VISION OF AACY
We envision a nation in which there is understanding, appreciation, and celebration of the lives of Caregiving Youth on their individual path to life’s dreams and opportunities.

MISSION OF AACY
We champion youth who provide care for chronically ill, injured, elderly, and/or disabled family members. We support their role as caregiver and guide their success in school and life.
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, their families, and our organization.

Our team’s dedication and hard work – both staff and volunteers, including the AACY Board of Directors and Advisory Councils – were superior, never missing a beat. We were thankful to be able to reach new Caregiving Youth participants. It was clear that both the economic and housing challenges were continuing to adversely impact our families.

And yet, these very special youth persevered as best they could. We continue to be 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 last year, we also look forward to the years ahead. A new vision, new focus, and a renewed sense of urgency are 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, 2022–23.

Connie Siskowski, RN, PhD
President and Founder
A Caregiving Youth Story

My dad has kidney problems, and he needs dialysis three times a week."

"One of the most challenging things..."

"When he wakes up in the middle of the night and starts throwing up, I have to help him go to the bathroom and throw up in the toilet. I have to stay with him for a few minutes until he feels better and then help him back to bed. It makes me feel sleepy, and in the morning, when I have to go to school, sometimes I just fall asleep in class."

"Caregiving Youth Project helps me because it takes a lot of stress off of me. They take me places, so instead of being stuck in the house all day, I go out and have some fun. The most fun thing I did in the Caregiving Youth group was when I went to camp and went swimming."

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AACY PROGRAMS

Caregiving Youth Project | CYP
- Direct services for Caregiving Youth in Palm Beach County in school and at home.

Caregiving Youth Institute | CYI
- National advocacy and awareness for Caregiving Youth.
- Caregiving Youth Research Collaborative (CYRC).
- Public/Professional Education Conferences.
- Affiliate Relationships.
Serving Students Where They Are: School, Home, and Community

Caregiving Youth provide assistance for family members who are chronically ill, injured, elderly, and/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 and their families to service partners who help meet their basic needs for food, beds, clothing, and medical services.

Building on its 16 years of success, the CYP also provides youth with Skills Building groups, mentoring, 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 for an average of five and a half years.

Caregiving Youth Project (CYP) Results 2022–23

- End of Year Online Feedback of 417 Students – 65.5% Female
- How the CYP Helped Them – Services are In and Out of School and at Home
- These Youth Cared for 540 Family Members (80.6% of Whom are Adults)

% YES

- Respondents are Caregiving Youth who are from Palm Beach County Schools.
- CYP Services are needs-driven so not all students receive the same support services.
The Caregiving Youth Institute (CYI) is dedicated to improving the lives of all young caregivers.

Advocating for their rights not only in Florida but nationwide: CYI pushes for legislation that supports Caregiving Youth and ensures their needs are met.

Raising awareness: Through various initiatives, the CYI educates the public and professionals about the challenges and needs of this “hidden population.”

Offering support solutions: This includes C.A.R.E.:
Connecting Caregiving Youth with resources and each other.
Advocating for them through legislation and other means.
Researching their needs and experiences to better understand and support them.
Educating the public and professionals about Caregiving Youth.

CYI Highlights:
- Virtual Conference (April 2023): CYI held its second virtual conference, bringing together professionals from various states to discuss Caregiving Youth issues.
- White Paper Development: Under Dr. Betsy Olson’s leadership (UNC-Chapel Hill), CYI and the expanding Caregiving Youth Research Collaborative began work on a significant white paper.
- Research Initiatives: In collaboration with Dr. Olson and funded by the National Science Foundation, research involving Caregiving Youth is underway. Additionally, the University of Miami Miller School of Medicine partnered with CYI to involve MD/MPH students in research related to Caregiving Youth.
- Expanding Network: CYI’s Affiliate Network has grown to include Colorado and Hawaii. Furthermore, there is a developing partnership with the Rhode Island Department of Education, which is the first in the US to incorporate Caregiving Youth into its statewide policies.

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!
AACY CYI NATIONAL ADVOCACY HIGHLIGHTS

AACY launched Caregiving Youth Action Day USA:
AACY spearheaded Caregiving Youth Action Day USA. In collaboration with Carers Trust UK and US partners, they held the first-ever international recognition day for Caregiving Youth in the United States.

AACY’s efforts made history in the US Caregiving Youth movement in 2022 as Congress recognized Caregiving Youth for the first time. Representatives Lois Frankel, Barbara Lee, and Maria Elvira Salazar introduced a resolution designating November 13-19 as National Caregiving Youth Week, recognizing the sacrifices of youth caring for loved ones.

US Government Accountability Survey:
AACY’s initiatives led to Congresswoman Lois Frankel, Reps. Barbara Lee and Bobby Scott to recommend a national study on Caregiving Youth to the Government Accountability Office (GAO). The study has been approved, and we are waiting for it to be completed, which will help in additional funding.

Caregiving Youth Institute Conference: The State of Caregiving Youth in the US: Research, Policy, and Practice – Hosted by UNC
The Caregiving Youth Institute Conference brings together researchers, professionals, policymakers, educators, and caregivers to address the unique needs of Caregiving Youth. This virtual conference featured topics related to Caregiving Youth that intersect the systems of healthcare, education, legislation, and the community.

AACY Attends Elizabeth Dole Foundation’s 2022 Heroes & History Makers Celebration:
AACY, a member of the Hidden Helpers Coalition, attended the Elizabeth Dole Foundation’s 2022 Heroes & History Makers Celebration to advocate for all young caregivers. The event featured Hidden Helpers, a movement to honor and support America’s hidden heroes and military caregiver kids.

Virginia Governor’s Conference on Aging – “At Risk: Caregiving Youth”
Dr. Richard Lindsay, a member of the AACY National Advisory Council, and Charlie Poole, a former Caregiving Youth and advocate, presented at the Virginia Governor’s Conference on Aging presenting a breakout session titled “At Risk: Caregiving Youth,” discussed the challenges faced by Caregiving Youth in Virginia and nationwide, available AACY resources, and future support plans.

Children, Society’s Safety Net: A Youth Caregiving Story | Feylyn Lewis | TEDxVanderbiltUniversity
Dr. Feylyn Lewis, PhD, of Vanderbilt University, gave a TEDx Talk on Caregiving Youth. A member of the AACY National Advisory Council, she shared her story of growing up as a caregiver for her disabled mother and the challenges she faced.

Dr. Siskowski reappointed to the faculty of the RAISE Family Caregiving Council.
STUDENT AND FAMILY IMPACT

The Caregiving Youth Project demonstrably empowers its young participants to achieve academic and personal success in school and life.

In 2023 100% of active participants graduated from high school, and over 97% of CYP-supported students progressed to the next grade level.

It’s important to acknowledge that post-pandemic economic challenges and the need to support their families have impacted post-graduation outcomes, still, over 85% of graduates are pursuing further education, certifications, or military service.

SIGNS OF SUCCESS
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 underachievement and job attainment, poor mental and physical health outcomes, and economic instability. With support nearly 100% of active high school seniors graduate!

CAREGIVING YOUTH PROJECT RESPITE & RECOGNITION EVENTS

- **Back to School Bash**: Provides practical support with school supplies, help the students feel prepared for the new year, and builds excitement for learning in a fun and social environment.

- **Camp Treasure**: The overnight camp offers a complete break from daily routines, allowing young people to engage in outdoor activities, build teamwork and problem-solving skills, and create lasting memories.

- **Graduation Party**: This event specifically recognizes the achievement of graduating Caregiving Youth, offering them a celebration of their hard work and commitment to their education and caregiving.

- **Holiday Celebration**: Provides a festive atmosphere during the holiday season, fostering a sense of community, recognition, and belonging for young people and their families who might otherwise feel isolated.

- **Family Day Picnic**: Encourages family bonding and creates shared positive experiences for Caregiving Youth and their families. It can also provide opportunities to connect with other families facing similar challenges.

The Caregiving Youth Project works! It delivers programming during school and after for academic and personal support, conducts home visits, and provides social activities centered around respite from caregiving. The combination brings structure, resources, and encouragement for students struggling to manage all their responsibilities and still be a kid every now and then.
“During the seven years I’ve been with AACY, the program has been amazing and has helped my family and me overcome so much. They would often help us with any necessities my family needed and would help me mentally. They have provided me with clothes, a bed, food, presents, a mentor, and more. During school, once a month, they would pull a few of us out of class and help us with anything mentally and physically. My family specialist is amazing. AACY has not only helped me with my family but also with school. Now, I will go to college, become a cosmetician, and one day open my own business... with AACY, now I know I can!”

DID YOU EVER HAVE WORRIES LIKE THIS WHEN YOU WERE IN MIDDLE SCHOOL?

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

“My mom has kidney failure and I want to know if my mom will ever need a new kidney?”

“Is there a way I can help my dad when I am at school?”

“What if he falls and I am not home to help?”

“When you lose your loved ones, will it affect your life?”

Caregiving Youth Fact

Without support, Youth caregivers exhibit more anxiety and depression than non-caregiving peers.
AACY PROGRAM EXPENSES

Youth Services and Advocacy: $1,169,670
Management and General: $215,904
Fundraising: $64,157

HOW WE RECEIVE OUR FUNDS

Grants - $610,850 - 51.1%
Contributions - $229,555 - 19.2%
In-Kind Donations - $170,057 - 14.2%
Fundraising Events - $183,530 - 15.4%
Interest and Other - $1,123 - 0.1%

TOTAL REVENUE $1,194,953 (INCLUDES IN-KIND)
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Grateful to our Donors and Major Partners!
Donate Today


Most people have never considered Caregiving Youth as an issue that needs addressing, but we know that many of you will "get it" right away. If you are one of those people, we need you on our team, and we need your financial support to help us grow, reach, recognize, and support as many kids as possible as quickly as possible.

Join us in changing the world for generations of kids by donating to the American Association of Caregiving Youth.

Make your check payable to AACY and mail to:
American Association of Caregiving Youth (AACY)
6401 Congress Ave. Ste. 200
Boca Raton, FL 33487
Give online at aacy.org/donate
Call 561-391-7401 or 800-508-9618