



When Circles Align



**Advocates
for Children**

ANNUAL REPORT 2025

2025 was a defining and deeply meaningful year for Advocates for Children. What we experienced was not simply growth in programs or locations, but growth in possibility for the children, youth, and families who rely on us during some of the most vulnerable moments of their lives. This year brought milestones that will shape our community for years to come. We opened Newman House and welcomed our first residents, creating a safe and nurturing home for youth who deserve stability, dignity, and a true sense of belonging. We expanded our presence in Cobb County, strengthening partnerships and increasing access to critical services. In Floyd County, we opened a new office focused on youth experiencing homelessness and young people aging out of foster care, ensuring local access to housing support during life's most fragile transitions.



A letter from Rachel

At the same time, we strengthened the quality and coordination of care across our continuum of services. From advocacy and housing to prevention and family support, our work remained grounded in compassion, consistency, and a commitment to meeting families where they are. Recognition received this year reflects the dedication of our staff, volunteers, and partners who show up each day with both skill and heart.

None of this progress happens alone. Our staff, volunteers, board members, community partners, and supporters form the circle of care surrounding every child and family we serve. As you read this report, I hope you see more than milestones and numbers. I hope you see safety restored, resilience strengthened, and young people stepping into brighter futures. Your support makes this work possible, and we are grateful to walk alongside a community that shows up when it matters most.

RACHEL CASTILLO
President + CEO

Board of Trustees

Glen Merritt Board Chair
Raymond James

Sid Rowser Chair-Elect
C&I Customer Service, Georgia Power Company

Lamont Kiser Treasurer
Director, Bartow County Water

Andre Weaver Secretary
Assistant Superintendent, Cartersville City Schools

Jim Andrews
Divisional Vice President | Commercial, Specialty & Turf Manufacturing – Shaw Industries

Vicky Durham
Community Volunteer

Sean Ely
Owner, Ely Corporation

Carol Hatch
*Program Manager/Grants Administrator
New Foundations Development, Inc. Calhoun
Housing Authority*

John Lampley
Sr. Pastor, Mt. Zion Missionary Baptist Church

Imani Mance
*Sr. Director of Human Resources, The Home
Depot*

Jud McGivaren
Owner, RenovationX

Carrie Trotter
Managing Partner, Trotter Deems & King

Scott Nation
*VP of Mortgage + Regional Sales Manager,
United Community Bank*

Kasey Salas
Founder, EmpowHer

Joey Womack
Owner, Joey Homes

Scott Sangrey
*General Manager of Warehouse Operations,
Chick Fil A Supply*

Monica Whitfield
*Business Development Specialist, Family
Savings Credit Union*

Rachel Castillo
President + CEO, Advocates for Children

Nancy Newman
Board Member Emeritus



When Circles Align

In 2025, Advocates for Children did more than expand programs. We strengthened how our work connects. Services were intentionally realigned under three core circles of care: Advocacy and Justice, Housing and Stability, and Child and Family Well-Being. This alignment reflects a simple belief that lasting change happens when support is coordinated, continuous, and responsive to real life.

Emma's journey reflects what becomes possible when those circles move together.

The First Circle ADVOCACY + JUSTICE

Emma* entered foster care during middle school, carrying questions about safety, belonging, and what would happen next. During that uncertain time, her first interactions with Advocates centered on ensuring her voice was heard and her experiences were treated with care.

At a Children's Advocacy Center, Emma participated in a forensic interview that enabled her to share her experiences in a setting designed to reduce fear and protect her dignity. The process was careful and compassionate, surrounding her with professionals focused not only on gathering information but on protecting her from additional harm.

Soon after, a CASA volunteer became a steady presence in Emma's life. While agencies made decisions about placement and permanency, Emma had someone focused solely on her best interests. Her CASA advocate showed up consistently, listened without judgment, and ensured her needs were never lost within complex processes.



This circle created the foundation for everything that followed.

As Emma moved through adolescence, the question shifted from safety to stability and where she would begin building a life of her own.

The Second Circle **HOUSING + STABILITY**

During her time in care, Emma lived at Flowering Branch Children's Shelter, now Newman House. There, she found structure, encouragement, and steady routines that allowed her to focus on being a teenager rather than surviving instability. Staff celebrated milestones that might seem ordinary but meant everything: learning to drive, graduating high school, and beginning college with hope for what could come next.

After leaving care, Emma was determined to live independently. For a time, she managed on her own, balancing responsibility and ambition without the safety net many young adults rely on. Eventually, she realized that independence without support can quietly become isolation.

Emma returned to Advocates through Youth Independent Housing and secured an apartment in her own name. That moment represented more than housing. It was stability, confidence, and the freedom to focus on long term goals instead of daily survival. With rental assistance and case management, she strengthened employment, transportation, and life skills that anchor lasting independence.

Housing did not solve every challenge, but it created the stability necessary for growth.



1,669

In 2025, Advocates for Children served a total of 1669 people through our CASA, CAC & Youth Accountability programs.

102

102 Youth were diverted from court involvement and 90% of youth had no new charges while in the Youth Accountability program.

76

76 youth and 58 of their dependent children were housed across more than 50 apartments throughout our service area.

The Third Circle

CHILD + FAMILY WELLBEING

While building stability through Youth Independent Housing, Emma learned she was pregnant. The news carried both excitement and fear, reminding her how essential community would be as she prepared for motherhood.

Through In Home Parenting Education, Emma is gaining practical skills, emotional support, and the confidence to care for her child. The focus reaches beyond parenting techniques. It centers on helping her trust herself, strengthen healthy routines, and create the nurturing environment she wants her child to experience.

Rather than facing this new chapter alone, Emma is surrounded by guidance, reassurance, and steady support as she steps into motherhood.

Today, Emma stands in a place shaped by every circle that surrounds her. Advocacy ensured she was heard. Stability gave her room to grow. Family support is helping her build something lasting.

Her journey is still unfolding, and Advocates remains part of that story, walking alongside her as she creates a future defined not by the challenges she experienced but by the stability and love she is building for her child.



16,000

Safe Place reached more than 16,000 people helping divert 27 children from homelessness, while 12 youth received housing support at Newman House.

98%

98% of children served in our FRC Navigation program remained within their family without the need for out-of-family placement

142

142 parents and 207 children participated in In Home Parenting services.

**Advocates
for Children**
served 21,647
children, youth +
families in 2025



The Circle that Makes Everything Possible

Behind every young person's progress is a network of people and organizations willing to step forward. Volunteers, business partners, schools, healthcare providers, civic groups, and community leaders extend the reach of Advocates far beyond any single program or location.

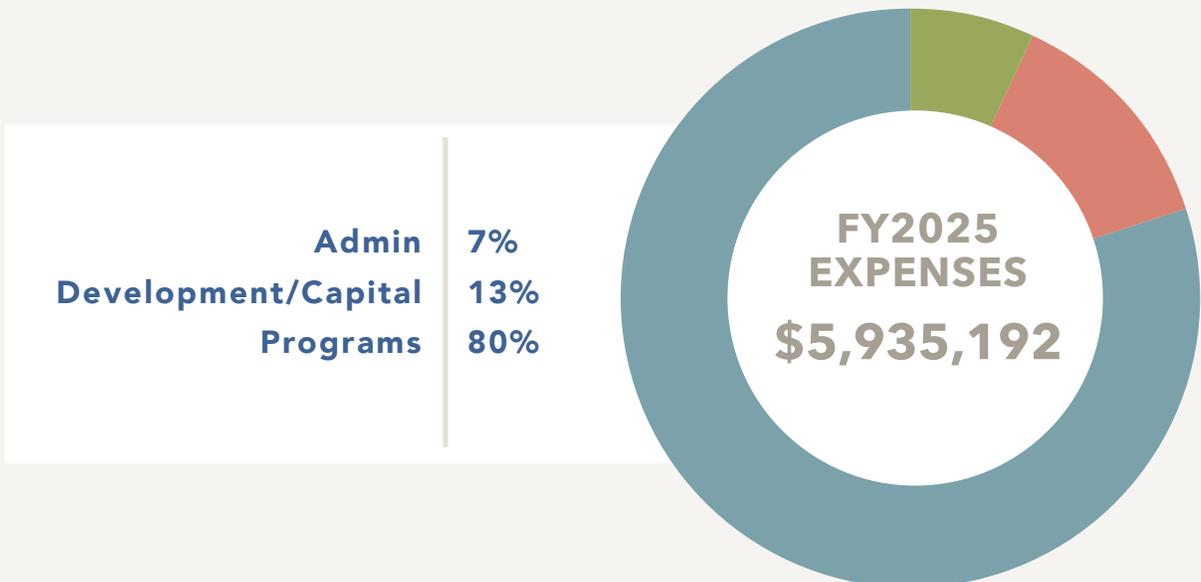
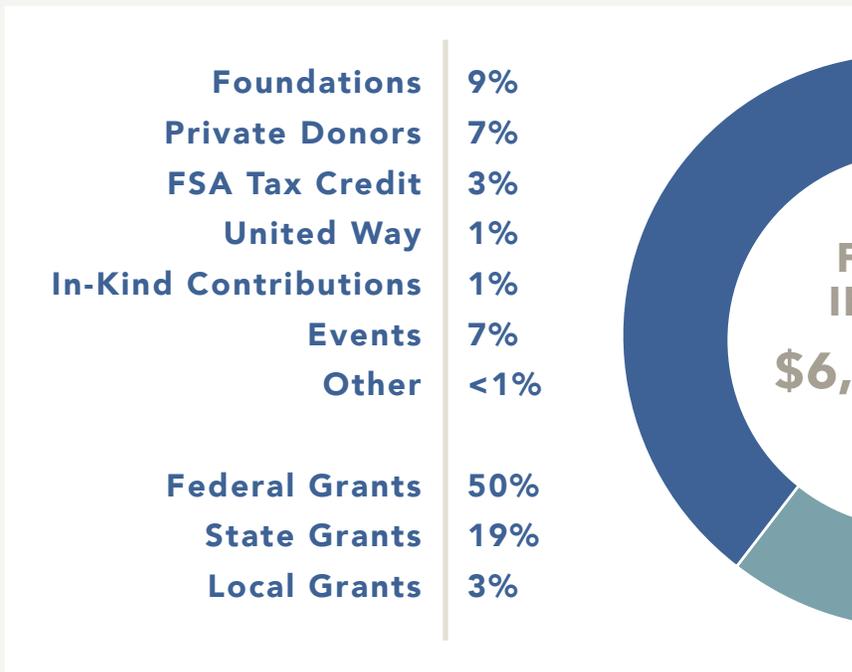
CASA volunteers stand beside children as decisions are made about their futures. Employers and housing partners help create pathways to stability. Schools, healthcare providers, and local organizations help ensure families are connected to support before challenges deepen. Each partnership strengthens the continuity of care that allows young people to move forward without navigating systems alone.

This circle reflects shared responsibility in action. It is the collaboration, trust, and willingness to show up that keeps services connected and impact sustained across Northwest Georgia. We are deeply grateful to every volunteer and partner who invests time, resources, and belief into this work and helps make lasting change possible.

Financial Stewardship

Advocates for Children remains committed to strong financial stewardship, transparency, and accountability. Every dollar invested supports direct services and the systems that ensure children and youth receive consistent, high-quality care.

Our financial strength in 2025 positioned Advocates for continued growth and long-term sustainability.



*2025 NON-AUDITED FINANCIALS

Looking Ahead

A circle that keeps expanding

In 2025, Advocates for Children did more than grow. We strengthened the connections that ensure children, youth, and families are supported at every stage. When advocacy, housing, and family support work together, gaps close before crisis takes hold.

In 2026, that circle will expand to include mental health services designed to meet young people and families with timely, accessible care. This next step reflects what we have consistently seen across our programs: stability cannot last without emotional well being, and healing requires both practical resources and therapeutic support.

As this work moves forward, our focus remains on early intervention, trauma informed care, and removing barriers that prevent families from accessing services. By integrating behavioral health into our continuum, we strengthen our ability to respond not only to immediate needs but to the deeper experiences shaping long term stability and resilience.

*When the circles connect,
futures change.*

Advocates for Children Regional Office for Prevention & Advocacy

827 Joe Frank Harris Parkway | Cartersville, GA 30120

Advocates for Children Cobb County Location

375 Franklin Gateway South | Marietta, GA 30067

Advocates for Children Gordon County Location

206 S. Wall Street | Calhoun, GA 30701

Advocates for Children Floyd County Location

202 East 3rd Ave. Rome, GA 30161



**Advocates
for Children**

WWW.ADVOCCHILD.ORG