



2023 ANNUAL REPORT

eliminating racism
empowering women

ywca

Kalamazoo



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YWCA Kalamazoo has never waited patiently for change.

We are a public health organization focused on social justice and providing services for vulnerable communities of Kalamazoo.

We operate at the intersection of racial and gender equity, creating new partnerships, programs, funds and impact to directly and immediately accomplish change.

We leverage the power of partnership.

YWCA Kalamazoo uses its foundational position in the community to be a coalition catalyst. By bringing together the populations we serve, like-minded organizations, academic experts, government entities, elected officials, and generous funders, we're able to achieve remarkable, sustainable solutions through advocacy and systems change.

We fiercely and comprehensively support equitable opportunity for mothers and children.

Our approach is innovative and holistic. Beginning with prenatal care, healthy births, and reducing infant mortality, we give mothers, birthing parents, and babies the start they deserve. We support them in our affordable, trauma-informed childcare centers, while also training community members to be effective childcare providers. Furthermore, we create safe spaces for women and children free from violence, coupled with comprehensive services such as therapy, legal service, and opportunities for economic advancement.



Founded in 1885. Built for today's Kalamazoo.

YWCA's across the country share a mission: Eliminating Racism. Empowering Women. In Kalamazoo, we pursue that mission by addressing the social determinants of health. We understand that racism is a public health crisis.

When the need grows, we grow. When policy isn't inclusive, we transform it. When the community is at risk, we step in with new support. When racism rears its ugly head, we are champions for an anti-racist community.

Join us in our fierce, focused fight to expand the foundations of racial and gender equity throughout Kalamazoo.



YWCA IS ON A MISSION TO STAND UP FOR SOCIAL JUSTICE

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empowering women
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YWCA KALAMAZOO WORKFORCE PROFILE

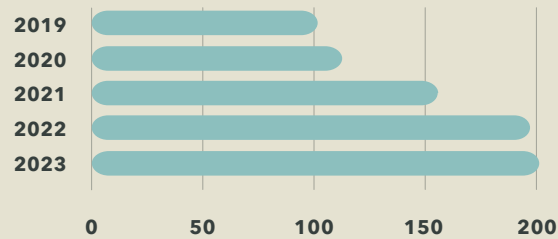
Based on the YWCA Kalamazoo’s workforce distribution, 45% of the agency’s workforce identify as Black or African American. Additionally, 17% of the agency’s workforce identify as Hispanic, Latino or two or more races.

**This is not additive as the U.S. census considers Hispanic/Latino an ethnicity rather than race.*

Source: <https://www.census.gov/quickfacts/fact/table/kalamazoochartertownshipkalamazoocountymichigan,kalamazoocitymichigan,kalamazoocountymichigan,US/PST045221>

2023 WORKFORCE PROFILE:

NUMBER OF EMPLOYEES



**The YWCA Kalamazoo workforce has steadily increased from 2019 through 2023. In 2019, we employed 109 employees, and in 2023, there was an 84% increase in staff (201 employees) compared to 2019.*

RACE DISTRIBUTIONS

	2023 YWCA	KZOO COUNTY CENSUS
BLACK OR AFRICAN AMERICAN	45%	12%
WHITE/CAUCASIAN	33%	81%
ASIAN	3%	2.8%
HISPANIC OR LATINO	12%	6%
AMERICAN INDIAN OR ALASKA NATIVE	0.5%	0.5%
TWO OR MORE RACES	5%	3.9%

9 Out Of 10

During exit interviews, 9 out of 10 YWCA Kalamazoo former employees would recommend YWCA Kalamazoo to a friend. Opportunities for improvement included more training, improved onboarding, improved communications, increased transparency, increased accountability, opportunities for team building, and increased staff engagement. Human Resources have since introduced a 3-day onboarding orientation for all new employees.

SERVICES PROVIDED BY YWCA KALAMAZOO:

During 2023, YWCA Kalamazoo served an unduplicated 6,250 community members. Each program at YWCA Kalamazoo is unique and serves a different clientele. We proudly provide the following services and events to our clients and the Kalamazoo community.

ADVOCACY AND SYSTEMS CHANGE



CARING FOR VICTIMS OF ABUSE



PROMOTING MATERNAL AND CHILD HEALTH



IMPROVING THE LIVES OF CHILDREN



Total **6,250**
people

^Total unduplicated clients. Most clients receive more than 1 service within the CVA department. *Number of community members interacted with.



To Our YWCA Supporters

Dear Friends,

At YWCA Kalamazoo, 2023 was a remarkable year of both impact and transition. This year, the organization bid farewell to its dynamic leader of 9 years, Dr. Grace Lubwama. Dr. Grace's legacy is one for the ages - among many achievements throughout her tenure, she spearheaded the introduction of YWCA's infant mortality work, including the co-creation of Cradle Kalamazoo. She led the vision and launch of a new childcare site, the first in the community to offer 24/7 care. She steered the organization through the pandemic, creating a small oasis of stability while the world was in chaos. Dr. Grace served as an historic leader for YWCA Kalamazoo, completing her final chapter with the organization in early 2023.

That spring, Lisa Rodriguez, a remarkable long-time YWCA board member who joined the organization as an employee in 2019 to lead its development efforts, rose to lead the organization for the remainder of 2023 as YWCA Kalamazoo's Interim CEO. With the steadfast partnership of the organization's then-board chair Demarra West, Lisa's steadiness, expertise, and profound dedication to the organization's mission allowed for seamless transition. Programs not only remained uninterrupted, but they continued to strengthen.

Transition is often the marker of the strength of a movement. Change is a test of resilience, and successful change is made possible only by the skilled efforts of many. It is an inspiring reminder that YWCA Kalamazoo's mission is so much greater than any one of us, and that our momentum continues because those who lift up this organization believe the momentum must continue. We must push for the survival of Black babies, who are dying at three times the rate of white babies. We must make childcare accessible for marginalized families who are often excluded from this essential component of economic opportunity. We must ensure every survivor of every identity has a safe, healing place to turn in our community. We must create paths for reproductive justice, even when systems interfere. We must, we do, and we will.

This work is made possible because of the organization's thousands of community partners, allies, supporters, volunteers, and employees. We all play a role in creating the resilience that allows us to face change with courage - and in equity work, "change" is the constant. Thank you for your support of YWCA Kalamazoo. Your solidarity gives this movement strength.

In partnership,



SUSAN ROSAS



From Our Board Chair

Dear Friends,

2023 marked a year of transition and sustained organizational growth amidst an ever-changing political and social environment. The strength, resilience, and deep commitment of YWCA Kalamazoo across teams meant that we were able to move steadily forward in our mission work while balancing and embracing transitions in leadership. As we close this chapter, it is evident that we have come out stronger on the other side.

2023 saw the close of Dr. Grace Lubwama's nine-year tenure as the CEO of YWCA Kalamazoo. Dr. Grace left us with her remarkable legacy and profound impact which will remain a defining period in YWCA Kalamazoo's long history. Her visionary, fearless, and resolute leadership ushered in a new era in our work as champions for equity in Kalamazoo - one where the mobilization of our agency's collective strength and commitment to our mission enabled us to forge onward in the relentless pursuit of racial and gender justice despite challenging political and social climates.

Following Dr. Lubwama's departure, Lisa Rodriguez accepted the torch as Interim CEO with courage and grace, ensuring that our vital work was able to move forward without interruption. YWCA Kalamazoo was able to serve 6,250 unduplicated individuals through our program areas of caring for victims of abuse, promoting maternal and child health, improving the lives of children, and advocating for social justice and systems change. Without the steadfast commitment and tireless efforts of Lisa and the entire 200-strong YWCA Kalamazoo team, this would not have been possible.

In times where instability and uncertainty threaten to overwhelm our vision for the future, we must remain with our eyes open and feet forward, planted firmly in our foundation that justice and equity for our most marginalized communities - Black, Indigenous, people of color (BIPOC), undocumented and immigrant, low-income, LGBTQIA+, survivors of violence, women, and children - are not only possible but are necessary. We are continually grateful for our countless community allies, donors, and volunteers whose support is vital to our progress. Without your generosity of spirit, time, and funds we would be unable to carry out our mission work.

It has been a privilege and honor to serve as Board Chair during this season of growth and change as I witnessed the tenacity, passion, devotion, and tireless efforts of the entire YWCA Kalamazoo team in our pursuit of eliminating racism and empowering women, and promoting peace, justice, freedom, and dignity for all. As we move into the next year, I have the utmost confidence in our capacity as changemakers to carry out our mission and vision for Kalamazoo and beyond and to remain a source of safety and stability for those who need us most.

REGENA NELSON, board chair 2023-24

Regena F. Nelson





Improving the Lives of Children
*Providing accessible high-quality early learning
and childcare for families*

**Every
child
deserves
an
equitable
start in
life.**

YWCA Kalamazoo focuses on improving children's lives and well-being through innovative, high-quality childcare and educational programs that support vulnerable children with trauma-informed racial and gender justice curricula.

DREAMERY CHILDCARE CENTERS

Our classrooms are designed to feel like a hug. When the children are vulnerable, having come from chaos at home, we provide them safety and security - sometimes the most trusted space of their day. The Dreamery is committed to providing quality childcare at affordable prices so families can work outside the home while their children are safe, learning, and having fun.

YWCA Kalamazoo welcomes children aged six weeks through the year before they enter kindergarten. The Dreamery offers high-quality early learning experiences, childcare, and Great Start Readiness Programs. YWCA Kalamazoo provides well-rounded programming, including tuition assistance, transportation, and additional support for homeless and low-income families.



Case Studies

ASHLEY AND AINSLEY

Ashley and their family discovered The Dreamery when they moved to Kalamazoo in late 2020. They signed their 11-month-old, Ainsley, up for the infant classroom, which was a great fit immediately. Ainsley has grown through each level and now thrives in the preschool classroom. Their family loves how Ainsley is challenged daily to learn important things, to start forming an educational background, to be a positive member of her classroom, and to become a leader. Ellis enrolled at 12 weeks old and has since graduated from toddler 2, where he is learning excellent communication skills and abilities to co-exist with others in the classroom. **“His growth over the past two years has been incredible. Both children are overjoyed at drop-offs each morning, ready to play and learn with their teachers and friends.”**

The family prioritized diversity when looking for childcare and was thrilled to find such a diverse community at The Dreamery. They have also expressed gratitude for the unique way the organization determines eligibility for financial assistance because they would not have been able to afford such great care and early development. Because of Dreamery’s dedication to families and the community, finances are never a worry for Dreamery families.

FRANKIE, SAGE, AND ARI

Frankie’s family has been using the YWCA Downtown Dreamery since the summer of 2018. Their oldest, Sage, has attended since being in the infant room and is now in kindergarten. Ari, their youngest, has been attending since Toddler 1 and is currently in preschool prep. Before choosing the YWCA Kalamazoo, the family toured and evaluated reports for approximately ten other childcare centers. They shared that the primary reasons they chose the YWCA Kalamazoo were the staff and curriculum quality. Due to unforeseen circumstances, their children have spent a few weeks at other centers. However, the YWCA Kalamazoo has been their best experience. **“The staff quality is high, our children have learned so much, the food is outstanding. I could continue because the YWCA has been better in all categories than other centers.”**

Another reason this family chose the YWCA is because they support the YWCA’s mission and goals. From the first center they evaluated, they looked at the staff boards and saw homogeneity; however, **the Dreamery offered their family the diverse environment they hoped to raise their children in—racial, ethnic, national origin, sex, and gender diversity.** Frankie also appreciated that children living in the YWCA shelter share a classroom with their children.

“In short, the YWCA is the best. We could have another dozen locations in our community, and Kalamazoo would be better.”

Resource Hub

CHARLIE AND BLAKE

During late 2023, Charlie fled a domestic violence situation along with their 2-year-old toddler, Blake. Seeking safety and refuge at a YWCA shelter. Charlie faced insurmountable issues, such as finding childcare so they could work and attend school. **Thankfully, they had a team of YWCA Kalamazoo staff working alongside them to ensure their transition to living independently was successful. The Resource Hub received a referral from a YWCA Kalamazoo advocate to help with childcare placement and finding housing.** The Dreamery at Edison assisted by enrolling Blake in their childcare program. Charlie had enrolled in school at KVCC and secured a job at a local nursing home. They were highly self-motivated and needed the community’s support to rebuild their family’s foundation and find a safe home.

Resource Hub staff helped Charlie find a local apartment that suited Charlie and Blake’s needs. Since it was close to Christmas, the Resource Hub, in partnership with Sparrow & Nest Designs (a non-profit that furnishes homes for unhoused families), provided the client with a solid start for their new independent lifestyle. Despite some slight delays resulting from a few funding challenges, Charlie and Blake were able to move into their new home shortly before the holiday. Alongside the two owners of Sparrow & Nest, staff transformed the apartment into a Christmas-ready home. Charlie left work that day, picked up Blake, and walked into their new home. Charlie was overcome with emotion when they called both non-profits to express their gratitude for their assistance. Indeed, it takes a village.

COMMUNITY MEMBERS SERVED BY IMPROVING THE LIVES OF CHILDREN >

YWCA Kalamazoo houses the Dreamery Downtown Site (353 E Michigan Avenue) and Dreamery Edison Site (1155 Portage Street). During 2023, 217 clients enrolled in the program. That is an increase when compared to 2022 enrollment, which marks the continuous demand for childcare in Kalamazoo. Various tuition assistance programs covered 65.9% of tuition for enrollees. In addition to childcare, Improving the Lives of Children (ILC) also connects families to resources. During 2022, we received 195 requests, and 37 of them received the services requested of YWCA Kalamazoo.



217

children enrolled
in the Dreamery
in 2023

(not including drop-ins)



195

services
requested

BREAKDOWN OF TUITION ASSISTANCE FUNDING:

65.90% Percent of
Total Children

RESOURCE HUB FOLLOW-UP SERVICES:



37

requested
services
performed



Promoting Maternal & Child Health

Addressing maternal and child racial disparities with evidence-based programs

**Every
baby
deserves
to
thrive.**

YWCA Kalamazoo is leading the effort to curb infant mortality in Kalamazoo. Infant mortality is the death of a baby before their first birthday. The infant mortality rate is the number of infant deaths that occur for every 1,000 live births. Infant mortality affects all of us because we are all a part of this community.

Our goal is for every mother to have a healthy pregnancy and for every child to reach their third birthday with vital developmental milestones met. Our Women and Infant Supportive Health program promotes healthy pregnancies, positive birth outcomes, and the well-being of infants and mothers living in Kalamazoo.

Healthy
**PREGNANCIES & POSITIVE
BIRTH OUTCOMES**



Women and Infant Supportive Health (WISH) Home Visitation Program

YWCA Kalamazoo Women and Infant Supportive Health (WISH) program equips families of Kalamazoo County with skills and resources necessary for healthy pregnancies and raising healthy babies. YWCA WISH is a home visitation program that offers a high-quality, culturally relevant, and evidence-informed curriculum. YWCA WISH works with families to meet their goals of being the best parents they can be! Our services include:

- Advocacy and transportation to doctor visits
- One-on-one and group education for parents
- Goal setting and skill-building
- Assistance meeting financial needs
- Social support

Prenatal and Parent Education

YWCA Kalamazoo offers parent Educational and support groups to equip families with knowledge and skills to teach, bond, and interact with their children. The educational opportunities include, the “Baby Bump” peer support group that focuses on the following:

- Baby’s care and safety
- Baby’s growth and development
- Baby’s nutrition
- Breastfeeding
- Healthy relationships
- Mom’s health during and after pregnancy
- Reproductive health
- Safe sleep practices



Infant Mortality Initiative

During January 2014, YWCA Kalamazoo created the Kalamazoo Infant Mortality Community Action Initiative, which has grown from an abstract idea to a great collaborative effort: Cradle Kalamazoo. The Cradle collaborative encompasses a solid commitment from community partners, several healthcare institutions, key funding agencies, local academic institutions, multi-denominational faith-based organizations, and both for-profit and non-profit organizations: All engaged in reducing racial disparities of infant mortality rates in Kalamazoo. YWCA continues to manage Cradle, and remains a vital partner in advancing the goal of reducing infant mortality disparities through strategic objectives that include health equity, community engagement, and home visitation programs.

2023 IMPACT: COMMUNITY MEMBERS SERVED BY PROMOTING MATERNAL AND CHILD HEALTH



total appointments
2,993

189
new enrollments

WISH events

(baby bump, car seat, safe sleep, and outreach)

events.....24
participants....196

239
referrals

total births

70

healthy birth - 67
poor birth - 0
pre-term birth - 2
underweight birth - 0

96%
satisfaction with overall program

235
first-time moms

163
first birthdays celebrated

Case Studies

HARPER, JAMIE, AND RILEY

Harper and their two toddlers, Jamie and Riley, were unhoused and living in a single hotel room when they connected with YWCA Kalamazoo's WISH program staff. Multiple barriers prevented Harper from seeking more stable, safe, and permanent housing. **WISH staff members and Harper worked together to develop a plan to find better housing. Based on recommendations, support, and referrals from WISH staff, Harper secured an apartment for their family. WISH funding paid the security deposit, and a community partner provided additional support.** Through this partnership, Harper's new apartment met every need they and/or their children could have imagined including full furnishings, innumerable kitchen supplies, a smart television, décor, and books and bookshelves for each child. Finally, Harper and their children were home. Since moving in, Harper has maintained the apartment beautifully.

EMERY AND AVERY

One of our clients, Emery, faced a challenging journey when their baby, Avery, arrived prematurely, needing intensive care in the NICU. Emery became overwhelmed navigating unfamiliar territory, compounded by language barriers and a lack of transportation knowledge. WISH offered practical assistance such as taxi services and language translation to ensure Emery could be by their baby's side daily, providing much-needed breast milk, and witnessing their baby thriving filled Emery and WISH staff with gratitude. With the guidance of a dedicated caseworker, Emery learned to navigate the city bus system. WISH also provided bus tokens, ensuring they could sustain themselves as they built a better future.

WISH's support continued beyond baby Avery's stay in the hospital. With WISH's assistance, Emery enrolled in WIC and connected with organizations like the Kalamazoo Literacy Council and Goodwill Industries. Through ESL classes and personal development opportunities, Emery's journey toward self-sufficiency continued. For Emery, WISH transformed from a program into a lifeline, offering hope and change. Emery's and Avery's story serves as a reminder of the impact empathy and community support have on overcoming life's challenges.

**To protect our clients' identities, we have substituted all real names with non-binary names and changed all pronouns to they/them/theirs.*





Caring for Victims of Abuse

Providing services for domestic violence, sexual assault, and human trafficking victims and survivors

**We create
paths
to live
without
violence.**

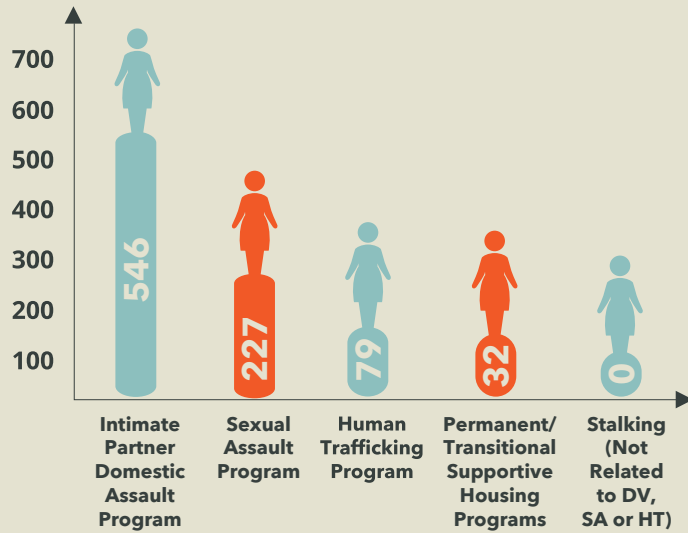
YWCA Kalamazoo represents the voices of victims and survivors of violence (intimate partner domestic violence, sexual assault, human trafficking); provides high-quality, comprehensive programs and education that create change, increases the understanding of the impact of violence, and develops collaborative and community action initiatives to identify and address root causes of violence. We strive to help survivors lead lives free of violence. YWCA Kalamazoo is dedicated to promoting the healing of survivors of intimate partner domestic violence, sexual assault, and human trafficking. Our complimentary services for adults and children include.

- One-on-one counseling and victim advocacy, and emergency response to:
 - sexual assault
 - intimate partner and domestic violence
 - human trafficking
- A variety of free support groups for survivors
- Emergency shelter
- A legal team including attorneys, case managers, and paralegals on staff
- Childcare while receiving personalized services
- Services in both English and Spanish.
- Housing advocacy and assistance through Transitional and Permanent Supportive Housing options, as well as rent and utility assistance.



COMMUNITY MEMBERS SERVED BY CARING FOR VICTIMS OF ABUSE

812

 community members served

While the number of clients served in 2023 has decreased, this is due to a restructuring in programming and ensuring our staff has time to concentrate on their mental & physical well-being

554

 mental health related therapy clients supported

145

 total sexual assault nurse examinations

pediatric & teens



adult (over 20)

emergency main shelter

407



Adults and Children

19,576

nights community members spent at shelters

SEXUAL ASSAULT NURSE EXAMS AND SEXUAL ASSAULT KIT INITIATIVE

YWCA Kalamazoo is the only provider of Sexual Assault Nurse Exams (SANE) in the county. We offer highly trained, specialized, and consistent service delivery to rape victims/survivors through a medical forensic examination done in a non-hospital environment, on-site at the YWCA Kalamazoo. YWCA Kalamazoo SANEs are confidential. Our nurse examiners provide uninterrupted exams in a quiet, private, and comforting examination room. Our SANE nurses will conduct exams at area hospitals for emergency medical situations. SANEs are accessible to all survivors of sexual assault at no cost.

In 2022, we served 145 community members, 50% of whom were adults, and the other 50% were pediatrics and teens. Additionally, YWCA Kalamazoo is in partnership with the prosecutor's office to support survivors as old rape kits are being tested through the Sexual Assault Kit Initiative (SAKI). Kalamazoo was a hot spot for kits that were backlogged and not tested. Now, as they begin the testing process, we provide the needed supportive services to survivors.

Testimonial

RAMI

YWCA Kalamazoo Victim Services employs the Kalamazoo County Sexual Assault Kit Initiative (SAKI) Advocate. In 2010, a local university student named Rami was sexually assaulted. Initially, Rami sought a Sexual Assault Nurse Examiner (SANE) to assess them at YWCA Kalamazoo. Unfortunately, the investigation stalled and became one of the cases assigned to the Kalamazoo County SAKI project. The Kalamazoo SAKI Team contacted Rami to offer support and options. Rami chose to move forward and pursue prosecution.

In the months leading up to Rami's trial, the victim advocate provided weekly meetings to offer emotional support and help process feelings

surrounding the case. The advocate also was present at all meetings with the prosecutor while preparing for court. In this case, the defendant pleaded guilty and was sentenced to 5-15 years in prison in late 2023. The advocate was present at the sentencing hearing with Rami, providing ongoing support before and after the hearing.

Below is a statement from the survivor about their experience through this process:

"I've waited over 13 years for this moment. Having a whole team of people believe in you and fight for the justice you deserve brings so much healing. This allowed me to stand up for myself and take back my voice."

HUMAN TRAFFICKING

We served 79 community members and have validated that our services impact the clients. Recently, we conducted a longitudinal analysis of our clients using validated and reliable assessments such as the Housing Instability Index, Human Trafficking Screening Tool, Maternal risk factors, Psychosocial Risk factors, Resource Access, and Stress Indicators. All the assessments returned statistically significant positive results with a p-value of less than 0.05 at the 6-month check-in. Our clients' decreased symptoms indicate that our programs allowed them to experience healthier and more positive life outcomes.

Testimonial

ALEX

Alex had been working with the YWCA Kalamazoo for only a few months when they shared their story. Trapped in an abusive situation, they were hopeless. They knew they needed help but had no idea where to start or what to do. Thankfully, they learned of YWCA Kalamazoo and the support our organization could offer. Alex shared,

Continued on next page >

Alex Continued >

“The day I walked in there and sat down with someone, that was the day my life began to change.” YWCA Kalamazoo staff worked with Alex to get them to safety and connect them with other organizations that supported their life free of abuse. The YWCA Kalamazoo’s holistic approach to supporting Alex was unmatched. As their confidence increased, Alex began taking charge of their life, accessing resources, building relationships with others, finding a job, and reaching out for help when needed. Alex shared:

“Today, I don’t feel hopeless. [The YWCA Kalamazoo staff] provide REAL help. I cannot stress enough how helpful this program is. It saves lives. ... This community is lucky to have them. I am lucky to have them.”

THE THERAPY

We also provide mental health-related services to community members who come to us through other programs. In 2023, we served 554 clients and spent 3,666 hours with them to provide them with emotional support.

Testimonial QUINN

Quinn came in requesting therapy services to address their experience with intimate partner violence. A therapist began working with Quinn through a biopsychosocial intake. In the corresponding session, Quinn and the therapist worked through several assessments to determine Quinn’s current levels of functioning related to depression, anxiety, post-traumatic stress disorder, and more. After reviewing these assessments, the therapist recommended that Quinn engage in services at a local agency to gain some introductory coping skills before doing more profound trauma work. Quinn chose this, and the therapist coordinated scheduling with the on-site Community Health Worker (CHW), who accompanied the client to the next agency. The CHW provided Quinn with a warm transition and emotional support as they moved from YWCA Kalamazoo to the referred agency. Quinn scheduled an appointment with a new outpatient therapist specializing in Dialectical Behavioral Therapy at the outset of this meeting.

EMERGENCY RESPONSE TEAM AND ADVOCACY TEAM

The emergency main shelter served 407 adults and children for 19,576 nights. We also served 155 people at motels for 1,345 nights and seven people at Koru House for 435 nights. On average, we served one person for 48.1 days. Transitional Supportive Housing (TSH) served 74 residents for 18,398 nights, and the Permanent Supportive Housing Initiative (PSHI) housed 27 residents for 5,963 nights. In advocacy work, the team provided 290 units of services to 327 community members.

Since our work is connected within CVA, the newly combined Emergency Response and Advocacy team has a story showcasing the unique services that serve CVA survivors and victims.

Testimonial ROWEN AND ARDEN

YWCA Kalamazoo Victim Services Emergency Response Team partners with the Kalamazoo Department of Public Safety and the Kalamazoo County Office of Prosecuting Attorney to support and provide resources to survivors of domestic violence, sexual assault, and human trafficking. In early 2024, YWCA Kalamazoo staff received a referral from KDPS for Rowan, a domestic violence survivor whose assailant had attempted to burn down their home and then their car when Rowan tried to leave and get to safety along with their child, Arden.

A YWCA Kalamazoo Advocate immediately got Rowan and Arden into the emergency shelter. Staff referred this case to the YWCA Kalamazoo Legal Department for Personal Protection Order assistance. They also connected Rowan with the Therapy Department to support them through the emotional turmoil they were experiencing. This Advocate was able to support Rowan through the court process and helped Rowan get back to work. YWCA Kalamazoo’s ERT even assisted them in paying one month’s rent and security equipment for their home.

This is a small sample of our daily work to walk alongside survivors in their healing journey.



To protect the our clients' identities, we have substituted all real names with non-binary names and changed all pronouns to they/them/theirs.



Advocacy & Systems Change

Creating a just community through addressing systems that cause racial and gender disparities

**Addressing
the
systems
that
cause
injustice.**

YWCA Kalamazoo is a recognized advocate for social justice. It advances racial and gender equity, advocates for public policy changes, and provides education that promotes equal protection and safety for families and equal opportunities for people of color, women, girls, and the most vulnerable of our community. Below are some of the areas of concentration.

Systems Change and Public Policy

YWCA Kalamazoo educates the public and policymakers on local, state, and federal levels regarding women's health and safety, women's economic empowerment, and racial justice and civil rights. We ensure that the voices of underrepresented communities are amplified. We work to raise awareness and foster systematic change around racial and gender equity as it relates to YWCA Kalamazoo's policy initiatives.

Community Education

YWCA Kalamazoo provides education and awareness of the impact of domestic violence, sexual assault and human trafficking, and more to increase community awareness. Utilizing videos, open and honest dialogue, and interactive learning experiences, the YWCA Kalamazoo Presentation Series aims to raise awareness, build personal and collective responsibility, and provide skills to challenge violence throughout our lives and community.

Social Justice Impact and Events

YWCA Kalamazoo promotes systems change through community engagement, promoting racial and gender inclusiveness, culture and environment activities to foster participation and engagement of community partnerships and advance the YWCA's mission and movement.

Reproductive Health Fund

Access to reproductive health services is crucial to living a full and authentic life. We know that many barriers exist, such as lack of finances and transportation that make it difficult to access these

services. YWCA Kalamazoo's Reproductive Health Fund is here for you! This health fund works with community partners to provide doula services, abortions, gender-affirming name changes, hormone replacement medications, PEP for HIV prevention, emergency contraception, and transportation – all at no cost to you. Read to learn more about eligibility and services.

Get Out the Vote

This pivotal election year, YWCA Kalamazoo has a unique opportunity to show up and continue the bold and historical work of advancing Reproductive Rights across Kalamazoo County! Right now, our Get Out the Vote (GOTV) effort is focused on increasing awareness of reproductive health care access here in Kalamazoo County. We also prioritize educating our elected officials and holding them accountable for addressing the barriers communities of color face in accessing comprehensive reproductive health care

LITTLE GIRLS
WITH DREAMS
BECOME WOMEN
WITH VISION.
-UNKNOWN

COMMUNITY MEMBERS PARTICIPATING IN THE ADVOCACY FOR SYSTEMS CHANGE

Total
4,619
people
124 events

CRADLE KALAMAZOO

459
people
11
events

COMMUNITY EDUCATION/TABLING EVENTS

3,505
people
60
events

TRAINING & TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

187
people
31
events

PREVENTION EDUCATION

371
people
17
events

ADVOCACY AND SYSTEMS CHANGE

97
people @
5 events



REPRODUCTIVE HEALTH FUND

274
total
callers

SERVICES PROVIDED

ABORTION		DOULA
113		24
<hr/>		
gender affirming care		135
<hr/>		
EMERGENCY CONTRACEPTION		TRANSPORT
2		1

ADVOCACY AND SYSTEMS CHANGE OVERVIEW

During 2023, YWCA Kalamazoo’s Public Policy and Advocacy Team collectively engaged with the community and actively advocated for nearly 60 local, state, and federal policies. Our team’s advocacy took on many forms, including testimony before legislators, visiting elected officials at Michigan’s Capitol, and engaging hundreds of community members in calls to action. From these activities, we saw significant advocacy and programmatic wins. Some of the team’s progress includes supporting protections for survivors of domestic violence by preventing those convicted of domestic violence from possessing firearms, advancing abortion care rights and access, and tackling housing conditions for local families for the betterment of infant health and safety.

Beginning in August of 2023, a collective of home visitation providers, community leaders, and advocates saw a need to discuss and address the poor quality and often unsafe housing conditions within a large portion of local housing. Residents reported concerns regarding security, sewage, and pest control. YWCA Kalamazoo’s Public Policy Team joined conversations

to help advance advocacy at the city and county levels. Substandard housing conditions often contribute to a wide range of significant health problems, including increased maternal stress and anxiety, respiratory conditions, exposure to mold and pests, and childhood lead poisoning. Poor or dangerous housing conditions are also closely associated with unsafe sleeping environments for infants and can be a contributing risk factor for sleep-related infant injury or death. In coalition with advocates, YWCA Kalamazoo assisted in coordinating responses to Kalamazoo city inspection, HUD, and other leaders to address these housing conditions impacting residents and their families. These efforts remain active.

Each year, YWCA Kalamazoo's Public Policy Team hosts Stand Against Racism. In 2023, this event aimed to educate legislators, advocates, and community members about the disparities that persist in accessing comprehensive reproductive health care and to spread awareness around the policy and advocacy efforts that YWCA Kalamazoo is working on to address these issues. Over 40 attendees joined the policy team in advocating and hearing from statewide leaders in the Reproductive Justice movement in Michigan, including state representatives, grassroots organizers, and coalition partners.

YWCA Kalamazoo cannot sustain advocacy and systems change efforts on its own. To sustainably support our mission and work to create long-term change, YWCA Kalamazoo's Public Policy and Advocacy team built strong relationships with state and national partners while sharing the successes of our work with organizations and providers nationwide. The team supported reproductive justice through strategic planning and movement-building retreats with national partners like All* Above All and Michigan Voices. Our leadership has met with organizations from New York to Colorado to share our experiences and operations of the YWCA Kalamazoo's Reproductive Health Fund.

Testimonial

CAMERON

Cameron, a participant of YW Tech Labs, joined the program as part of their journey to get back on their feet by pursuing their professional and life goals. When they signed up for the program, staff learned that Cameron had difficulty accessing the materials for the YW Tech Labs course due to a lack of equipment and a disability. They also did not have reliable transportation. A key tenet of the YW Tech Labs is ensuring that all participants have access to everything they need to complete the program successfully so staff immediately got to work. Together with Cameron, they set up a laptop with reliable internet, and using available technology and personalized staff support, the program was made accessible and easy to use. Cameron was thrilled to be part of the program and was thankful for all the specialized assistance YWCA Kalamazoo was able to provide.

Cameron's transportation issues also prevented them from getting reliable work and moving. This impacted their quality of life (inability to get to necessary appointments). **YW Tech Labs was able to work with another internal department to obtain funding and coordinate necessary repairs to Cameron's vehicle. Cameron was hugely grateful for this assistance. While they ultimately did not complete the program, they are in a much better place due to the resources and hope of opportunity provided by YW Tech Labs.**

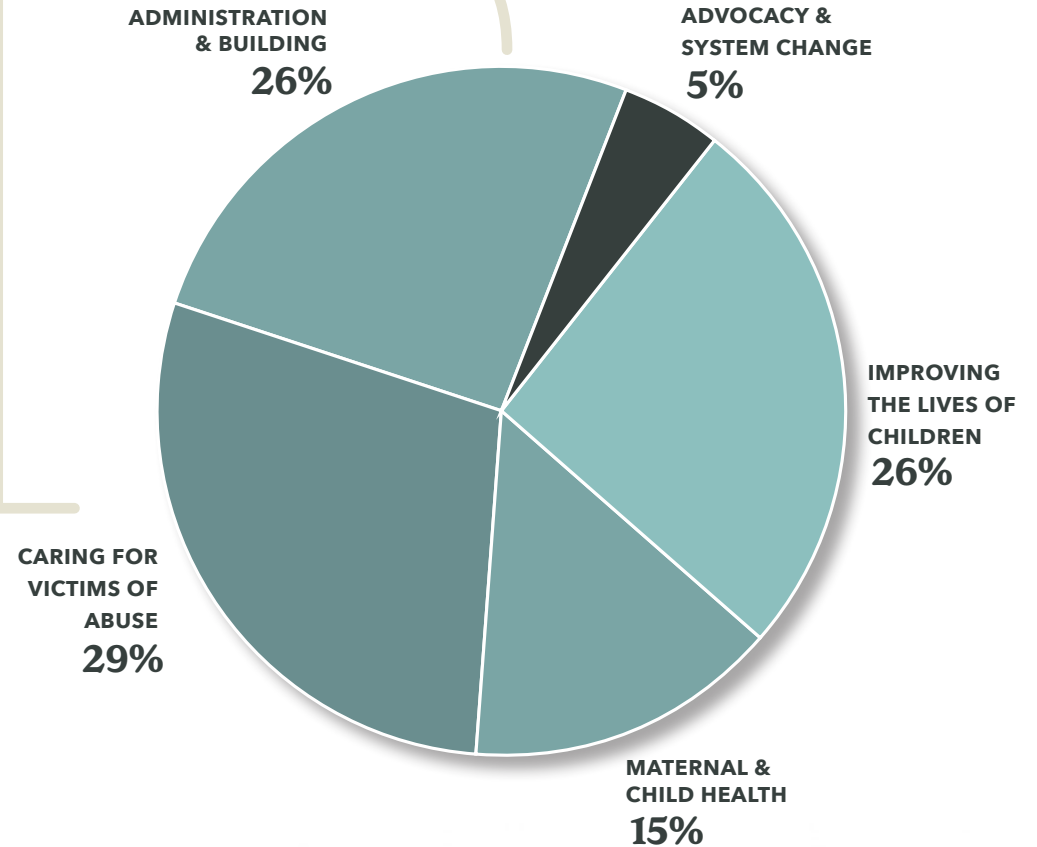
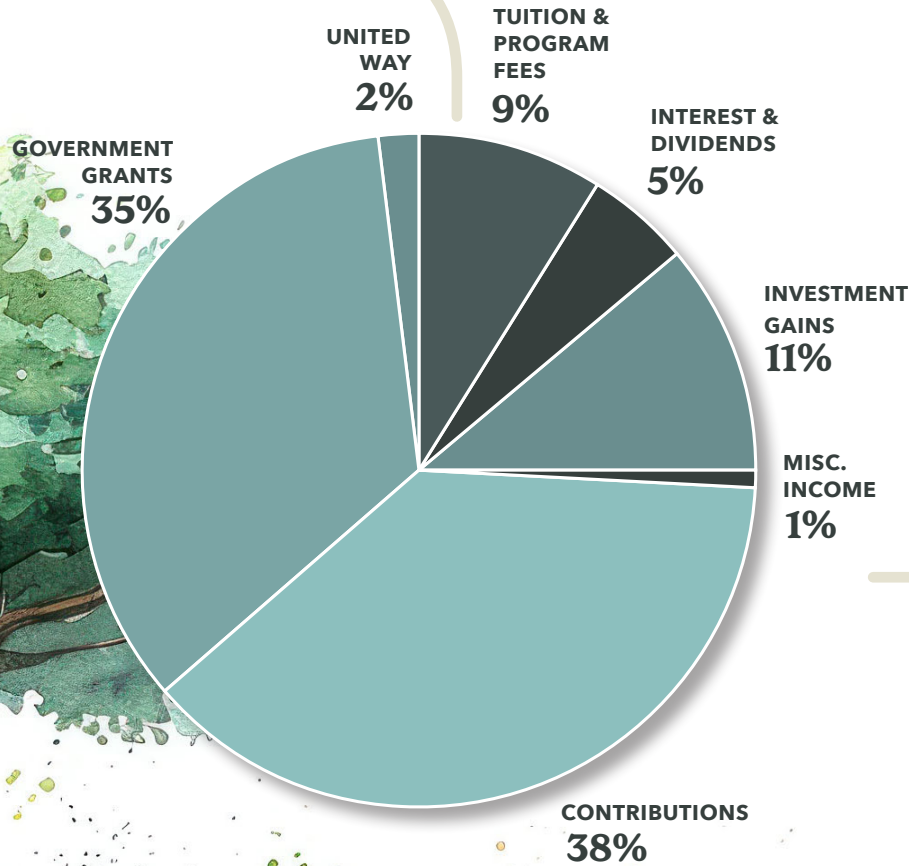
**To protect the our clients' identities, we have substituted all real names with non-binary names and changed all pronouns to they/them/theirs.*



Revenue & Expense Data 2023

TOTAL REVENUE:
\$11,265,061

TOTAL EXPENSES:
\$16,791,536



Join Our Movement



DONATE

Your donation helps us continue to be community allies in Kalamazoo by providing services and programs for women and their families in Kalamazoo County. Consider giving to any of our strategic focus services, the Reproductive Health Fund, In-Kind donations, or a Legacy Gift.



BECOME A MEMBER

Membership in the YWCA reflects your belief in the value of supporting a local organization that has represented women's interests since 1885 in the Kalamazoo community. It is also a cost-effective way to support vital services to children and families throughout the community.



VOLUNTEER

Your time, talents and energy are valuable gifts, and support the women, children, and families in our community. Learn more and submit an application to see how you can help YWCA support the Kalamazoo community.



BECOME AN INTERN

Interns get direct experience working with victims of domestic violence, sexual assault, and human trafficking, while gaining competencies in crisis intervention, empathy, advocacy and service programs.



BECOME A TEAM MEMBER

YWCA is dedicated to eliminating racism, empowering women, promoting peace, justice, freedom, and dignity for all through racial and gender equity services and programming that serve the Kalamazoo community. Be a part of our team.



SHARE YOUR STORY

YWCA offers great support for survivors of abuse by being a safe place to share your story, free of judgment, scrutiny, and criticism. In turn, your story can help other survivors as they navigate their own trauma. The shared experience is invaluable. Learn how you can share your story through discussion and letters of support.

Thank you for all you do

DONORS

We're so very proud that you join us in this important work. You helped us change lives by providing financial support that allowed us to be the leader in providing vital services for marginalized populations throughout the Kalamazoo community. Our appreciation is boundless!

SPONSORS

If not for your financial and in-kind support of our programs, events and activities, we would not be able to provide the valuable services that are vital to the Kalamazoo community. Words are not enough to express our sincere gratitude!

VOLUNTEERS

Your unconditional support of YWCA Kalamazoo is appreciated so much. You give so much to the Kalamazoo community and ask for so little in return. Giving is your reward. We're so fortunate to have you on our team because we're stronger together!

COMMITTEE MEMBERS

You carry the spirit of YWCA Kalamazoo in your heart. Your desire to serve, strategic direction and management support allows us to identify and satisfy the needs of the underserved in our community. We are forever grateful for your dedicated support!



WE ARE YWCA KALAMAZOO

eliminating racism
empowering women

ywca
Kalamazoo



United Way of the Battle Creek
and Kalamazoo Region

YWCA Kalamazoo | 353 East Michigan Avenue | Kalamazoo, MI 49007 | (269) 345-5595 | ywcakalamazoo.org



YWCA Kzoo



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