

ALLIANCE
for **CHILDREN'S**
RIGHTS

IMPACT REPORT

2022-2023

Advancing
Equity and
Justice for
Young People

SERVING LOS ANGELES SINCE 1992



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OUR MISSION

is to protect the rights of children in poverty and those overcoming abuse and neglect by delivering free legal services, supportive programs, and systemic solutions.

OUR VISION

We envision a world in which all young people have safe, stable homes, with the support they need to heal and thrive.



A Message
from the
**President &
CEO**

Dear Friends,

It is with immense pride and excitement that we share with you the Alliance for Children's Rights' 2022-2023 Impact Report. The stories it shares—of both individual lives and broader systems that have been impacted by our advocacy—are testament to the power we have as an Alliance to change the future. Thank you for your partnership in making all this work possible.

Every day, I remain moved by the incredible resilience and courage of young people, and their ability—despite acute adversity—to persist, to heal, and to inspire. They, and the caregivers who step up for them, put their trust in us as their advocates. It is a special honor to advance justice and wellbeing for these young people, and to collaborate with our community to reform the systems that impact their lives.

This past year, the Alliance served nearly 5,500 children, young adults, and families—creating access to education, physical and mental healthcare, housing, financial support, and other essential services that create stability, security, and opportunity for youth. Our advocates worked tirelessly to remove obstacles to our clients' success, and to represent their interests in schools, administrative agencies, and the courts. We also collaborated with young people, caregivers, and coalition partners to address the inequities in our systems and advocate for ground-breaking policy reforms.

None of this would be possible without the exceptional team of volunteers, community partners, foundations, supporters, youth, families, and staff who make up the Alliance for Children's Rights. Our work together is essential. It's what allows us to have our clients' backs, whenever they may need us. Explore what a difference our collective advocacy can make in these pages, and feel inspired. Thank you for making a difference.

In solidarity,



Jennifer L. Braun

President & CEO

Our Impact

This year, the Alliance advocated for nearly

**5,500 children
and young adults**

impacted by foster care

We provided trainings for

**7,900+ providers
and community
partners**

to help them better serve young people
and families in the child welfare system.

Philanthropic Spotlight

The Alliance is deeply appreciative of the **Conrad N. Hilton Foundation's** support to advance our mission, sustain our programs, and expand our services. The Foundation's thought partnership helps us shape our work to best support the young people we proudly serve.

Who We Serve

Los Angeles County has the **largest population** of young people in foster care in the country

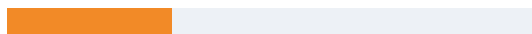
with **26,000+ children and young adults** in its system, and thousands more at-risk of entering foster care. Each of the young clients we serve has their own unique story, but they all are healing from significant trauma and hardship. These youth are among our county's most resilient and diverse populations.

Ethnicities of our clients

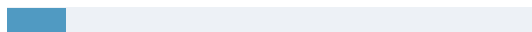
47% Latino



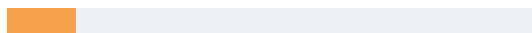
27% Black



7% Multi-Ethnic



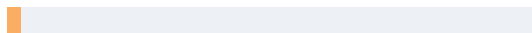
8% White



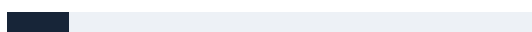
1% Asian American



1% American Indian/AIAN



9% Other/Unknown



Ages of our clients

34%

Ages 0-5



41%

Ages 6-17



25%

Ages 18+



60%

of our clients have identified special needs



15%

of our clients are monolingual Spanish speakers



Our Programs

ADOPTIONS FROM FOSTER CARE

LEGAL GUARDIANSHIP

BENEFITS

EDUCATION

HEALTHCARE

EXPECTANT AND PARENTING YOUTH

TRANSITION AGE YOUTH

Adoptions from Foster Care

Uniting “Forever Families” — The Alliance has remained constant in our advocacy, helping end the oftentimes long road in the foster care system for young people and their families.

This year, the Alliance worked to eliminate barriers and provided representation for more than **470 adoptions** from foster care in collaboration with pro bono partners through remote and in-person hearings.

In many cases, children are adopted by relative caregivers like our client Patricia, who provides safety and love for her great nieces.



We sacrificed a lot, but this is one of the most fulfilling things we ever chose to do. We love them so much, we would never let them fall through the cracks. The Alliance held my hand the whole way. To us parents and caregivers who need help, they give us that peace of mind knowing that someone else out there cares.”

— **PATRICIA B.** Relative Adoptive Parent

Legal Guardianship

Guiding Caregivers and Legal Guardians —

Without a legal relationship, caregiving families are limited in their ability to protect and provide for the children in their care.

This year, our advocates provided counsel or representation to more than **270 caregivers**, helping clients—like Chailana and her mother establish legal guardianship of her two nephews—so that they can address vital medical consent, enroll them in school, access services and critical benefits, and protect the young people in their care.



Legal guardianship changes everything. Before, we couldn't get assistance, get them to the doctor, or get therapies, even though I was constantly advocating. Many days we felt like giving up. But here is where they feel they belong. There was a lot of violence at home. The Alliance helped us through. King is learning to trust again. Malcolm is coming along. It has been great to see them healing and learning to express themselves.”

— **CHALAINA R.** Relative Legal Guardian

Benefits

Ensuring Families Receive Support —

By securing public funding, the Alliance supported more than **520 caregivers** this year as they opened their homes and hearts to children in need of stability.

Our advocates recovered more than **\$700,000** in benefits and specialized funding for our clients, so that they—like Tina—could meet the important needs of the young people in their care. Since program began, we have recovered more than **\$36M** in wrongfully-denied benefits.



For eight months we were not receiving assistance to help with her medical needs. It was a nightmare, but the Alliance helped me recover assistance. They have more compassion than anyone I have worked with in the child welfare system. Today, Jessica is striving and thriving. I am going to give her everything I have in soul and power."

— **TINA C.** Relative Adoptive Parent

Education

Championing Our Clients' Education Rights —

Children and teens impacted by foster care experience the poorest education outcomes of any student population due to instability and systemic inequities.

That is why it is critical that our attorneys helped our clients obtain early intervention, therapies, special educational services and general education advocacy—supporting more than **500 students**, like Brianna.



I needed someone to hear us. Brianna has a disability, but everyone just ignored us. The Alliance opened so many doors, paving the way for Brianna's educational future and helping me learn how to advocate for her. Now, she is getting the special education and therapy she needs. She is learning to speak up and is excited to learn to read like her friends."

— **JULIE A.** Caregiver

Thanks to support from the **Saltz Family Early Intervention Advocacy Center**, the Alliance helped **more than 160 infants and toddlers** obtain critical early intervention services.

Healthcare

Supporting Health and Wellness — Far too often, our clients encounter obstacles in obtaining vital mental and medical health services. A study reported a quarter of Los Angeles' teens in foster care not being able to access the healthcare they need. This year, our team advocated for nearly **300 children and teens**, ensuring our young clients have active health coverage and eliminating barriers to medical services.

Expectant & Parenting Youth

Healthy Teen Families Program — This year, our social workers supported more than **250 young parents**, providing access to prenatal care, parenting, education, childcare, essentials, healthcare, employment, and housing—empowering them with the resources they need to break the inter-generational cycle of children being removed from young parents in foster care.



ALLIANCE OF
MOMS

Our gratitude to **Alliance of Moms**, a community raising awareness and funds to help build brighter futures for young moms and their families.



As a young mother in foster care, it was many ups and downs. I went from being homeless with my son, to getting help with housing, and going back to school. The Alliance helped me find a sense of belonging, and that feeling of belonging has a direct impact on my mental, physical, and emotional well-being as well as my children's."

— **TYEIONA H.** Client

Transition Age Youth

Empowering Youth Aging Out of Foster Care —

Our advocates help address the barriers that keep youth who are transitioning out of foster care from self-sufficiency—connecting them to critical resources, housing, healthcare, education, employment, and other essential supports.

This year, our team served **1,500+ transition age youth**, like Erica, through legal advocacy and holistic social services to empower them as they strive for success and independence.



When I was younger, I faced a lot of challenges in foster care, not being placed into good foster and group homes because of my medical condition. The Alliance has always had my back. They help me with legal matters, and always make sure I have what I need to care for my kids. They really advocate for me and helped me stay housed when a landlord was trying to wrongfully evict me."

— **ERICA S.** Client

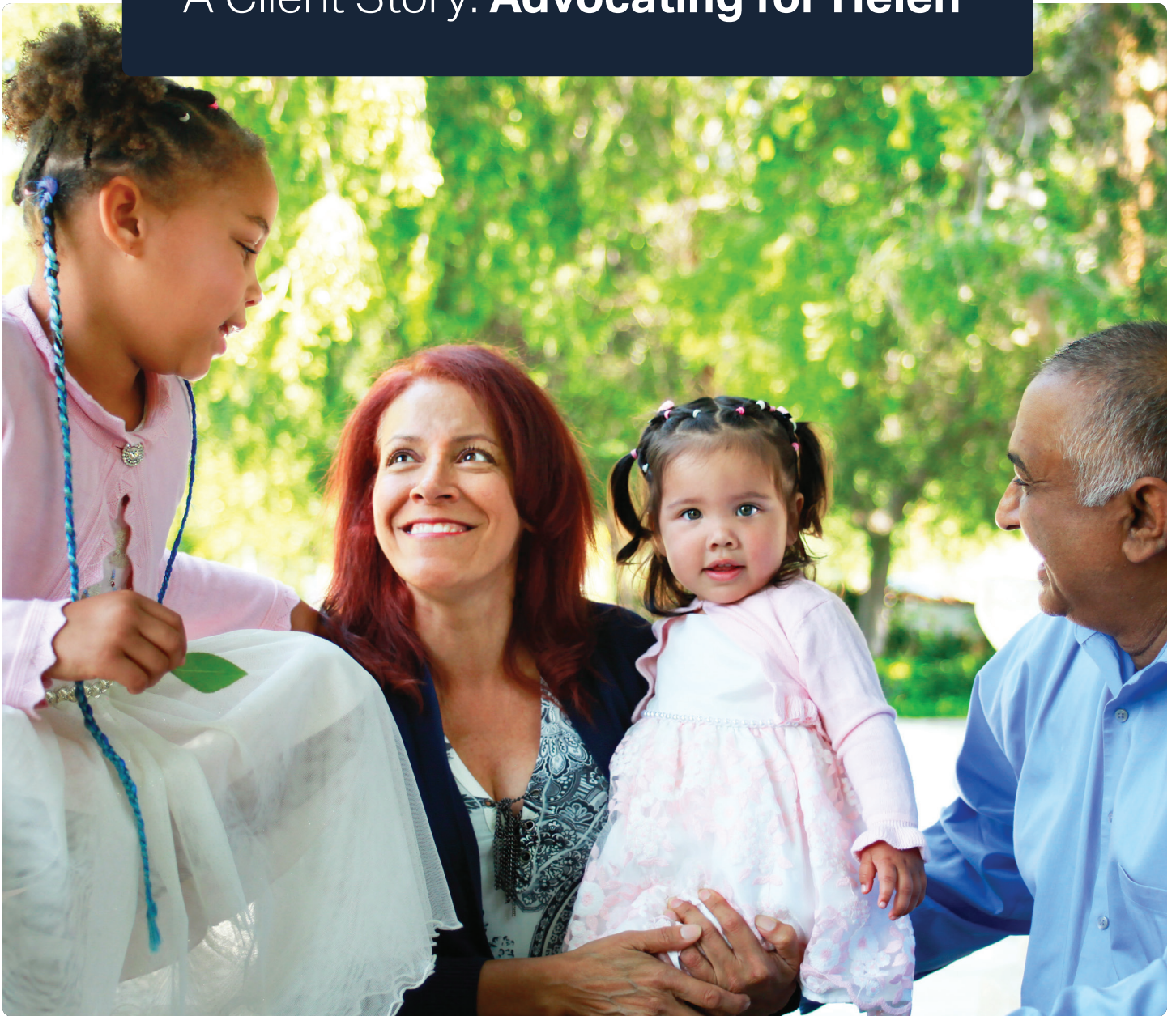


L.A. OPPORTUNITY
YOUTH COLLABORATIVE

Improving Outcomes for Transition Age Youth

Spearheaded by the Alliance, the **Los Angeles Opportunity Youth Collaborative (LAOYC)** collaborated with partners to support more than **1,660 youth** in foster care in accessing education, workforce training, and employment opportunities. In 2022, LAOYC Young Leaders participated in **123 convenings**, connecting with **4,000+ other youth and supportive adults**.

A Client Story: **Advocating for Helen**



"The Alliance opened my eyes to the rights that we have. I **feel empowered and we feel like we can advocate for her.** If something doesn't work, we know we can work together to get things done for her."

— **EMILCE K.** *Adoptive Parent*

Emilce and Karim had long endeavored to build a family and, after over a decade of unsuccessful fertility treatments and family planning, disheartened—they gave up. Still, they knew they had room in their hearts and their loving home to parent and nurture, so they began the journey towards becoming a resource family—a journey that would eventually lead them to Helen.

Helen first came to them in 2016. When the couple received the call, she was still in the hospital, only three days old and drug-exposed. Her biological parents were unable to care for her, and other relatives were unable to step up to meet her needs—which were many.

She required devoted support, and Emilce and Karim aspired to give her the best start possible. They provided a nurturing environment, made sure she was receiving regional center services and therapies to address her considerable motor delays, and took her to daily classes to help her with her development. But when Helen turned three, at the peak of the pandemic, her regional center services abruptly ended. Then they faced challenges accessing therapies as the school district violated the law in denying her services, partly claiming that they could not properly assess her due to COVID-19 limitations.

“They weren’t really looking at the details,” recalls Emilce. “She wasn’t walking right, she was constantly throwing herself on the ground, putting everything in her mouth. I knew she needed more help and I was completely lost. I searched everywhere for support, and then I found the Alliance. I knocked on their door, wondering if they’d come through. To my surprise, everything turned around once Helen had an attorney in her corner.”

With Emilce and Karim’s fierce and persistent advocacy, and after two complaints to the Department of Education, numerous individualized education plan (IEP) meetings, and proper assessments, the Alliance was able to secure special education, speech therapy, and occupational therapy for Helen, in addition to compensatory services to make up for vital support she lost due to the district’s original failure during the pandemic.

“It was so hard in the beginning. But once she grew, she flourished.” says Emilce. “She is so mature, happy, and smart. She likes to do anything where she is helping other people.”

“When I grow up, I want to be a teacher, a librarian, and a makeup artist,” Helen proudly expresses. “I want to be a teacher so I can teach people math, I want to be a librarian so I can give kids books, and a makeup artist to do people’s hair and makeup.”

Now Helen is seven, has officially joined the family through her adoption out of foster care, and has a younger one-year old sister, Eliana.

“Working with the Alliance made us stronger as parents. I pay more attention to the children’s developmental milestones. We have goals to meet, but Helen has accomplished so much and she’s thriving.”



A photograph of two young girls hugging outdoors. The girl on the left is wearing a straw hat and a light blue shirt, and the girl on the right is wearing a pink shirt. They are both smiling. The background is a blurred outdoor setting with trees and buildings. The text "A Year in Review" is at the top, and "YEAR IN REVIEW" is written vertically on the sides.



Children's Court Advocacy Project Launched

The Alliance launched the **Children's Court Advocacy Project** to deepen our work helping youth and families navigate the dependency and probate court systems.

Through this project, our advocates support clients in informal placements, help young people achieve stability in cases of emancipation, and assist in obtaining birth records.



New Foster Care Benefits Online Tool for Youth and Caregivers

With funding support from the **Office of Child Protection** and **Rotary Club of Los Angeles**, and in partnership with the Alliance, the **Los Angeles County Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS)** launched an online tool to help young people in foster care or probation, and their caregivers, discover and access critical benefits and resources. Creating anytime access to information and resources promotes individual agency for transition age youth to help them develop and achieve their employment and education goals so that they can thrive.



Empowering Young People to Advocate for Educational Rights

The Alliance launched the **Education Rights Youth Cohort**, a program that connects young adults with lived experience in the foster care and delinquency systems and equips them with training on education rights, public speaking, and advocacy. Armed with these skills, the cohort joins the Alliance's education staff to host trainings for high school-aged youth to empower them about their rights. The group also attends events with county and school leaders to raise awareness and improve education outcomes for themselves and their peers.



Medical-Legal Partnership Launched

The Alliance partnered with the **Hub Clinic at Martin Luther King, Jr. Outpatient Center** (MLK Hub) to launch a new medical-legal partnership aimed at advancing patient access to legal advocacy. With many caregivers being directed to the MLK Hub for their children's primary healthcare, this partnership enables our team to connect directly with patients to provide critical legal and supportive services, including access to healthcare, special education, housing, and economic and food support.

Our special thanks to the **UniHealth Foundation**, a non-profit philanthropic organization whose mission is to support and facilitate activities that significantly improve the health and well-being of individuals and communities within its service area. We are also grateful to the **George Hoag Family Foundation** for its support of this project.

Policy Victories

This year, the Alliance focused our advocacy efforts on supporting placement stability and successful transitions to adulthood for transition age youth and advanced policy reforms and funding that support all children and youth in foster care and their caregivers.

- **Promoting Access to Supplemental Security Income for Foster Youth** — \$600,000 to facilitate access to Supplemental Security Income (SSI) benefits for foster youth with disabilities, with a focus on transition age youth.
- **Ensuring Emergency Caregiver Funding** — An additional \$1.7M to provide emergency payments to caregivers.
- **Increasing Access to Emergency Child Care Bridge** — \$35M in expansion funding, which includes \$26M for childcare vouchers, \$5M to increase number of child care navigators, and \$4M for trauma-informed training for providers.
- **Clarifying Education Rights** — **AB 180 (Committee on Budget)** defines education rights for youth impacted by child welfare and juvenile justice.
- **Reducing Barriers to Family Reunification** — **AB 1686 (Bryan)** increases the likelihood that children will be reunified with their parents by requiring counties to presume that the costs parents are required to pay likely pose barriers.
- **Promoting Family Decision Making** — **AB 2309 (Friedman)** addresses families' reported challenges with the WIC Section 360(a) guardianship process to promote family decision-making.
- **Expanding Access to Diplomas for Highly Mobile Students** — **SB 532 (Caballero)** expands and strengthens educational rights for youth in foster care, youth experiencing homelessness, former juvenile court school students, children of military families, and migratory children.
- **Clarifying Access to Juvenile Court Records** — **SB 1071 (Umberg)** addresses the long delays youth and caregivers frequently face when waiting to receive critical funds and essentials by allowing attorneys and judges to access juvenile case files for the purposes of administrative hearings.
- **Improving Housing Stability for Older Youth** — Bolstered local implementation of AB 1979, an Alliance co-sponsored bill that improves housing stability for nonminor dependents through technical assistance.
- **Supporting Successful Transitions to Adulthood** — Assisted with design and implementation of a Los Angeles County guaranteed income pilot program and secured a priority designation for former foster youth to maximize enrollment access for young adults with a history of child welfare involvement.

Caregiver Day at the Capitol

March 29, 2023 — In partnership with **California Alliance of Caregivers**, the Alliance hosted the first in-person **Caregiver Day at the Capitol** since 2020. It was a powerful day of advocacy joining more than 80 caregivers, providers, and advocates who raised their voices to share the effect of our policy priorities with legislators, their staff, and administration leaders.



Coming Together



31st Annual Champions for Children

March 15, 2023 — We brought together our supporters to honor **George Cheeks** and **Wendy Smith Meyer** and celebrate the mission of the Alliance, raising over **\$1.5M** to support justice and opportunity for young people. Thank you to our host **Cedric the Entertainer**, special guest **Mayor Karen Bass**, and musical guest **Jennifer Holliday**.



Day of Wellness with Alliance of Moms

November 11, 2022 — **Alliance of Moms** hosted a self-care afternoon, treating our young mothering clients to a rejuvenating afternoon of relaxing spa treatments, healing, community and conversation around optimism and wellness. Our gratitude to our member volunteers and these young moms—for their strength, for sharing their truth, and for holding space for each other.



George Zajfen Tournament — Tennis for Tots

September 28, 2022

The doubles tournament welcomed friends from our tennis-loving community to honor and remember **George Zajfen** and raise vital funds to support our mission. Together, we raised a record-breaking **\$130,000**.

National Adoption Day

November 19, 2022

In collaboration with our pro bono volunteers, the Children's Court, and our partners, the Alliance helped finalize more than **135 adoptions** out of foster care in Los Angeles County on a special day of celebration.



TAY Thanksgiving

November 19, 2022

With support from **Heirloom LA** and our dedicated volunteers, the Alliance brought our transition age youth clients and their families back together for a Thanksgiving celebration and feast, with activities, gift baskets, and community-building.



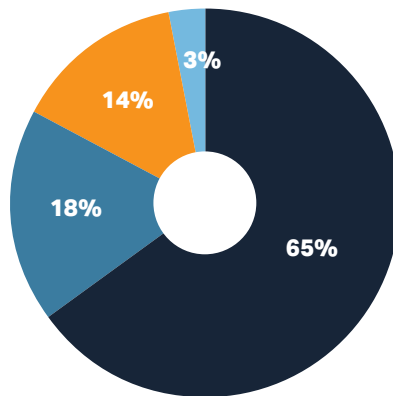
Financials at a Glance

We are dedicated to ensuring your contributions serve our mission and our clients as efficiently as possible. As a recognized 501(c)(3) non-profit organization, the Alliance for Children's Rights seeks to be transparent in our operations by making our financials publicly available.

We are proud of our Charity Navigator 4-star rating and GuideStar-awarded Platinum Seal of Transparency for demonstrating strong financial health, accountability, and transparency for 13 consecutive years.

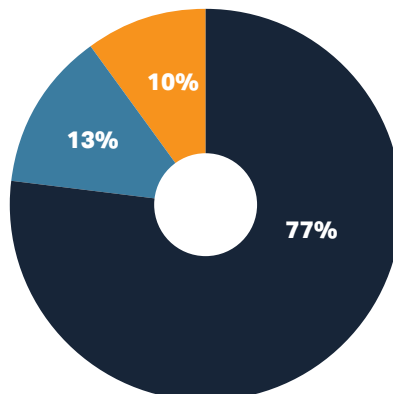


Overview



Operating Revenue and Support

- Foundations
- Individual and Corporate
- Fundraising Events, Net
- Cy Pres and Other



Total Programmatic Efficiency

- Program Services
- Support Services
- Fundraising

Financial Summary

for FY2023 with FY2022 comparison

		2023	2022
Revenue and Support	Contributed legal services and in-kind contributions*	\$15,379,125	\$13,879,844
	Contributions and grants	\$8,613,926	\$5,812,384
	Fundraising events, net	\$ 1,410,112	\$1,616,083
	Total Revenue and Support	\$25,403,163	\$21,308,311
Expenses	Program services	\$21,803,859	\$19,349,389
	Support services	\$1,077,640	\$872,932
	Fundraising	\$879,967	\$796,428
	Total expenses	\$23,761,466	\$21,018,749
	Change in net assets from operations	\$1,641,697	\$289,562
	Forgiveness on PPP loan advance	—	\$758,400
	Employee Retention Credit (ECR)	\$383,152	—
	Net unrealized and realized investment income	(\$575,613)	\$641,991
	Change in Net Assets	\$1,449,236	\$1,689,953
Fundraising Summary	Fundraising expenses as a percentage of total operating expenses**	10%	11%
Assets, Liabilities, and Net Assets Summary	Cash and cash equivalents ***	\$3,383,192	\$2,777,950
	Contributions and grants receivable	\$4,269,729	\$2,604,466
	Investments	\$12,833,757	\$13,755,176
	Prepaid expenses and other assets	\$182,345	\$190,584
	Furniture and equipment, net of accumulated depreciation	\$337,063	\$241,091
	Total Assets	\$21,006,086	\$19,569,267
	Accounts payable and accrued expenses	\$675,120	\$455,587
	Agency payables	\$55,000	\$286,950
	<i>Total liabilities</i>	<i>\$730,120</i>	<i>\$742,537</i>
	Undesignated	\$4,055,556	\$3,921,126
	Board-designated	\$7,100,000	\$7,100,000
	Board-designated endowment	\$4,000,000	\$4,000,000
	With donor restrictions	\$5,120,410	\$3,805,604
	<i>Total net assets</i>	<i>\$20,275,966</i>	<i>\$18,826,730</i>
	Total Liabilities and Net Assets	\$21,006,086	\$19,569,267

* The Alliance recorded more than 30,464 hours of contributed legal services donated by law firms, attorneys, summer associates, and paralegals for the fiscal year ended March 31, 2023. The estimated fair value of these services was \$15,377,625.

** Total operating expenses excludes legal contributed services and in-kind expenses.

*** Cash and cash equivalents include cash held in money market accounts and highly liquid investments purchased with an average maturity of six months or less.



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Kelly Zajfen
Alliance of Moms

Francis M. Wheat, Esq.
*Founder
(1921-2000)*

** Former Board Chairs*



“Together, the Alliance is transforming the future for young people in our communities.

As board co-chairs, we are proud to serve this organization and be in solidarity and partnership with the many advocates, caregivers, volunteers, and supporters who make this life-changing work possible.”

— **DENA COOK AND ALAN EPSTEIN**

Board Co-chairs

Welcoming Our Newest Board Members

We are proud to announce and welcome the newest members of the Alliance's Board of Directors who bring a wealth of expertise, leadership, and passion to our organization.



Michelle Esquivel-Hall
CBRE



Simone Jones
Sidley Austin LLP



Marc Korman
WME



Celeste Owens
Gallagher



Marc Provissiero
Odenkirk-Provissiero
Entertainment



John Schwab
Munger, Tolles & Olson



Steven Velkei
Velkei Law



Kelly Zajfen
Alliance of Moms

Our Pro Bono Partners



This year, the Alliance coordinated more than **30,464 hours of pro bono legal work**, totaling over **\$15.3M in expert legal services** for our clients.*



For many years, Dykema attorneys have enjoyed a wonderful partnership with the Alliance. The successful guardianship petitions that enable loved ones to make necessary decisions about a minor's care and education, as well as the government benefits we have obtained for families in dire need of improved economic stability have been highlights. The strength of the clients, in the face of difficult challenges, truly inspires all of us to continue this important work."

— **TAMARA A. BUSH** *Dykema*

Together with some of our city's best attorneys, the Alliance provided expert legal representation to advance justice for young people.

Our gratitude to the partners and firms who are directly impacting the lives of children, teens, and families.

Accenture
Akin Gump Strauss Hauer & Feld LLP
Allianz Asset Management of America
Allred Maroko & Goldberg
ArentFox Schiff
Augustin Egelsee, LLP
BakerHostetler LLP
Best Best & Krieger LLP
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Venable LLP
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The Wonderful Company

Cy Pres Partners

Funds from cy pres awards help us improve outcomes for children, teens, and families in need of justice. Thank you to the law firms and attorneys who nominated or supported the Alliance as a cy pres recipient.

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Epps & Coulson, LLP
Goodwin Proctor LLP
Law Offices of Ronald A.
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