing program, works to improve the lives of women by building their literacy skills. A new unique referral partnership was formed with the Literacy Alliance of Northeast Florida to help improve reading, writing, speaking and comprehension skills and making sure that women who are active in literacy programs also know that the WCJ is a safe place for them to share and work through their emotional

responses to trauma as well as life's daily challenges. This new partnership means we can help reduce emotional barriers that may be contributing to women's challenges around their education.

The WCJ also provides help to women and the wider community through the Community Resiliency Model (CRM)™. The WCJ is the first organization in Northeast Florida to offer education focused on the biology and neurophysiology of trauma. This CRM training is available through individual and group training and it equips people with a set of wellness skills that allows a person to reset and bring their body back into balance. The skills can be used before, during or after a stressful event to help bring a person back into their resiliency zone—empowering people to manage their responses to life's daily challenges and helping to improve overall mental health and wellbeing.

Lastly, our Bosom Buddies program continues to provide specialized support to women living with breast cancer, many without access to health insurance. This past year, over 200 “Buds” were supported via support groups, access to physicians and essential financial support to help with expenses associated with medical care.



2021

THRIVE!

RESILIENCE: The Courage to Come Back

Our annual breakfast, THRIVE!, took place on August 24, 2021 at the Hyatt Regency, Jacksonville Riverfront. The event theme was *RESILIENCE: The Courage to Come Back*, and that's exactly what we had to have when one week before the event, we made the difficult decision to move the event completely virtual in response to rising Covid-19 rates. The team quickly pivoted to streaming the event live from the hotel via the WCJ's website, where hundreds of viewers tuned in, and we donated the already-purchased food for the breakfast to the Sulzbacher Center to help their kitchen feed men, women and children.

The community coming together to support survivors and to improve the lives of women is just one of the reasons Jacksonville is so special. Our Host Committee for THRIVE! 2021 raised a record-breaking amount from our ever so generous donors and organizations. The WCJ relies on this annual fundraising event to help meet the gap in funding for our life-changing services. Our services are free at the point of delivery in large part because we receive federal, state and local funding, but the community support we receive in donations and sponsorships really helps to keep the doors open to our J. Wayne and Delores Barr Weaver Sexual Assault Forensic Exam Center and our mental health counselors providing support for as long as needed.

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The Zimmerman Family







By the Numbers

Prevention Training:



1,115

Individuals received **Sexual Assault Prevention** Training

Mental Health:



4,280

Mental Health Counseling sessions were delivered

Forensic Exams:

291 Sexual Assault Exams Conducted



Volunteers:

138 Volunteers provided 12k hours of support



Advocacy:

621 Survivors received **Advocacy Services**

Rape Crisis Hotline:



4,064

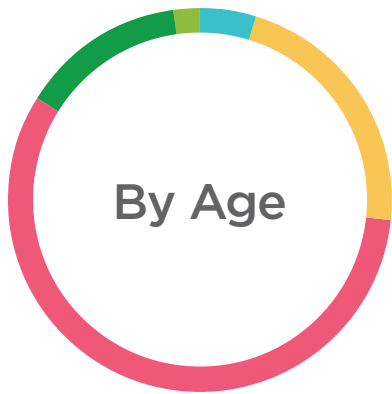
Inbound calls to the **Rape Crisis Hotline**

Community Education:

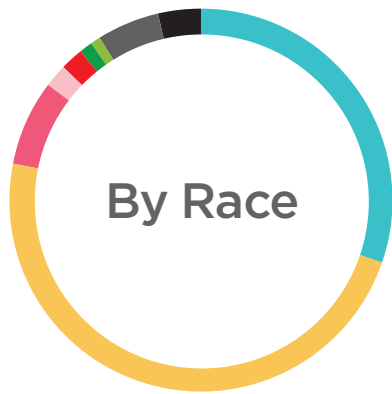


204 Support provided to **Breast Cancer Survivors** & those in need of Literacy Support

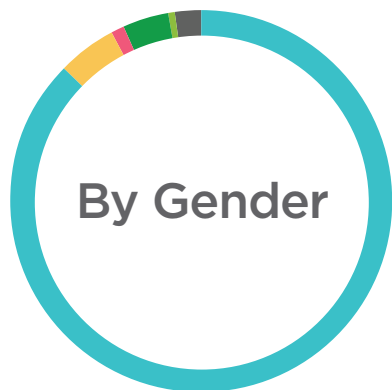
Clients Served



- >18 5%
- 18-24 22%
- 25-50 58%
- 50-75 14%
- Not Known 2%

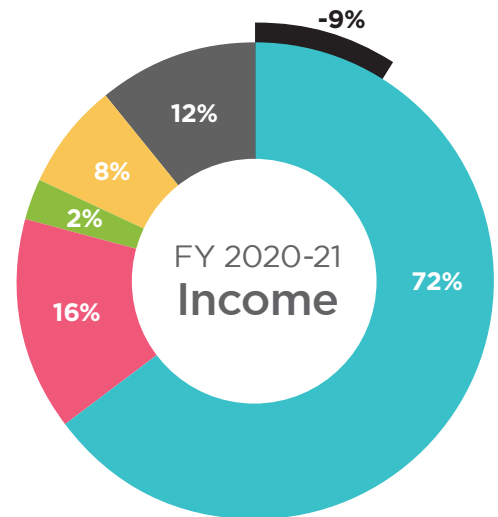


- African American 30%
- Caucasian 47%
- Multiracial 7%
- Hispanic 2%
- Asian 2%
- Pacific Islander >1%
- American Indian/Alaska Native 1%
- Other/Self-described 5%
- Not Known >4%



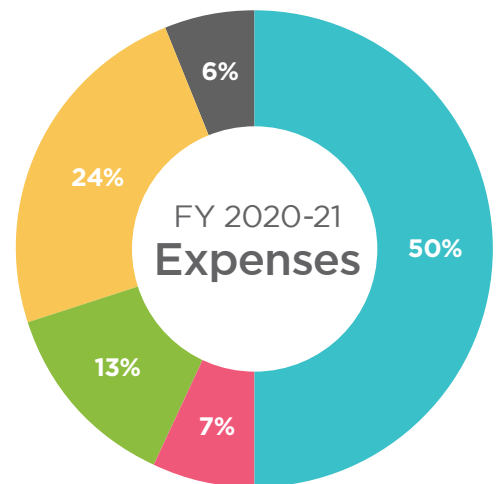
- Female 87%
- Male 5%
- Non-binary/Genderfluid 1%
- Not Known 5%
- Transgender Female >1%
- Other 2%

Financial Snapshot



- Grants \$2,054,287
 - Contributions \$453,036
 - In-Kind \$43,613
 - Special Events \$223,224
 - PPP Loan \$334,374
 - Investments/Other* (\$250,857)
- * Loss offset by a target gift

TOTAL INCOME **\$2,857,677**



- Rape Recovery/Advocacy \$1,364,292
- Community Education \$192,075
- Counseling \$342,005
- General Services/Admin \$642,288
- Fundraising \$168,499

TOTAL EXPENSES **\$2,709,159**

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