



WESTCHESTER
CHILDREN'S
ASSOCIATION

Children's Champions Since 1914

2022

ANNUAL REPORT

wca4kids.org | [@wca4kids](https://www.instagram.com/wca4kids)



Dear Friends of WCA,

Westchester Children's Association (WCA) remains the voice for our children. Recent efforts have focused on rebuilding the mental resilience of our children and creating long-lasting solutions to persistent issues of youth justice and housing for families.

In partnership with Pace University, WCA conducted a second survey of Westchester parent's digital access. Findings suggest digital inequity remains present for families of low socio-economic backgrounds and those of LatinX origin.

WCA unveiled the Hope Quilt project, bringing community awareness to assistance needed by young families with children zero to 5. Quilt squares designed by children and adult volunteers were sewn together by the Village Squares Quilters.

Our annual Advocacy Breakfast was back in-person. Lecturer Kira Hudson Banks, PhD, co-founder of the Institute for Healing Justice and Equity and Professor of Psychology at St. Louis University talked about the need for increased mental health supports as part of educational equity.

Executive Director Allison Lake was appointed by Gov. Hochul to serve on the New York State Child Poverty Reduction Advisory Council where she participates in statewide advocacy to reduce child poverty by 50% over the next ten years.

Last year we did all of this and much more. Your support is critical to our success, and we are grateful for your donations and involvement.

Sincerely,

Ann Umemoto

WCA Board President

Our Vision

Every child healthy, safe, and prepared for life's challenges regardless of race or zip code

Our Mission

To identify children's needs, make those needs known, and see that they are met

Our Work

We turn data into knowledge, build a shared agenda, and mobilize for change



2022 Highlights

Click on a highlight to connect to more information

127

Attendees at our annual Advocacy Breakfast



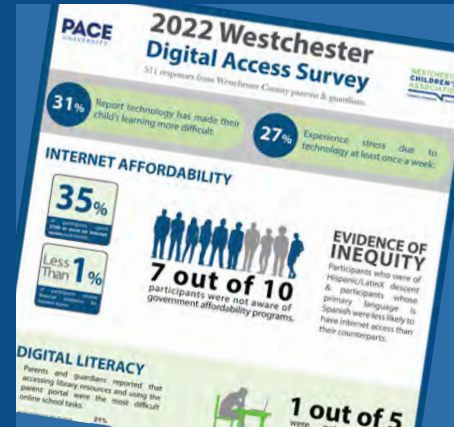
3

Incredible honorees at our 2022 Benefit



16

Community presentations by WCA staff



511

Responses to our Digital Access Survey

1

Appointment to the statewide Child Poverty Reduction Advisory Council by the Governor



8

Hope Quilts from thousands of community squares





2022 Advocacy Update

ISSUES

SUMMARY

ACTION

Child Poverty

Child poverty remains an issue in Westchester and throughout New York State. Data indicates that the **ever-increasing cost of living** is hard on many Westchester families.

WCA's Executive Director, Allison Lake, has been selected as one of the inaugural members of **New York State's Child Poverty Reduction Advisory Council** by Governor Kathy Hochul. The council aims to cut New York's child poverty rate by 50%.

Child & Youth Homelessness

Unstable housing and homelessness put children and youth at risk of challenges, developmental delays, and enduring health and behavioral issues.

WCA engaged in discussions with policymakers to **expand the county's definition, policies and benchmarks** for assisting families facing homelessness. WCA also secured funding to begin a new eviction court watching initiative.

Early Childhood Supports & Home Visiting

Vulnerable families throughout Westchester often have limited access to early childhood supports. WCA undertook the year-long Hope Quilt Project to emphasize the need for increased funding and accessibility of **home visiting programs, promoting the wellbeing of infants and children.**

Fabric collected from the community was sewn into eight **Hope Quilts**, highlighting the importance of home visiting programs. With this project, **WCA garnered the support of the Westchester Board of Legislators and County Executive Latimer, as well as coverage by News12.** We are grateful for the time and craftsmanship of Village Squares in sewing these quilts for us.

A photograph of a woman with dark hair, wearing a striped shirt, smiling and holding a young child. The child is wearing a striped sweater and jeans, and is also smiling. The background is a soft, out-of-focus light blue.

2022 Advocacy Update

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Youth Justice

New York State's education system currently relies heavily on suspensions to address student issues and behavior challenges. **Solutions Not Suspensions (SNS) advocates for alternative approaches** that don't harm the student's well-being and learning.

WCA and state partners made headway with Albany "Lobby Day" on the Solutions Not Suspensions (SNS) bill, which would require alternative approaches that do not harm the students' well-being and learning.

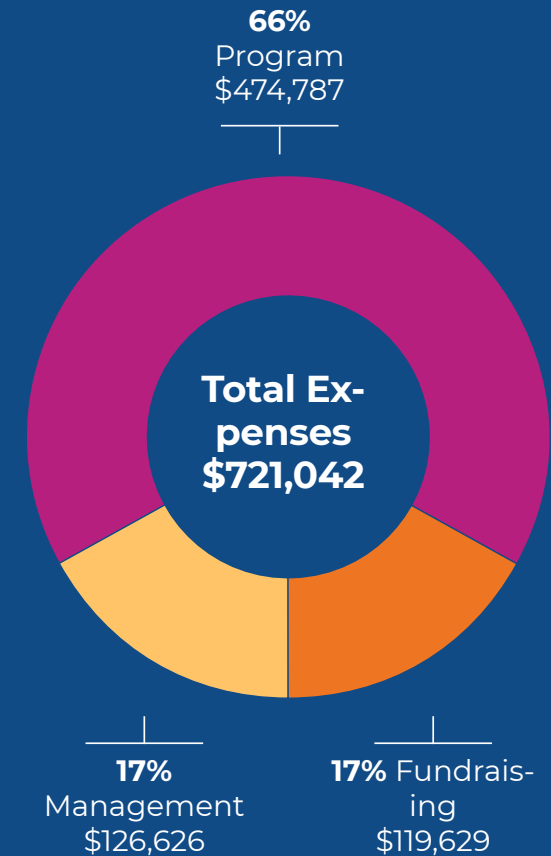
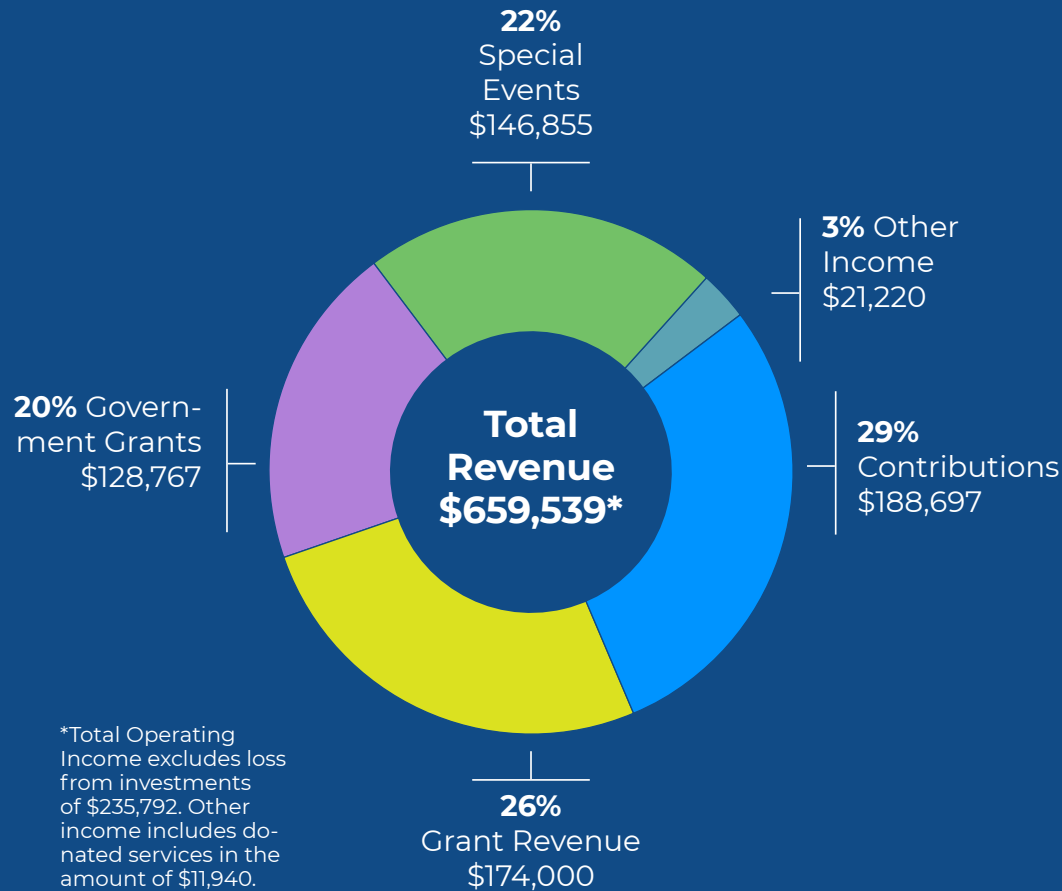
Civic Engagement

WCA's Advocacy 101 Training consists of collaborative sessions that lead youth and caregivers across Westchester in skill development, **empowering them to amplify their voices** within their local communities and beyond.

WCA collaborated with Sister to Sister International and Family Ties of Westchester to provide **Advocacy 101 Trainings to caregivers of system-involved youth**, empowering them to understand legislation, voice opinions, and strategize for community impact.

Financial Profile for 2022

In 2022, WCA experienced a decrease in net assets in the amount of \$297,295. Much of this change can be attributed to endowment investment losses totalling \$235,792. As of December 31, 2022, WCA had net assets (assets minus liabilities) of \$2,119,611 and unrestricted assets of \$455,391.



A copy of the complete audited financial statement is available on the WCA website wca4kids.org. It may also be requested from WCA or the New York State Attorney General, Office of Charities Registration, 120 Broadway, New York, NY 10271. Go to <https://wca4kids.org/about-wca/financials/>

Thank you to our generous donors!

We are deeply grateful to all our donors who make our work possible.

Special thanks to those who are enrolled in our monthly giving program: **Defenders for Children.**

If you would like to learn more about how you can become a defender for children, contact us at wca@wca4kids.org or 914.946.7676.

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- 1 DaMia Harris, Pat White, Rep. Jamaal Bowman, Joanne Dunn, Margaret Käufer, and Richard Nightingale
- 2 Award winners Katie Lobach, Tim Foley (Building and Realty Inst.), and Nicole Sheindlin (Her Honor Mentoring) with Allison Lake (WCA Executive Director)
- 3 Kate Weingarten and Engelina Olsthorn with Allison Lake

Thank you to our generous donors!

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DIGITAL ACCESS SURVEY RELEASE



- 1 Sydney Moraitis, Limarie Cabrera, and Prof. Gina Scutelnicu-Todoran
- 2 Top: Leg. Colin Smith, Walter Rendon, Leg. MaryJane Shimsky, Allison Lake, Sydney Moraitis, and Raphael Ceara; Bottom: Patricia Brigham, Limarie Cabrera, and Margaret Käufer

HOPE QUILT REVEAL



- 3 Dep. Comm'r John Befus, Leg. Jewel Williams Johnson, and Allison Lake

Thank you to our generous donors!

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Let's work together to help Westchester's children thrive!

Give monthly and become a *WCA Defender for Children*

wca4kids.org/monthly-donor

- 1 Dr. Kira Hudson Banks and Allison Lake
- 2 Eliza Rauchwerger
- 3 A question from the crowd

WESTCHESTER CHILDREN'S ASSOCIATION

Children's Champions Since 1914

Westchester Children's Association
470 Mamaroneck Ave., Suite 304
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www.wca4kids.org
wca@wca4kids.org
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Give

Become a monthly supporter, leave a legacy gift, or make a single gift wca4kids.org/donate



Take Action

Positive change happens when many people raise their voices on behalf of children and youth. For easy ways to become an advocate for children and youth, visit wca4kids.org/take-action



Stay In Touch

Keep up to date on issues affecting Westchester's children and youth, by completing the form at wca4kids.org/subscribe



Spread The Word

When you share social media posts, forward a petition to friends, or invite someone to a WCA event, you're helping us make sure that our children's needs are met.

Tag us @wca4kids.

STAFF

Allison Lake, *Executive Director*
Limarie Cabrera, *Director of Data, Operations and Finance*
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(Staff and Board of Directors as of December 31, 2022)