

# Here's What Happened in FY2021 with TEAM for West Virginia Children!

## Emergency Funds for Child Abuse Prevention!

When the American Rescue Plan was passed in March, it included one-time increases for Community-Based Child Abuse Prevention - \$1 million for West Virginia. This additional funding will support increases for our *Partners in Prevention* mini-

grantees for two years. It will also strengthen the Circle of Parents and *Our Babies: Safe & Sound* initiatives, along with increasing our training capacity. Family Resource Networks and Family Resource Centers around the state will also get a bump up in their grants.



## Smiths Honored With 2021 *Service to Children Award*

The TEAM was pleased to recognize Bill and Vickie Smith for their accomplishments in the education field by giving them our *Service to Children Award*.

This award is given annually to honor a person or persons

who have made a major impact on improving the lives of our state's children. The award was tailor-made for the Smiths! The event was held virtually on April 29 and

was a great success. The presenting sponsor was Hoop's Family Children's Hospital at Cabell Huntington Hospital. Many thanks to all of our sponsors and ticket holders!



## About Us

The TEAM is an umbrella organization operating statewide, but housed in Huntington WV.

The TEAM consists of five major programs.

Incorporated in 1986, the TEAM has been working to improve the lives of our state's children for 35 years!

TEAM's five major programs include Mountain State Healthy Families, Western Regional CASA, Prevent Child Abuse West Virginia, Partners in Community Outreach, and West Virginia Infant/Toddler Mental Health Association.

## Mountain State Healthy Families Home Visitors Continue to Offer Support

The TEAM entered its 25th year serving families facing challenges and offering them voluntary, intensive home visitation services through Mountain State Healthy Families.

Those challenges continued to be exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic in FY 2021. Following safety protocols, home visitors served 244 families, facilitating 3794 home visits, a 4% increase over last year. This could not have been accomplished without the

continued option of virtual visits. Due to COVID restrictions, almost 80% of these visits were done via virtual platforms. Virtual and in home visits will continue.



*At first, I thought “I don’t need that. I come from a healthy household and a great family.” Then I thought “I can’t pass up an opportunity to have another source at my fingertips.”*

*When you have a lot of unanswered questions and you don’t know what to expect out of being a new mother, the more resources you have the better. They did a great job of navigating COVID and making us feel involved. I’m grateful that Mountain State Healthy Families has been a part of my life.*

—Lauren, Cabell County Participant

## Growth of WV Infant/Toddler Mental Health Association

Despite 2021 being a challenging year, the number of people endorsed within the WV Infant/Toddler Mental Health Association increased by 35% (the national increase was 23%).

There are now 45 professionals endorsed in the state, with another 37 in process.

The WV Infant/Toddler Mental Health Endorsement offers individuals supporting infants, toddlers and their families a professional development plan

that focuses on knowledge, best practice skills, and reflective work experiences that lead to increased confidence and credibility.

*I would like to express my gratitude to all the work put into this Association. It is a true benefit to the professionals, early care and education providers, and families in our state.*

—Survey Respondent



**West Virginia Infant/Toddler  
Mental Health Association**  
*Supporting the social and emotional well-being of children*

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## Training Offered Through Partners in Community Outreach

18 Partners in Community Outreach programs applied and received a Training and Technical Assistance stipend of up to \$1,000 last year.

Many programs decided to provide training for staff.



**Partners in Community Outreach**

*Education Begins at Home*

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*The Infant Massage Training led by Linda Storm was more than I expected! Learning the history of Infant Massage has helped the parents feel more comfortable knowing that it has been around for centuries. I am excited to watch the bond grow between parents and children as they learn new ways to comfort them. The basics teach parents how to recognize when their infants are engaged or disengaged based on sounds, movements, and body language, helping them to understand how important consent is even at such a young age.*

—Kelsey Schmidle, Parent Educator,  
Preston/Taylor Counties

## Western Regional CASA Celebrates 30 Years!



During this year, 102 CASA volunteers advocated for 709 abused or neglected children in 10 counties. 29 of those volunteers were newly trained during this year. CASA staff and volunteers participated in 1,166 court hearings to advocate for their CASA children.

Western Regional CASA piloted CASA in West Virginia with the first volunteer appointed by Judge L.D. Egnor in September 1991.

Western Regional CASA needs more community members as volunteers. Contact Kim at [kwilds@teamwv.org](mailto:kwilds@teamwv.org).

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*A 13-year-old girl with frequent placement disruptions said, “I don’t like people but I really like when my CASA visits.”*

—Kanawha County Teen with  
a CASA Volunteer



**CASA**

Court Appointed Special Advocates  
**FOR CHILDREN**

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**WESTERN REGIONAL CASA**



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***Good beginnings  
last a lifetime!***

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**TEAM for West Virginia Children** is a non-profit organization whose mission is to work with communities and families to promote and advance the well-being of children, making their needs and healthy development a priority. We deliver our mission by operating and partnering with an integrated network of programs that:

***Advocate*** for children.

***Prevent*** child abuse and neglect.

***Strengthen*** family relationships.

***Educate*** and build family-friendly communities.



## Growing a Better Tomorrow for All Children, Together with Prevent Child Abuse West Virginia

April is designated as Child Abuse Prevention (CAP)



Month. The national Pinwheels for Prevention campaign remained largely virtual as COVID-19 guidelines were still in place.

However, some Partners in Prevention teams did plant pinwheel gardens while practicing social distancing. A variety of events were also live streamed on social media outlets. Prevention awareness materials were distributed alongside meal deliveries and curbside services.

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***I have never had to ask for help before, but since I lost my job because of COVID I can't provide for my kids like I used to. The amount of stress and anxiety I have built up has been lifted a bit today because of the willingness of you all to come out to bring food to people like myself who are really struggling.***

—Monongalia County  
Mobile Food  
Distribution recipient