

ANNUAL REPORT

2022-2023



The Rowan Center
A Sexual Assault Resource Agency



Dear Friends,

As we reflect on this past year, our overwhelming emotion is gratitude—gratitude for our supporters, our dedicated staff and board, the communities that have rallied around our mission, and, most importantly, our clients who allow us to serve them. Because of all these people, The Rowan Center had another year filled with success and inspired growth—all of which benefits our clients and communities.

Last year, we told you about how we rewrote our mission to include the third pillar of what we do every day: advocacy. We are thrilled to report that our advocacy department has grown and expanded its services, with a special focus on justice advocacy. Strengthening relationships with local law enforcement and hospitals means victims and survivors are more likely to receive the best trauma-informed care available. These practices lead to more healing for our clients, more collaboration with our partners, and more accountability for those who perpetrate sexual violence in our communities.

This year, our education program returned to pre-pandemic levels of service in our schools, educating almost 17,000 children in the eight towns we serve. We are teaching our kids how to stay safe through curriculum, with lessons on topics like how to be the boss of their own bodies, how to be an active bystander, what consent is, what the laws are, and how to be prepared for college. Additionally, this year, we had an added challenge of educating our communities about sex trafficking because, yes, that is happening here—and it is happening to children who attend our schools.

Next year, in 2024, we will officially open our long-term therapy clinic. This clinic has been a strategic goal for The Rowan Center for years that took on more urgency when the growing need for mental health services skyrocketed in our communities. Because of our generous community of donors and supporters, we will be able to serve those who lack the resources to access mental health care for trauma, offering a lifeline not previously available to them.

We are excited to share more of our highlights from this year and more details about our operations in the following pages. Our gratitude is immense—and we are excited to continue moving toward our aspirational goal of being the best provider of sexual assault prevention resources we can possibly be for our eight Lower Fairfield County communities.

With gratitude,

Mary Forman Flynn
Chief Executive Officer

Sharon Walker Epps
Chair of the Board







BY THE NUMBERS



ADVOCACY

The Rowan Center's Advocacy and Training Department offers support services to victims and survivors of sexual violence through a statewide text-and-chat line and a telephone hotline, victim rights enforcement, and training for trauma-informed advocates and counselors who offer services all across the state.

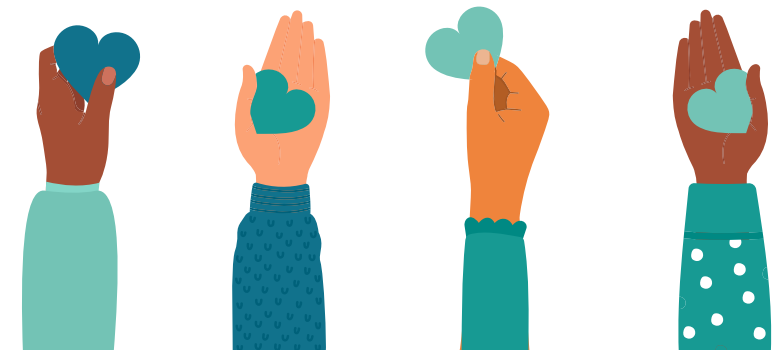
In addition, advocates walk alongside victims and survivors as they take their own next steps, including accompanying survivors to:

-  **The Hospital.** Advocates from Greenwich, Stamford, and Norwalk help survivors understand victim rights and the OVS Victim Compensation Fund, walk with them through the forensic evidence collection procedure if the survivor chooses, provide referrals for other services, deliver clothing and personal hygiene products, and offer emotional support up until the moment of medical discharge.
-  **The Police Station.** Advocates help survivors understand victim rights and the OVS Victim Compensation Fund, provide information about diverse legal remedies, come alongside survivors as they prepare for police interviews, and follow up with detectives as needed.
-  **The Courthouse.** Advocates orient survivors to victim rights, provide emotional support through court hearings, assist with filing forms, and follow up with court victim advocates and state attorneys.
-  **Forensic Interviews (MDT).** Advocates accompany parents of children who have experienced abuse as they undergo forensic interviews at local child advocacy centers.

Advocacy Training and Certification Program

Our Advocacy Training and Certification Program consists of a 40-hour training course with a final exam for a statewide certification as a Sexual Assault Advocate and Counselor.

Our program certified 17 volunteers during FY23, and 25 volunteers covered 54% of hotline shifts.



Advocates support our hotline and our text/chat line. If you or someone you know has experienced sexual violence, we are here to help:



Text 888-999-5545 (M-F, 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.)



Chat at therowancenter.org (M-F, 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.)



Call 203-329-2929 at any time

EDUCATION

Last year, the Education Department continued its work to educate and equip people of all ages to respond to and prevent sexual violence. Through presentations in schools, community organizations, police departments, healthcare facilities, and more, we helped people understand sexual violence—and learn what they can do to promote health and safety for themselves and those around them.

In FY23, we gave 774 presentations and served 16,602 participants through prevention education. We taught in 36 unique schools and organizations and responded to 18 disclosures of sexual violence from students.

During the spring of 2023, our communities experienced an alarming uptick in child sex trafficking that was affecting middle schoolers in Lower Fairfield County. The Rowan Center immediately responded by providing prevention education with an emphasis on trafficking prevention and awareness to 35 principals, 151 teachers, and 3,800 students. In addition, we had our first “Take Back the Night” event at UConn Stamford.

We look forward to continuing our education efforts this year!

BY THE NUMBERS

774 PRESENTATIONS

16,602 PEOPLE EDUCATED

36 SCHOOLS AND ORGANIZATIONS

THE IMPACT OF EDUCATION

“[The Rowan Center’s] presentations resonate with the students on so many levels. They get to learn so many important things—from what healthy relationships should include or not include, to what consent looks and sounds like, to how to support a friend who has been a victim of sexual violence, to name only a few. This 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,
Staples High School

“On behalf of our school community, we fully support the work of The Rowan Center and are so thankful for their knowledge, educational resources, and empathetic trainers.”

—Kristina Colmenares, Principal,
Rippowam Middle School



COUNSELING

The Counseling Department had another successful year, providing over 1,200 individual sessions to primary and secondary survivors of sexual violence.

At the beginning of FY23, we hired a Referral Specialist to join the Counseling Department team, which has greatly benefited our efforts. This new team member brought with them over 30 years of referral experience in the greater Stamford area, and with their case management expertise and community connections, the agency was able to help bridge over 54% more victims to services that fulfilled their basic and complex needs, compared with FY22. The Referral Specialist was successful in supporting survivors and victims with over 40 unique needs, which included, but were not limited to, housing, medical care, employment, and comprehensive case management.

The Referral Specialist’s efforts to reduce counseling clients’ barriers to their basic needs assisted in strengthening their psychological capacities to learn, develop, and integrate healing tools offered during counseling sessions. As a result, we observed a trend of clients returning and seeking support for their latest needs. The Counseling Department aims to continue growing the agency’s visibility within the community through our ongoing referral efforts with local partners in hopes of reaching more survivors in the new year.

BY THE NUMBERS



MSW INTERNS

During FY23, we hosted our third Masters of Social Work (MSW) intern cohort comprised of three fantastic MSW students from local programs. These three interns provided direct counseling services to our short-term crisis counseling clients from our pilot program, all under the supervision of our Director of Counseling and our Clinical Director.

LONG-TERM THERAPY PILOT

We evaluated the findings from our FY22 therapy pilot program and discovered that clients who received only short-term counseling services saw a 35% reduction in the severity of their PTSD symptoms on average, while the clients who received both short-term counseling and long-term therapy through our pilot program saw an average decrease of 56%. In addition, clients who received EMDR as part of their long-term therapy services had an average reduction of 64%. These findings inspired us to start the process of applying for a license from the State of Connecticut and the Department of Public Health to open a permanent long-term clinic. We are happy to report that we are in the final stages of that process and hope to have our clinic up and running during 2024.

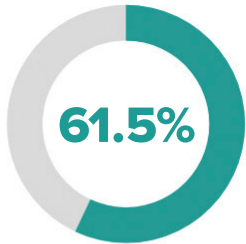
IMPACT OF COUNSELING

“Since my crisis began, I have worked with a copious amount of organizations offering to aid me during my time of need. The only organization that had my best interest at heart in all aspects of being was The Rowan Center. I’m happy to say this place is and will always remain such a safe and meaningful, special place for me.” –B.S., Client

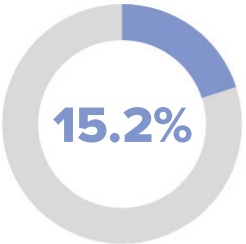
“[I was] referred to The Rowan Center for counseling after my kidnapping in Haiti. Being new to this country and to the system, I was disoriented and didn’t know where to start or what to do to get some help. Meeting with my counselor was one of the best things that happened, considering how chaotic things were for me. She is very efficient and will work tirelessly to find the adequate resources or until a satisfying answer is reached.” –G.R., Client

FINANCIALS

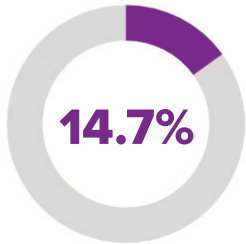
OPERATING REVENUE	
FEDERAL AND STATE GRANTS	\$802,613
GRANTS	\$198,333
SPECIAL EVENTS	\$192,210
OTHER CONTRIBUTIONS	\$111,284
TOTAL INCOME	\$1,304,440



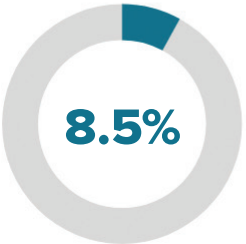
FEDERAL AND STATE GRANTS



GRANTS



SPECIAL EVENTS

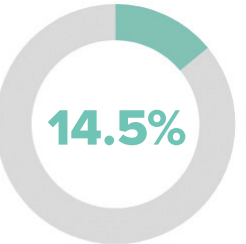


OTHER CONTRIBUTIONS

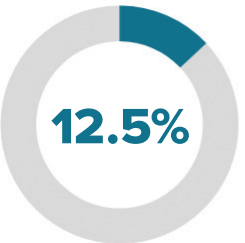
OPERATING EXPENSES	
PROGRAM SERVICES	\$924,210
MANAGEMENT/GENERAL	\$177,223
DEVELOPMENT	\$158,235
TOTAL EXPENSES	\$1,265,880
TOTAL REVENUE OVER EXPENSES	\$38,560



PROGRAM SERVICES



MANAGEMENT/GENERAL



DEVELOPMENT

WHAT YOUR PARTNERSHIP MAKES POSSIBLE

“Sexual violence and abusive behavior are prevalent in every community and affect all people regardless of age, socioeconomic status, gender, race, or religion. The statistics are staggering and the devastating consequences of this violence can cross generations and last a lifetime. We need to make prevention a priority! Awareness of this issue and prevention education is the best solution we have. It is a key to reducing violence and instilling healthy relationships in our community. The Rowan Center’s educational programs, outreach, and presence in our schools are valuable resources to our community. They have been able to interact, help, and support both students and adults in a classroom setting and on a one-to-one basis.”
–Barbara Bartlett, Health Educator, Eastern Middle School

“The staff and team [at The Rowan Center] are very supportive and helpful. The resources are great—they go up and beyond to make sure all corners are covered. Whenever I feel like giving up or letting go, there is always a reassurance to push in. I would recommend the services to anyone who is in a situation where they are needed. I have been at my lowest points, sometimes having breakdowns and meltdowns, but when I go into a session and have talks [with my counselor], my security comes back. I know they are always a phone call away!” -A.H., Client



THANK YOU TO OUR DONORS

\$10,000+

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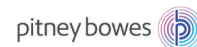
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Rebecca Wilson, LMSW



THANK YOU TO ALL OUR COMMUNITY PARTNERS



We proudly serve the eight towns of Lower Fairfield County: Darien, Greenwich, New Canaan, Norwalk, Stamford, Weston, Westport, and Wilton.

Mission

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.

Vision

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

Statement of Inclusion

The Rowan Center serves all survivors of sexual violence in our eight-town region, regardless of age, sex, immigration status, race, ethnicity, nationality, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, or religious or spiritual beliefs.

Contact Us

1111 Summer Street, Suite 202
Stamford, CT 06905
(203) 348-9346



@therowancenter
therowancenter.org

24-Hour Crisis Hotlines:

English	(203) 329-2929
Spanish	(888) 568-8332
Toll-Free	(888) 999-5545
Chat	therowancenter.org