
BENNINGTON COUNTY

CHILD ADVOCACY CENTER & SPECIAL INVESTIGATIONS UNIT

Joy Kitchell
Executive Director

129 Elm Street
Bennington, VT 05201

The Bennington Select Board
c/o Stuart Hurd, Town Manager
205 South Street
PO Box 469
Bennington, VT 05201

November 25, 2019

Dear Members of the Bennington Select Board:

The Bennington County Association Against Child Abuse (dba Bennington County Child Advocacy Center and Special Investigations Unit) is requesting that our appropriations request for **\$5,000** in funding support once again be placed on the ballot in March 2020.

Our FY19 Annual Report, which is attached, provides information that you have requested. This information includes our Mission and Vision Statement regarding our work with children who are victims of sexual abuse or egregious physical abuse.

Funding support from the Bennington community allows the staff at the Bennington County Child Advocacy Center the ability to provide a multitude of additional services to children, families, and community members at large.

- Provide prevention education to local schools, preschools, and childcares. This involves training new teachers/ staff, modeling lessons, and serving as a mentor when concerns arise.
- In compliance with Vermont's Act 1, we provide professional development to educators, support staff, childcare providers, preschool teachers, and Head Start programs in the signs and symptoms of child sexual abuse.
- Participate in events at local colleges. This ranges from educating students about working in our non-profit organization to co-sponsoring events with Southern Vermont College about domestic violence safety. With the closing of Southern Vermont College, this partnership ended at the end of FY19.
- Participate in community events for families such as BCCCA Family Fair.
- The month of April has become a tradition for our staff. We hold several community events. We have continued the #Benningtongoesblue campaign, Clothesline Project, Candlelight Vigil, and our pinwheel garden. We co-sponsored with Southern Vermont College, the showing of "I Am Evidence" for the college and the Bennington community.
- Late September was set aside for Just Bike! justice for kids. We also continue to collect and repair bikes through our Bike Drive for kids in foster care/ kinship care. This year with a RiseVT Amplify grant, we



supported the Village School of North Bennington and Bennington Elementary after school bike-riding programs (33 children participated).

The Bennington County Child Advocacy Center has a staff of two. I am forever amazed at what we accomplish within our budget. In addition to our work at the Center, our staff of two sit on various community boards and committees: SEALL, Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACES), Alliance for Community Transformation (ACT), Children's Integrated Services (CIS), Caring Dads, Poverty Work Group of Housing (Renters 101), RiseVT Stakeholders, Bennington Bike Around, and the Center for Restorative Justice (CRJ) Court Diversion Panel.

We will continue with these efforts, along with supporting children who are victims of sexual abuse.


If you have any questions regarding the supplementary material you requested, I am happy to provide clarification where needed.

This funding request includes the following information for the Select Board's consideration regarding The Bennington County Association Against Child Abuse placement on the ballot in March 2020:

1. FY2019 Annual Report: This provides our Strategic Plan and Evaluation for FY2019 (this includes work done within the Bennington community), Strategic Plan for FY2020, contact information for Stephannie Peters, Board President, and Joy Kitchell, Executive Director. This report also contains a list of all revenues received from municipalities in the current year and expectations for the coming year. An explanation of how the requested funds will be used to support the Bennington community with examples from FY 2019 and FY2020 is also included.
2. Three-Year Budget comparison for FY2019, FY2020, and FY2021. Please note FY2021 is a WORKING DRAFT.
3. A copy of our FY19 financial review.

A representative from the BCCAC would be pleased to speak at Bennington's March Annual Town Meeting.

Sincerely,



Joy Kitchell, Executive Director

BENNINGTON COUNTY
ASSOCIATION AGAINST CHILD ABUSE

ANNUAL REPORT
FY2019

PREPARED BY:
JOY KITCHELL, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
SEPTEMBER 2019

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CONTACT INFORMATION

Bennington County Association Against Child Abuse
dba Bennington County Child Advocacy Center and Special Investigations Unit
129 Elm Street
Bennington, Vermont 05201
Tax Status: 501 (c) 3 Federal Exempt # 03-0338769

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Joy Kitchell, Executive Director
Phone: (802)442-5107
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DESCRIPTION OF ORGANIZATION AND ACTIVITIES

MISSION STATEMENT

The Bennington County Child Advocacy Center and Special Investigations Unit (BCCAC/SIU) is a multidisciplinary team (MDT) that ensures children and families involved in sexual abuse or allegations resulting in serious physical injury cases receive child-friendly services from law enforcement, prosecution, protective services, and receive timely and effective counseling. These cases require special expertise in the area of investigation and services to victims to enhance protection and to facilitate court proceedings. The BCCAC/SIU proactively investigates these cases and emphasizes prevention through education and training. The operations of the BCCAC/SIU promote cooperative efforts between municipalities, police, prosecutor's office, medical community, mental health, child protective services, schools, and other advocacy groups.

VISION STATEMENT

The Bennington County Child Advocacy Center and Special Investigations Unit is dedicated to being a leading advocacy and learning center in the state of Vermont.

We protect the rights of the victims, meet the needs of the families, and encourage community supports.

We promote educational activities for our youth that strive to reduce the probability of them becoming victims of abuse or victimizers.

We provide the highest quality staff development to all Multidisciplinary Team Members, both locally and state-wide, that is current, improves the quality of forensic investigations, and builds professionalism in public service.

We monitor the legal framework at the state and federal level to ensure that the laws protecting our children, vulnerable adults, and adult victims of abuse are adhered to and reflect best practice.

STRATEGIC PLAN EVALUATION FY19

GOAL #1: Increase organizational development

Objectives:

A. Identify realistic funding sources

- a. Pursue grant funding for both the general fund and specific programming
- b. Continue annual giving campaign
- c. Develop a signature fundraising event
- d. Recruit board members with capital campaign experience

Status:

- a. We held our second annual *Just Bike! justice for kids* event in the fall of 2018. We will hold our third event on September 29, 2019.
- b. We increased our town appropriations. We now receive \$7,300 from seven towns.
- c. The Board has established a fundraising committee. Betsy Dunham will be the chair.
- d. Increased Facebook engagement (as of June 30- 670 likes)
- e. Fundraisers utilizing Facebook birthday fundraisers (\$1,300)

B. Participate in established community events

- a. Family activities
- b. Information/ resource tables
- c. Make an intentional effort to co-sponsor events with other organizations

Status:

- a. We Continue to participate in community events such as Bennington County Child Care Family Fair, SVSU Community Resource Table Walk.
- b. Our April events were well attended and supported: Bennington Goes Blue, The Clothesline Project, and Candlelight Vigil, "I Am Evidence" screening. PAVE and Southern Vermont College partnered with us in these events.

C. Public Relations

- a. Maintain presence on social media sites
- b. Continue outreach to local media outlets: digital, radio, television and paper
- c. Develop Public Service Announcement for radio and television

Status:

- a. We held our third annual #BenningtonGoesBlue hashtag campaign during the month of April. We participated in the state-wide #VTStandsAgainstChildAbuse campaign. We also worked with our paper and Facebook outlets, to provide

information about our CAC/SIU.

- b. Maintain a Facebook page with daily updates, and an Instagram account.
- c. The director participated in a new segment for GNAT-TV with PAVE. The director also participated in a public radio interview, along with Senator Sears and PCAVT Director Linda Johnson. This was aired on Wyoming Public Radio and will be on a future NPR broadcast.

GOAL #2: Increase Prevention Education

Objectives:

A. Serve on community boards/committees that promote early childhood and family

- a. Develop education programming for the community
- b. Develop education programming for Birth to 5 years old
- c. Continue to implement education programming for school-age students
- d. Develop education programming for college-age students

Status:

- a. We continue to provide trainings on Vermont's Act 1 to childcare and school programs.
- b. We continue to work with the SVSU on implementation of PCAVT programming Kindergarten through grade 8.
- c. We have begun to work with both private and public PreK programs.
- d. We have begun working with The Tutorial Center, and continue to work with SEALL, Inc.
- e. The Executive Director serves on various committees and boards: Vermont Children's Alliance (Vice President), Seall, Inc (President), Children's Integrated Services/Pediatric Community Care Team, ACES, and the Poverty Work Group for housing.
- f. The Case Coordinator works with Caring Dads as the Program Coordinator, Alliance for Community Transformation (Secretary), and Court Diversion panelist.
- g. Through the Executive Director's role as an adjunct professor at SVC, several MDT members were brought in as guest lecturers. In addition, SVC worked with the CAC on the Clothesline Project and the screening of "I am Evidence."

B. Increase professional development opportunities for partner agencies and Multidisciplinary Team Members

- a. Utilize a list serve to announce local, state, and national trainings
- b. Identify needs for professional development at the local level
- c. Offer/support workshops/conferences held locally

Status:

- a. This is on-going work that has continued.
- b. The director organized a training for the state with Cory Jewell Jensen. Our two SIU investigators will participate in June 2019 in a 3-day forensic training for electronic devices.
- c. Investigators have participated in Forensic Interviewing, Advanced Forensic Interviewing, and Extended Forensic Interview Training.
- d. We have had two SANE from SVMC complete training in Pedi-SANE.
- e. The director participated in several TEND trainings at the International Symposium in Huntsville (Vicarious Trauma).

Goal #3: Support state-wide efforts for improving laws that impact child maltreatment investigations, prosecution, intervention, and prevention.

Objectives:

- a. Work with legislature and other parties to change laws
- b. Bring attention to these issues with fact-based information
- c. Garner support from other agencies and the community by educating them on the issues.
- d. Host a Legislative Breakfast for the local delegation

Status:

- a. Two board members, from DCF and the State's Attorney's Office often consult at the state level on new legislation.
- b. Local representatives attended a Legislative Breakfast with staff, MDT members and Board members.

Goal #4: Increase organizational ability to meet current National Children's Alliance Standards

Objectives:

- a. Evaluate current Mental Health supports within the community.
- b. Develop a long-term plan for increasing Mental Health supports within the community.
- c. Develop a Succession Plan for CAC staff
- d. Evaluate current medical practices in place and how it aligns with 2017 Standards for medical care.

Status:

- a. In February our Re-accreditation application was submitted, our site review is scheduled for August 2019

- b. We currently have three private mental health clinicians that we have operating agreements with. Two SANEs at SVMC have received training in Pedi-SANE. SVMC is piloting a tele-health system for SANES with UVM.
- c. The Succession Plan for CAC staff is completed and will be updated annually.

Goal #3: Support state-wide efforts for improving laws that impact child maltreatment investigations, prosecution, intervention, and prevention.

Objectives:

- d. Work with legislature and other parties to change laws
- e. Bring attention to these issues with fact-based information
- f. Garner support from other agencies and the community by educating them on the issues.
- d. Host a Legislative Breakfast for the local delegation

Status:

- c. On-going
- d. Two board members, from DCF and the State's Attorney's Office often consult at the state level on new legislation.
- e. Local representatives came to the CAC and met with staff and Board members.

Goal #4: Increase organizational ability to meet current National Children's Alliance Standards

Objectives:

- e. Evaluate current Mental Health supports within the community.
- f. Develop a long-term plan for increasing Mental Health supports within the community.
- g. Develop a Succession Plan for CAC staff
- h. Evaluate current medical practices in place and how it aligns with 2017 Standards for medical care.

Status:

- d. These are in-process. One of the Board members is assisting the Executive Director with the alignment to 2017 Standards.
- e. The local ACES team is working to support the CAC in increasing mental health supports, one of board members sits on this committee as does the Executive Director.

STRATEGIC PLAN FY20

GOAL #1: Increase organizational development

Objectives:

A. Identify realistic funding sources

- e. Seek at least 3 other grant funding sources for both the general fund and specific programming
- f. Continue annual giving campaign and increase our constituency list
- g. Develop a two more fundraising events
- h. Recruit board members with capital campaign experience

B. Participate in established community events

- d. Family activities
- e. Information/ resource tables
- f. Make an intentional effort to co-sponsor events with other organizations

C. Public Relations

- d. Increase presence on social media sites
- e. Continue outreach to local media outlets: digital, radio, television and paper
- f. Develop Public Service Announcement for radio and television

GOAL #2: Increase Prevention Education

Objectives:

A. Serve on community boards/committees that promote early childhood and family

- e. Continue to expand education programming for the community
- f. Offer 3 connections to our programming in the Northshire
- g. Continue to expand education programming for Birth to 5 years old
- h. Continue to implement education programming for school-age students
- i. Develop education programming for college-age students

B. Increase professional development opportunities for partner agencies and Multidisciplinary Team Members

- a. Utilize a list serve to announce local, state, and national trainings

- b. Identify needs for professional development at the local level
- c. Offer/support workshops/conferences held locally
- d. Provide workshops that supports understanding Vicarious Trauma

Goal #3: Support state-wide efforts for improving laws that impact child maltreatment investigations, prosecution, intervention, and prevention.

Objectives:

- g. Work with legislature and other parties to change laws
- h. Bring attention to these issues with fact-based information
- i. Garner support from other agencies and the community by educating them on the issues.
- j. Host a Legislative Breakfast for the local delegation
- k. Seek out and support local clinicians and medical care providers

Goal #4: Increase organizational ability to meet current National Children's Alliance Standards

Objectives:

- i. Evaluate current Mental Health supports within the community.
- j. Develop a long-term plan for increasing Mental Health supports within the community.
- k. Annually review and update the Succession Plan for CAC staff
- l. Evaluate current medical practices in place and how it aligns with 2017 Standards for medical care.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

AS OF JUNE 30, 2019

Jackie Myers, President
Stephanie Peters, Vice-President
Christopher Oldham, Treasurer
Erica Marthage, Secretary
Betsy Dunham, Member
Kyle Hoover, Member
Bernadette Thompson, Member

BENNINGTON COUNTY CHILD ADVOCACY CENTER STAFF

Joy Kitchell, Executive Director
Jenna Caslin, Case Coordinator/Administrative Assistant

SPECIAL INVESTIGATIONS UNIT STAFF (CO-LOCATED)

Anthony Silvestro, Bennington Police Department Detective
Lauren Ronan, Vermont State Police Detective Trooper (March 2019)
Benjamin Barton, Vermont State Police Detective Trooper (Ending Feb. 2019)

FINANCIAL SUMMARY

FY 2015: Financial Review

FY 2016: Audit

FY 2017: Financial Review

FY 2018 Financial Review

FY 2019 Financial Review (included)

MUNICIPALITIES APPROPRIATION SUPPORT

FY 2020

Town of Bennington: \$5,000.00

Town of Landgrove: \$500.00

Town of Peru: \$500.00

Town of Pownal: \$500.00

Town of Sandgate: \$200.00

Town of Shaftsbury: \$500.00

Town of Woodford: \$100.00

FY 2021 Pending Requests

Town of Bennington: \$5,000.00

Town of Landgrove: \$500.00

Town of Peru: \$500.00

Town of Pownal: \$500.00

Town of Sandgate: \$200.00

Town of Shaftsbury: \$500.00

Town of Woodford: \$100.00

BENNINGTON COUNTY ASSOCIATION AGAINST CHILD ABUSE

ANNUAL REPORT, FY2019

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THREE-YEAR BUDGET COMPARISON

Income			
Funding Sources	Actual FY2019	Budget FY2020	Projected FY2021
SIU Program Support Grant	\$100,221.00	\$100,221.36	\$100,221.36
State Appropriations	\$32,850.00	\$32,850.00	\$32,850.00
Vermont General Funds	\$7,150.00	\$7,150.00	\$7,150.00
Vermont Children's Alliance sub award from National Children's Alliance	\$7,000.00	\$7,000.00	\$7,000.00
Donations	\$11,639.95	\$8,600.00	\$8,600.00
Rental Income	\$12,600.00	\$13,236.00	\$13,236.00
Town Appropriations	\$6,300.00	\$7,300.00	\$7,300.00
SIU Law Enforcement Grant	\$60,000.00	\$60,000.00	\$60,000.00
United Way	\$2,000.00		
Total Income	\$239,760.95	\$236,357.36	\$236,357.36
Expenses			
Personnel	\$121,350.98	\$124,183.20	\$124,183.20
Payment to BPD (SIU LE Grant)	\$60,000.00	\$60,000.00	\$60,000.00
Building	\$26,464.22	\$23,350.16	\$23,350.16
Utilities	\$12,461.64	\$12,904.00	\$12,904.00
Operating	\$11,887.32	\$9,500.00	\$9,500.00
Other	\$6,442.88	\$6,420.00	\$6,420.00
Expenses	\$238,607.04	\$236,357.36	\$236,357.36

DOLLARS SPENT IN BENNINGTON

100% of the Personnel line goes towards Bennington residents. As Bennington residents, their dollars are spent, for the most part, locally.

\$60,000 or 25% of the overall budget is paid to the Town of Bennington to support the salary and benefits of the BPD SIU Detective.

Our office is in Bennington, so in general, utilities, building, and operating expenses are paid locally.

BENNINGTON STATISTICS

The FY2019 Strategic Plan Evaluation notes in detail the prevention and education work done within the Bennington community.

Regarding clients served, it should be noted that our numbers are fluid. Once a disclosure of abuse is made, the length of time we provide support can vary greatly, depending upon the nature of each case. The Bennington Child Advocacy Center staff may work with a family for several years. The judicial process can take as long as three years; our staff maintains contact and support through the duration. We have some families that we have stayed connected with for up to five years. Then there are families that may discontinue with us and reconnect a year or two later. Each family's needs are unique; we strive to provide whatever support is best for healing.

Clients Served

Fiscal Year	New Clients	Bennington Residents
FY 2019	70	41
FY 2020 (as of 11/23/2019)	39	19

