



ANNUAL REPORT 2025 - 2026

One Safe Door. Every Child Heard.

Explore Our Annual Report Online





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MESSAGE FROM

The Executive Director & Board Chair

This past year marked significant growth, expanded responsibility, and deepened impact for the Child & Youth Advocacy Centre of Simcoe Muskoka (CYACSM).

Across our region, more children and youth are disclosing abuse. More families are navigating complex investigations and court processes. More young people require immediate mental health stabilization while waiting for long-term services. The demand for coordinated, trauma-informed support continues to rise.

At CYACSM, children and families enter one safe door — where police, child protection, medical professionals, mental health providers, and advocates work together so each child can share their story once and begin to heal.

In 2024–2025:

800

children, youth, and caregivers supported

300+

forensic interviews conducted

7

Child Victim Witness Support delivered across seven courthouses

30%

increase in investigative volume

Each of these numbers represents a child who found safety in disclosure. A caregiver who received clarity during crisis. A young person who did not have to face the justice system alone.

When a child is ready to speak, waiting is not an option. Early, coordinated intervention changes outcomes.

The CYAC model reduces further traumatization by coordinating investigations and care, providing timely access to advocacy and counseling, and strengthening community safety through early intervention. Research shows that for every \$1 invested in CYACs, more than \$5 in social and economic value is generated through reduced justice, health, and social system costs.

As a regional hub serving over 9,000 square kilometres, CYACSM is more than a centre — we are a coordinated system response.

Our growth reflects community trust. It also underscores the need for sustainable investment to ensure every child continues to receive timely, trauma-informed support.

With gratitude,



Kate Waugh
Kate Waugh
Executive Director



Val Gates
Valarie (Val) Gates
Board Chair

WHO WE ARE

One Safe Door. Every Child Heard.

The Child & Youth Advocacy Centre Simcoe Muskoka (CYACSM) exists because children should never have to navigate abuse — or the systems responding to it — alone. We serve children and youth across Simcoe Muskoka who have experienced or witnessed physical abuse, sexual abuse, exploitation, or violence, along with the families and caregivers supporting them.

Across a region of nearly 9,000 square kilometres, our two child- and youth-friendly centres in Barrie and Orillia, together with our mobile response, provide safe places where children can be heard, believed, supported, and connected to the help they need.

Every service is provided at no cost to children and families.



What We Do

When a child discloses abuse, an entire system is set in motion.

Police may need to investigate. Child protection may become involved. Medical care may be required. Families need support. Trauma treatment may be needed. And months — sometimes years — later, a child may be asked to enter a courtroom and tell their story again.

CYACSM brings that fragmented system together around the child. Through a multidisciplinary response, we coordinate with police, child protection, healthcare, mental health, victim services, justice partners, and other community professionals so children and families do not have to navigate these systems on their own.

At our Barrie and Orillia centres — and through mobile services across Simcoe Muskoka — children can access specialized forensic interviews, advocacy and system navigation, mental health supports, court preparation and accompaniment, medical services, facility dog support, and connections to additional community resources.

Instead of asking a child to find their way through the system, we bring the system to the child.



Behind Every Number is a Child

The numbers tell us how much our work has grown. They also tell us something more important: hundreds of children and families in Simcoe Muskoka needed a specialized response to abuse, violence and trauma this year. Behind every interview, referral, counselling session and court appearance is a child whose life changed — and a team working to make sure what happened next did not cause further harm.

2025–2026 AT A GLANCE

★ **800+**
Children, youth and caregivers supported

🤝 **95**
Children and youth supported through the court process

📋 **57**
Children and youth accessed trauma-focused counselling

👮 **16**
Policing partners

🔍 **344**
Forensic interviews

🏛️ **7**
Courthouses served

Nearly **9,000 km²**

of Simcoe Muskoka served



BEYOND THE NUMBERS

Numbers show the scale of our work. People show us why it matters.

**And behind every number is our commitment:
One child. One coordinated response. One safe door.**

A DISCLOSURE

One Story. One Safe Place to Tell It.

A child arrives at the CYAC after a concern of abuse has been reported. They enter a space designed for children rather than an institutional interview room. Their caregiver is met by someone who can explain what is happening. Police and child protection professionals coordinate their work. A specially trained interviewer meets with the child.



Behind the scenes, the adults responsible for the investigation work together.



The child has one job:

Tell their story in their own words, at their own pace.

They should not have to understand which agency needs what information. They should not have to carry their story from one professional to another. They should not have to manage the system responding to what happened to them. That responsibility belongs to us.



The child tells their story.

We make the system work around them.

A FAMILY IN CRISIS

"What Happens Now?"

A disclosure rarely affects only one person. For a caregiver, the phone call can change everything. Suddenly there may be a police investigation. Child protection involvement. Questions about safety. Medical concerns. Counselling needs. School issues. Financial pressures. Siblings who need support. And a child looking to the adults around them for reassurance. All while the caregiver may be experiencing their own shock, anger, fear or grief. This is where advocacy matters. A CYACSM Advocate becomes a consistent point of connection — helping the family understand what is happening, communicating with professionals, identifying immediate needs, connecting them with services and staying alongside them as the situation unfolds.

One parent described what that meant for their family:

"Without the CYAC I'm not certain how we would have navigated all the working parts between police, health and mental health after the trauma we suffered. I can't thank you enough and I hope that other families will have an opportunity to be supported by such a wonderful team. Thank you."

— Parent

CHILD VICTIM WITNESS SUPPORT

A Courtroom Was Built for Adults. We Help Children Navigate It.

WHAT WE DO

For children and youth involved in the criminal justice system, the investigation may be only the beginning. Court can come months — sometimes years — after a disclosure. By then, a child may be asked to revisit one of the most difficult experiences of their life in an unfamiliar and highly formal environment. CYACSM's Child Victim Witness Support Program helps children and youth understand the court process, prepare for testimony, access appropriate accommodations and have a trusted support person beside them throughout the experience.



THIS YEAR

95

Children and youth were supported through the court process, with;

134

new referrals received.

5

Our team provided support across five courthouses in Simcoe County: Barrie, Bradford, Orillia, Collingwood and Midland.



Support included court preparation, courthouse orientation, communication with justice partners, assistance identifying testimonial accommodations, accompaniment and ongoing support to children and their caregivers.

BRIDGING SUPPORTS TO WELLNESS

Disclosure Is Not the End. Healing Has to Follow.

WHAT WE DO

Through Bridging Supports to Wellness, CYACSM provides specialized, trauma-informed mental health support to children and youth who have experienced abuse and violence. The program helps bridge the critical period following disclosure, when children and families may otherwise face lengthy waits for specialized community-based services.

THIS YEAR



Children and youth accessed counselling through CYACSM.



One to two Weeks

Children and youth were able to receive trauma-focused support following abuse, with counselling access typically available within one to two weeks.



Clinical Capacity & Response

During the year, CYACSM also worked to strengthen clinical capacity and build a more sustainable mental health response for children and families.

COMMON GROUND

From “This Happened to Me” to “I’m Not Alone”

WHAT WE DO

Common Ground creates a safe, supportive space for youth ages 12–18 who have experienced or witnessed violence.

Through facilitated group activities, creative expression, discussion and connection, young people build coping skills, confidence and relationships with peers who understand experiences that can otherwise feel profoundly isolating.

THIS YEAR

Demand for connection continued to grow. Over the past two years, **125 young people** participated in Common Ground, and many of those participants asked for opportunities to continue participating after completing the program.

Young people also returned through summer drop-ins and other engagement opportunities, demonstrating that what many wanted was not simply another program session — it was continued connection.

YOUTH VOICE AT CYACSM

Nothing About Young People Without Young People

Children and youth are at the centre of everything we do. That means their role cannot end at receiving a service. Young people have something to say about the systems designed to support them — and we need to hear it. At CYACSM, we are creating meaningful opportunities for young people with lived experience to influence programs, challenge assumptions, share their perspectives and help shape what comes next.



*"I am more informed
and aware of myself.
I feel less alone."*

**— Common Ground
Participant**

FROM PARTICIPANTS TO PARTNERS

Our Youth Advisory and Ambassador Team brings together young people with lived experience who want to use their voices to make the path better for others. Their perspective gives us something professional expertise alone cannot: an understanding of what services, spaces and systems actually feel like to the young people experiencing them.



Youth help us ask better questions.

- ★ Does this language make sense to a teenager?
- ★ Does this space actually feel safe?
- ★ What happens when a program ends but a young person still needs connection?
- ★ What do adults misunderstand about disclosure, trauma and healing?
- ★ What would have made the experience better?



These are not questions we should answer for young people when we can answer them with young people.



FOUR PAWS. A POWERFUL IMPACT.

Sometimes the Most Powerful Support Doesn't Need Words

At CYACSM, our three accredited facility dogs — Beacon, Marion and Grace — are an important part of our trauma-informed response, providing a calm, reassuring presence during some of the most difficult moments a child or youth may experience. Beacon, Marion and Grace work alongside CYACSM staff and multidisciplinary partners to support children and youth throughout their experience with our Centre.



MORE THAN SUPPORT FOR CHILDREN

Responding to child abuse is difficult work. Every day, CYACSM staff and our multidisciplinary partners hear painful stories, support families in crisis and carry significant responsibility for the children and youth we serve. Beacon, Marion and Grace have a place in that part of our work too. Their presence offers moments of connection, comfort and calm not only for children and families, but also for the professionals working alongside them. They remind us that trauma-informed practice is not simply a program or a set of procedures. It is a culture of care — and compassion belongs everywhere within it.



Beacon



Marion



Grace

IN MEMORY OF MOOSE

His Pawprints Will Always Be Part of Our Team.

This year, we said goodbye to a very special member of the CYACSM family. Moose served children and families with the quiet steadiness, warmth and unconditional presence that made him so deeply loved. His impact cannot be measured simply by the number of children he supported. It lives in the difficult moments he made a little easier. In the children who reached for him when words were hard. In the families who found comfort in his presence. In the professionals who watched him connect with a child when nothing else seemed to reach them. And in the CYACSM team who had the privilege of working beside him.

Moose showed us, again and again, that support does not always require words — and that sometimes a small moment of comfort can make an enormous difference. We will always be grateful for the children Moose comforted, the lives he touched and the years he spent as part of our team.

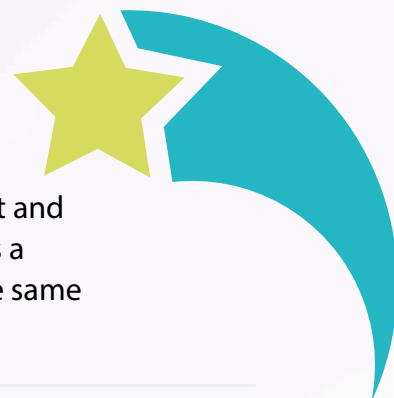


MEDICAL SUPPORT

A Child's Health Is Part of the Response

WHAT WE DO

Some children who experience abuse require specialized medical assessment and care. Through our partnership with RCSCAN, CYACSM's Orillia Centre includes a dedicated medical space where Well Child examinations can take place in the same child-focused environment as other CYAC services.



A YEAR OF GROWTH

More Children Reached. More Support Available. A Stronger System Taking Shape.

2025–2026 was a year of significant growth for CYACSM — in the number of children coming through our doors, in the services available to them, and in our role within the systems responsible for responding to child abuse.



2025–2026 Healing Became a Bigger Part of Our Response

CYACSM continued strengthening Bridging Supports to Wellness, helping children and youth access specialized trauma-focused counselling following abuse and violence. 57 children and youth accessed counselling. We also began strengthening our clinical capacity to ensure that as demand grows, access to healing grows with it.



MAY 2025 Our Support Followed Children Into the Courtroom

CYACSM assumed delivery of the Child Victim Witness Support Program, extending our continuum of care beyond disclosure and investigation and into the criminal justice system.



November 2025 We Built More Space Around Children

CYACSM moved into a larger Barrie location, creating additional space for children, families, staff and multidisciplinary partners and laying the groundwork for expanded forensic interview capacity.



2026 We Strengthened the Voice of CYACs Beyond Our Region

CYACSM continued to deepen collaboration with Child & Youth Advocacy Centres across Ontario and Canada, sharing practices, identifying common challenges and contributing to conversations about the future of the CYAC model.

Across the province, CYACs are confronting many of the same realities: increasing complexity, growing demand and funding models that have not always kept pace with the essential role these centres play. Our work increasingly includes advocating not only for the children who walk through our doors today, but for a system in which every child in Ontario has access to a coordinated, child-focused response to abuse.

IN OUR COMMUNITY



COMMUNITY CHAMPIONS

This Work Is Powered by Community

Every donation, grant, sponsorship and community fundraiser helps CYACSM respond when a child discloses abuse — providing safe spaces for forensic interviews, an Advocate for a family in crisis, specialized counselling following trauma, support through the justice system, and programs that help young people reconnect and heal. This year, individuals, foundations, businesses, service clubs, municipalities and community organizations chose to stand with children and youth across Simcoe Muskoka. Their generosity did more than fund programs. It helped make sure a child had somewhere safe to go when they needed us.

OUR COMMUNITY CHAMPIONS

We extend our sincere gratitude to the governments, municipalities, foundations, businesses and individuals whose investment strengthened our work in 2025–2026.

Government & Public Sector Partners

Ministry of the Attorney General
Justice Canada
Ontario Trillium Foundation
City of Orillia
Township of Springwater
County of Simcoe
Orillia Community Investment Fund

Foundations & Corporate Supporters

The Dunkley Foundation
JP Bickell Foundation
Bell Let's Talk
Baytowne Hyundai

Individual Donors

Allan Saunders
Ania Fairfield
Anja Boer
Alyssa Wright
Barbara Lockhart
Chelsea Poirier
Christine Chraman
Christine Jarvis
Connie Bagley
Donna Kumagai
Ed & Halinka Dybka
Erica Sinclair
Jane Waechter



James Kruk
Jennifer Harris
Kelly Emerson
Kelly Hoogeveen
Kimberley Greenwood
Lisa Addison
Paula Waugh
Sara Aureli
Serena Biesinger
Shaan Parekh
Stephan Kleiser
Yasmine Folliott

EVERY GIFT BECOMES PART OF A CHILD'S RESPONSE

A donation may help furnish a room. Support a counselling session. Keep an Advocate beside a family. Help a young person prepare for court. Create a place where youth can meet others who understand. Or make it possible for CYACSM to respond to a need that restricted funding simply does not cover. Different gifts make different things possible. But ultimately, they all lead back to the same place: A child who needed help — and a community that made sure it was there.

With sincere gratitude to everyone who invested in children and youth through CYACSM during the 2025–2026 fiscal year.



Board of Directors



Valarie Gates
Board Chair



Kimberley Greenwood
Vice-Chair



Erica Sinclair
Secretary



Christine Charman
Treasurer



Jim Dykes
Director



Mandy Simcoe
Director



Dr. Marian Boer
Director



Mike Lassaline
Director



Peter Famiglietti
Director

Staff



Kate Waugh
Executive Director



Angela Gontier
Child Witness Manager



Ashley Collins
Operations Coordinator



Annelise Mota
MSW, RSW, Counsellor



Ciara Corcoran
Child and Youth Advocate



Courtney Allison
Child Witness Advocate



Mackenzie Taylor
Indigenous Child and Youth Advocate



Samantha Sattler
Bookkeeping



Scott Denis
Program Manager

2025–2026 FINANCIAL SNAPSHOT

This Work is Powered by Community

Revenue by Source

Provincial Government	\$413,264
Federal Government	\$219,523
Municipal Government	\$154,578
Individual Donations & Foundations	\$93,110
Fundraising & Community Fundraising	\$20,931
Interest Income	\$5,565

Total Revenue:	\$906,971
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Expenses

Salaries & Wages	\$583,483
Occupancy	\$153,454
Programs	\$56,791
Technology	\$52,559
Professional Fees	\$21,814
Operations & Administration	\$53,437

Total Expenses:	\$921,538
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WHAT THOSE NUMBERS MADE POSSIBLE

Financial stewardship is ultimately about impact.

The resources entrusted to CYACSM supported a regional response spanning nearly 9,000 km², including two child-friendly centres, mobile and partner locations, specialized staff, forensic interview capacity, advocacy, trauma-focused counselling, youth programming, facility dogs and support for children navigating the criminal justice system. Our financial statements tell you where the money went. The rest of this report shows you what it made possible.

Transparency & Accountability

The financial information presented here is a summary of CYACSM's audited financial statements for the fiscal year ending March 31, 2026. Full audited financial statements are available at cyacsimcoemuskoka.ca. Registered Charity No. #85012 6681 RR0001

WHERE WE GO FROM HERE

This year demonstrated what is possible when systems come together around children. It also made clear how much work remains. Demand is growing. Children and families continue to navigate systems that were not designed to work together. Access to specialized trauma treatment remains inconsistent. Geography creates barriers. And across Ontario, access to a Child & Youth Advocacy Centre is still not guaranteed for every child who needs one. Our vision for the future is bigger than growing CYACSM. It is changing what children and families can expect after abuse.

ACCESS

Where a Child Lives Should Never Determine the Help They Receive



Every child who experiences abuse should have access to a specialized, child-friendly and coordinated response — regardless of their postal code, which police service is investigating, or how close they live to a CYAC. We will continue strengthening our Barrie and Orillia centres while expanding the partnerships, mobile capacity and regional infrastructure required to bring the CYAC response closer to children throughout Simcoe Muskoka.



HEALING | Children and youth need timely access to specialized mental health support that understands the impact of abuse and violence. Families and caregivers need support too. Young people need opportunities to reconnect, build confidence and discover that what happened to them does not have to define what happens next. CYACSM will continue strengthening trauma-focused counselling, peer support, family supports and youth engagement so that our response does not stop when an investigation ends. We want every child who comes through our doors to have a clear pathway from disclosure to support to healing.



SYSTEM CHANGE | CYACSM will continue working with local, provincial and national partners to strengthen the multidisciplinary response to child abuse and advocate for sustainable investment in Child & Youth Advocacy Centres. Our long-term vision is clear: When a child or youth is involved in an investigation of abuse, a coordinated, child-friendly CYAC response should be an expected part of the system.

THE FUTURE WE ARE WORKING TOWARD

A future where a child tells their story once, in a place designed for them. Where professionals communicate with one another instead of asking families to carry information between systems. Where a parent in crisis has someone to call. Where specialized trauma treatment is available when a child is ready for it. Where young people have a voice in the services created for them. Where children entering the justice system are prepared, supported and treated as children first. And where every child — regardless of where they live — can walk through one safe door and find a coordinated team ready to respond. That future will require investment, partnership, advocacy and change. But children who have experienced abuse have already been asked to carry enough. It is our responsibility to build a system that carries more of the burden for them.

One Safe Door. Every Child Heard.



ONE SAFE DOOR. EVERY CHILD HEARD

705-327-0118

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BARRIE: 60 Bell Farm Rd. Barrie, ON. L4M 5G6

info@cyacsimcoemuskoka.ca

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