

# ANNUAL REPORT 2023

Strengthening Families and Inspiring Action  
Through Education, Awareness and Advocacy

Fiscal Year Oct. 1, 2022-Sept. 30, 2023



**WE ARE PREVENTION PEOPLE.**  
Fall Local Council Director's Meeting

## From the Executive Director

**W**elcome to the good part – where we reflect on a year marked with significant milestones. We celebrate advancing the Prevent Child Abuse Georgia mission; we can see the cause for that celebration reflected in the tangible data on the pages of this annual report. It represents our team's abundant commitment to serving Georgia's families. We invite you to rejoice with us over these extraordinary results. But there remains much work to do. The statewide need for science-informed prevention strategies is urgent. Day by day, woven into the many trainings, meetings, and conversations, we are united in the belief that all children and families can live a purposeful and happy life with hope for the future. It is the connections we make that translate into pushing

forward evidence-based, family-centered, equitable programs and initiatives to impact Georgia's children and families.

The impact of our work is like that proverbial pebble tossed in a lake as its ripples fan out to create transformative change.

We trust our shared values and the intentionality of an aligned and comprehensive primary prevention ecosystem will nudge forward the dream that all families can thrive.

We are truly grateful for your continued support.

Warm regards,



**Jennifer Stein, MBA**  
Executive Director

**P**revent Child Abuse Georgia (PCA Georgia) works to increase public awareness and implementation of programs that PREVENT child abuse and neglect by developing trainings and connecting families to needed resources. We also build, support, and sustain prevention networks and partnerships such as our local PCA Georgia councils, Strengthening Families Georgia, Georgia Essentials for Childhood, and the Georgia Family Support Network.

## Prevention Network

**Our local PCA Georgia council network** strengthens and supports families in their communities. We support the implementation of primary and secondary prevention programs. We provide free technical assistance and training on family-centered approaches that improve staff competencies and outcomes for families.

At our semi-annual meeting for local councils, we were pleased to bring in national consultants, The Code Group, who delivered a dynamic workshop on Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, Accessibility, and Social Justice that featured tools for facilitating difficult conversations. This past year, we have been primarily focused on amplifying the work of our councils across Georgia. Drawing on the expertise of our new communications director, a council communications networking group, and a new quarterly newsletter just for our local councils were established to expand prevention messaging further at the local level.

We were also happy to welcome three new councils, reinforcing the power of local child abuse prevention leaders: PCA Atlanta, PCA Ogeechee, and PCA Atlantic Area.

## Training and Education

**Training professionals** represents an enduring part of our core work. PCA Georgia develops and curates training based on the needs of families in our state, professionals in the field, and emerging research on promising practices. We aim to equip professionals and interested community members with new knowledge and skills to serve families and children better. Our special topic webinars included:

- **Discussing Physical Punishment with Parents**
- **Perspectives on Poverty**
- **Healthy Outcomes from Positive Experiences**
- **Creating Nurturing Environments for LGBTQI+ Youth**

Webinars were presented by our highly qualified staff and external subject-matter experts.

Annually, we host the Georgia Conference on Child Abuse and Neglect with our partners at the Stephanie V. Blank Center for Healthy Development. This year, we added a new partner – the Georgia Center for Child Advocacy. With a return to in-person and a sold-out crowd of almost 400 attendees, we leaned into our theme of Thriving Families: That’s Our Why. Attendees enjoyed the wide variety of topics presented by local and national experts while embracing the sense of community the day provided.

PCA Georgia trains professionals statewide to deliver prevention-focused training to others, using a “train the trainer” model. This dramatically increases our ability to provide quality training experiences to communities and professionals in every city. With many trainers being qualified by Bright From the Start, we can also better meet the training needs of professionals in the childcare and early education system. The ripple effect of this growing network of trainers is seen as we look at the significant increase over last year in the number of workshops held and the number of participants trained. Our Mandated Reporting trainings had a 23% increase in sessions held, with a 54% increase in participants now trained to identify better and report suspected child maltreatment. Protective Factor trainings saw a 71% increase in trainings held and a 19% increase in participants who can help caregivers identify and bolster their protective factors and resilience, creating safe and nurturing environments for children.

## National Partnerships

Prevention happens in partnership, and as the state chapter of **Prevent Child Abuse America** since the early 1980s, we benefit from the education and support received as a valued member of this nationwide chapter network. Our staff works in tandem and stays connected to our national leaders, formulating innovative strategies to address the complex issues facing families and the factors leading to child maltreatment. From participating monthly in specialized affinity workgroups with other state chapters to attending PCA America’s Directors Meeting and, later in the year, the Annual Conference, our staff stays informed on emerging science and equally shares successes from Georgia. We were proud to present two workshops, one highlighting our work with the rebranding of our 1-800-CHILDREN helpline to Find Help Georgia and the other on our state’s Child Abuse and Neglect Prevention Plan through Inclusive Conversations. The new Theory of Change, announced at the PCAA Conference, aligns with the Georgia Essentials for Childhood work plan, providing a deeper connection to the hope we all share for families and children to thrive.

## Strengthening Families Georgia

**S**trengthening Families Georgia (SFG) is a collaborative statewide initiative committed to weaving research-based Protective Factors into services for families and children. With a year marked by progressive efforts, SFG has significantly advanced the well-being of families across Georgia by refreshing its five-year strategic plan and accompanying evaluation framework. These vital revisions



Above, Kendra Cole, MPA, presents on the Protective Factors at the 2023 Georgia Conference on Child Abuse & Neglect, held Sept. 14.

offer a more precise direction and enhance our ability to measure our influence on families' lives.

SFG's expansion efforts this fiscal year have been transformative, with 17 new partnerships forged to broaden the reach of the Five Protective Factors in various family

support programs. These new relationships are pivotal, enabling us to integrate resilience-building strategies more comprehensively and ensure that support meets families

wherever they may be. SFG has placed a strong emphasis on training, which is key to our mission. The training enables professionals to integrate the Protective Factors into everyday practices, exemplifying our investment in nurturing a state where families and their children can find security and develop resilience. Four master trainers from Prevent Child Abuse Georgia and the Department of Family & Children Services (DFCS), Prevention & Community Support section, were equipped to impart SFG's Protective Factors framework to other professionals. This initiative had a cascading effect, resulting in 23 professionals becoming certified SFG Protective Factors trainers, many of whom now offer training that provides Bright from the Start (BFTS) credit. This credential is crucial for our trainers, enfranchising them to facilitate continuing education that directly supports Georgia's work with children and their families.

Our initiatives have made strides beyond training. SFG reached broader audiences by contributing to significant events, including the Georgia Head Start Association Spring 2023 Conference and the Georgia Conference on Child Abuse and Neglect in September. Through these efforts, SFG has not only empowered families but also strengthened the fabric of communities. By educating and collaborating, we build a stronger, more resilient Georgia for future generations.

## Georgia Essentials for Childhood

**A** Vision for Child and Family Well-being in Georgia: **Our State's Child Abuse and Neglect Prevention Plan**, 2020-29, completed its second full year of implementation. Through its six objectives and 77 strategies, the 10-year plan articulates a theory of change for Georgians to reduce and prevent maltreatment and to promote positive outcomes for families, systems, governments, and society.

In 2023, the state-level management of the plan evolved, shifting primary emphasis from a set of 14 regional conveners to the cultivation of a broader movement around child and family well-being. **Georgia Essentials for Childhood** worked to find, discern, and report on existing successful practices and approaches across the state. This replaced many local partners' earlier understandings of the CANPP as a mandated collection of new initiatives that must be implemented.

Successful statewide activities from 2022 continued, further attracting larger audiences of working partners and community collaborators:

- Semi-annual Community of Practice sessions (spring and fall sessions): supplying opportunities for professionals,

practitioners, and community members interested in similar priorities to get together to share successes, discuss barriers, learn about resources, and receive technical assistance.

- Annual review sessions (one with each region): examining progress on implementation plans, challenges, opportunities, and changes as needed.
- Ongoing access to state-level organizers through a technical-assistance webform and the deployment of Basecamp as a collaborative platform for coordination and communication both within and across regions.

The fundamental accelerant for CANPP implementation this year was the addition of a State Prevention Plan Coordinator, Beth Florence, to PCA Georgia staff, thanks to support from the **Preventing Adverse Childhood Experiences: Data to Action** project at Georgia Department of Public Health.



Above, Beth Florence presents on the CANPP at the Fall PCA Georgia Directors' Meeting, held Sept. 13.



## Training

Building competency



## Awareness

Increasing understanding

**2,784**

Professionals attended  
Webinars + One-off  
Trainings



### STRENGTHENING FAMILIES GEORGIA

Protective Factors



**23**  
New  
Community  
Café  
facilitators



**72**  
Workshops

**899**

Professionals  
trained

**27,724**

Completed  
online training

**17+**

New partner  
organizations



**1,755**

Mandated  
Reporters trained

Workshops presented  
state + national  
conferences

**24**



**39**

Digital  
Newsletters

Reached  
**3,000+**  
newsletter  
subscribers

New  
subscribers  
+504

**1**

National  
media mention



PCA Georgia  
featured on  
podcasts



**1**  
Proclamation  
Signed



**905**

New social media  
followers



**15,000**

Pinwheels planted for  
Child Abuse Prevention  
Month to remind us of our  
WHY: we believe every  
child deserves a happy,  
carefree childhood.

### 2023 CONFERENCE ON CHILD ABUSE & NEGLECT



**400**  
attendees

**16**  
workshops

**2**  
awards

## Resources

Linking to supports

### FIND HELP GEORGIA

Providing training + support to providers to connect families to resources



**241**  
workshop attendees

**178**  
Certified Navigators



**580**  
app downloads

**21,000**  
users

**94,300**  
resource searches

**50,000+**  
pieces of marketing material

**6,900**  
Parent tip sheets



Accessed CAP Month  
Community  
Action Guides



**542**

State, regional, national  
collaborative meetings



**40+ years**  
building thriving  
families

**69,713**  
web sessions



PCA Georgia website serves as a  
valuable resource on prevention  
strategies to communities +  
professionals.

## Capacity

Inspiring hope for the future

**+3**

New local councils

**34**

Hours of support  
provided to councils



**17**

Prevention  
Ambassadors



**568**

Trainers in  
prevention  
network

+63 in 2023

New in 2023



Director of  
Communication  
& Media



CANPP  
Coordinator

New in 2024



GFSN  
Coordinator



Creative Services  
Specialist

**F**ind Help Georgia, a collaborative program of PCA Georgia, the Department of Early Care and Learning, and the Technical College System of Georgia, had its first full year of successful implementation. Project & Resource Coordinator Kimberly Stewart-Lucas provides leadership for the virtual resource hub designed to help Georgians in need easily navigate supportive resources online, via mobile app, or by calling a resource navigation specialist.

In the first year, the average online search volume grew to approximately 4,300 monthly searches. Through persistent outreach and promotion, the Find Help Georgia platform usership was 73% higher than other comparable states or organizations using the FindHelp platform.

It was a remarkable year improving access for families to locate financial assistance, food pantries, medical care, childcare, job training, and other free or reduced-cost services through Find Help Georgia's website and mobile app.

There has been a 130% increase in searches made on the platform since its launch in April 2022. Through community-based organizations, Find Help Georgia saw a 173% increase in connections made through the platform as helpers navigated supportive resources for clients.

Thanks to support from statewide partners, we introduced the Find Help Georgia platform to community members across all industry sectors. We presented training workshops designed to support direct service providers and advocates in how to



Above, Kimberly Stewart-Lucas shares her passion for Find Help Georgia as the Spring 2023 PCA Georgia Directors' Meeting, held Feb. 28.

customize the individualized program cards and embed the free suite of tools for providers into their daily workflow. With this solid foundation in place and the growing awareness of this tool, Find Help Georgia will continue to expand access to needed resources for all Georgians.

Feedback from helpers was overwhelmingly positive, with many responses like this one:

***"I am so eager to implement this as early as next week with our Advocates. I will be having them all create accounts and will make sure they attend future training. We will search for resources while our families are here so we can print off info for them and provide them info by phone on an ongoing basis as well." – Workshop Attendee***

---

## Georgia Family Support Network

PCA Georgia is now the implementing agency for the **Georgia Family Support Network (GFSN)**, which leverages state, county, and community networks to strengthen practices that champion quality family support for organizations providing direct services to families. Family support and strengthening organizations work with families in a multigenerational, family-centered approach to enhance parenting skills, foster healthy development and well-being of children, youth, and families, prevent child abuse, increase school readiness, connect families to resources, develop parent and community leadership, engage males and fathers, support healthy marital and couples' relationships, and promote family economic success.

Previously housed within the Prevention and Community Support (PCS) Section of the Division of Family and Children Services, GFSN became part of the National Family Support Network in 2018 –today there are 59 GFSN member organizations. With the fiscal support of our partners at PCS. Starting in January, the network will have its first full-time coordinator dedicated to the growth, quality implementation of standards, and support of this statewide member network.

**P**CA Georgia supports Georgia communities in the development, coordination, and implementation of public awareness activities focusing on the promotion of child abuse prevention. We nurture positive childhoods by educating and empowering communities to learn about practical solutions to prevent child maltreatment before it ever occurs.

Thanks to the generosity of the Joseph B. Whitehead Child Well-Being Fund at the Community Foundation for Greater Atlanta, PCA Georgia established a communications department by hiring its first Director of Communication and Media in November 2022. E. Lane Gresham joined the PCA Georgia team and has spent the first year learning and assessing the prevention landscape while serving as the primary contact for communication functions.

As the statewide lead of **April's Child Abuse Prevention Month** initiative in Georgia, PCA Georgia provided community resource guides and media toolkits. It distributed over 15,000 pinwheels, emblematic of the

national PCA campaign for happy, healthy childhoods throughout the state. April 2023 events included a virtual professional development series, a proclamation signing by Governor Brian Kemp at the Gold Dome with more than 70 partners, and an Open House for PCA Georgia at its new GSU campus location.

Also, in 2023, PCA Georgia joined the Georgia Press Association to grow our audience and raise awareness of child abuse prevention; joined the Georgia Chamber of Commerce to engage with and educate business leaders statewide; curated a new "What is Prevention?" toolkit for local councils to co-brand and use to educate and civically engage local communities and established a webpage with resources exclusively for media professionals.

PCA Georgia will soon announce its first Creative Services Specialist, adding capacity to communication efforts. This new role will deepen the ability of the organization to increase its primary prevention messaging and outreach efforts, changing how we talk about childhood adversity and what it takes to support and build strong families.

**A**ssistant Director Dr. Jyll Walsh serves as the PCA Georgia in-house subject-matter expert. Designing curriculum, researching academic papers, troubleshooting technical issues, leading trainings, or simply being available to answer the plethora of questions posed daily, Walsh is always ready to serve.

In August 2023, she launched the inaugural **PCA Georgia Ambassadors** cohort of 17 new prevention advocates. This program centered on leadership development to train, connect, and activate a network of passionate emerging leaders. This program is designed for college students, young professionals, or community members seeking knowledge and skills to make a difference. The 10-month program prepares its participants through

workshops and hands-on experience. Ambassadors will gain valuable skills to positively impact the lives of children and families across the state. Ambassadors' activities include monthly workshops, volunteer experiences, fundraising, and an awareness event.

Walsh has mentored many **GSU School of Public Health** students during her decade with the organization. Being part of a university allows PCA Georgia to be closely involved in developing future leaders. Over the years, PCA Georgia has hosted 18 student research assistants, 15 interns, and served on the committee for five students' capstone, the culminating project for a graduate degree. Look for additional features in upcoming newsletters and social media posts.

## Former Student Spotlight



**Maureen Oginga • PCA GRA 2019-20**  
Health Communication Specialist for Peers and Partners, CDC National Center for Emerging and Zoonotic Infectious Diseases

**M**aureen Oginga worked part-time with PCA Georgia as a student research assistant over two years while she was completing her Master's in Public Health at GSU.

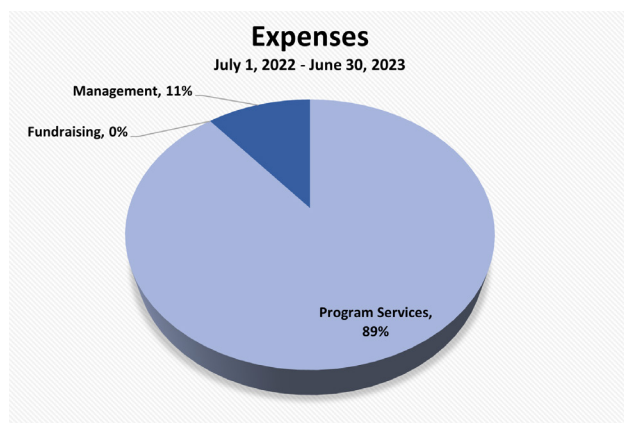
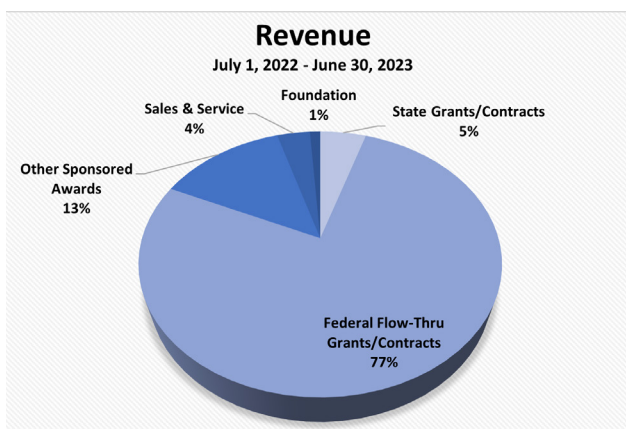
*"As a PCA Georgia student, I received support and nurturing and witnessed significant growth in my professional development. PCA Georgia and the staff also provided me with invaluable mentorship and opportunities for personal growth."*

During her time with PCA Georgia, Oginga was involved in community training and supported state coalitions aiming to strengthen families. While reflecting on her time with PCA Georgia, Oginga said it allowed her to observe dedicated staff members working behind the scenes to make critical decisions and create impactful initiatives.

Since graduating, Oginga has been an ORISE fellow with the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, focused on adverse childhood experiences (ACEs), and has recently stepped into a full-time position contracting with the CDC as a Health Communication Specialist for Peers and Partners.



# FINANCIAL SNAPSHOT



*An overview of PCA Georgia financials is included above. We are pleased to report that .89 cents of every dollar fuels our mission.*

## PCA GEORGIA TEAM



**Jyll Walsh, DrPH**  
Assistant Director



**Kendra Cole, MPA**  
SFG Coordinator



**Beth Florence**  
CANPP Coordinator



**E. Lane Gresham**  
Comms + Media  
Director



**Kimberly Stewart-Lucas**  
Training + Resource  
Coordinator

### ADVISORY BOARD

*Kathleen Baggett, PhD, Belisa M. Urbina, Deborah C. Chosewood, MS, Glenene Lanier, LMSW, Jacquelyn Zahm, Psy.D., Karsten Hartman, Laura E. Griggs, LMSW, Lisa Dawson, MPH, Michael Axelrod, JD, Michael Powell, Miriam Munn, Naeshia McDowell, MPH, Paige Ferrell, Polly McKinney, Sabrina Callaway, LCSW, Sandra Alexander, MEd., Susan J. Kelley, RN, PhD, FAAN, Stacey Chavis, MSL*

**PREVENT CHILD ABUSE GEORGIA IS  
A STATE CHAPTER OF PREVENT CHILD ABUSE AMERICA  
HOUSED AT THE MARK CHAFFIN CENTER FOR HEALTHY DEVELOPMENT  
SCHOOL OF PUBLIC HEALTH • GEORGIA STATE UNIVERSITY**

**PCAGEORGIA.ORG**



**Georgia Department  
of Human Services**  
Division of Family & Children Services

*This project was supported in part by the Georgia Department of Human Services, Division of Family and Children Services and the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Administration for Children and Families, Community Based Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act (CFDA 93.590). Points of view or opinions stated in this document are those of the author(s) and do not necessarily represent the official position or policies of the Georgia Department of Human Services, Division of Family and Children Services or the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Administration for Children and Families, Community Based Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act (CFDA 93.590).*