Community & Children's Resource Board
of St. Charles County

Annual Report

2024

CCRB
the community and children's
resource board of st. charles county

stcharlescountykids.org

Letter from Leadership

Dear Friends and Partners,

As we reflect on the past year, the theme “A Year of Transitions” could not be more fitting. 2024 marked a pivotal chapter in our agency’s journey—one defined by change, growth, and renewed purpose.

We honored the retirement of our long-serving Executive Director, Bruce Sowatsky, whose 25 years of leadership laid a strong foundation of trust, collaboration, and impact on our community. His legacy lives on in the deep relationships built with our Partner Agencies and St. Charles community, and in the values that continue to guide our work.

2024 also brought significant internal transformation. We embraced new technology to enhance our operations, took a thoughtful look at our compliance requirements to better align them with our strategic goals, and restructured staff roles and responsibilities to better serve our mission. These changes were not just structural, they were strategic, designed to position us for long-term success.

During these transitions, we began work on our *2023 Community Needs Assessment*, a critical step in understanding the evolving needs of the children and families we serve.

Through it all, our Partner Agencies remained steadfast, delivering life-changing services that created brighter futures for children in our community.

Looking ahead to 2025, our focus will turn to strengthening and streamlining our funding process to ensure we are well-positioned for the future. We are also excited to roll out the findings of our 2023 Community Needs Assessment, which will help inform our work in the years to come.

Thank you for being part of this journey. Your support, collaboration, and belief in our mission make everything we do possible. Together, we are building a stronger, more resilient community.

Melinda McAliney
Executive Director

Molly Dempsey
2024 Board Chair

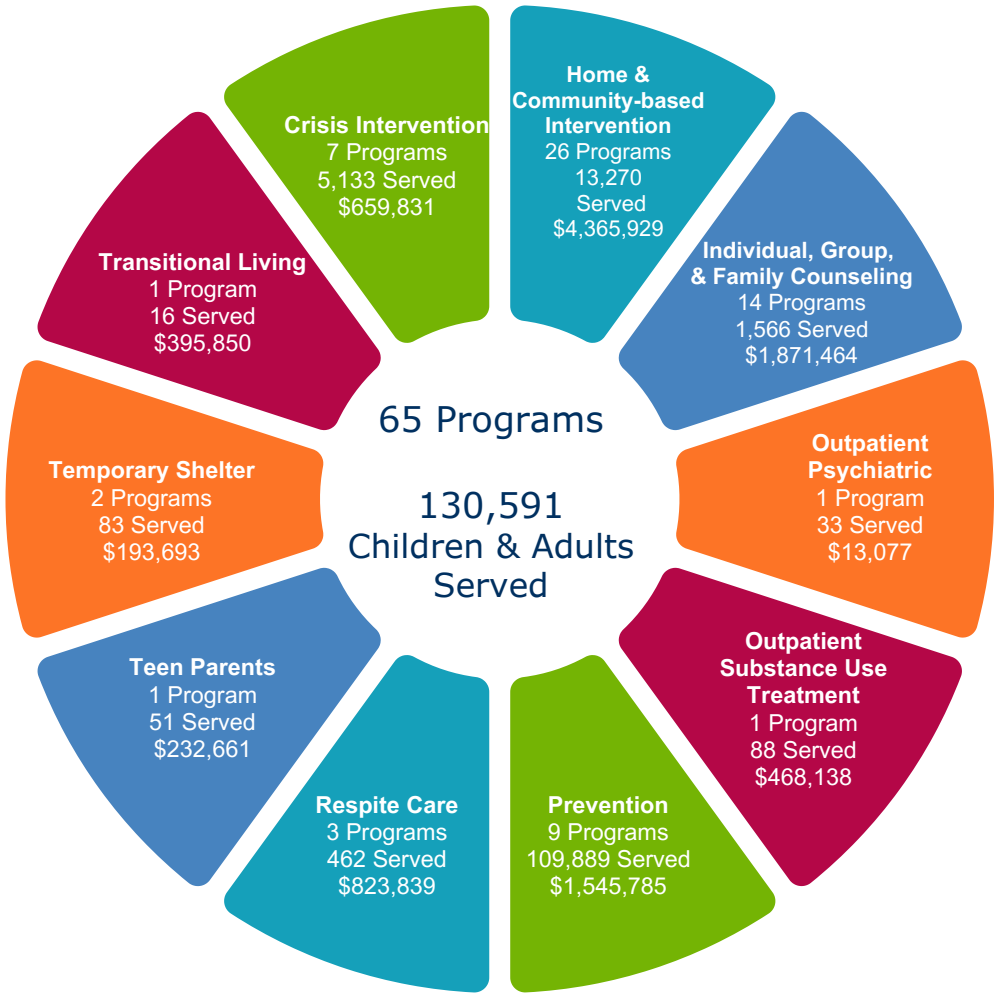
Investing in our Children

Using a voter-approved 1/8 cent sales tax, the Community and Children's Resource Board (CCRB) funds local nonprofits to provide essential mental health and substance use treatment services for children 19 years of age or younger in St. Charles County. CCRB-funded programs aim to:

- Improve child emotional and mental wellbeing
- Strengthen and stabilize children and families
- Respond to the shifting mental health needs of youth.

CCRB funds 10 service areas to promote and improve children's mental health and social-emotional wellbeing. In 2024, services were delivered by 38 nonprofit agencies dedicated to serving children, families, and adults.

As a result of these combined efforts, key indicators of youth and family health in St. Charles County demonstrate positive trends. The CCRB is committed to continuing our investment in effective mental and behavioral health services. Together, we are creating a community where every child and family can thrive.



Community Investment
$10.8 Million

Every Step of the Way

A child born in St. Charles County has access to a comprehensive spectrum of emotional and mental health services designed to support their development from infancy through adolescence. This continuum of care includes early intervention programs, school-based counseling, outpatient therapy, crisis intervention, and specialized services for trauma and behavioral health.

Delivered by a network of dedicated professionals—such as social workers, therapists, psychologists, and care coordinators, these services work collaboratively to ensure that every child has the opportunity to thrive emotionally, socially, and developmentally.

CCRB funds the following services and many more.

- Case management
- Community Outreach
- Crisis Intervention
- Emergency Respite Care
- FamilyTherapy
- Intensive in-home therapy
- Prevention programming
- Psychological Evaluation
- School-based counseling
- Youth Enrichment

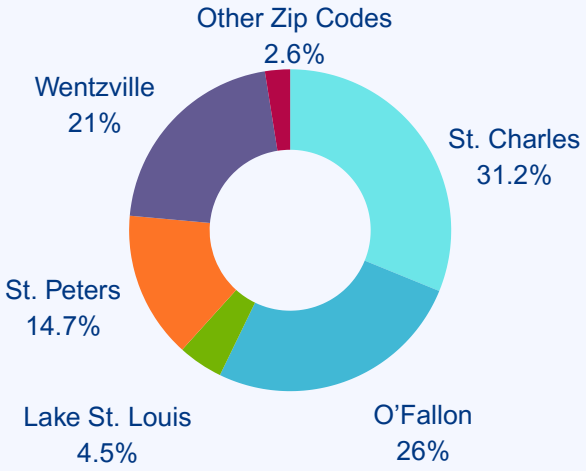
Understanding Our Community Through Data

CCRB gathers basic demographic information—gender, race, and zip code—for children who receive direct services such as counseling, crisis help, and short-term care. Over the past 5 years, the gender breakdown among youth has remained steady, while the racial breakdown showed a slight increase in diversity. The CCRB began tracking zip code data in 2023 to better understand service access across the County for children and caregivers.

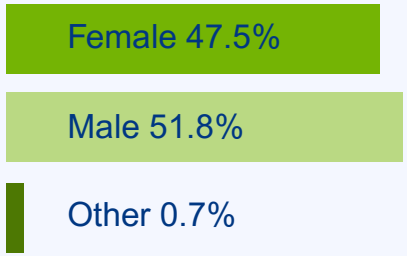
Furthermore, Partner Agencies provide their projected outcomes used to measure program impact on those served. We remain committed to high quality services that seek to serve the ever changing individual needs of children and families.

This data plays a vital role in helping CCRB assess community needs, identify service gaps, and ensure that resources are reaching children and families across all areas of St. Charles County. By understanding who we serve and the impact of services on them, we can continue to strengthen our programs and promote positive outcomes for all children in our community.

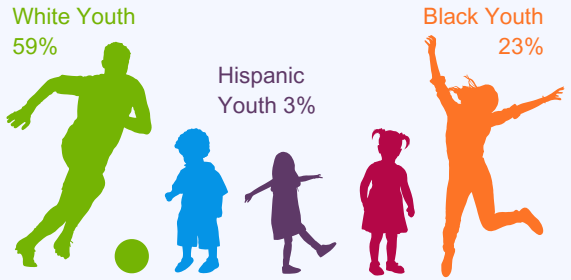
Percentage of Children Served by Direct Services



Gender



Race



Crisis Aid International's Advocate Mentors recently shared a powerful story that highlights the impact of their *Digital Safety for the Whole Family* presentations and crisis intervention services.

A community member attended an education event about online exploitation, the signs to watch for, and community resources available. The attendee was so moved by the information that she went home and shared what she had learned with her son, who has young children.

Not long after that conversation, the volunteer's son discovered that his young daughter had been groomed and victimized online by an adult. Because he had been equipped with knowledge about what to do and who to call in this devastating situation, he reached out to Crisis Aid and he was immediately connected to a specialized detective. In a fortunate turn of events, law enforcement was able to identify the perpetrator that same day, and the family was connected to an advocate.

This moment was a powerful reminder that the prevention programming funded by CCRB can truly be life changing.

Crisis Intervention

Services provide immediate, compassionate support to youth and their caregivers during times of acute distress, typically in response to a mental health crisis or family emergency. These services play a critical role in assessing risk, stabilizing the situation, and connecting children with appropriate community resources. The goal is to prevent escalation and help restore emotional and mental stability.

5,133
individuals served

92%
projected outcomes were met

$659,831
invested in programs

Partner Agencies

Behavioral Health Response (BHR)
Crisis Aid International, Inc.
LINC St. Charles County
NAMI St. Louis
Saint Louis Counseling
The Child Advocacy Center of Northeast Missouri
Youth In Need

Home- & Community-Based Intervention

Services enable children to access behavioral health interventions within their home, school, and community. They are vital for stabilizing families and supporting children facing a range of mental health challenges. Interventions include family peer support and mentoring, educational advocacy, youth enrichment programs, community-based mental health services, and intensive in-home support.

13,270
individuals served

93%
projected outcomes were met

$4,365,929
invested in programs

Partner Agencies

Big Brothers Big Sisters of Eastern Missouri
Boys & Girls Clubs of St. Charles County
CHADS Coalition for Mental Health
Community Council of St. Charles County
Community Living, Inc.
Compass Health Network
Family Advocacy and Community Training
Foster & Adoptive Care Coalition
Gateway Alliance against Human Trafficking
Megan Meier Foundation
NAMI St. Louis
Nurses for Newborns
SSM Health Care
Saint Louis Crisis Nursery
The Care Service
The Sparrow's Nest
ThriVe St. Louis
TREE House of Greater St. Louis
United Services for Children

Compass Health Network's *Autism Support Services* provided critical services to a mother of two young boys, one of whom was non-verbal. The mother had long felt something was different, but she didn't know where to turn.

Within just two months of starting Autism Support services, both boys received comprehensive evaluations to help better understand the challenges affecting their development. With a clearer understanding of their needs, the family is now connected to numerous vital community resources to support the boys' growth and development.

A high school student began therapy at **Youth In Need** while experiencing severe challenges in emotional regulation, communication, and school attendance due to anxiety and a history of family instability and trauma. With consistent support from their Youth In Need therapist, a dedicated parent, and school staff, the student gradually built coping skills, re-engaged with school, and graduated.

Since then, the student has continued engaging in therapy, enrolled and succeeded in college courses, maintained employment, and strengthened family relationships.

Individual, Group, and Family Counseling

Services include individual, group, and family counseling designed to support the emotional and mental well-being of children. Services help individuals work through personal challenges, foster peer connection and support, and strengthen family relationships. Through a range of therapeutic approaches, counseling promotes healthy communication, emotional regulation, and resilience in both children and their families.

1,566
individuals served

86%
projected outcomes were met

$1,871,464
invested in programs

Partner Agencies

Chestnut Health Systems
FamilyForward
Eleventh Circuit Family Court
FamilyForward
Kids In The Middle
Lutheran Family and Children's Services
Megan Meier Foundation
Mental Health America of Eastern Missouri
Partners In-Kind
Saint Louis Counseling
Saint Louis Crisis Nursery
The Child Advocacy Center of Northeast Missouri
Youth In Need

Outpatient Psychiatric

Services provide essential evaluations and interventions for children and adolescents experiencing psychiatric disorders. These services include comprehensive assessments by psychiatrists, medication management, and additional support such as lab testing. Effective outpatient care enables youth to better navigate school, home, and community settings, lowering risks of behavioral issues, delinquency, and suicidal ideation. Additionally, these services may bolster the effectiveness of other therapeutic counseling.

While only one agency is listed in this category, other CCRB-funded programs offer outpatient psychiatric services as part of a more comprehensive program.

33
individuals served

67%
projected outcomes were met

$13,077
invested in program

Partner Agency

Saint Louis Counseling

A child engaged in **Saint Louis Counseling's** Counseling and Psychiatry programs to help them manage anxiety and emotional expression. With appropriate treatment and therapeutic support, they learned self-care strategies, improved communication skills, and even helped a sibling navigate difficult emotions.

By year's end, the child was building healthy peer relationships, managing responsibilities with less anxiety, and feeling optimistic about the future, showcasing meaningful growth through consistent, compassionate care.

After experiencing a traumatic event, a student struggled with substance use, severe depression, anxiety, and legal issues. They were referred to **Preferred Family Healthcare's** comprehensive treatment services. Although initially hesitant to participate, they gradually engaged thanks to the consistent support of program staff.

Through access to psychiatric care, individual therapy, and family counseling, the student learned to manage their mental health and stop substance use. As a result, they successfully completed high school, secured employment, and rebuilt stronger relationships with their family.

Outpatient Substance Use Treatment

This service provides structured support for youth struggling with substance use, without requiring overnight stays. Treatment typically includes regular counseling sessions, education about substance use and its effects, relapse prevention strategies, and support for co-occurring mental health issues. Services are flexible, allowing youth to continue with school and family life while receiving care, and may include individual, group, and family therapy, medication managment, and psychiatry as part of a comprehensive recovery plan.

88
individuals served

100%
projected outcomes were met

$468,138
invested in program

Partner Agency

Preferred Family Healthcare

Prevention

Programs focus on equipping children, families, and adults with the knowledge and skills to prevent mental health issues, substance use, and risky behaviors before they start. Programs may include school-based presentations, community outreach, professional development, and awareness education. The goal is to promote healthy decision-making, build resilience, and support overall well-being through early education and proactive strategies.

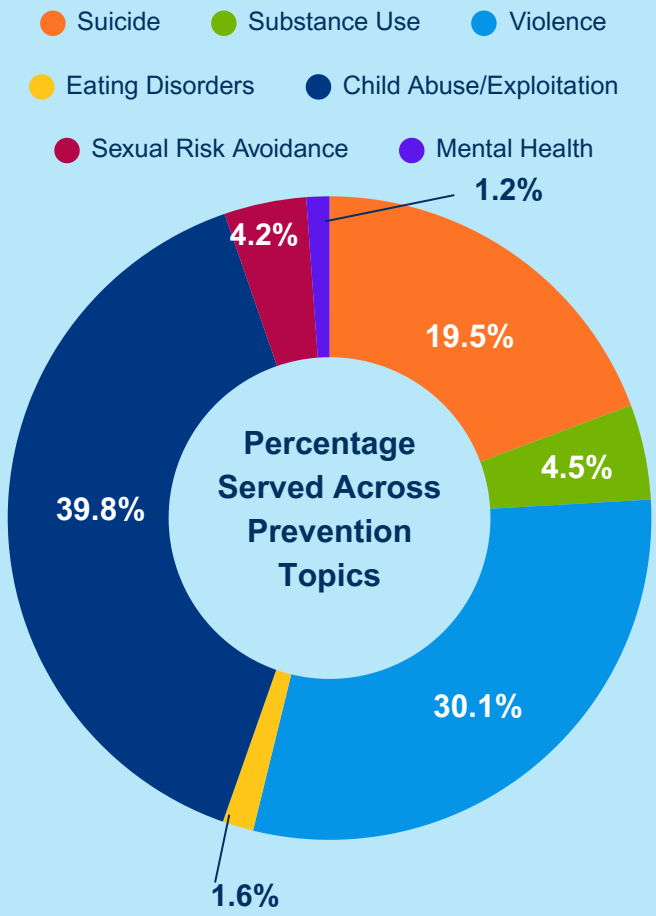
109,899
individuals served

100%
projected outcomes were met

$1,545,785
invested in programs

Partner Agencies

CHADS Coalition for Mental Health
Compass Health Network
Kids Under Twenty One
Missouri Eating Disorders Association
NAMI St. Louis
Preferred Family Healthcare
PreventEd
The Child Advocacy Center of Northeast Missouri
ThriVe St. Louis

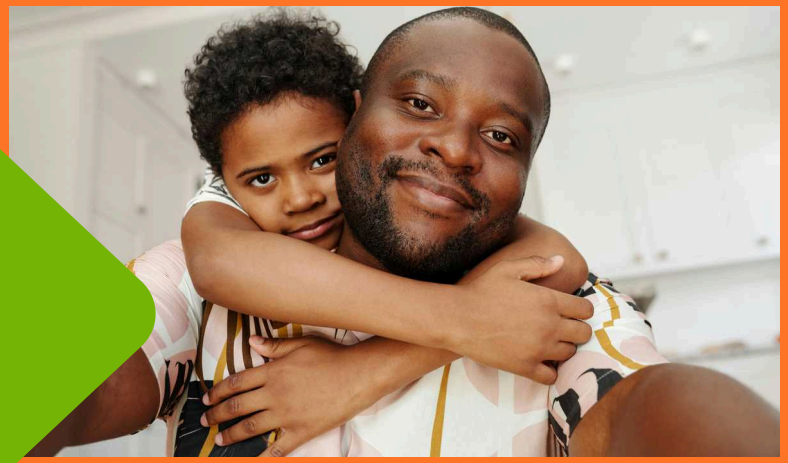


Community Living, Inc.'s Respite Center had a profoundly positive impact on a young man and his parent's overall wellbeing. Through the program, Johnny* was able to develop a greater sense of autonomy and independence, which was invaluable for his growth.

Respite weekends allowed Johnny to engage in community outings and adventures that he thoroughly enjoyed, all while being in a safe and supportive setting. The friendships he formed during his time at the Respite Center have significantly contributed to his happiness and development.

The Respite Center program has truly been a lifeline for the family, fostering a positive environment for Johnny to thrive while also supporting his family.

**Name changed for privacy*



Respite Care

Services provide temporary relief for families and caregivers of children with complex behavioral health needs or serious emotional challenges, as well as respite for families experiencing crisis. These short-term services offer a safe and supportive environment for the child while giving caregivers time to rest, recharge, or attend to other responsibilities. Respite care reduces stress and strengthens family stability.

462
individuals served

93%
projected outcomes were met

$823,839
invested in programs

Partner Agencies

Bethany Chrisitan Services
Community Living, Inc.
Saint Louis Crisis Nursery

Services to Teen Parents

Services support parents in navigating the challenges of parenthood while they work to regain stability following a housing or mental-health-related crisis. Programs are comprehensive and may include parenting education, case management, counseling, and housing assistance. The goal is to empower parents to build stable, healthy lives for themselves and their children.

51
individuals served

100%
projected outcomes were met

$232,661
invested in program

Partner Agency

Our Lady's Inn

When Janessa* entered services with **Our Lady's Inn (OLI)**, she was pregnant, living in her van, and had just lost custody of her young son. With no prenatal care, untreated mental health challenges, and a history of trauma and substance use, she feared losing her unborn child as well.

Within days of entering the program, Janessa was connected to medical care, mental health support, parenting classes, and essential services. Through hard work and support from OLI staff, she delivered a healthy baby, stabilized her mental health, entered stable housing, and is on track to regain custody of her older son. OLI's services gave Janessa and her baby a chance to grow and thrive in a safe, stable environment.

**Name changed for privacy*

Temporary Shelter

Services provide up to 30 days of short-term, safe, and supportive housing for children aged 10-19 years experiencing mental health challenges, homelessness, abuse/neglect, or emotional crises. Shelters offer a trauma-informed, youth-centered environment that integrates mental health support with basic needs services.

83
individuals served

100%
projected outcomes were met

$193,693
invested in program

Partner Agency

Youth In Need

Transitional Living

Services provide structured, time-limited housing and supportive services to young adults aged 16-19 years, who are transitioning from homelessness, institutional care, or unstable living situations toward independent, self-sufficient living. Counseling and supportive services are an integral part of programs that help youth transition from homelessness to safe living arrangements.

16
individuals served

100%
projected outcomes were met

$395,850
invested in program

Partner Agency

Youth In Need

From Crying to Connection

Eva* and Michael* became the pre-adoptive parents for three siblings, which included four-year-old Sophia*. She would wake up four or more times a night, bang her head against the wall, and cry for hours at a time. Sophia's cry at nighttime sounded just like that of an infant and not at all like it was coming from a four-year-old. The family enlisted the help of Heather,* a **Foster & Adoptive Care Coalition** *Family Works Specialist*.

After an intense file review and thorough assessment of Sophia and her pre-adoptive family, Heather learned of the trauma Sophia experienced during her first months of life. The neglect Sophia experienced significantly impacted her brain development; she was stuck in the developmental stage of an infant.

Heather explained to the family the impact of Sophia's trauma on her brain development and helped the family form a plan that would create safety around bedtime, calm Sophia's nervous system, and allow her brain to heal. Heather requested the family treat Sophia as if she were an infant during her nighttime episodes. When Sophia cried, the parents were to go into her room, bottle feed her, rock her and sing to her; they would do all the things attuned and nurturing parents do for their babies.

By meeting Sophia's most basic needs, her caregivers were able to begin the healing process. After just two weeks, Sophia's head banging stopped. She slept through the night completely without crying for the first time.

Two months later, Heather met with a concerned Eva who was worried Sophia was having a setback. Sophia wasn't banging her head on the wall, but her temperament during the day had changed. She was throwing tantrums, having some accidents, and wanted to do everything for herself! As Heather listened, she began to smile, "Welcome to toddlerhood! Sophia made it to the next developmental stage!" A sign that she felt safe and was healing.

**Names changed for privacy*

Financial Position

FISCAL END DECEMBER 31, 2024

ASSETS

Cash and Investments	$4,911,336
Receivables:	
Sales Tax Receivable	$1,839,701
ARPA Funds Receivable	$29,630
Interest Receivable	$96,123
Other Receivables	$50,971
Other Assets	$1,385
Total Assets	**$6,929,146**

LIABILITIES & FUND BALANCE

Accounts Payable	$818,015
Payroll Tax Liabilities	$1,420
Total Liabilities	**$819,437**
Restricted for Community and Children Services	$6,109,709
Total Liabilities and Fund Balance	**$6,929,146**

REVENUE

Sales Tax	$10,313,443
Investment Income	$203,218
ARPA Revenue	$792,562
Other	$298
Total Revenue	**$11,309,521**

EXPENSES

Service Contracts	$10,950,136
ARPA Contracts	$792,562
Administration	$687,000
Capital Outlay	$147
Debt Service	$30,565
Total Expenses	**$12,460,491**

About CCRB

Mission

Maximizing community resources to build and sustain a comprehensive system of services for children and families in need.

Vision

Preparing all youth and families to realize a brighter tomorrow.

Our Board

Molly Dempsey, Board Chair
Cory Elliott, Vice Chair
Kenneth Dobbins, Ph.D., Treasurer
Dave Beckering, Member
Jon Cunningham, Member
Larry Marty, Member
James Schaberg, Member
Nancy Schneider, Member
Catherine Williams, Member

Our Team

Melinda McAliney, Executive Director
Bruce Sowatsky, Executive Director, retired
Michelle McElfresh, Director
Jeanne Spencer, Data & Communication Specialist
Anna Muhm, Administrative Assistant

Sowatsky: Retiring MVP

In June 2024, a grateful community gathered to celebrate Bruce Sowatsky's retirement after 25 years of dedicated leadership. Bruce was instrumental in the passage of Proposition 1 in 2004, the first local tax in Missouri specifically designated to fund youth mental health and substance use treatment. His legacy is one of visionary leadership, fiscal responsibility, and an unwavering commitment to the wellbeing of St. Charles County youth.

The celebration brought together colleagues, County officials, friends, and the Sowatsky family to honor Bruce not only as a leader but also as a devoted family man. CCRB Board Members and staff presented him with a custom Cardinals jersey emblazoned with #25, symbolizing his years of service. The evening concluded with a symbolic "passing of the baton" to Melinda McAliney, the incoming Executive Director.

Highlights

Katie Lyczak, The Sparrow's Nest, and Michelle McElfresh at a St. Charles County System of Care meeting

Pinwheel Ceremony hosted by The Child Advocacy Center for Child Abuse Prevention Month in April

CCRB staff actively fostered meaningful connections with Partner Agencies, collaborated closely with one another, and deepened their engagement with the broader St. Charles County community through participation in the Community Services Summit, the St. Charles County System of Care, ATHENA Leadership Foundation of St. Charles County, the Faith Network, and local Chamber of Commerce organizations.

We also recognized retiring Board Members Dave Beckering and Cory Elliott for their dedication and years of service to the CCRB and St. Charles County children.

Cory Elliott, Melinda McAliney, and Jeanne Spencer attended the ATHENA Leadership Summit

Anna Muhm and Michelle greeted participants at the Community Services Summit

Dave Beckering and Cory Elliott, retiring Board Members.

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