Demand for Trauma-Informed Services Reaches All-Time High

Despite our growth and reach, the need for children’s mental health services continues to eclipse our capacity, demonstrating the importance of increasing access.

Since the arrival of COVID-19, ChildSavers has committed to remaining open and available to children, families, child care providers, and community partners. In October 2021, American Academy of Pediatrics, American Academy of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry, and Children’s Hospital Association declared a national emergency in children’s mental health, citing the serious toll of COVID-19, which exacerbated the crisis that existed prior to the pandemic.

While we continue to serve children impacted by trauma, there has been an increased demand for services to help clients experiencing grief resulting primarily from the pandemic and community violence. Our work now includes a greater focus on ways to cope with and process grief.

Our team is working diligently to provide quality mental health services to children. Thanks to the incredible generosity of the ChildSavers community, our team is equipped to rise to serve even more children than ever.

During the first six months of fiscal year 2022, ChildSavers served 571 children – a 17% increase from the same time last year.

One of our strengths is our ability to adapt and innovate. Prior to the pandemic, our referrals typically came in response to a specific incident – a death in the family, divorce, a traumatic event – or for a client having a trauma history.

Top 5 Reasons for Referral

Across all mental health services, July 1 - December 31, 2021

1. Trauma
2. Problems at school
3. Anger management
4. Death of a loved one
5. Physical aggression
Child Care Industry Adapts to New Oversight

Regulations are constantly evolving, and our team remains committed to guiding child care providers through various changes. On July 1, 2021, Virginia folded child care oversight into the Department of Education, which is changing expectations for child care programs. New guidelines required child care providers to install carbon monoxide detectors onsite. Though a nominal fee for some, purchasing new equipment can create a budget hardship for many family day home providers.

After learning about this new need, our friends at Truist put together 72 child care provider kits to aid providers in creating safe environments. In addition to carbon monoxide detectors, the kits included batteries, flashlights, first aid items, and more.

One of the kit recipients was Shemik Sellars, a family day home owner who shared her story last spring. Now open for 15 months, we checked in with Shemik to learn more about how ChildSavers has supported her along her journey.

One of the many resources Shemik has utilized is the CLASS observation (Classroom Assessment Scoring System). CLASS is a tool used by ChildSavers to measure the quality of teacher/child interaction. Teachers learn how to enhance their daily routines and lessons by intentionally engaging in language-enriched conversations with children and providing autonomy – regardless of age. Shemik says that the biggest takeaway from her observation was receiving a state-approved curriculum that matched her needs.

Shemik also utilizes other ChildSavers services, including Ready Regions, Virginia Infant & Toddler Specialist Network, and Child and Adult Care Food Program -- all of which she shares helps her remain operational so costs are not a burden for her families.

Shemik said, “I’ve worked in child care for 18 or 19 years. These programs introduced me to the business side. They help with the quality of my program and allow me to be more efficient and business-minded.”

Providers like Shemik are essential to:
- keeping our economy running by allowing parents and caregivers to work;
- providing environments for children to be safe, happy, healthy, and ready to learn.

ChildSavers100: To the Moon!

When ChildSavers100 was first launched in July 2019 to generate the resources needed to double the number of children we serve by 2024 – the year ChildSavers turns 100 – raising $15 million seemed a herculean task.

In spite of a global pandemic which has caused so much uncertainty, you have stepped forth and given of your own treasure and inspired others to do the same.

By December 31, you raised almost $14 million to grow our endowment, sustain programs, and invest in capital and technology improvements to enhance and expand operations.

The goal is within reach, and what was once a vision will become reality. None of which could have happened without your collective investment.
**Partnership to Prevent Youth Gun Violence**

In Richmond, homicide is the leading cause of death among youth 15-24 years of age. The number of homicides in the city reached a 15-year high in 2021, and both victims and suspects are getting younger and younger. Youth violence presents a serious public health concern, and the city is acting.

To combat the critical need for youth violence prevention in Richmond, City Council was awarded a grant from the Virginia Department of Criminal Justice Services to provide youth gun violence prevention programs. Working alongside Richmond Parks and Recreation, Communities in Schools, and Challenge Discovery Projects, ChildSavers is offering mental and behavioral professional support to a group of 7th and 8th graders who have not committed violent acts, but have either experienced gun violence firsthand or who have siblings who have committed gun violence.

Over a ten week period, four ChildSavers therapists will work with two cohorts of students at River City Middle School. Six weeks in, the cohorts are not only receiving therapeutic services, but are also serving as a work group to help the city create specific deliverables and actions to address the crisis of youth gun violence.

**Giving Tuesday Goals Exceeded - Again and Again**

We started Giving Tuesday with a matching goal of $11,500 and you surpassed it by noon. Then, another matching donor challenged us to raise $25,000 by midnight, and you rose to the challenge.

On Giving Tuesday, 100+ donors collectively raised $63,791 - our most successful giving day in history! These donors are new and long-time supporters, educators, community leaders, friends, family, former staff, current staff, and clients.

On November 30, our office was filled with cheers, happy tears, and gratitude for the 100+ donors who gave, as well as our matchers: Wind River Chimes, Judy & David Pahren, Anke & Russ Jackson, Tamra & Jeffrey Wilt, Ginny & Riker Purcell, Joyalin & L. Robert Bolling, and Brown, Edwards & Company, LLP.

**Children’s Holiday Party To-Go**

Each year, our community gathers to create a safe space to celebrate the holidays. For the second year, we pivoted to a Party To-Go. In addition to receiving warm boxed meals, children took home healthy recipes, art kits, hygiene items, and a new toy.

Thank you to our financial sponsors: Davenport & Co., Starbucks at Winterfield, Richmond Christmas Mother Fund, Williams Mullen, The Mt Carmel Baptist Church, and Blue Edge Capital.

This party is also possible because of countless in-kind donors and volunteers. Thank you for making this holiday season bright.
### Year-to-Year Impact

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>July - December 2020</th>
<th>July - December 2021</th>
<th>Comparison</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Children connected to early care programs</strong></td>
<td>25,767</td>
<td>27,421</td>
<td>+7.6%</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Children participating in mental health services</strong></td>
<td>481</td>
<td>571</td>
<td>+18.5%</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Adults participating in early care trainings</strong></td>
<td>1,500</td>
<td>2,252</td>
<td>+50.1%</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Adults participating in trauma &amp; resiliency trainings</strong></td>
<td>1,424</td>
<td>2,243</td>
<td>+57.9%</td>
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</tbody>
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**ChildSavers**

200 North 22nd Street  
Richmond, VA 23223

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Artwork created by ChildSavers client  
with caregiver consent