



# Annual Report 2017

# 2017 Board of Directors

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Shannon Rushing  
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Brian Thomma  
Bette White  
Lesa Wilson  
Shane Wilson

# Staff

## Administration

Heather Ward, Executive Director  
Lindsey Morris, Executive Assistant  
Jacob Bridgeman, Operations Manager  
Susan Williams, Grant Writer

## Hope House

Monica Escobedo  
Jennifer Dube  
Rosy Guerra  
Abigail Dauphin  
Bethany Bradley

## Family Enrichment Services

Belinda Braly  
Melissa Ward  
Marcy Ash  
Sierra Mullan  
Matt Groth

## CASA

Shirley Davis  
Rachel Hoelscher  
Connie Gauwain  
Kalih Martinez  
Vanessa Hayes  
Rebekah Beltran

## Community Engagement

Leann Forbes  
Morgan Tuttle  
Melody Jeter

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# THE MISSION

of the Children's Advocacy Center of Tom Green County, Inc. is to ensure that every child in our community has a safe and nurturing home. As an umbrella agency, the Children's Advocacy Center of Tom Green County, Inc. houses six programs: Hope House, Court Appointed Special Advocates, Family Enrichment Services, Child Fatality Review Team, Concho Valley Family Alliance, and the Strengthening Child Welfare Continuum Group. While each program is separate and unique, they all work together to protect children and strengthen families in our community.



# The Beginning

Twenty-five years ago, only two volunteers made up the staff of the Children's Advocacy Center of Tom Green County, Inc. (CAC). The CAC began serving children through the Hope House program by offering child abuse victims and non-offending caregivers a warm, home-like environment and utilizing a child-friendly, multidisciplinary approach throughout the investigation, prosecution, and healing process. Recognizing the efficiency and the numerous quality, communication, and economic benefits of housing a full range of community-driven programs under one roof, the Board of Directors continued expanding the services to develop the umbrella organization that exists today.



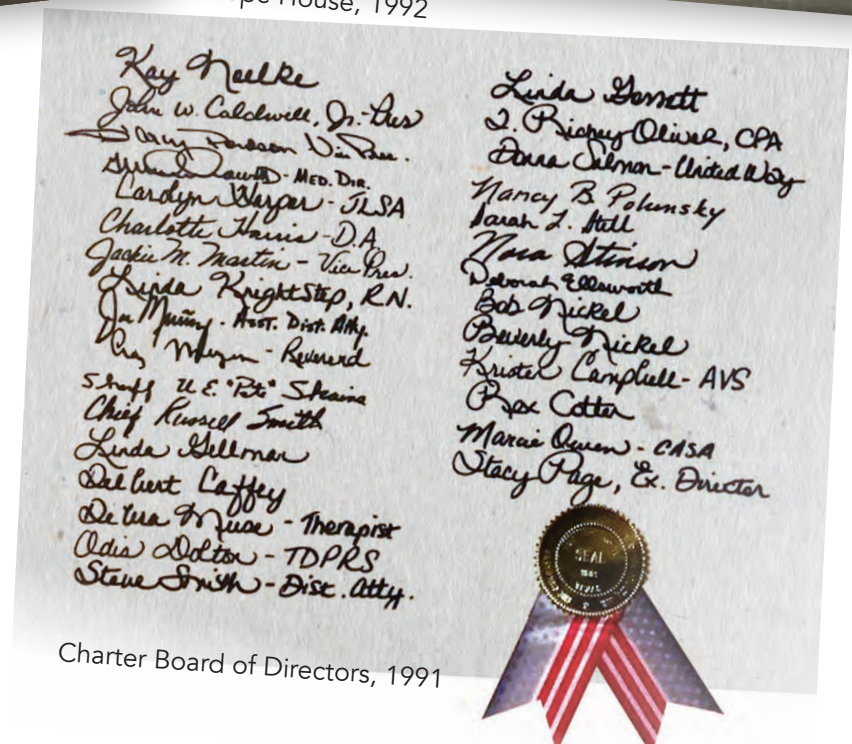
Stacy Page, Executive Director, 1992



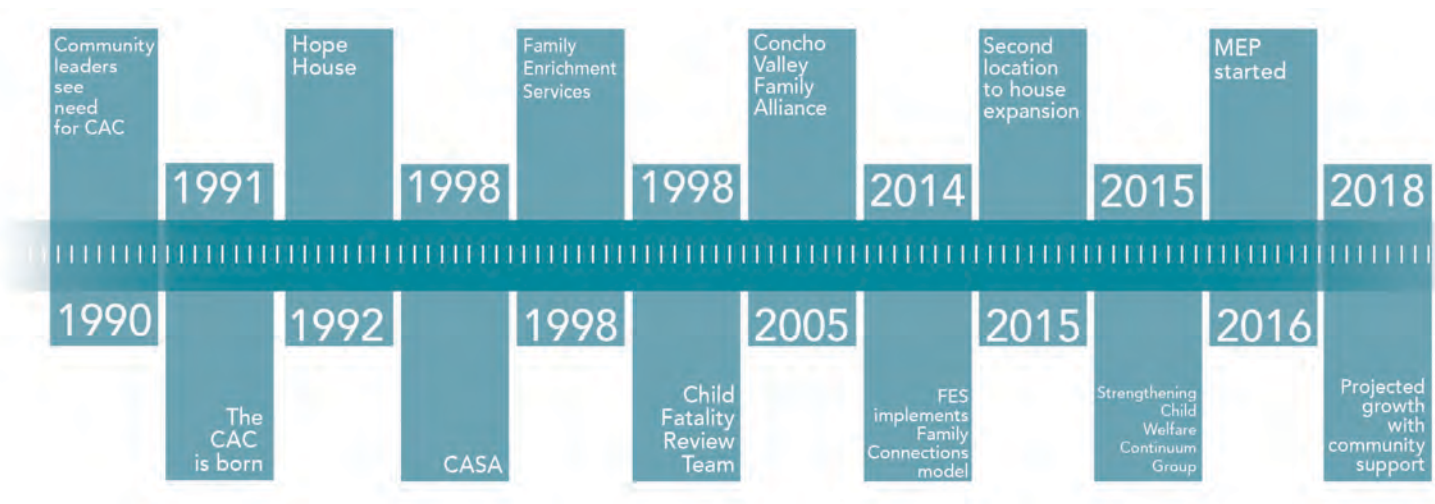
Hope House, 1992



Texas Governor George W. Bush signs CAC model into statute, establishing CAC's as a best practice, 1995.



Charter Board of Directors, 1991



- 1990** - Kay Noelke and Jackie Martin see a need for a Children's Advocacy Center in San Angelo, Texas.
- 1991** - Articles of Incorporation are filed with the State of Texas and 501(c)(3) non-profit status is granted to the Children's Advocacy Center of Tom Green County, Inc.
- 1992** - The first child is interviewed at Hope House.
- 1998** - The Court Appointed Special Advocates (CASA) program joins the CAC, ensuring abused and neglected children's best interests are voiced when their futures are being decided by a court of law.
- 1998** - Family Enrichment Services (FES) is created to offer a whole-family approach to strengthening families in Tom Green and surrounding counties.
- 1998** - The Child Fatality Review Team (CFRT) is added to the CAC. The team reviews all child fatalities with the goal of reducing the number of preventable deaths.
- 2005** - The Concho Valley Family Alliance (CVFA) is created by the CAC to engage the community in building stronger families.
- 2014** - Family Enrichment Services (FES) implements Family Connections, an evidence-based, nationally replicated social work model.
- 2015** - Legislative changes expand the role of Hope House and additional staff are hired. The staff outgrows the Koberlin location and leases a second location.
- 2015** - Strengthening Child Welfare Continuum Group was created with the hopes of strengthening the child welfare system by evaluating policies and filling gaps.
- 2016** - Hope House implements the Multidisciplinary Enhancement Project (MEP) and begins reviewing the statewide child abuse hotline for Reagan and Tom Green counties, ensuring no child or family slips through the cracks and receives every service they deserve.
- 2018** - Hope House is eligible to add additional counties to the Multidisciplinary Enhancement Project (MEP) with community support and space.





## **Hope House**

**Every child. Every effort. Every service.**

Hope House provides services to victims of child abuse and neglect, including forensic interviews, case coordination, and therapy services on behalf of law enforcement and Child Protective Services (CPS). The services are critical for the investigation, criminal prosecution, justice, and the healing process for the child and family.

Historically, the process used to respond to outcries of abuse and neglect generated numerous issues such as excessive interviews of child victims, the inability to obtain appropriate legal evidence, and lack of communication among involved individuals and agencies. Recognizing the need to serve children more efficiently and help the families rebuild their lives as quickly as possible, the Hope House Multidisciplinary Team (MDT) developed a cooperative approach to the investigation of child abuse and neglect. Hope House staff coordinates and reviews each child's case with local, state, and federal law enforcement, medical personnel, CPS, district attorneys, and therapists.

Hope House ensures every child receives the hope, healing, and life-changing services they so rightly deserve.<sup>1</sup>

### **Counties Served**

Coke, Concho, Crockett, Irion, Kimble, McCulloch, Menard, Reagan,  
Runnels, Schleicher, Sterling, Sutton, and Tom Green

### **Multidisciplinary Team (MDT)**

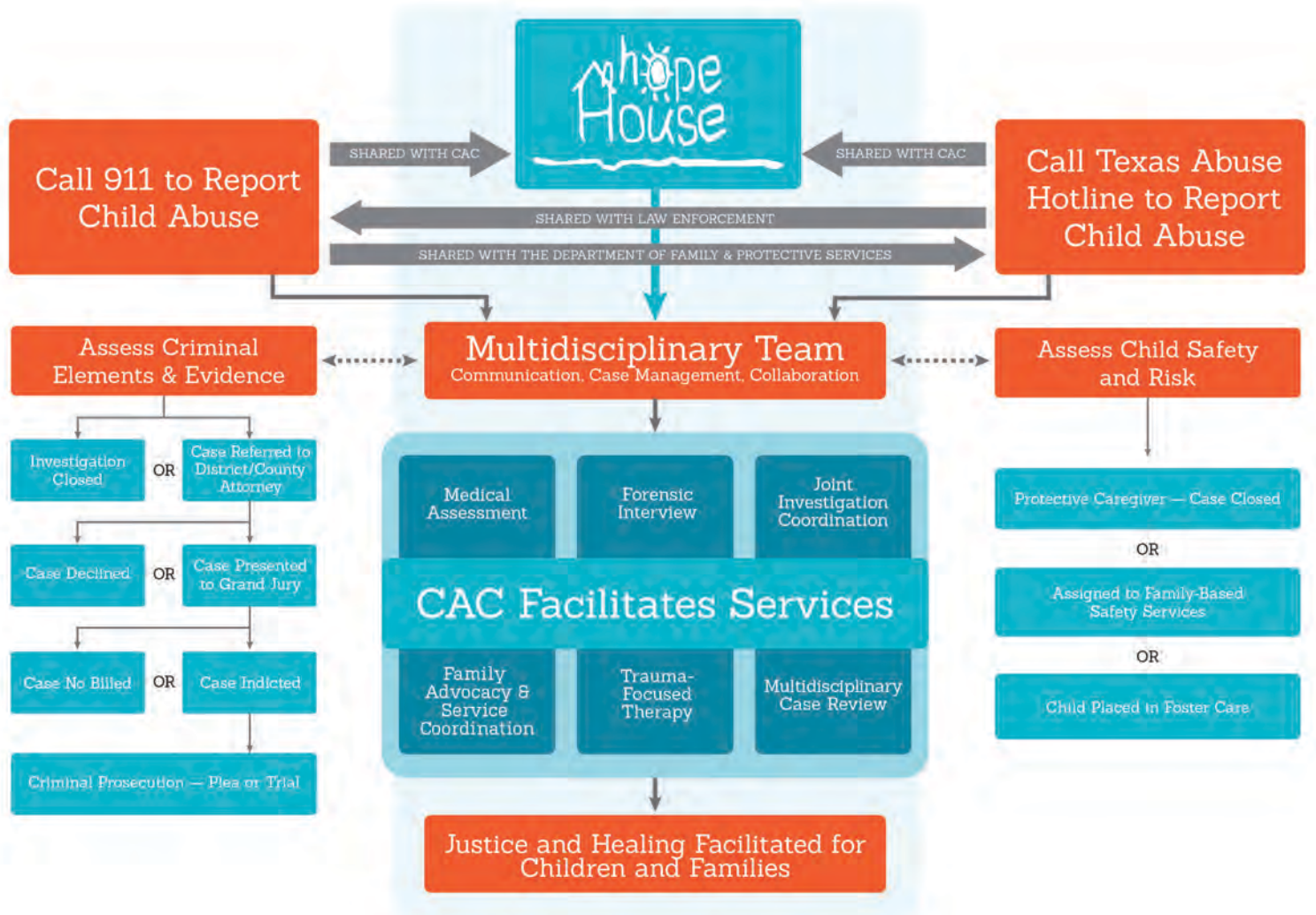
- 51st, 112th & 119th District Attorney's Office
- Child Protective Services
- Hope House Family Advocates
- Hope House Forensic Interviewers
- Hope House Intake Coordinators
- Reagan County Sheriff's Office
- San Angelo Police Department
- Shannon Hospital SANE Program
- Tom Green County Sheriff's Office
- West Texas Counseling Associates



### Fiscal Year 2017 Data:

- 1,628 intakes reviewed and coordinated from Tom Green and Reagan counties
- 604 children received direct services, which included forensic interviews, therapy, and/or case management.

## Follow a Child Through the Hope House Journey





### Fiscal Year 2017 Data:

- 101 CASA volunteers served 532 children
- CASA volunteers donated over 4,364 hours and traveled approximately 21,573 miles

## CASA

### Giving a Voice to Children in Care

The Court Appointed Special Advocates program speaks for the best interests of abused or neglected children whose home will be determined by a court of law.

When home is no longer safe and a child enters the foster care system, a judge may appoint a committed volunteer called a CASA. The CASA volunteer stands beside the child throughout their journey to provide hope and help guide the child to a safe and permanent home.

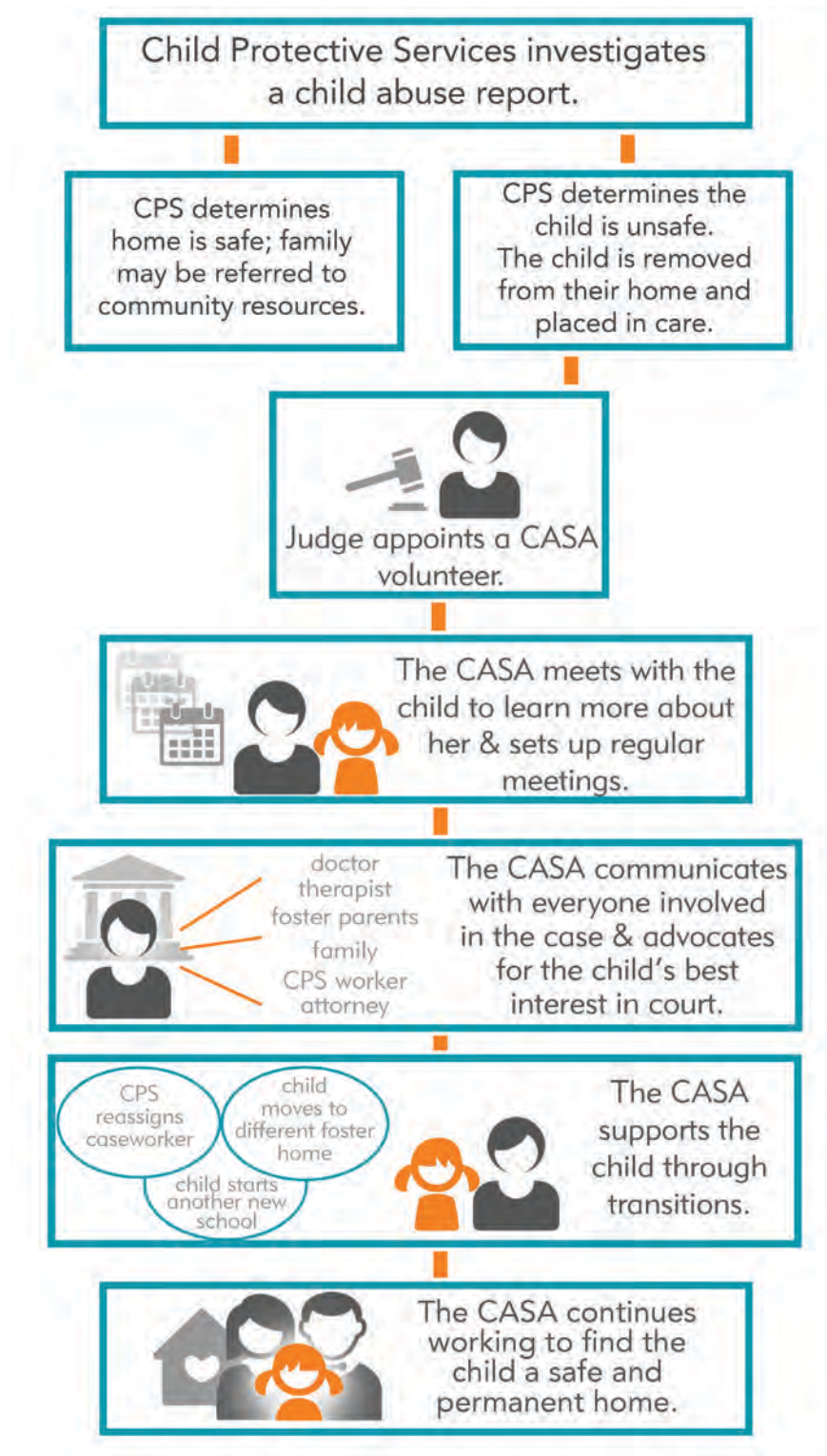
### Counties Served

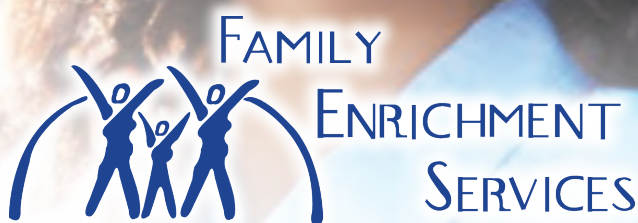
Coke, Concho, Crockett, Irion, Runnels, Reagan, Schleicher, Sterling, Sutton, and Tom Green





# Follow a Child Through the CASA Journey





## Family Enrichment Services

### Building Stronger Families

Family Enrichment Services (FES) understands that parenting is not easy, and we all need help from time to time. FES provides services to build stronger families in Tom Green, Concho, and Runnels counties through two free programs.

**Circle of Parents** is a national network of non-profit organizations and parent leaders who use the mutual self-help support group model as a means of preventing child abuse and neglect to strengthen families. This weekly support group is led by trained facilitators and parent leaders. As a free program, it gives anyone in a parenting role the opportunity to find and share support by discussing the successes and challenges of raising children. Through open conversations, parents are able to leave weekly meetings with new strategies for creating solutions at home. Circle of Parents meetings reinforce positive parenting by letting parents know their behavior and family dynamics are typical and providing reassurance that the challenges parents face are neither unique nor unsolvable to their family. The program further assists caregivers by offering a children's group simultaneous to the adult meeting. Circle of Parents is an ongoing group, allowing individuals to attend as frequently as desired.<sup>5</sup>

### Research shows Circle of Parents strengthens families by:

- Improving communication
- Improving problem-solving skills
- Linking parents to resources in the community and within the group

### Counties Served

Concho, Runnels, and Tom Green





**Fiscal Year 2017 Data:**

- 571 individuals assessed and referred to services
- 371 children and families received home visits, case management, and participated in weekly support groups
- FES staff spent 2,247 hours with 831 face-to-face contact through home, community, or office visits

**The Parent Mentor Program** is for anyone seeking parenting tips or guidance. This model utilizes a community-based, empowerment approach that works with families in their homes and in the context of their neighborhoods to help parents meet the basic needs of children and prevent child maltreatment. For over twenty years, research regarding the Family Connections Model has shown individualized family intervention is geared to increase protective factors, decrease risk factors, and target child safety, well-being, and permanency outcomes. Using assessment-driven, individualized interventions and resources, case managers meet with families weekly to help identify and build upon the family’s strengths and needs. A tailored service plan is created for each family to assess progress throughout their journey. In order to maintain fidelity, case managers are limited to seeing 10 families on a weekly basis for 9 months.<sup>6</sup>

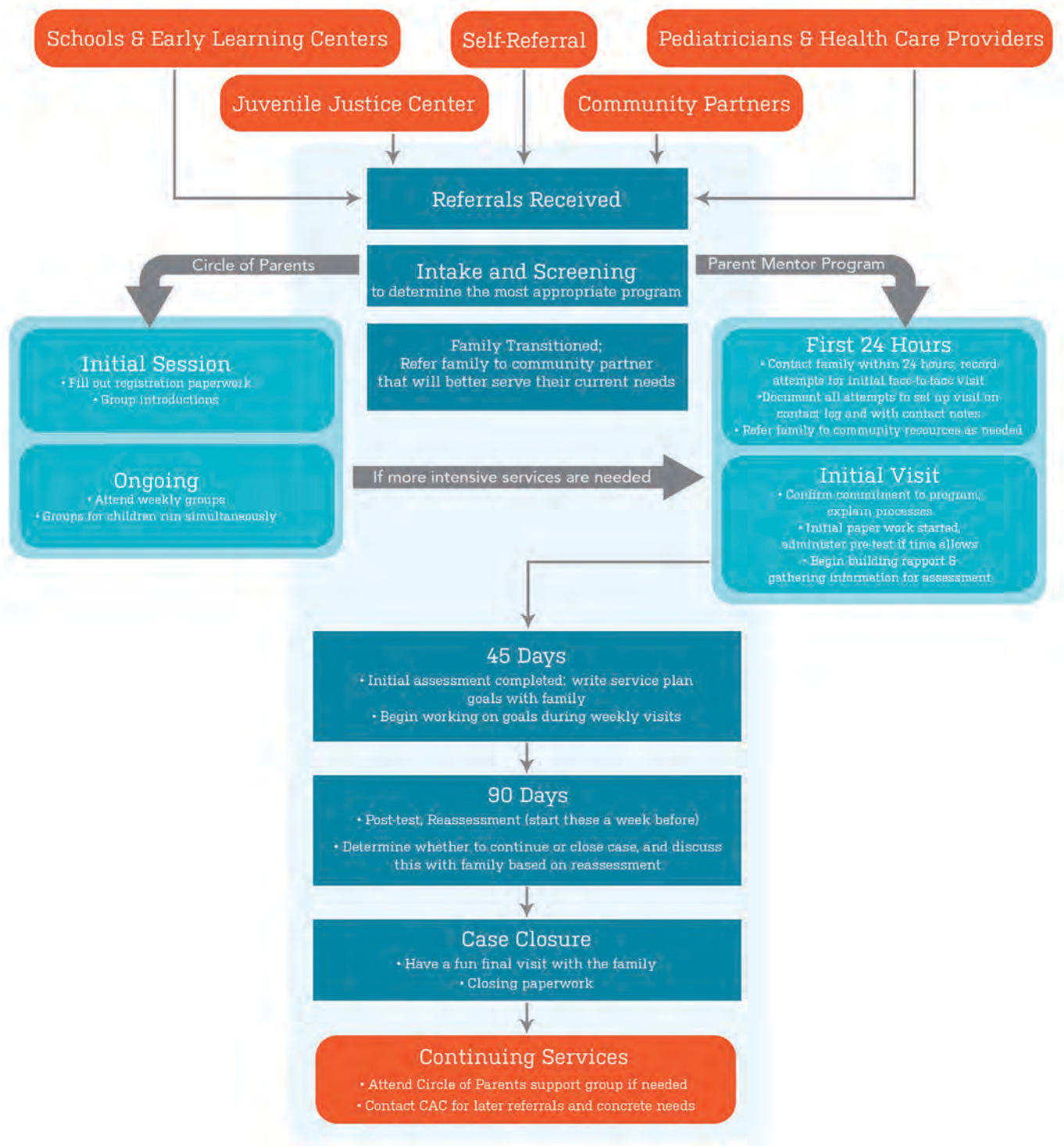
**Increase protective factors by:**

- Promoting supportive caregiver-child relationships
- Increasing the use of positive discipline methods
- Increasing supervision by the caregiver
- Improving the coping strategies of caregivers
- Promoting social support and community connections
- Promoting spirituality, cultural roots, and economic stability

**Decrease risk factors by:**

- Reducing the caregiver’s mental and physical health problems
- Reducing the child’s behavioral, mental, and physical health problems
- Reducing family conflict
- Reducing social isolation
- Helping families reduce poverty
- Reducing community violence
- Reducing incidents of child abuse and neglect
- Increasing child well-being

# Follow a Family Through the Family Enrichment Services Journey







## Concho Valley Family Alliance

### Building a Unified Community to Strengthen Families

The Concho Valley Family Alliance (CVFA) is a coalition comprised of parents, agencies, business leaders, churches, and other community residents steadfast in the mission of building a unified community to strengthen families. Since its inception in 2005, CVFA has modified and established programs and initiatives aimed at better meeting the needs of families and children.

#### Initiatives Have Included:

- The annual Pinwheel Ceremony on the courthouse lawn with over 500 children and adults present.
- The annual Picnic in the Park to engage and strengthen families and bring awareness to community resources, with over 1,000 children and adults present.
- Design and implementation of the Parent Mentor home visiting program.
- Active participation in the Concho Valley Transit District bus route redesign to meet the needs of children and families.
- Host of “Meth in the Family” town hall meetings to raise awareness and engage the community in developing local solutions.

## Concho Valley Family Alliance Members

- |  |   |   |
|--|---|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 211 Texas</li> <li>• Alcohol and Drug Abuse Council of the Concho Valley</li> <li>• Angelo State University</li> <li>• Child Protective Services</li> <li>• Children’s Emergency Shelter</li> <li>• Concho Valley Home for Girls</li> <li>• Concho Valley VISTA</li> <li>• Concho Valley Workforce</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Goodfellow Air Force Base</li> <li>• High Sky Children’s Ranch</li> <li>• La Esperanza Clinic</li> <li>• Legal Aid of Northwest Texas</li> <li>• Maximus/Medicaid</li> <li>• MHMR Concho Valley</li> <li>• Open Arms Rape Crisis Center and LGBT Services</li> <li>• San Angelo Fire Department</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• San Angelo ISD</li> <li>• San Angelo ISD Headstart</li> <li>• Shannon Medical Center</li> <li>• Southgate Church of Christ</li> <li>• Texas Health Steps</li> <li>• Tom Green County Juvenile Probation Department</li> <li>• United Way of the Concho Valley</li> <li>• West Texas Counseling Associates</li> <li>• Youth Advocate Program</li> </ul> |
|--|---|---|



CHILD FATALITY  
REVIEW TEAM

## Child Fatality Review Team

### Preventing Child Fatalities in the Concho Valley

The goal of the Child Fatality Review Team (CFRT) is to improve the response to child fatalities in a 13-county region. A multidisciplinary, multi-agency team reviews all child deaths, regardless of cause, and strives to identify gaps in services designed to protect children. The team focuses on reducing the number of preventable child deaths by establishing reporting guidelines, looking for trends, and dispersing awareness materials to the community.

### Recent Campaign Initiatives Include:

- "Don't Text and Drive"
- "Anchor It"- Preventing TV tip overs
- Co-sleeping endangerment
- All-terrain vehicle safety
- Gun safety

### Child Fatality Review Team Members

- 112th District Attorney's Office
- 119th District Attorney's Office
- 51st District Attorney's Office
- Angelo State University
- Compassionate Friends
- DPS State Trooper
- Early Childhood Intervention
- Goodfellow Air Force Base
- Justice of the Peace, Prct. 4
- Reagan County Sheriff's Department
- Safe Kids Coalition
- San Angelo ISD
- San Angelo Police Department
- Shannon Clinic
- Shannon Medical Center
- Texas Department of Public Safety Victim Services
- Texas Department of State Health Services
- Texas Rangers
- Tom Green County Sheriff's Office
- Wall ISD



## Strengthening Child Welfare Continuum

### Strengthening the Local Child Welfare System

The Strengthening Child Welfare Continuum Group is a partnership created to build a better continuum of services. This community coalition evaluates practices and policies to inform local and statewide efforts and fill gaps, ensuring that children are safe, families are strong, and communities are resilient.

### Roundtable Discussions Have Evaluated:

- Children's mental health services
- One Voice Texas child welfare policy and practice continuum
- Child abuse prevention continuum
- Foster care and faith-based efforts

### Strengthening Child Welfare Continuum Group

- 340th Judicial District
- Alcohol and Drug Abuse Council of the Concho Valley
- Angelo State University
- Child Protection Court of the Concho Valley
- Child Protective Services of the Concho Valley
- Children's Hope
- Concho Valley Foster Parents Association
- Concho Valley Workforce
- High Sky Children's Ranch
- La Esperanza Clinic
- MHMR Services
- New Horizons
- One Voice Texas
- Open Arms Rape Crisis Center and LGBT Services
- Private Practice Attorneys
- Representative Drew Darby
- River Crest Hospital
- San Angelo Police Department
- San Angelo Area Foundation
- San Angelo Fire Department
- San Angelo ISD
- Senator Charles Perry
- Texas Department of Family Protective Services
- Tom Green County Juvenile Probation Department
- West Texas Counseling Associates
- West Texas Guidance and Counseling
- West Texas Medical Associates



# Community Education

• **Recognizing & Reporting Child Abuse Training** educates child-serving professionals by utilizing a facilitator and a video-based format. R&R training is statistically proven to make ten children safer for every one adult trained by providing the tools to recognize signs of child abuse, proper reporting protocol, and community services.<sup>8</sup>

• **Multidisciplinary Team (MDT) Trainings** are conducted for the public-private partners. As an accredited member of CAC Texas, the Children's Advocacy Center of Tom Green County hosts regional trainings and connects the team to learning collaboratives for continuing education, skill enhancement, and networking.



**68** MDT members were trained in Advanced MDT Investigative Training and Trauma Focused Cognitive Behavioral Therapy in 2017.

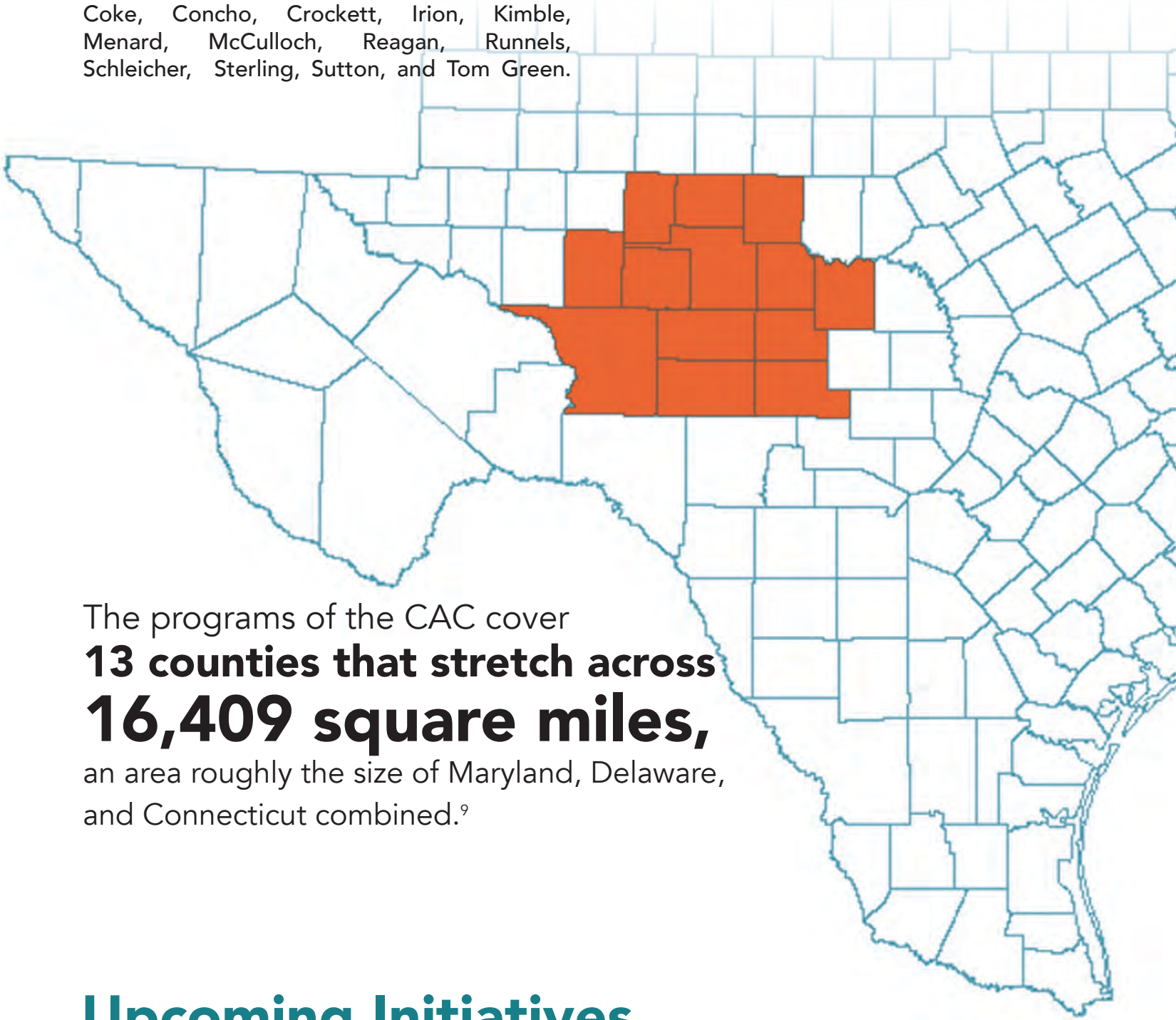
**499** individuals received free training from the CAC in Recognizing and Reporting Child Abuse in 2017.

## Recognizing and Reporting Child Abuse Training

- Angelo State University Student Teachers
- Ballinger ISD
- Bronte ISD
- Brownwood ISD
- Christoval Elementary
- Early Childhood Center
- Eden ISD
- Eldorado ISD
- House of Faith
- Irion County ISD
- Kiddie Korner Day Care and Preschool
- Kids Eat Free
- Kidz R Us Learning Center
- Menard ISD
- Miles ISD
- Mosaic Child Care Center
- New Bridge Shelter
- Ozona ISD
- Paint Rock ISD
- Reagan County ISD
- Region 15 Head Start
- Robert Lee ISD
- SAISD Head Start
- San Angelo Christian Academy
- San Angelo ISD
- San Angelo WIC
- Sierra Vista United Methodist Church
- Sonora ISD
- St. Luke Child Development Center
- Sterling City ISD
- The Family Shelter
- TLCA San Angelo
- Trinity Lutheran School
- Veribest ISD
- Wall ISD
- West Texas Rehabilitation Center
- Winters ISD

# 13 Counties Served

Coke, Concho, Crockett, Irion, Kimble,  
Menard, McCulloch, Reagan, Runnels,  
Schleicher, Sterling, Sutton, and Tom Green.



The programs of the CAC cover  
**13 counties that stretch across  
16,409 square miles,**  
an area roughly the size of Maryland, Delaware,  
and Connecticut combined.<sup>9</sup>

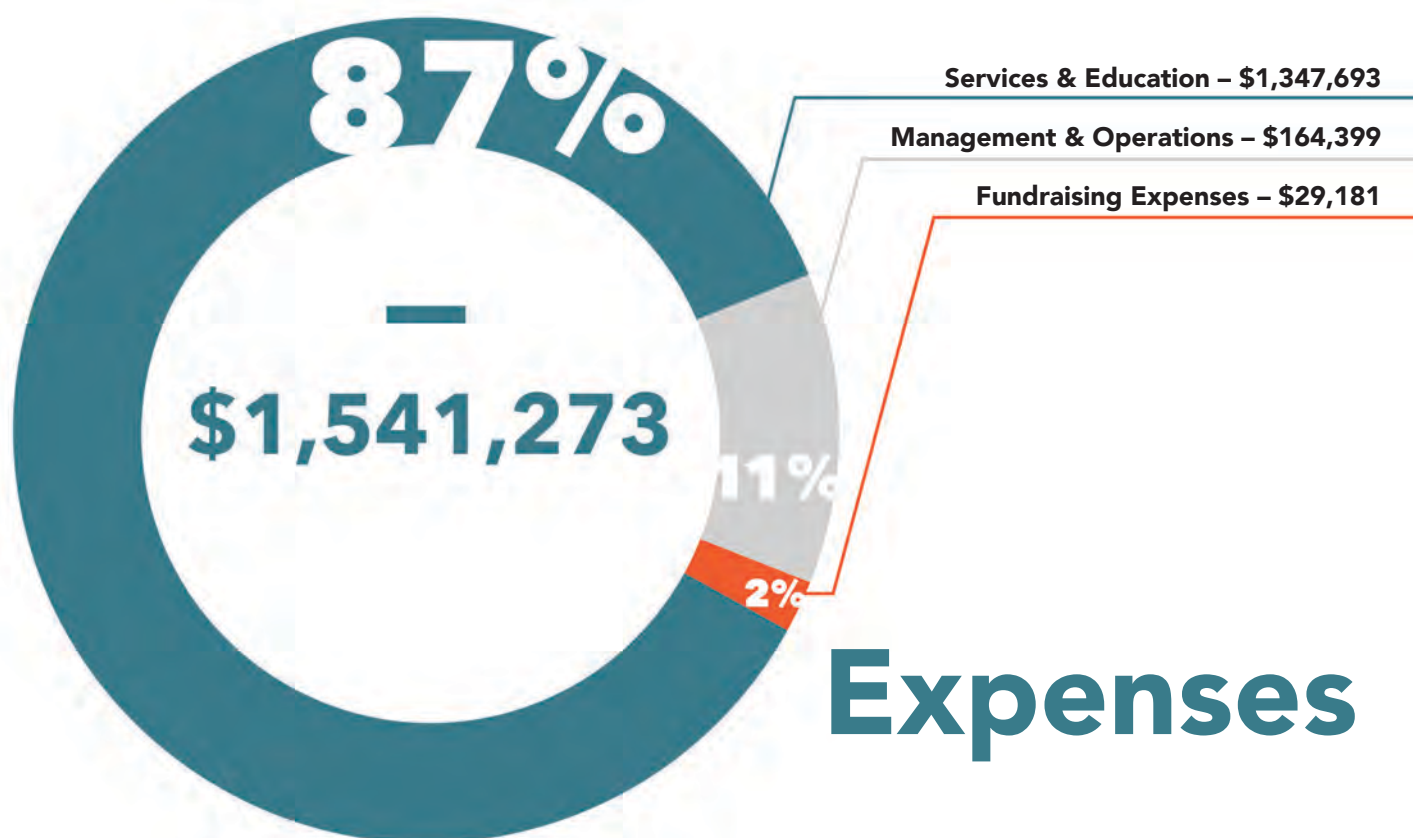
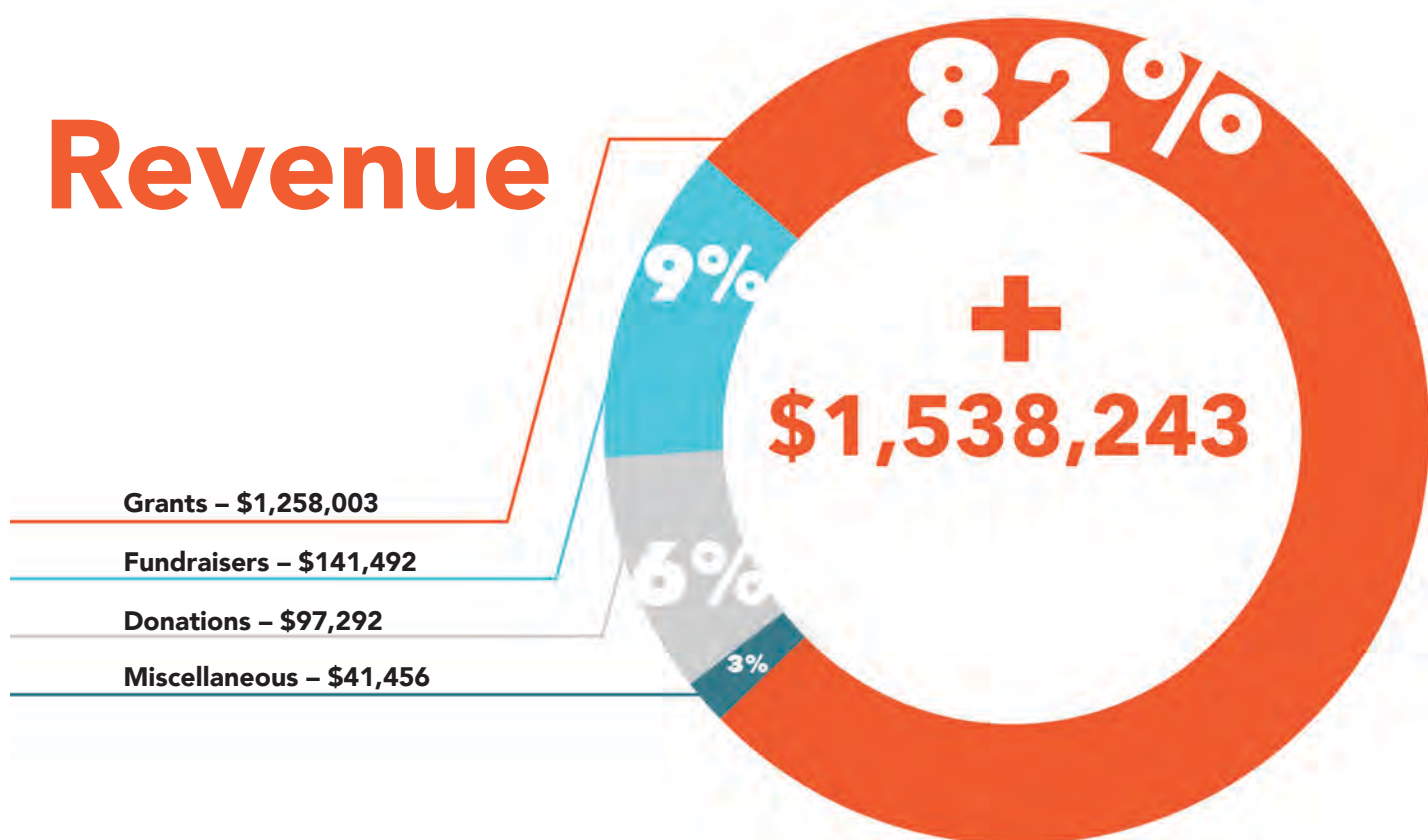
## Upcoming Initiatives

- Increase endowment
- Expand facility space to increase efficiency and keep up with exponential growth
- Expand reach in out counties
- Co-locate Hope House partners
- Ensure every child has a CASA volunteer



# Financial Highlights

## Revenue



## Expenses









# Engagement



# 2018 Board and Staff

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Elizabeth Starnes, Therapist  
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Jennifer Dube, Hope House Coordinator,  
Lead Forensic Interviewer  
Rosy Guerra, Hope House Intake Coordinator  
Abigail Dauphin, Hope House Family Advocate

Jacki Ledbetter, Hope House Family Advocate,  
Intake Coordinator  
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Sierra Mullan, FES Youth Services Coordinator  
Matt Groth, FES Parent Mentor  
Camille Duarte, FES Parent Mentor  
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Rachel Hoelscher, CASA Coordinator  
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Kalih Martinez, CASA Case Manager  
Vanessa Hayes, CASA Case Manager  
Jennifer Barron, CASA Case Manager







Children's Advocacy Center of Tom Green County, Inc.  
317 Koberlin, San Angelo, TX 76903  
325.653.4673 (HOPE)  
[cactomgreen.org](http://cactomgreen.org)

