OUR VOICE

2025 -26 Annual Report



Together, we inspire hope, healing, and safety.

A LETTER FROM THE DIRECTOR

Greetings Fellow Change Makers,

The world feels really heavy right now, with news of sexual violence and human trafficking dominating our screens and little meaningful and transparent accountability taking place. It is easy to get discouraged, and it is important to let ourselves grieve the pain that so many survivors are feeling, and yet we cannot let it stop us from continuing to work hard to end the violence. Just by reading this report I know that you care about survivors and want our community to be a safe place for all. When I start to feel weighed down by the heaviness of our work I think about the audacious hope that our founders had to start this organization. In 1974 Our Voice was created by a group of survivors who were enraged by the status quo of how prevalent sexual violence in our community was, and how little support there was for survivors. When I ground myself in the fact that in 1974 women just won the right to have credit cards, and pregnant people just won the right to not be fired due to their pregnancy it really reminds me that the creation of our beloved organization require a lot of audacious hope. It was not born from an easy fight, or a belief that systems would want to change but survivors showing up to support each other. People being willing to answer a crisis line to make sure that no survivor felt alone. Volunteers being willing to have hard conversations about what consent is, and how we prevent sexual violence from happening in the first place.

We have changed a lot since our humble roots and grown into an organization that survivors and systems trust to be experts on sexual violence, and yet the fight continues. All of us at Our Voice dream of a day where our organization can sunset because we are no longer needed and everyone in our community is safe from sexual violence. Until that day, we will continue in our mission of making sure that no survivor who reaches out feels alone, and that we continue to work to ensure that there is a broad understanding of how we all can be in more healthy relationships with one another.

I am so proud of the work that we are doing, and so honored to work with such a fantastic team of passionate individuals every day who make space for the hard work but also the strength we get to see in survivors every day. This past year we served more survivors than the year before, and while we are sad that our services were necessary for so many people we are grateful for the trust that survivors put in us. I, as a survivor, know how hard it is to unearth the worst moments of someone's life and tell them to another person, and this work is truly sacred to be able to watch someone move from that dark place to a place of healing. We cannot do this work alone and we are so grateful for our community's support.



Rita Nugent, *Executive Director*

TOGETHER, WE CREATE A COMMUNITY WHERE SURVIVORS CAN BEGIN TO HEAL



Communities are defined not only by what they build, but by how they care for one another during life's most difficult moments.

Every day, survivors of sexual violence and human trafficking in Western North Carolina make the courageous decision to reach out for help. When they do, they deserve more than a response. They deserve a community that believes them, walks beside them, and invests in their healing.

That is the role Our Voice plays.

Through advocacy, counseling, prevention education, and partnerships, Our Voice helps transform compassion into action. We stand beside survivors during moments of crisis, educate thousands of community members to prevent future violence, and strengthen the network of people and organizations committed to creating safer communities.

None of this happens alone. It is made possible by volunteers who answer late night calls, community partners who open their doors, sponsors and donors who invest in our mission, and advocates who work tirelessly every day to ensure that no survivor has to navigate their journey alone.



This annual report is a reflection of what is possible when a community chooses to stand together. Every number represents a life touched. Every partnership represents a door opened. Every gift represents hope. Together, we are creating a community where survivors can heal, where prevention is possible, and where every person knows they are not alone.

Every year, more and more people reach out to Our Voice for support. Behind every counseling appointment, hospital visit, phone call, or classroom presentation is a person whose life has been touched by sexual violence or human trafficking. Their stories are all different, but each begins the same way: with someone choosing to ask for help.

WORKING WITH OUR COMMUNITY TO SUPPORT SURVIVORS

A survivor builds the courage to reach out and ask for support.

And they are met with a voice that says, "we hear you, and we believe you. We are here to support you."



Direct Services

Advocates and Volunteers Alongside Survivors

A volunteer answers the crisis line. An advocate meets a survivor during a forensic exam, accompanies them to court, helps coordinate safe shelter, assists with housing, connects them with legal protections, or simply stays beside them during one of the hardest moments of their life. Every response is different because every survivor's needs are different.

Survivors often need support that extends far beyond any one service. Safety and healing can depend on access to healthcare, legal advocacy, housing, transportation, financial resources, and other forms of support, often at the same time. By strengthening relationships with organizations and systems across Western North Carolina, Our Voice helps create a more connected community response, reducing barriers and making it easier for survivors to access the support they need. The impact of these partnerships is felt in the moments when a survivor receives a forensic exam with an advocate beside them, finds a safe place to stay, accesses services in their own language, or is connected to resources that help them move forward.

"I don't know how to begin thanking you for everything you have done for me over the past four months. You have literally helped me change the trajectory of my life for the better. Thank you for being super heroes."

Anonymous Survivor and recipient of Our Voice Counseling Services

Behind each survivor is an entire community working together. During the past year, Our Voice strengthened partnerships with hospitals, law enforcement, attorneys, community agencies, and regional human trafficking partners while continuing to facilitate multidisciplinary Rapid Response Teams across Buncombe, McDowell, and Transylvania Counties. Specialized training in emerging trends, immigration protections, and survivor advocacy ensured our team remained prepared to meet survivors wherever they are.

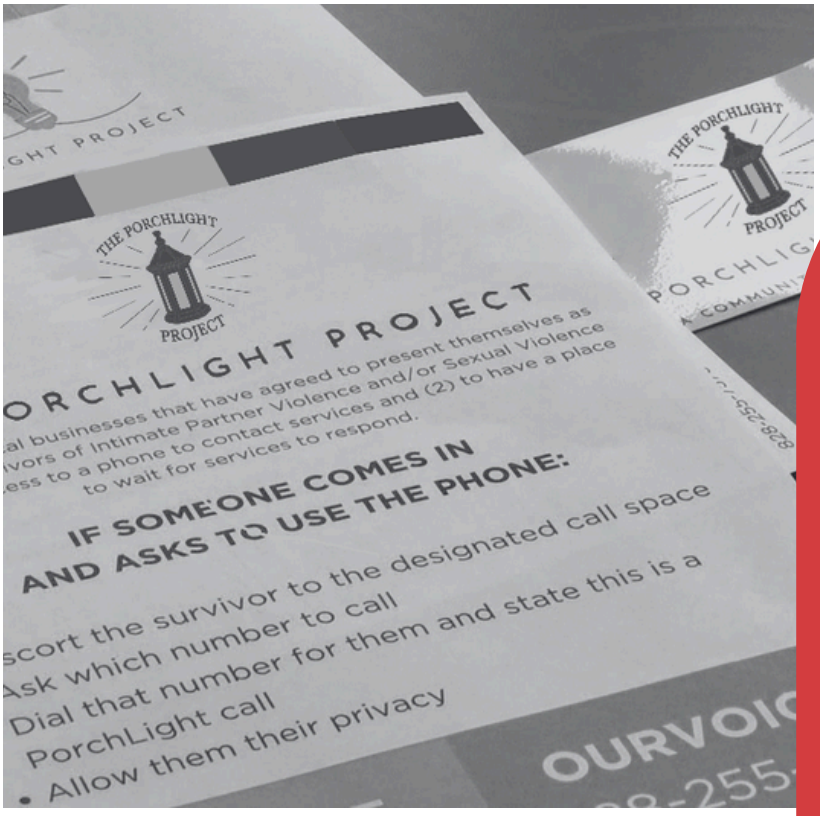
Because when a community invests in survivors, everyone is stronger.

OUR COMMUNITY IMPACT

"It only takes one survivor walking through your door to be worth the effort to become a porchlight partner."

Becky Lloyd, *Founder and CEO of Signs for Hope*





The PorchLight Project, in partnership with Helpmate, continued to grow as a network of businesses and organizations offering welcoming spaces where survivors can access information and resources. Expansion into neighboring counties is helping build a broader regional network of survivor support.

55 Agency Partnerships

600 Meals Provided to Survivors (Food Connections)

5 Community Prevention Trainings

13 Businesses Trained in Prevention

47 Agencies Trained in Prevention

7 School Prevention Partnerships

15 Human Trafficking Trainings

78 Porchlight Partnerships

SUPPORTING SURVIVORS EVERY STEP OF THE WAY

Counseling

Once the crisis ends, healing can begin

The immediate crisis may pass, but healing is a journey that unfolds over time. After survivors have taken the courageous first step of reaching out, Our Voice provides free, confidential, trauma-informed counseling that empowers each person to heal at their own pace.

This year, our Counseling Department continued expanding access to care by bringing services directly into community settings and increasing opportunities for survivors who might otherwise face significant barriers to receiving support. Through individual counseling, support groups, and specialized programming, Our Voice remained committed to ensuring that healing is accessible to every survivor, regardless of their circumstances. The department also invested in advanced clinical training, strengthening the quality of care provided to survivors across a variety of settings.



"To witness this group of survivors begin healing from trauma they had carried for decades was an honor. They arrived feeling invisible and left feeling seen, supported, and no longer alone in their healing"

Natalie B., Director of Counseling Services

One example of this commitment was the launch of a trauma processing group for incarcerated survivors of sexual violence. For nearly every participant, it was the first time they had ever been given the opportunity to address the sexual trauma they had carried throughout their lives. Many entered the group overwhelmed by the thought of talking about their experiences. By the final session of the first round, participants expressed gratitude not only for the healing they had begun, but for being seen, heard, and treated with dignity. Many shared that they had long felt invisible and forgotten, and that having someone bring services directly to them reminded them they still mattered. Their courage to confront years of unspoken trauma is a powerful reminder that healing is possible when survivors are met with compassion, safety, and unwavering support.

As we look ahead, Our Voice remains committed to removing barriers to care, expanding community-based services, and reaching survivors wherever they are so that every person has the opportunity to heal with dignity, hope, and support.

STOPPING VIOLENCE BEFORE IT STARTS

Prevention

Creating safer communities for tomorrow.

While advocates and counselors walk beside today's survivors, prevention educators are working to ensure tomorrow's stories are different.

Prevention begins by helping people recognize violence, understand healthy relationships, and know how to respond when someone needs help. Through education in schools, colleges, businesses, law enforcement agencies, and community organizations, Our Voice equips youth, professionals, and community members with knowledge and tools to create safer communities. This year, that work grew through youth leadership initiatives, expanded college campus programming, bystander intervention, healthy relationship education, and specialized programs addressing human trafficking, sexual harassment, and drug-facilitated sexual assault. Our Voice also shared its prevention curricula with other organizations, helping partners build their own capacity to bring this work into the communities they serve.

I am thankful for the information I learned today. I feel more knowledgable. The prevention training opened up the horizon of things trafficking truly are versus the idea of it.

Anonymous Training Attendee

Together, our efforts build prevention at multiple levels, strengthening individual knowledge, professional response, community awareness, and collaboration.



Our Voice provided Human Trafficking 101 training to the Woodfin Police Department, and the impact was immediate. Officers on scene recognized indicators of trafficking, contacted Our Voice, and connected a potential survivor with support. This partnership is a powerful example of what can happen when education becomes awareness, awareness becomes action, and a community is prepared to respond.



LOOKING AHEAD

Looking ahead, Our Voice is focused on strengthening the organizational capacity and financial sustainability needed to meet the evolving needs of our community. That means investing in our people, building more diverse and sustainable funding, and continuing to listen and adapt as our region changes.

Our goal is not simply to grow, but to grow with purpose, protecting the quality and accessibility of the services survivors rely on today while building a strong foundation for the future.

BY THE NUMBERS

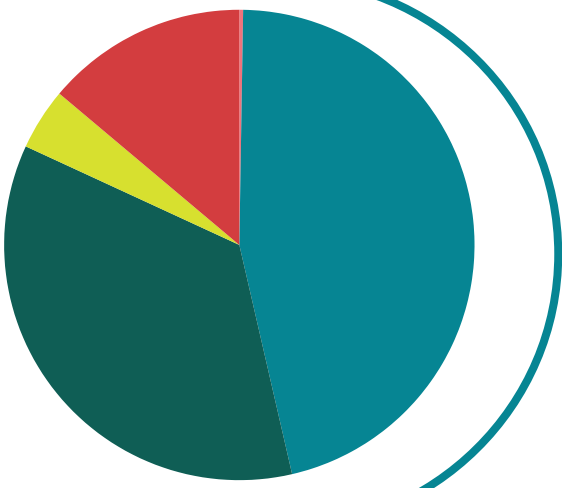
- **3** Counties Served
- **1923** Crisis Line Calls Answered
- **11** Legal Advocacy Provided
- **13** Forensic Exams Supported
- **676** Total Counseling Sessions Provided
- **172** Survivors Received Counseling
- **136** Homeless Survivors Supported
- **40** Support Groups Led
- **90** Bilingual Clients served
- **667** Adult Prevention Education Participants
- **406** Youth Prevention Education Participants
- **58** Human Trafficking Survivors Supported
- **4197** Volunteer Hours Logged

FINANCIAL STEWARDSHIP

How did we steward community investment?

Every number represents a person who found support, a student who learned about consent, a bartender trained to recognize trafficking, or a donor who chose to invest in a safer community. Together, these numbers tell the story of a community showing up for survivors.

That community support became especially important this year as Our Voice navigated the loss of more than $100,000 in federal funding to support critical survivor services. In a changing funding landscape, unrestricted contributions from individuals, businesses, sponsors, and community partners provided essential flexibility, helping Our Voice continue to offer free services while responding to emerging needs and investing in the long-term strength of the organization. This support helped sustain the continuum of care survivors depend on, from crisis response and advocacy to counseling, human trafficking services, and prevention education.

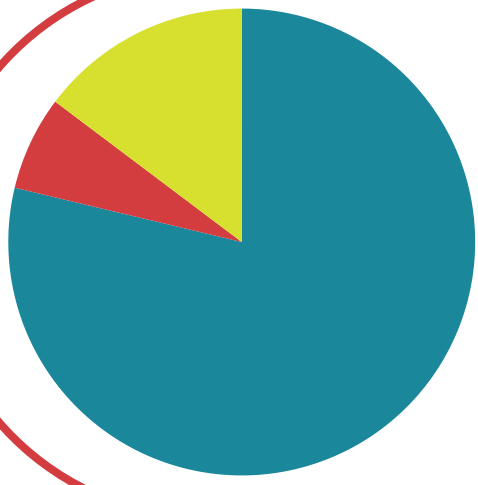


Revenue

- Federal + State: $639,004
- Other Grants: $491,464
- Event Fundraising: $58,838
- Contributions: $192,102
- Program Income: $3,595

Expenses

- Payroll: $866,671
- Program Expenses: $71,898
- Operating Expenses: $162,168



COMMUNITY POWERED CHANGE

Financial stewardship at Our Voice means using every resource with intention while building a funding model that can sustain this work into the future. This year, our community responded with extraordinary generosity, strengthening unrestricted support and demonstrating that the responsibility for supporting survivors does not belong to any single funding source. It belongs to all of us. As public funding becomes less predictable, a diverse and engaged community of donors, foundations, businesses, and partners is increasingly important to ensuring that survivors can continue to access services at no cost, whenever they need them. We can't do this work alone, and we are grateful for the support of the following partners, grantors, and donors.

COMMUNITY PARTNERS

Corporate Partners

Antidote Chemist Spirits
Apotheca Cannabis
Bebop Bottle Shop
Blooms of Kindness
Burial Beer Co
Charmed Boutique
The Crow & Quill
Del Vicchios Italian
Gan Shan Neighborhood Asian
Ginger's Revenge
Hillman Beer
iHeart Radio Asheville
Lookout Brewing Co
Low Down
Maurices
Oak and Grist Distilling Company
Olde London Road
One World Brewing
Pawsitivity Pet Spa
Pisgah Brewing Company
Potential New Boyfriend
Riverside Rhapsody Beer Company
Scheffer Group
The Crow & Quill
The Flying Squirrel
The Golden Pineapple
The Mule
The Odd
The Wedge Brewing
The Whale Asheville
Zillicoah Beer Company

Corporate Sponsors

Advent Health
Alfie Loans
Asheville Proper
Asset Marketing Brokers
BrownHaven Homes
Everyday Gourmet
First Bank
Givens Foundation
HCA/ Mission Hospital
HomeTrust Bank
Hummingbird Salon, Montford
iHeart Media Asheville
Leah B. Noel, CPA
Legacy Bookkeeping
Legerton Architecture
Morris Business Solutions
Mosaic Community Lifestyle Realty
Rug & Home
Scorch Fitness
Sineath Construction
Tag.d
Tops for Shoes
Work Nouveau

GRANTORS + FUNDERS

Rape Prevention Education
Division of Women and Youth
Governors' Crime Commission
North Carolina Commission Against Sexual Assault (NCCASA)
Sexual Assault Services Program
Dogwood Health Trust
Impact Health (Healthy Opportunities Pilot)
Sisters of Mercy
Tzedek Social Justice Fund
Buncombe County
Asheville ARPA (Us Dept of Treasury)
Hunter Hometown Foundation
Mercy Mountain Foundation

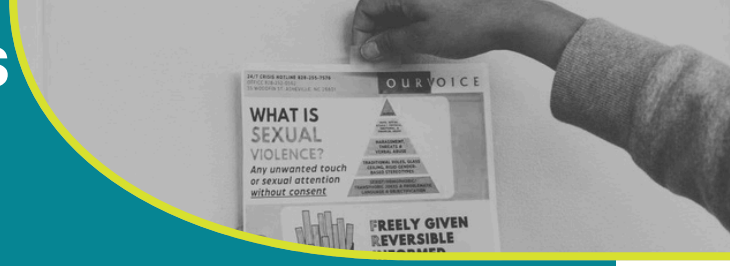
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If you or someone you know needs support, Our Voice's *24/7 crisis line* is always available at (828) 255-7576.



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