

Yearbook

Impact Review 2020-2021



Championing. Connecting. Celebrating.

Welcome to the Annual Report of the American Association of Caregiving Youth. This has been a year like no other; we have done our best to share its highlights.

The dedication and hard work of our team - both staff and volunteers - was superior, never missing a beat during the national pandemic. We were considered essential and our doors remained open throughout, even with most staff learning to work remotely. Our Board transitioned to new and strong leadership and new donors surprised us allowing our creativity to contribute to the success of Caregiving Youth and their families.

It's really about the spirit inside these very special young people. It's rare, pure, and radiant. We feel fortunate to stand alongside them. We are excited to share their stories knowing you will be inspired and motivated to help them along their journeys, just like us.

As we report on and celebrate the impact of the last year, we also look forward to the next few years ahead. New vision, new focus, and a renewed sense of urgency is driving us to build a larger community of supporters and donors around our cause. We must ensure our best and brightest youth are not dimmed by their family role of caregiver but are made to shine brighter because of it.

With thanks, the AACY Board, staff, and volunteers welcome you to our Annual Report, Yearbook 2020-21.



Connie Siskowski

Connie Siskowski, RN, PhD
President and Founder

National Advisory Council

Martin Hunicutt, Co-Chair
Sara Poole, Co-Chair
Dale Bell
Althea Ceasor
Ann Faraone, EdD
Carol Goodheart, EdD
Josephine Kalipeni
Daniel Look
Connie Siskowski, RN, PhD
Rita Solnet
Stephanie Valery
Marc Watrous, PhD

2020-21 Board of Directors

Rosie Inguanzo-Martin, *Chair*
Jeffrey Gordon, Esq., *Vice Chair*
Isabel Parrado, *Secretary*
Debralyn Belletieri, *Treasurer*
Connie Siskowski, RN, PhD, *President*
Mark Balsom, Esq.
Karen Brill
Althea Ceasor
Gail Eagle
Scott Gottlieb, CPA
Daniel Polen
Dominique Renaud

CAREGIVING YOUTH FACT ➔ *Middle and high school Caregiving Youth in Florida and in the US outnumber children of all ages who are homeless or in foster care.*

Caregiving Youth Project



Serving Students Where They Are: School, Home, and Community

Caregiving Youth provide assistance for family members who are chronically ill, injured, elderly, or disabled, often sacrificing their own education, health, and well-being in the process. Since 2006, AACY has invested in partnerships to support student-caregivers who are struggling personally and academically. Through a formal agreement with The School District of Palm Beach County, the Caregiving Youth Project (CYP) provides direct services to youth from sixth grade through high school and connects them to service partners who help meet their basic needs for food, beds, clothing, and medical services.

Building on its 14 years of success, the CYP also provides youth with Skills Building groups, Lunch & Learn sessions, out of school activities (Camp Treasure, park days, bowling, college tours), and in-home help (respite, tutoring, computers, ramps, home repairs, medical equipment). Participants remain in CYP an average of five and a half years.



MIDDLE SCHOOLS SERVED → **20**

HIGH SCHOOLS SERVED → **13**

TOTAL STUDENTS
SERVED 2020-21 → **450**

AVERAGE YEARS A STUDENT
BENEFITS IN THE PROJECT → **5.5**

TOTAL CAREGIVERS SERVED SINCE
2006 → **2000**

Caregiving Youth Institute

Spanning the Caregiving Youth World: Local. State. National.

The Caregiving Youth Institute is growing its reach by advocating for Caregiving Youth nationwide, raising awareness regarding their needs, and offering solutions for their support. The Institute's work is to **C.A.R.E.** **C**onnect kids; **A**dvocate for legislation on their behalf; **R**esearch to increase knowledge; and **E**ducate the public and professionals.

The Caregiving Youth Institute held its first virtual conference in April 2021 with professionals from the United Kingdom and several states. It plans for the next conference (in person) on April 21, 2022. The Caregiving Youth Research Collaborative has taken a pause during the pandemic.

AACY's Affiliate Network and its strategic national partnerships are growing to support more Caregiving Youth and reach our goal of zero student drop-outs in the U.S. due to family caregiving responsibilities.

M
E
N
T
O
R
S

A
R
E

I
M
P
O
R
T
A
N
T
!!



2020-2021 ADVOCACY

- University of Miami Miller School of Medicine partnered with AACY to conduct research with its MD/MPH students
- AACY received legislative support in Florida with an expansion project reaching the Governor's budget through FL Senator Lori Berman as Caregiving Youth Champion, and co-sponsored by Representative Mike Caruso
- US Representative Lois Frankel met with caregiving youth and supported Dr. Siskowski's appointment to HHS RAISE Family Caregiving Council's faculty; her DC office staff obtained signatures of 23 Congress persons
- Held first US Caregiving Youth Connects Zoom meeting
- Dr. Siskowski participated in the Caregivers Conference and also Chronic Illness Forum at Palm Beach State College & with Dr. Faraone in No Barriers Summit

MEDIA COVERAGE

- Documentary with Caregiving Youth Project students continues
- Jordan Hernandez, a Boca High teacher created a podcast with Connie Siskowski and posted on his website as well as AACY
- WPTV ran a story on an AACY family in Riviera Beach whose home was then repaired by an AvalonBay Community partner
- CBS 12 came to AACY office to conduct and run an interview
- AACY launched its new website with continued improvements as we move forward!

CAREGIVING YOUTH FACT ➡ *More than 70% assist a parent, grandparent or great-grandparent, while others care for disabled siblings or several family members.*
34% assist more than one person in the household.

Student and Family Impact

Delivering on Dreams: Now. Future. Forward.

THE NEED FOR SUPPORT

In Palm Beach County, Florida, and throughout the United States, Caregiving Youth are a hidden population of children who often sacrifice their education, health, well-being, and childhood to provide care for family members who are chronically ill, injured, elderly, or disabled. The 2019 FL Youth Risk Behavior Survey resulted in discovering more than 290,000 public middle and high school students who are caregiving.

The Silent Epidemic (2006) reported that among young adults who dropped out of school, 22% did so to care for a family member. Without the support students receive in our Caregiving Youth Project, Palm Beach County will likely experience an increase in the school drop-out rate, impacting our community with more crime, disease, and teen pregnancy. Unsupported caregiving by youth also places this population at risk for academic under-achievement and job attainment, poor mental and physical health outcomes, and economic instability.

THE SIGNS OF SUCCESS

The Caregiving Youth Project works. It delivers programming during school and after for academic and personal support, conducts home visits and provides social activities. The combination brings structure, resources, and encouragement for students struggling to manage all their responsibilities and still be a kid every now and then.

CAREGIVING YOUTH PROJECT EVENTS

- Back to School Bash
- Virtual Camp Treasure
- Graduation Party
- Holiday Celebration at the Zoo
- Lion Country Safari

CAREGIVING YOUTH PROJECT IMPACT

- More than 95% of students annually progress to the next grade level or graduate
- 95% Caregiving Youth high school graduation rate in 2021
- 75% of graduates enrolled in college, acquired post-secondary education or certification, or joined the military. This is 15% less than previous years due to students working to help financially support their families as a result of COVID.



MY LIFE

Brady Bloom - 2021 Graduate

"I live at home with my mom, who is a single mom and she is permanently disabled. I assist in caregiving in the home setting and beyond. Daily responsibilities change from day to day; however, I am always available to assist my mom with her needs and I am happy that I am able to do so. She has her share of medical challenges. I love my mom so much and I always want to make sure she is taken care of and doing as well as she can."

Brady, now an alum of the Caregiving Youth Project, attends Florida Atlantic University!

CAREGIVING YOUTH FACT ➔ *Youth caregivers exhibit more anxiety and depression than non-caregiving peers.*

Take Care of Youth Who Take Care of Others

Making Time To Be Young: Happy. Safe. Secure.

Did you ever have worries like this when you were in Middle School?

"Is there a way I can help my dad more often when I am at school?"

"How do I help my abuelito walk?"

"What would happen if they need medicine when there is none left?"

"My mom has kidney failure and I am worried that will my mom ever get a kidney?"

"When you lost your loved ones, will it effect your life?"

"What to do when the person won't listen to you?"

WHO CARES FOR THEM?

Your gift helps the AACY team take care of youth who care for others.

You ease their worries and give them answers. Your gift gives more than the support these kids need to make it through their extra challenges, you give back precious hours of laughter, friendship, confidence, dreams, smiles, and time to be young. Your gift gives them back a future.

NO DREAM DISCARDED

Dreams don't have to be left behind.

Choosing to care for a loved one doesn't have to sacrifice youthful hopes and plans. Remember AACY with your monthly or annual donation, give through a donor advised fund, donate supplies to our wish list (listed at aacy.org), and support a fundraising event to keep our kids dreaming.

NO FUTURE FORGOTTEN

A gift to AACY by bequest in your will, a charitable remainder trust, or a qualified charitable distribution ensures that vulnerable caregiving youth will always receive your support when they need it most. Contact us today to leave your forever impact on a young life.

DONATE TODAY:

Give online at aacy.org/donate

Call 561-391-7401 or 800-508-9618



Make your check payable to AACY and mail to:

American Association of Caregiving Youth (AACY)
6401 Congress Ave. Ste. 200 Boca Raton, FL 33487

Investing in Caregiving Youth

Growth

- The CYP is in 33 middle and high schools in Palm Beach County and serves Caregiving Youth in 23 other schools
- CYP Alumni program initiated
- The Caregiving Youth Institute held a Virtual Conference with international presenters and participants
- AACY continued to participate in new research and capstone projects with UNC and UM Miller School of Medicine and internships with Florida Atlantic University

Personal Impact

349 youth caregivers shared their AACY experience:

- 91% improved grades, had more help at home, could manage stress better, made new friends, and improved their own health.
- 70 % no longer felt alone, felt good about themselves, knew more about caregiving, enjoyed better family relations, and wanted other students to know the benefits of the CYP



How Your Support is Paying Off for Youth

AACY Program Expenses

Youth Services and Advocacy:
\$1,025,904

Management and General:
\$128,416

Fundraising:
\$9,040

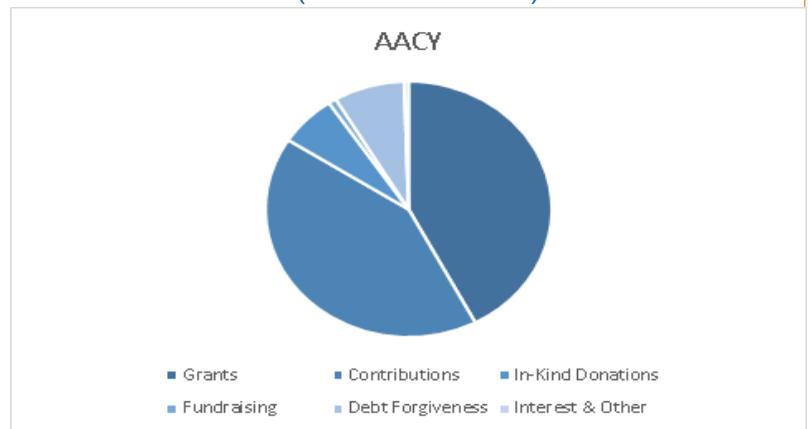
May 7, 2021



Seven Caregiving Youth participated in the Listening Project of the RAISE Family Caregiver Council: their voices were heard nationally!

Total Revenue \$1,391,121

(Includes In-Kind)



Grants - \$588,546 - 42.3%

Contributions - \$581,360 - 41.8%

In-Kind Donations - \$89,796 - 6.5%

Fundraising Events - \$12,751 - .9%

Gain on Forgiveness of Debt - \$111,378 - 8%

Interest and Other - \$7,290 - .5%

THE CAREGIVING YOUTH PROJECT - WORKS IN PROGRESS

"K" is a 14 year old who, in addition to caring for her mom whose cancer has returned, personally struggles with sickle-cell anemia, has had several surgeries and has been on the hospital homebound program since 2019 due to safety concerns surrounding the pandemic. During her time with the Caregiving Youth Project since 2018, she also cared for her maternal grandmother who has since passed away.

AACY has provided services to K including tutoring and counseling. When she is healthy, she enjoys attending sponsored activities within the community. K and her family are thankful for the ongoing support they have received from AACY and believe that remaining positive, giving back, and having faith will help them get through the challenges they continue to face as they work to beat the odds.

AACY is Grateful to our Major Partners and Donors!



Batchelor Foundation, Boca West Children's Foundation, Charles & Joan Hermanowski Family Foundation, Community Foundation, Leslie L. Alexander Foundation, McNally Family Foundation, Newell Community Fund, Order of St. John of Jerusalem, Schmidt Family Foundation, The Jim Moran Foundation, and The Pulte Family Foundation



6401 Congress Ave. Ste. 200
Boca Raton, FL 33487
561-391-7401 •
800-508-9618

aacy.org