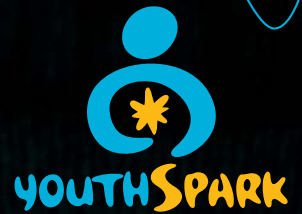


We are

*Always...*



# Always Being a Source of Compassion and Love...

The Youth Services Center is the heart of our work, and is managed by our dedicated staff who mentor and provide trauma-informed case management services for our youth. By addressing individual and family vulnerabilities; connecting families to appropriate services; and, providing funding shortfalls to cover gaps in connecting kids with services, we are a source of **COMPASSION** and **LOVE** for all of those we serve.



Since opening our Center in the fall of 2017, we have served over 600 kids. In fiscal year 2019-2020, 135 youth walked through our door for access to resources and support. We provided:

- \* 121 acts of crisis intervention
- \* 2,200+ instances of individual counseling and support
- \* 565 group therapy sessions
- \* 484 acts of court advocacy
- \* 12,000+ hours spent by each case manager providing intervention services and support

Resulting in...

- \* 75% of youth maintaining weekly group attendance
- \* 80% of youth deciding not to runaway or reaching out before attempting to runaway
- \* 75% of youth decreasing their truancy rates/increasing school engagement
- \* 80% of youth complying with probation and court mandates
- \* 137 hours spent online by youth participating in our 2020 Virtual Summer Program

Our Center offers three special program tracks to serve teens including:

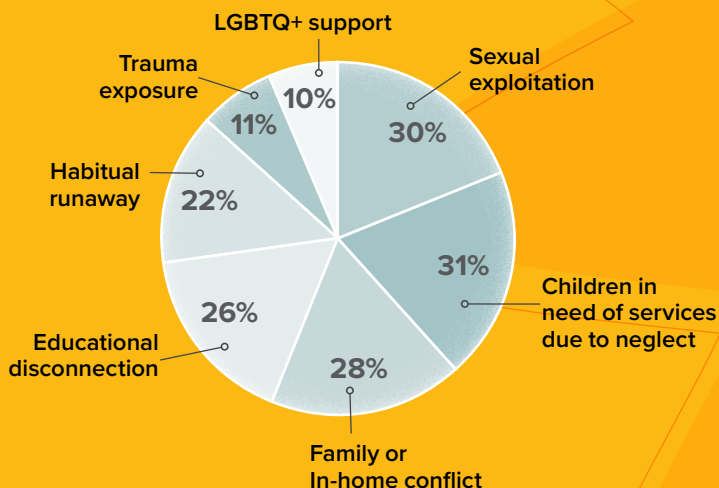
**Voices:** Equipping girls who have experienced or are highly vulnerable for sexual exploitation with ways to empower themselves, cope with trauma, and enhance healthy relationships.

**Connections:** Equipping youth experiencing in-home or community violence with ways to ease, express, and to solve conflict and feelings of anger resulting in personal stabilization.

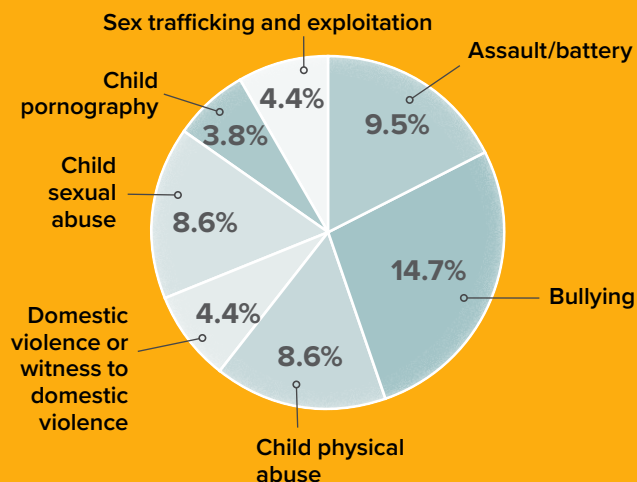
**Expressions:** Equipping LGBTQ+ youth to challenge internalized negative messages, handle stress, build a community of support, and embrace their true selves.

# Over the last year...

## YOUTH WERE REFERRED TO OUR CENTER FOR ONE OR MORE OF THE FOLLOWING:

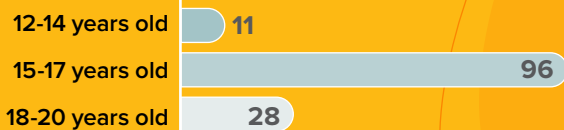


## AFTER DEVELOPING RELATIONSHIPS WITH OUR YOUTH, THEY ALSO DISCLOSED:



## YOUTH DEMOGRAPHICS:

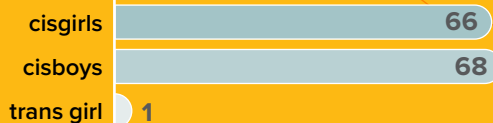
### Ages:



### Race:



### Gender:



### Sexual Orientation:



**“Jacqueline” spent many hours online, and found herself meeting guys who wanted to see her in person.** Already having experienced an abusive relationship at just 17 years old, she was eager to be loved. Since joining our weekly Voices group, she now understands the dangers of online activity and risky behaviors. “Being in group, I realize I didn’t have much self-esteem or self-love, but I feel like I do now. I never thought I could even go to college, but now youthSpark is helping me do that.” Today, Jacqueline is a Voices group leader and her mom has praised the changes, noting, “I appreciate that Voices has helped my daughter blossom. The support of our family as we lost loved ones to COVID-19 and a house fire went well beyond our expectations. It’s nice to know we matter.”

# Always Proclaiming Our Voice for Vulnerable Youth...

**We are a powerful voice in our community speaking OUT and speaking UP for the kids who need us. By educating those in the court, law enforcement, and other organizations who work with trauma-exposed youth, we build awareness and understanding of child abuse and trafficking, while also protecting our kids from future exploitation.**

Our Community Education Program provides education and awareness building to a variety of individuals, groups, and organizations. Using an interactive approach to engage and inspire attendees, our formal trainings and workshops are uniquely designed to meet the needs of individual audiences and areas of practice. Over the past year, our programs have included our Community and Teen Ambassador trainings, mandatory reporter trainings, professional continuing education trainings, and corporate engagements. We have also provided technical assistance to countless juvenile justice, medical, legal and educational professionals when they needed help the most to connect a young person to services and advocate for their protection. We proudly extend our help to parents in our community who are proactively seeking help when they notice behavior changes that indicate unspoken abuse or exploitation.

In 2019-2020 we launched a new awareness campaign, thanks to the support of the Robert and Polly Dunn Foundation. *Text Effects* uses real-life experiences to educate and empower teens and adults alike on the dangers of youth exploitation and sex trafficking by incorporating a series of short, yet compelling, educational messages via text messages. Working with National CineMedia—America’s Movie Network, we created mini text stories that were featured on-screen in all movies, all lobby screens, and directly online (banner ads) to identified moviegoers in the Regal Atlantic Station 18 and AMC North DeKalb 16 theaters. We have already had over 800,000 impressions with over 2,700 individuals clicking through to read more about our work—that’s three times the national average.

For over 10 years, we have used data collected from our experiences working with children who are victimized by abuse, and then turned that data into actionable responses to abuse that can make a real difference. We use research and survivors’ input to develop creative, innovative solutions to change the way youth injustices and vulnerabilities are identified and addressed. In 2019, we completed a multi-year research project with **Georgia State University’s Department of Sociology** (funded by the National Institute of Justice) to uncover the hidden labor and sex trafficking experiences of homeless youth and presented these findings to policy makers, law enforcement, and victim service providers to have immediate on-the-ground impact.

In 2019-2020, we made a difference by:

- ★ Educating 3,000+ people, including 1,793 adult and 491 teen Community Ambassadors
- ★ Participating in key community coalitions and task forces including:
  - Georgia Statewide Human Trafficking Task Force
  - Fulton County Board of Commissioner Sex Trafficking Task Force
  - Atlanta Coalition for LGBTQ Youth
  - Wellstar Health System Human Trafficking Task Force
  - International Human Trafficking Institute’s Metro Atlanta Coalition to End Human Trafficking
- ★ Teaming up with volunteers who dedicated **177 hours** of service to the Youth Services Center

In 2019, we began a fellowship with the **Georgetown Center for Juvenile Justice Reform** to analyze and understand how we can change the welfare systems that LGBTQ+ youth are currently in. Our four-year capstone project has already generated much excitement and offers a roadmap for evidence-based policies and practices to cultivate a fair, inclusive, and respectful culture in the justice system. This includes a multi-year assessment of LGBTQ+ inclusivity in juvenile court through the development and implementation of non-discrimination policies and trainings for court staff/partners, systems to help kids identify allies and safe-spaces, and community-based alternatives to incarceration.



# Always Standing With Our Community...

Our work is only possible because of our dedicated and caring community partners. We work together for a common goal—to LIFT UP one another to make our community a thriving place for all. Our community partners work with us on research, provide educational opportunities for our kids, help us stock our Dream Closet, and become Community Ambassadors. When we stand together, nothing is impossible. In 2019-2020, our community partners included:

100 Black Women, St. Mountain-Lithonia Chapter  
Accenture  
Alston + Bird, LLP  
Atlanta CASA  
Atlanta Police Department  
Atlanta Woman's Club  
Chick-fil-A Foundation  
City of South Fulton  
Coca-Cola  
Color ATL  
Atlanta Suburban Chapter, Delta Sigma Theta Inc.  
Emory Law Barton Child Law and Policy Center

Emory Rollins School of Public Health  
Federal Home Loan Bank Atlanta  
Free the Mind Co.  
Fulton County  
Fulton County Juvenile Court  
The Fulton-DeKalb Hospital Authority  
Girl You Matter Fitness  
Georgia Cares  
Georgia State University, Department of Sociology  
Hartsfield-Jackson Atlanta International Airport  
International Human Trafficking Institute  
The Hair Transformer  
The Junior League of Atlanta

The Links, Camellia Rose Chapter  
The Keri Hilson Foundation  
Lazy Bone Catering  
National Association of Negro Black Professional Women's Club, Inc.  
Pink Diamondz Cosmetology  
St. Anthony's of Padua  
Truly Living Well Agriculture and Farming Center  
United Way of Greater Atlanta  
Verizon  
VoxATL  
Wellspring Living  
Wholistic Stress Control Institute



**A dynamic and meaningful platform to share about our work, raise awareness and educate the community is critical.**

When the generous team at **Accenture** approached us and offered to help us “tell our complex story” to extend our reach, we were more than grateful. Our new redesigned, updated, and enhanced website, which officially launches December 2021, will offer visitors better ways to engage and connect with us. Visitors will learn about child sex trafficking, read stories about inspiring teens whose lives have been changed, and understand how they can take action to make a difference.

# Always Grateful for Those Who Make Our Work Possible...

It is not surprising that our hearts are filled with joy when our donors and supporters stand with us in our work. They provide the financial support we need to make our work possible. They are the lifeblood of our organization and our gratitude for them is immeasurable. Each year we are supported by an array of foundation and corporate donors, government grants, individual donors, board members, and churches/civic organizations.

During this past year, some of our foundation, corporate, church, and government financial supporters included the AEC Trust, Bobbie Bailey Foundation, Mary Allen Lindsey Branan Foundation, Mary Brown and George Brown Funds of Atlanta, Catholic Foundation of North Georgia, Central Presbyterian Church, Criminal Justice Coordinating

Council, Dressemer, Robert and Polly Dunn Foundation, Federal Home Loan Bank, John and Mary Franklin Foundation, Fulton County Community Services Program, Fulton-DeKalb Hospital Authority, Granite Telecommunication, Help for Children, Moore-Manna Law Office, NoVo Foundation, Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention, Pearl Investment Initiative/Friends for Life Foundation, RSUI Group, Ida Alice Ryan Charitable Trust, Tapestri, United Way of Greater Atlanta, and Verizon.

We thank ALL of those who supported our work in 2019-2020—from every individual donor to our biggest grant supporters. Together we are creating brighter futures for vulnerable kids in our community.



Thanks to a multi-year grant from the **NoVo Foundation**, we are partnering with Emory University and the National Center for Civil and Human Rights to create a replicable model of our work, which other jurisdictions can use to better support survivors and vulnerable girls in their communities. This survivor-led initiative will increase the availability of on-the-ground services while creating much-needed structural change.



# Always Embracing Hope and Looking Forward...

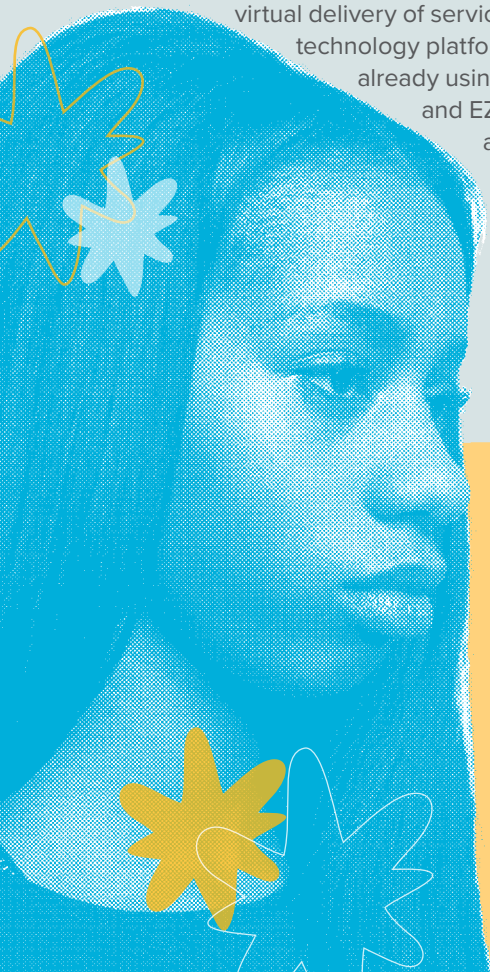
Who would have known at the start of the new year, 2020, that just over two months later everything would change? The COVID-19 pandemic resulted in many businesses and organizations struggling. Many of our fellow community members found themselves out of work. Individuals and families had to find new ways to cope during an unprecedented time in our country's history. Yet, even with the challenges of the pandemic, we were always looking forward and always full of hope. We would find a way—no matter what it took—to ensure our kids and their families were being cared for and receiving the services they needed during such a trying time.

We found that one of our greatest successes came out of our biggest challenge: creating immediate and effective responses to the crisis. Prior to the pandemic hitting Georgia in March of 2020, teens had dropped into our Youth Services Center **662** times already that year. When Fulton County Juvenile Court closed to the public, we were required to close our drop-in center, and reimagine how we would provide trauma-informed case management and group therapy. In response, we successfully pivoted to virtual delivery of services quickly by leveraging technology platforms our organization was already using, including Zoom, Slack, and EZ Texting. These platforms allowed us to connect with youth where they were, easily sharing COVID-19 resources, and holding virtual group programming. Combined with the strong relationships our case managers

already had with our kids, we were pleased to report we experienced no significant gaps in service delivery.

The spring shelter-in-place order also posed challenges to our referral pipeline by limiting the ability of teachers and court partners to identify the signs of trauma and sexual exploitation. Without their critical eye in watching for children who need help, referral opportunities inevitably go down. To address this problem, we 1) created a new online/virtual referral process and worked with court partners to support the success of this new system, and 2) strengthened our relationship with Fulton County Juvenile Court's Child in Need of Services (CHINS) unit to streamline the referral of runaway youth into our Center, allowing us to more quickly serve those who needed us.

As we all continue to struggle with the fallout and uncertainties that the pandemic brings, we will do everything we can in the coming year to respond quickly, act proactively, and be a source of HOPE and SUPPORT for our kids and their families.

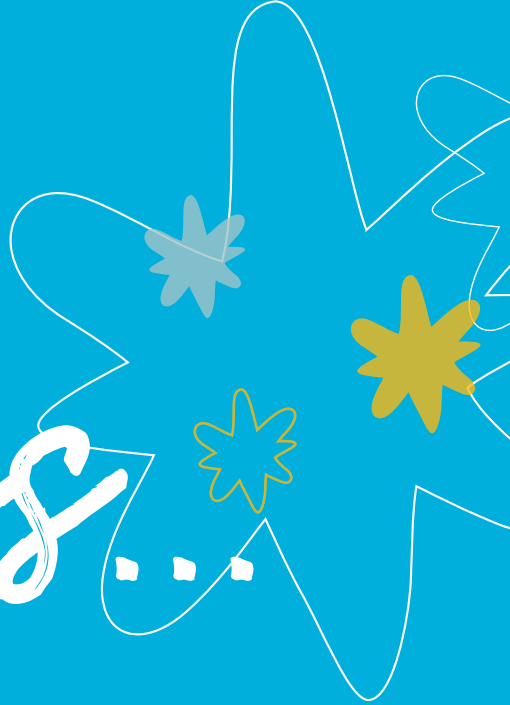


Recognizing employment opportunities for youth would be vastly affected in response to the COVID-19 pandemic, we created an exciting five-week virtual summer program with interactive seminars such as Podcasting, Business, Music, and Dance. This special programming was made possible through the amazing generosity of our corporate partners at **Verizon** and others in the community. Thirty-seven teens actively participated in the programs, spending more than 137 hours in the virtual classroom and reporting positively on the experience. All of our kids who completed the summer program received a stipend aimed to foster entrepreneurship during these uncertain times in the workforce.



We are

Always...



*Here for kids. Here for parents. Here for our community.*



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