

ANNUAL REPORT 2021/2022

MESSAGE FROM LEADERSHIP

Dear Friends,

It has been another significant year for The Rowan Center—a year filled with innovation and transformation. In the midst of increased assault and sexual violence cases in our community—including a 5% increase in rapes reported in Connecticut and a 51% increase in reported sexual violence on college campuses—The Rowan Center has seen demand for our services grow dramatically.

In response, we consistently ask ourselves how we can improve. How can we serve more victims and survivors? How can we educate our communities in the most effective way? How can we continue to reach and heal everyone who needs us?

Thanks to your generous support, we have been able to respond to the needs of our communities by expanding our services, being innovative with counseling practices, and staying fresh and current with our curriculum offerings—all of which you will learn more about in this report. Through education, counseling, and advocacy—our three core pillars—we come alongside victims and survivors every day to remind them that they are not alone.

To reflect our evolving priorities and goals as an organization, we updated our mission and vision this year, affirming our purpose that focuses on the past, present, and future needs of our communities and setting the foundation for the years to come.

Today at The Rowan Center:

We counsel victims and survivors as they process their experiences of sexual violence from the past, we advocate for them as they navigate the circumstances of the present, and we educate our communities to prevent sexual violence in the future.

Our vision is that our communities are educated, empowered, and free from sexual violence.

We are **always** moving forward with these principles as our guides, and with an unwavering commitment to serve victims and survivors in our communities in the best way possible. We are so grateful that you are with us on this journey.

Thank you,

Mary Forman Flynn
Chief Executive Officer

Sharon Walker Epps
Chair of the Board

ABOUT THE ROWAN CENTER

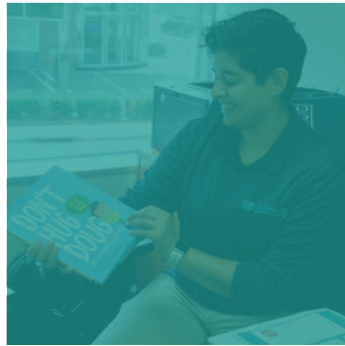
The Rowan Center has provided critical support to victims of sexual violence in lower Fairfield County since 1979. The eight towns we serve include Darien, Greenwich, New Canaan, Norwalk, Stamford, Weston, Westport, and Wilton. We provide a 24/7 hotline, a 40-hour-a-week text-and-chat hotline, and in-person advocacy at our local hospitals, police stations, and courts. We offer confidential crisis counseling to victims and their loved ones, available free of charge in English, Spanish, and Haitian Creole to individuals of all genders and nationalities ages 14 and up. We also provide age and developmentally-appropriate awareness and prevention education for K-12 students, colleges, corporations, law enforcement, community organizations, and more.



WE COUNSEL VICTIMS AND SURVIVORS AS THEY PROCESS THEIR EXPERIENCES OF SEXUAL VIOLENCE FROM THE PAST, WE ADVOCATE FOR THEM AS THEY NAVIGATE THE CIRCUMSTANCES OF THE PRESENT, AND WE EDUCATE OUR COMMUNITIES TO PREVENT SEXUAL VIOLENCE IN THE FUTURE.

2021/2022 IMPACT

469
HOTLINE
SERVICES



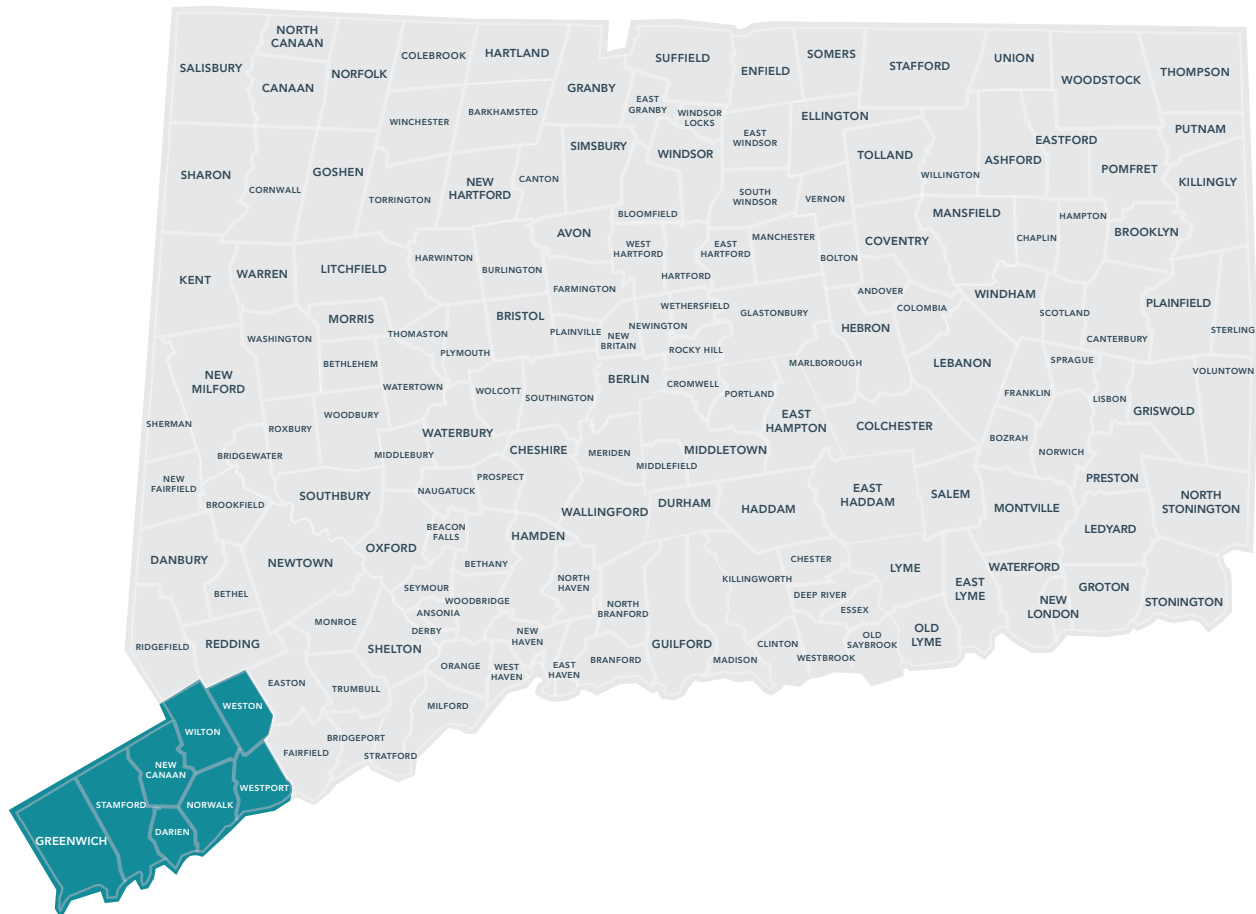
59
VOLUNTEERS



20
TABLING
EVENTS



653
EDUCATION
EVENTS



FINANCIALS

OPERATING REVENUE

THE CT ALLIANCE TO END SEXUAL VIOLENCE	\$586,773
GRANTS	\$211,228
SPECIAL EVENTS	\$155,770
OTHER CONTRIBUTIONS	\$79,918
TOTAL REVENUE	\$1,033,689



THE CT ALLIANCE TO END SEXUAL VIOLENCE



GRANTS



SPECIAL EVENTS



OTHER CONTRIBUTIONS

OPERATING EXPENSES

PROGRAM SERVICES	\$758,593
MANAGEMENT/GENERAL	\$148,717
DEVELOPMENT	\$130,305
TOTAL EXPENSES	\$1,037,615



PROGRAM SERVICES



MANAGEMENT/GENERAL



DEVELOPMENT



THE IMPACT OF EDUCATION

THE ROWAN CENTER EDUCATES PEOPLE OF ALL AGES ON SAFETY, CONSENT, BODILY AUTONOMY, ASSAULT PREVENTION, AND ADVOCACY IN AN EFFORT TO ELIMINATE SEXUAL VIOLENCE IN THE COMMUNITIES IT SERVES.

Powered by partners like you, our education program experienced a great deal of growth this year. One of our primary goals was to revamp all of our K-12 and college education programming to be more effective, accessible, and skill-based for all. In addition, Jorge Lopez-Martinez was promoted to Advocacy Manager and we hired a new Bilingual Community Educator, Elizabeth Jenkins-Sahlin. Finally, we had a bold dream to reach 10,000 students over the course of the year, following the obstacles we faced during the COVID years—and we greatly surpassed it!

In addition to this growth, we were honored to:

- Be involved in Darien's first-ever Pride event, tabling and sharing information about safety and consent.
- Partner with our Student Advisory Council to inform our strategy at high schools and colleges. Members of the SAC hosted us at their schools, and their advocacy work is making a difference for the next generation.
- Teach high school students how sexual violence can affect them, especially male students. We saw it all “click” for them as they understood that anyone of any gender could experience sexual violence.

After doing a presentation at a local high school, there was a student who called the hotline specifically asking how to assist a friend on the other side of the state. Within 24 hours we were able to get their friend connected with local resources. They had an accompaniment for the next day and throughout the process.

This year, we served almost

15,000

community members through our education programs!

Over the course of the year, we hosted round tables at schools and taught students how to respond to disclosures. We worked with college students interested in understanding how gender expectations can lead to sexual violence. We taught a summer camp group, held an information session for a group of church parishioners, and presented programs at a local youth center.

As we look to the future, we're building partnerships with our local health departments, investing in prevention education for individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities, and expanding our offerings for healthcare providers.

I have been working with The Rowan Center for almost 10 years now and have had the pleasure of witnessing the enormous positive impact on the students of Staples High School...The program brings forth topics that aren't easily covered in a way that makes them less risky or triggering to students so that they feel comfortable to ask questions and gain a deeper understanding.

- Kelly Shamas, health teacher at Staples High School



THE POWER OF COUNSELING

THE ROWAN CENTER SUPPORTS PRIMARY AND SECONDARY VICTIMS OF SEXUAL VIOLENCE THROUGH CONFIDENTIAL, NO-COST COUNSELING.

This year, we expanded two of our most-requested services: long-term counseling and EMDR. We now have three staff who are part of the EMDR international association, and we are eager to build on the pilot of our long-term counseling program. Our team has also grown; we now have a booming internship program and have hired five former volunteers to join our staff!

As we look to the future, we are focused on outreach. We are expanding community collaborations and continuing to nurture existing partnerships to help reach even more victims and survivors who may not know about our services. We want to remind everyone in our community that we are here for them.



Together, over the course of the year, we provided 849 no-cost counseling sessions to 143 people who have been impacted by sexual violence.



When the memories of my childhood sexual abuse emerged, I completely fell apart. My whole world as I knew it was shattered, and I was overwhelmed with fear, terror, and shame. I recall visibly shaking. I knew I needed help, and all I knew for certain was that I needed trauma-informed care. I needed someone who understood me because I no longer understood myself.

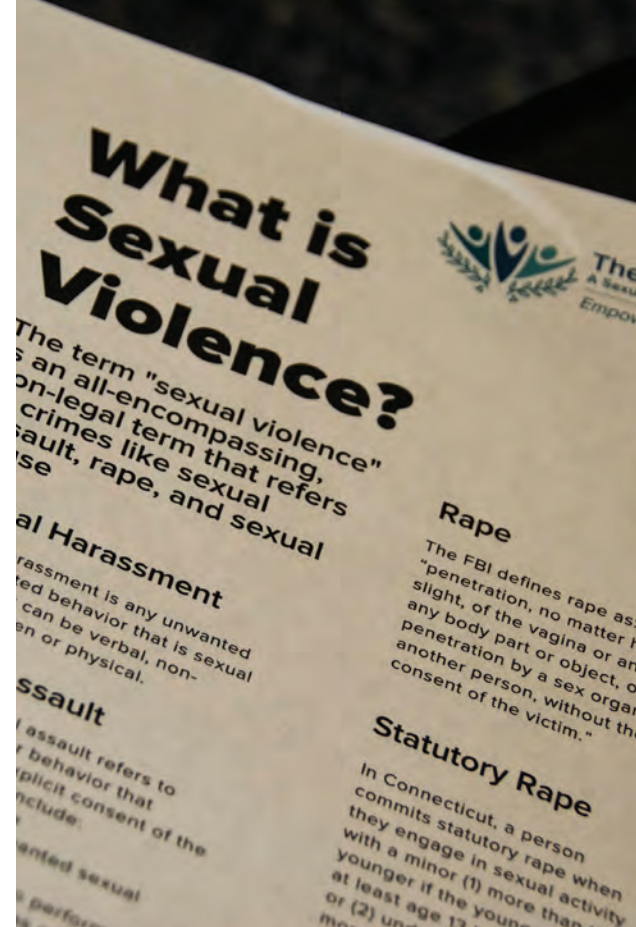
I found my way to The Rowan Center's website.

As a man, the stigma of discussing sexual abuse was strong—but stronger still was the need to be whole. I recall only one sentence when my counselor responded to my email: "I believe you." Three words pierced my shame and darkness.

We met for weeks, and I underwent EMDR. Through the process, my fear, terror, and shame disappeared. The work we did together genuinely saved my life. It set me on a path to healing and wholeness. My therapy finished, and I remain in a support group—and each week, it is life-giving.

I would urge anyone who has experienced trauma, regardless of gender, to consider speaking with the team at The Rowan Center. Because I know first-hand that "they believe you." They not only understand trauma—they are truly called to serve those of us who have been traumatized.

- Sexual violence survivor





TRANSFORMATION THROUGH ADVOCACY

THE ROWAN CENTER TRAINS AND DEPLOYS ADVOCATES TO RESPOND TO HOTLINE CALLS, ACCOMPANY SURVIVORS ON HOSPITAL VISITS, AND HELP THEM NAVIGATE THE LEGAL SYSTEM.

This year, our incredible team of trained advocates provided 467 hotline services—accompanying victims and survivors to the hospital, police station, and courts. Through every interaction, our 59 volunteers remind people they are not alone.

One of the biggest moments of the year was launching the new statewide text/chat line, in collaboration with the CT Alliance to End Sexual Violence, which allows community members to connect with advocates via text and chat. This new service, combined with our existing 24/7 hotline, makes advocacy services even more accessible to victims and survivors.

As we look to the year ahead, we are working to strengthen our relationship with police departments and hospital emergency departments. In addition, we plan to train and certify at least 30 new advocates and recertify at least 75% of our existing team. Through it all, we will keep providing individual advocacy services to primary and secondary victims and survivors of sexual violence.

COMMUNITY

The Rowan Center is invested in our communities. Through education programs, advocacy, and relationship building, we connect with partners, equip volunteers, educate students, share our mission, and build connections for impact—all to further advance our work serving survivors and fighting sexual violence.



We met with the Greenwich Youth Conservation Program at Greenwich Town Hall.



The Rowan Center's CEO, Mary Forman Flynn, was honored as one of YWCA Darien/Norwalk's 2022 Women of Distinction.



We partnered with Saraswati Yoga and Darien Parks and Recreation to provide a morning of recentering and calming yoga on the beach.



We shared our mission with Norwalk Mayor Harry Rilling, Stamford Mayor Caroline Simmons, Senator Bob Duff, and Senator Will Haskell at our Proclamation Event during Sexual Assault Awareness Month.



Volunteers and staff hosted a table at Norwalk Community College, educating students about The Rowan Center's work.



We joined representatives from a number of our peer organizations for a powerful morning at the Domestic Violence Crisis Center, discussing how we can work together to support survivors of domestic violence and advocate for crime victims.



VOLUNTEERS

The work of our dedicated volunteers makes our 24/7 hotline possible. They are the first point of contact when a victim or survivor of sexual violence reaches out, providing compassionate support, useful information, and concrete next steps.

It can be very difficult for survivors to come forward—even on our confidential hotline—and our volunteers create a safe, trusted place where victims and survivors can share their stories. This work is critically important in making survivors feel seen and supported. We are so grateful for the time and care our volunteers put into serving victims and survivors of sexual violence in our community.



SEXUAL VIOLENCE IS A VERY COMMON OCCURRENCE IN HIGH SCHOOL...BUT WE'RE GOING TO STOP THIS. ALL OF US ON THE STUDENT ADVISORY COUNCIL ARE TAKING OUR EXPERIENCES AND MAKING CHANGES WITH THEM AFTER ALL THE MEETINGS. IT'S REWARDING TO KNOW YOU'RE DOING SOMETHING IMPORTANT.

- LILY LIND, THE ROWAN CENTER STUDENT ADVISORY COUNCIL LEADER

The Rowan Center's Student Advisory Council is made up of young leaders in our community who provide insights and information about sexual violence at their high schools and college campuses.

ACTIVE VOLUNTEERS

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Bilingual Community Educator - English/Spanish

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Bilingual/Bicultural Counselor and Intake Coordinator

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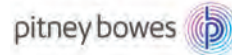






The Rowan Center
A Sexual Assault Resource Agency

THANK YOU TO ALL OUR COMMUNITY PARTNERS



CONTACT US

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