



2018
ANNUAL
REPORT



BLUE SKY BRIDGE
Child & Family Advocacy Center

At Blue Sky Bridge, we facilitate a collaborative approach to child abuse investigations while providing child victims and their families with support in a safe and child-focused environment. We strive to make the community safer for all children and families through intervention, education and advocacy.

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“SINCE I TOLD, MY FAMILY GOT HELP AND NOW I FEEL SAFE TO GO HOME.”
- A CHILD SERVED BY BLUE SKY BRIDGE

A MESSAGE FROM EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR,
GINA MAIONE EARLES

Dear friends,

We are beyond grateful for Blue Sky Bridge's accomplishments during our 2018 fiscal year ending 3/31/18 – accomplishments that would not have been possible without the expertise and dedication from staff, vision and passion from our board, and the shared hope from our supporters of putting an end to child abuse. Thank you for partnering with us.

During the last year our organization experienced phenomenal growth. Staff grew by 67%, our physical space grew by 141% (as a result of a successful capital campaign), we added two new program initiatives (Medical Treatment Program and Trauma-focused Cognitive Behavioral Therapy), and our operating budget grew by 56% in order to support our programmatic expansion. We are finally able to serve all the children and families in our community who need us in all the ways that they need us, and that feels really good.

Of course, our recent success would not have been possible without the generous support received from community members like you. Again, we thank you.

Our focus for the future is to refine our current programs, and to continue expanding where our community needs us most, particularly in the areas of therapy and education. Success will be defined in establishing a new level of financial security to ensure that we can continue to be available in a timely and effective way for families and children. Success will also mean that our community is better equipped to protect children.

Child abuse is an extremely complex issue that requires all of our efforts to tackle. As you will see in the coming pages, we are working harder than ever to ensure that child abuse victims receive the best possible care, and that all children in Boulder County remain safe.

Together, we believe that we can put an end to child abuse.
Thank you for joining us in our mission.

With gratitude,



Gina Maione Earles, Executive Director



OUR PROGRAMS

Forensic Interviews

A forensic interview is a neutral interview intended to solicit accurate information based on alleged events that have occurred, and is utilized to assess and determine the safety of a child. Research indicates interviewing children in a safe, neutral, and child/family friendly environment increases reliability and credibility in a child's statement. Ideally, it also provides each individual child the opportunity to tell their story in great depth one time.

Family Support

Child abuse can impact the whole family, which is why our Family Support Program offers support to caregivers during and after the Forensic Interview. Our goal is to ensure that the adult(s) caring for the child are receiving the information and tools they need in order to move forward and help the child and family heal.

Medical

Medical treatment is a new program initiative that launched in November 2017. Through a partnership with Boulder Community Health, children coming to Blue Sky Bridge are now able to receive an on-site medical examination. The purpose of the examination is to assess whether the child may need further medical attention, to provide an opportunity to collect evidence if possible, and to promote healing and safety.

Therapy

Trauma-focused Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (TF-CBT) is an evidence-based, short-term treatment model for children and youth impacted by trauma. TF-CBT includes parents or caregivers for portions of the therapy. Research shows that TF-CBT successfully resolves a broad array of emotional and behavioral difficulties associated with single, multiple, and complex trauma experiences.

“BSB HAS HELPED ME TREMENDOUSLY THROUGHOUT THIS CHALLENGING TIME. I’VE HAD TO PROCESS A LOT FOR MYSELF AND MY DAUGHTER, AND THIS HAS BEEN MY ‘SAFE PLACE,’ WHERE I’M ABLE TO DISCUSS EVENTS THAT I’M NOT ABLE TO TALK ABOUT ANYWHERE ELSE.”

– CAREGIVER SUPPORT GROUP PARTICIPANT



MARION

Marion is a three-year-old female Golden Labrador. Her role as a facility dog is to help reduce stress and anxiety for children, families, staff and agency partners visiting Blue Sky Bridge.

She is a calming presence for children coming to Blue Sky Bridge to share their story, and may be utilized during therapy sessions and forensic interviews.

School Based Education Program

Our school based education program utilizes a three-tiered holistic approach that includes a presentation with tips and resources for parents, training for school personnel, and a program for 3rd grade children consisting of four thirty-minute class presentations. The class presentations are developmentally age appropriate with an emphasis on touching rules and body safety rules, the difference between secrets and surprises, identifying trusted adults, and the “No, Go, Tell” plan.

The goals of the program are to increase students’ knowledge on body safety, teach strategies for prevention, instruct on how to report abuse if it has occurred, and encourage open dialogue between children and the adults in their lives on issues related to sexual development and abuse. **100% of schools participating in our school based education program demonstrate improvement in understanding of key body safety concepts identified as best practice in child sexual abuse prevention.**

2017-2018
School Based
Education
Program

36
Schools

2,147
3rd grade
students

295 Caregivers
received training

65 School personnel
received training

Project Pinwheel

Project Pinwheel is a group of agencies working together to prevent and reduce child sexual abuse in our community through a commitment to greater awareness, education, information sharing, outreach, and the reduction of any gaps in service.

In the fall of 2017 the steering committee decided to expand the effort throughout Boulder County. A new steering committee was formed including wider representation from law enforcement, prosecution, human services and public education.

In an effort to increase awareness and outreach, the agencies came together to “plant” pinwheel gardens across Boulder County during Child Abuse Prevention month in April.

Project Pinwheel offers many trainings for adults to increase education. One such training is Darkness to Light’s Stewards of Children. During the 2018 fiscal year, **97** adults received this child abuse prevention training.



- Boulder County Department of Housing & Human Services
- Boulder County District Attorney
- Boulder County Sheriff
- Boulder Police Department
- Boulder Valley School District
- Erie Police Department
- Lafayette Police Department
- LEVI (Longmont Ending Violence Initiative)
- Longmont Public Safety
- Louisville Police Department
- St. Vrain Valley School District
- University of Colorado Police Department

"As a member of the Blue Sky Bridge Education Committee, I am honored to have an opportunity to share my volunteer experience with you. Every classroom experience I have with Blue Sky Bridge strengthens my belief that our regular contact with third grade classrooms in Boulder and St. Vrain schools will reduce the incidence of sexual abuse dramatically in our community and that many more incidences of sexual abuse will be reported and contained!

As a psychologist practicing in Boulder for 25 years I have personally witnessed the sadness and traumatic impacts of unreported sexual abuse. Retirement has allowed me to help prevent these impacts through this important asset for our community that Blue Sky Bridge provides.

It is amazing to go through grade schools and experience the warm greetings of fourth graders who remember last year's presentations. Third graders are usually glad to see us and ask many questions of the presenters. We use puppets and dolls in our curriculum to reduce kids' fear responses while we teach skills to empower them in scary situations. We want them to have assertive behaviors to use to leave a situation when they feel unsafe about a touch and then to get adult help.

The training for volunteers is exceptional and Blue Sky Bridge staff is amazing. The other Education Committee volunteers are bright, competent, committed, hard working people who have become a wonderful and dynamic social network for me. Being a contributor to the Education Committee is a force in making my retirement a meaningful, engaging life experience."

- Lester Wall, Education Volunteer



"I offer my strongest support and appreciation for Blue Sky Bridge and the services they provide to children and families. I started my career at a time when these services were not available, and trust me, we were not as effective and supportive in these investigations as we are today. The forensic interviewing capabilities and the emotional support provided by the staff at Blue Sky Bridge make for stronger cases and better outcomes. Child abuse does occur in Boulder County, we are not immune to it. But as a county teamed with our partners at Blue Sky Bridge, we are better equipped to help children, hold offenders accountable, and end the cycles of abuse. Please join me in supporting Blue Sky Bridge".

- Sheriff Joe Pelle



“Having been a sexual assault nurse examiner for several years I am impressed with the effect that a forensic exam has on an individual. When children have been a victim of assault there are multiple health impacts. These include: sexually transmitted infections, suicidality, self-harm, engaging in risky behaviors, etc. A thorough exam addresses physical, emotional, and mental health, and allows for the patient to be seen by an expert and have their concerns addressed. Following exams, I have seen relief expressed by the patient as they are reassured that their body is healthy and normal. They are also able to ask questions that they may have been uncomfortable asking before regarding anatomy and sexuality. I have seen how much this helps to reassure the victim as well as the parents. Additionally, resources and appropriate medical follow-up care instructions are also given. A medical forensic examination is an important part of the collaborative care of pediatric victims of sexual assault.”

- Elyse Diewald RN, BSN, SANE-A, SANE-P



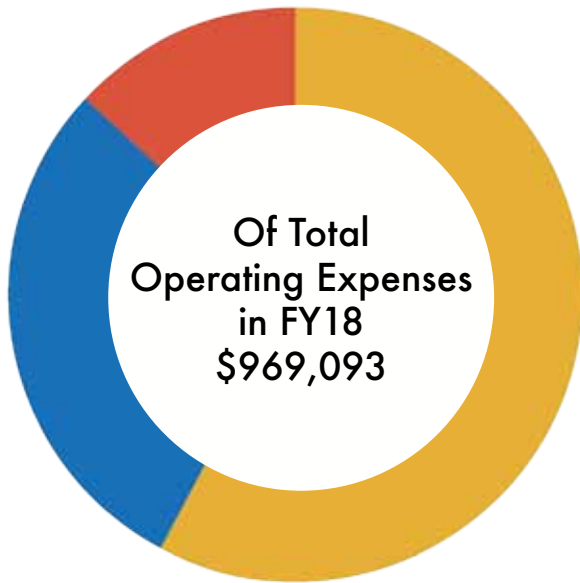
“Blue Sky Bridge (“BSB”) is an amazing organization. The staff at BSB has changed the lives of so many parents and children. The District Attorney’s Office has the utmost respect and appreciation for the staff of BSB because we know how hard they work to protect kids and to help our community. BSB is one-of-a-kind because of their expertise, collaborative approach, and tireless efforts to make the Boulder community safer. With their child advocacy efforts, BSB supports abuse victims through a victim’s most difficult and traumatic moments. Through BSB’s strong working relationship with law enforcement and the District Attorney’s Office, BSB leads a coordinated, supportive, and compassionate response in addressing abuse. As a society, our collective consciousness is currently focused on terrible accounts of sexual assault. In Boulder, we are so extremely fortunate to have BSB. The District Attorney’s Office has been able to secure justice for the most vulnerable in our society because of the dedicated and talented staff at BSB. BSB helps to make Boulder a special place.”

- Michael Dougherty, District Attorney

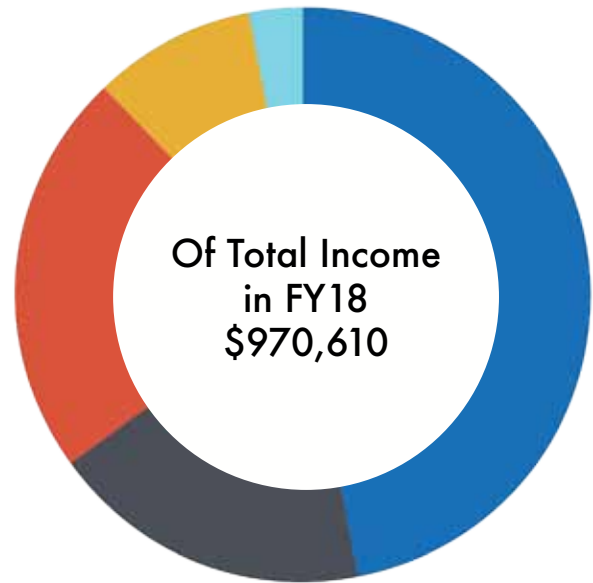


FINANCIALS

Fiscal Year 2018: April 1, 2017 - March 31, 2018

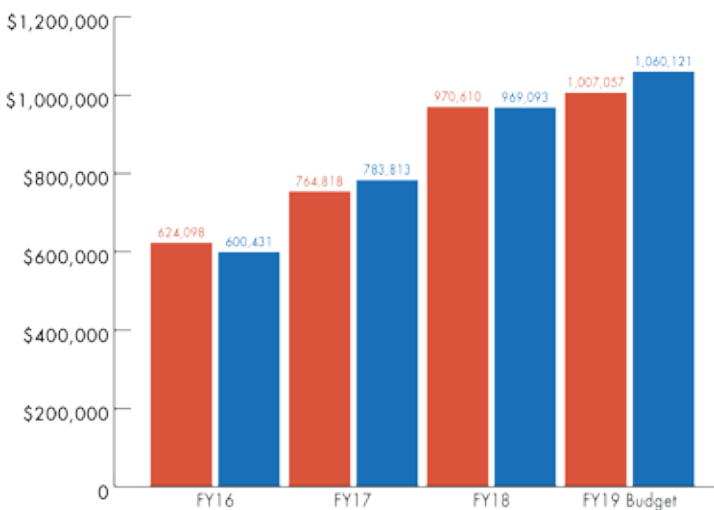


- Prevention Education & Outreach 29%
- Forensic Interviewing, Family Support, & Medical 58%
- Trauma-focused Therapy 13%



- Government 47%
- Individuals 23%
- Events 18%
- Foundations 9%
- Other 3%

Income vs expense



- Operating Income
- Operating Expense

Statement of Financial Position as of 3/31/18

Current Assets	\$735,934
Fixed Assets	\$1,972,846
Endowment	\$193,981
Total Assets	\$2,902,762
Liabilities	\$40,046
Board Designated Reserves	\$500,000
Temporarily Restricted Funds	\$183,663
Permanently Restricted Funds	\$120,543
Unrestricted Net Assets	\$2,058,510
Total Liabilities and Equity	\$2,902,762

HIGHLIGHTS

New Programs

During the 2018 fiscal year, Blue Sky Bridge launched two new programs: Medical and Therapy. Due to the generous support of our Capital Campaign, our expanded facility allowed us to increase program offerings as well. Blue Sky Bridge was able to create a space for medical exams, as well as two new therapy rooms. These new program offerings help us serve additional children and families in Boulder County.

Prior to the launch of our medical program, children receiving a medical exam needed to travel to Arvada or Loveland. We now have the ability to conduct these important exams in our facility, adding convenience and familiarity to families coming to the facility. Specialized Sexual Assault Nurse Examiners (SANE) are available on-site, as needed, thanks to our partnership with Boulder Community Health.

Our therapy program allows us to offer Trauma-focused Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (TF-CBT) to assist in the healing process of clients. The therapy program is available for children and youth ages 3 to 17 who have participated in a Forensic Interview following a traumatic event or series of events. Sessions are typically 90 minutes long, and include 30 minutes at the beginning of the session to work with parents or caregivers. TF-CBT clients attend weekly sessions for 16-20 weeks. **100% of therapy clients display reduced trauma symptoms.**

Additional 2018 Accomplishments

304

Forensic Interviews

78% related to allegations of child sexual abuse

65% identified as female

35% identified as male

299

non-offending caregivers received **family support services**

142
Crisis Calls

5,600

individuals reached through community **outreach & trainings**

35 non-offending caregivers participated in our **peer support group**

19 clients received TF-CBT

20th Anniversary



A Moveable Feast 20th Anniversary

On Saturday, June 3, 2017 Blue Sky Bridge celebrated the 20th Anniversary of A Moveable Feast™. Over 250 people came together at the beautiful home of Jennifer Budacz in Goldbranch Estates, Niwot to help bring an end to child abuse in Boulder County.

We raised over \$135,000 from the evening, and we are proud of the fact that when you give to Blue Sky Bridge, you are supporting a solution to the epidemic of child abuse in our local community.

On behalf of the Blue Sky Bridge staff and Board of Directors, and the A Moveable Feast™ Planning Committee, thank you to hosts, guests, and sponsors for your incredible generosity and thank you for making a difference in the lives of Boulder County's children.



Sponsors

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The Mary & Tim Wolf Family Foundation

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AMF Photos: Lisa Doane Photography & Riley Ferrero

STAFF (as of 3/31/18)

Gina Maione Earles | Executive Director
Michelle Amato, LSW | Family Support Advocate
Katie Ashburner, MSW | Program Manager, Forensic Interviewer
Allison Breed, MSW, LCSW | Therapist
Gretchen Fair, LCSW | Family Support Advocate
Robin Friesen-Holwell, MS, LMFT | Program Manager, Therapist
Amanda Fuentes, MA | Forensic Interviewer
Claudia Gilbert | Bilingual Prevention Education Associate
Faith Motter, MSW | Director of Development and Communication
Sarah Vincent | Development & Events Manager
Trish Wood | Prevention Education Associate

Karen Daly | Consultant
Debbie Stewart | Grant Writer

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