



## A MESSAGE FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Volunteers for Youth Justice had a dynamic and impactful 2024, continuing its mission to support children and families in crisis across the Northwest Louisiana community. If I could describe 2024 for VYJ in one word, it would be growth. Our organization expanded in numerous ways, adding new programs to better serve children and families, welcoming new employees to enhance our capacity, and building new community partnerships at the Harbor to strengthen our impact. It was a year of progress, collaboration, and transformation, setting the stage for an even brighter future. We expanded our existing programs, including the School-Based Resource Centers, to three additional schools in Caddo Parish. This growth allowed us to better support administrators, teachers, and students by implementing TBRI® strategies and addressing truancy issues directly on campus.

As we look ahead to the coming year, we are thrilled to announce the launch of VYJ's newest program, the Family Resource Center. The FRC (Family Resource Center) provides comprehensive support to identified families focusing on prevention, education and empowerment for families as a whole.

- Parenting Education and Skill Building
- Kinship Navigator Program
- My Community Cares

We are proud to carry on our 43-year tradition of serving the Northwest Louisiana community with dedication and care. We remain committed to expanding our impact, fostering meaningful connections, and providing vital resources to support children, youth, and families in need. Together, we will continue to strengthen our community and build a brighter future for all.

Best regards,  
**Kelli Todd - Executive Director**



## TO OUR VALUED DONORS AND PARTNERS,

It is always an honor to share my reflections on serving as President of the Board of Volunteers for Youth Justice. This was my second time serving as President; I originally served in 2012-2013 and boy what a difference a decade can make! Our team has grown significantly over this time, and our programs have been continually evaluated and modified if necessary to ensure they are meeting the needs of our families. Some programs have ended, and several new ones have been created, such as TASC and TBRI®. At the end of my first term as President, Battle of the Gumbo Gladiators was born and now attracts thousands of gumbo lovers who help us raise critical funds for our work.

During that time, we were able to realize a longstanding vision to bring all the resources our families need to a single location to make access to them easier, and now we have that in The Harbor, with the help of the Caddo Parish School Board. We have introduced Calming Studios in several locations, and they have been looked at as models from communities around the country.

None of this would be possible, though, without the incomparable leadership of our Executive Director, Kelli Todd, and her passionate and talented staff, as well as the hundreds of volunteers that make our programs possible. And they are all able to do what they do because of generous support from you.

So, from the bottom of my heart, I thank you for making our very important work of providing a caring community for children, youth and families in crisis possible at the highest level possible.

Sincerely,  
**Angie White - President**



**Administrative Costs**

**4%** Administrative costs make up only 4% of organizational expenditures.

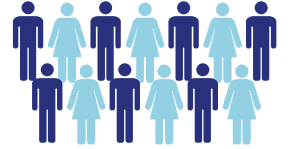
## 2024 BY THE NUMBERS

**CASA** advocates devoted **4,571** hours and traveled **26,096** miles to support children, ensuring their voices were heard and their needs addressed.



# 26,096

# 10,448



Volunteers for Youth Justice served **10,448** children in 2024.

# 3%



Out of **2,014** referrals to **TASC**, only **3%** of the elementary-aged children served required court intervention, showcasing the program's success in providing early support and promoting consistent school attendance.

In 2024, over **300** volunteers supported Volunteers for Youth Justice by providing advocacy, intervention, and mentoring services.



# 1,357



The **School-Based Resource Center** provided direct services to **1,357** students and delivered training to **266** school staff members in Caddo parish.

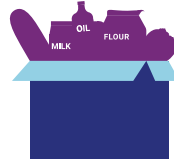
The **Teen Court** received a total of **700** volunteer hours, with teen volunteers contributing **508** hours and adult volunteers providing **192** hours.



# 629

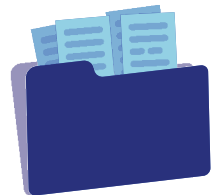


The **FINs** department supported **629** families in Northwest Louisiana, providing services aimed at preventing the need for court intervention.



The Harbor Food Bank provided **6,554 lbs.** of food to families in Caddo parish.

There were **155** cases referred from the community to The Harbor where adequate resources and services assisted **137** individual clients.



My Community Cares hosted or participated in **209** community meetings, engaging over **1,800** attendees throughout the year.



The Harbor School Uniform Closet provided school uniforms and supplies to **254** students, ensuring they had the essentials needed for a successful school year.

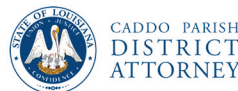
# \$23K

My Community Cares provided over **\$23,000** in direct support to assist families, helping to prevent out-of-home placements through immediate financial assistance.

# 566

The **Trust Based Relational Intervention (TBRI®)** provided trauma-focused training to 566 participants across four units at Caddo Correctional Center.

## COMMUNITY PARTNERS





## PROGRAMS & SERVICES / FINANCIAL REPORT

### CASA (Court Appointed Special Advocates):

Contact - [patricia.alicea@vyjla.org](mailto:patricia.alicea@vyjla.org)

CASA trains volunteers to serve as officers of the court and “friends” to children in need. These volunteer advocates are assigned by judges to ensure that each child is placed in a safe, permanent home.

### TBRI® (Trust Based Relational Intervention):

Contact - [lucinda.miles@vyjla.org](mailto:lucinda.miles@vyjla.org)

TBRI® is an attachment-based, trauma-informed intervention that is designed to meet the complex needs of vulnerable children. TBRI® uses Empowering Principles to address physical needs, Connection Principles for attachment needs, and Correcting Principles to disarm fear-based behaviors.

### YOUTH EMPOWERMENT CENTER:

Contact - [jacob.mccarty@vyjla.org](mailto:jacob.mccarty@vyjla.org)

The Youth Empowerment Center assists law enforcement officers in dealing with juveniles charged for delinquent offenses. Offenders are brought to the referral center by law enforcement officers where they receive a comprehensive assessment and are referred to community based resources for needed services and kept out of the Juvenile Detention Center.

### YOUTH PROGRAMS:

Contact - [shonda.houston@vyjla.org](mailto:shonda.houston@vyjla.org)

**JumpStart (Power of Choice & Stamp Out Shoplifting)** –

A diversion program providing educational workshops in a support group setting with volunteer facilitators trained to address the needs of at-risk youth.

**Teen Court** – A program designed to offer non-violent, first-time juvenile offenders the opportunity to be judged by a jury of their peers, accept responsibility for their actions, and make restitution for their offenses.

**GEMS & GENTS Mentoring** – A program that brings together young people with trained facilitators and adult mentors who assist with their educational, relational, and emotional development through group sessions, recreational activities, community service, and one-on-one mentoring.

**Leadership Academy** – A program of GEMS & GENTS, to provide a safe and supportive environment, whereby students are encouraged to improve their academic achievement, develop life skills, and embrace the servant leadership model for giving back to their school and community. Students are paired with one-on-one mentors who serve as leadership role models.

**Conflict Resolution** – A collaborative effort between VYJ and the Caddo Parish School Board, designed to address the dynamics that lead to violent behavior, with the goal of preventing future school fight violations.

### FINS (Families in Need of Services):

Contact - [jacob.mccarty@vyjla.org](mailto:jacob.mccarty@vyjla.org)

FINS provides programs for families on the verge of crisis due to the ungovernable behavior of a child. The primary goal of FINS is to secure appropriate services to remedy the underlying causes that lead to the family’s concerns.

### TASC (Truancy Assessment Service Center):

Contact - [shannon.wyche@vyjla.org](mailto:shannon.wyche@vyjla.org)

The purpose of TASC is to provide early identification and assessment of truant children in grades K-5 and the prompt delivery of coordinated interventions to prevent continued unexcused school absences.

### MY COMMUNITY CARES:

Contact: [kreesha.bennett@vyjla.org](mailto:kreesha.bennett@vyjla.org)

The MCC expands our commitment to reach into the at-risk community locations to strengthen families and support local neighborhoods. This program empowers community members to be architects of their own futures, fostering ownership, resilience, and sustainable change from within.

### SCHOOL-BASED RESOURCE CENTER:

Contact: [melissa.enis@vyjla.org](mailto:melissa.enis@vyjla.org)

The SRC extends our direct services onto school campuses, offering a spectrum of VYJ’s support services to schools. This program is committed to creating a positive and supportive school environment while building healthy relationships throughout school campuses.

## 2023-2024 FINANCIAL REPORT

### SUPPORT AND REVENUE

Individual and Corporate Contributions	139,669	3%
Grants	3,238,805	58%
Program Support	1,559,131	28%
Fundraising	188,365	3%
In-Kind Rent	192,269	3%
Unrealized Gains	35,968	1%
Miscellaneous	227,968	4%
<b>Total Support and Revenues</b>	<b>5,582,175</b>	

### EXPENSE

Program Expense	4,864,494	96%
Administrative Expense	199,426	4%
<b>Total Expenses</b>	<b>5,063,920</b>	

Change in Net Assets	518,255	
Net assets, beginning of year	1,399,870	
Net assets, end of year	1,918,125	



## MISSION, BOARD OF DIRECTORS AND MORE

### MISSION

*The mission of Volunteers for Youth Justice is to provide a community caring for children, youth, and families in crisis.*

### 2024 BOARD OF DIRECTORS

- President** - White, Angie
- Vice President** - Mitton, Kathy
- Secretary** - Henderson, Betty
- Treasurer** - Fair, Joel
- Seabaugh, Laura
- Lyons, Laurie
- Crawford, Brian
- Baxter, Laura
- Scoggins, Andy
- Burnham, W. Drew
- Greer, Patrick
- McPherson, Pamela
- Beaubouef, Deanna
- Savage, Alexandria
- Lasyone, Paige
- Sant, Daniel
- Executive Director** - Kelli Todd

### GUMBO GLADIATORS



Over 6,000 people enjoyed the Battle of the Gumbo Gladiators in 2024. The 2025 battle begins at 12pm on March 8th. See you at Festival Plaza!



### VOLUNTEERS FOR YOUTH JUSTICE IN THE COMMUNITY



CONTACT INFORMATION:  
318-425-4413 • [www.vyjla.org](http://www.vyjla.org)