Welcome to the Annual Report of the American Association of Caregiving Youth! Once again this year has been fraught with many challenges for our Youth and their families as well as our organization.

The dedication and hard work of our team - both staff and volunteers, including the AACY Board of Directors - was superior, never missing a beat as we all worked to get back to the "new normal" post pandemic. We learned to work remotely with our Youth and families, as well as with our Board and partners.

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 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 2021-22.

Connie Siskowski, RN, PhD
President and Founder

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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.

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AACY Yearbook 2022
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 15 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 ➔ 21**

**High Schools Served ➔ 14**

**Total Students Served 2021-22 ➔ 501**

**Average Years a Student Benefits in the Project ➔ 5.5**

**Total Caregivers Served since 2006 ➔ 2100**

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. Connect kids; Advocate for legislation on their behalf; Research to increase knowledge; and Educate the public and professionals.

The Institute held its fourth in person conference in April 2022 with professionals from several states. The first Legacy Memorial Award for Gail Gibson Hunt was presented to the National Alliance for Caregiving. A post conference academic Zoom meeting was held with Dr. Betsy Olson of UNC Chapel Hill to kick off the expanded Caregiving Youth Research Collaborative.

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.

2021-2022 ADVOCACY

- University of Miami Miller School of Medicine partnered with AACY to conduct research with its MD/MPH students
- AACY is drafting the FL Caregiving Youth Act through FL Senator Lori Berman and Representative Mike Caruso
- Dr. Siskowski reappointed to faculty of RAISE Family Caregiving Council
- Held first US Caregiving Youth Connects Zoom meeting
- PSA video and radio production completed in English, Spanish & Creole
- Among 148 high school students who were awarded 7,834 prorated community service hours of care during 42 weeks, at $10/hour their care contribution has a value of value of $1,539,920

MEDIA COVERAGE

- Documentary with Caregiving Youth Project students continues
- AACY Board Treasurer, Debralyn Belletieri, became Junior League Volunteer of the Year! Pictured in center with Board Chair Rosie Inguanzo-Martin and Dr. Connie Siskowski, AACY President
- 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.

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. 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. With support nearly 100% of active high school seniors graduate!

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
- Camp Treasure
- Graduation Party
- Holiday Celebration
- Family Day Picnic

CAREGIVING YOUTH PROJECT IMPACT
- More than 97% of students annually progress to the next grade level or graduate
- 97.9% Caregiving Youth high school graduation rate in 2022
- 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.

Mandy Alvarado Rivera
Caring for her brother to College grad!

The CYP helped me and my family in more ways than they will ever know. I had support in school with tools to relieve stress and homework help. Activities such as camp took me out of my everyday responsibilities. They also provided my family with resources such as building a wheelchair ramp for Isaac! When the CYP came into my life I said, “Finally someone understands me and my family.”

CAREGIVING YOUTH FACT
Youth caregivers exhibit more anxiety and depression than non-caregiving peers.
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 fulfill their dreams.

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 35 middle and high schools in Palm Beach County and serves Caregiving Youth in 22 other schools
- CYP Alumni program progressing
- AACY continued to participate in new research and capstone projects with UNC and UM Miller School of Medicine and internships with Florida Atlantic University schools of Social Work, Nursing and Medicine

**Personal Impact**
- 9% 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

**New Partnerships**
- Hidden Helpers Alliance with the Elizabeth Dole Foundation and Wounded Warriors
- Cariloop providing Care Coaches for Employed Family Caregivers
- Regis College
- Rhode Island School District
- RAISE Family Caregiver Council has included the voices of Caregiving Youth in national strategy for support!

**Total Revenue $1,259,472**

**AACY Program Expenses**
- **Youth Services and Advocacy:** $1,014,354
- **Management and General:** $204,190
- **Fundraising:** $18,117

**Grants - $642,348 - 51%**
- **Contributions - $481,699 - 38.2%**
- **In-Kind Donations - $86,210 - 6.8%**
- **Fundraising Events - $39,725 - 3.2%**
- **Interest and Other - $9,490 - .8%**
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!


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