

## 2024 IMPACT REPORT

empower  
survivors.  
foster  
change.

**CCAHT**  
COMMUNITY COALITION  
AGAINST HUMAN TRAFFICKING

POWERING  
*grow*  
**FREE**  
TENNESSEE

# table of contents

a message from our executive director .....	2
who we are .....	3
nia’s story .....	4
2024 financials + partners for change .....	5-6
impact overview + demographics .....	7-8
adult services programmatic impact .....	9
youth services programmatic impact .....	10
specialized training impact .....	11
community collaboration impact .....	12
connor’s story .....	13
looking ahead .....	14

*two thousand and twenty-four*  
**board of directors**

Cynthia Deitle, JD <i>Board President</i>	Brooklyn Sawyers Belk, JD <i>President-elect</i>	Kevin Sanford <i>Board Treasurer</i>
Christyn Allen	Sara Diamond	Karen Rodgers
Teri Baxter, JD	Denise Douglas	Natalie Saunders
Amber Lynn Carroll	Paul Duncan	Michele Thomas
Rhonda Clay, CFRE	Ernie Hoskins	Kate Trudell

# a message from our executive director

Dear Friends,

As I reflect on 2024, I am reminded that CCAHT's work lives in the delicate space between harsh realities and enduring hope. Human trafficking is a complex, layered crime—and it is deeply intertwined with many of the challenges facing our East Tennessee communities every day. Poverty, substance use, domestic and sexual violence, housing insecurity, food scarcity, and systemic inequities do not simply coexist with trafficking—they create the conditions in which it thrives.

Yet, to be clear, these vulnerabilities don't define the survivors we serve—but they do shape the paths that bring them to our doors. That is why, in 2024, CCAHT deepened its commitment to looking upstream—focusing not just on the aftermath of trafficking, but on the vulnerabilities and circumstances that fuel it. We expanded access to care for justice-involved survivors, invested in partnerships and prevention efforts across the region, and strengthened programming that meets survivors where they are—not where systems expect them to be.

Last year, we celebrated milestones—babies born, GEDs earned, new jobs started—and we stood with survivors - and each other - through moments of relapse, grief, loss, and uncertainty. We showed up on the hard days and held space for transformation. That's what long-haul love looks like. It's messy, personal, sacred work. And through it all, our team remained grounded in compassion and guided by the belief that healing begins with being fully seen and wholly accepted.

It is one of the greatest privileges of my life to walk this path alongside the CCAHT team and the survivors we serve. Their courage and relentless commitment are the heartbeat of our work. I'm equally grateful to our Board of Directors, the volunteers who give so generously of their time, and every donor and supporter who continues to show up, lift us up, and move this mission forward.

Looking ahead, I feel both hopeful and determined. CCAHT is entering a new chapter of strategic innovation, aiming to scale our impact, increase access to care, and push for systemic reforms that center survivors' voices and needs. We are committed to leading with humility and resolve, working to build a region where survivors not only find safety—but also rediscover their worth, reclaim their voice, and realize their power to heal and thrive.

None of this life-saving heart-led work would be possible without your partnership, fueling and sustaining our mission every day. Thank you for walking alongside us. Together, we're proving that love—steady, fierce, and unconditional—can change everything.

With heartfelt gratitude,



**Kate Trudell**  
*Executive Director*

# who we are

Founded in 2010, the Community Coalition Against Human Trafficking unites and equips our community - all 33 counties in East TN - to end human trafficking by raising awareness, facilitating training and education, fostering collaborative efforts, and providing a specialized continuum of care, from prevention to restoration, through our program Grow Free TN.

## our core values



We choose love first.



We believe in the power of community.



We ground ourselves in survivor-centered care.



We create innovative solutions to complex problems.



We approach our work with humility and a spirit of service.



We serve with the understanding that healing takes time.

## our commitment to *ethical storytelling*

At the Community Coalition Against Human Trafficking, survivor-centered care is a core value we practice every day. To foster change and empower survivors, we prioritize their voices and experiences in all aspects of our work.

This report features real stories from survivors who have granted us permission to share their journeys, hoping to inspire and help others. We approach the storytelling process with the utmost care and respect, ensuring that these narratives are shared ethically and thoughtfully. Personal information and names have been altered to maintain privacy and safety.

We recognize that some content may be challenging to read, particularly for those who have experienced trauma related to sexual assault, physical abuse, addiction, or mental health issues. Please prioritize your well-being as you engage with these stories.



A close-up portrait of a woman with long, dark, wavy hair, looking slightly off-camera with a gentle smile. She is wearing a light blue denim shirt. The background is a soft, out-of-focus landscape with greenery and a bright sky.

## Nia's Story

For much of her life, Nia had rarely seen what love, trust, or safety in relationships could look like. In the absence of these foundational experiences, she turned to drugs as a way to cope with the pain and confusion she carried. Someone Nia considered a friend—someone she trusted—took advantage of her and rather than offering support, he deepened her addiction and exploited her, coercing her into sexual acts with others to "repay" him for the drugs he supplied.

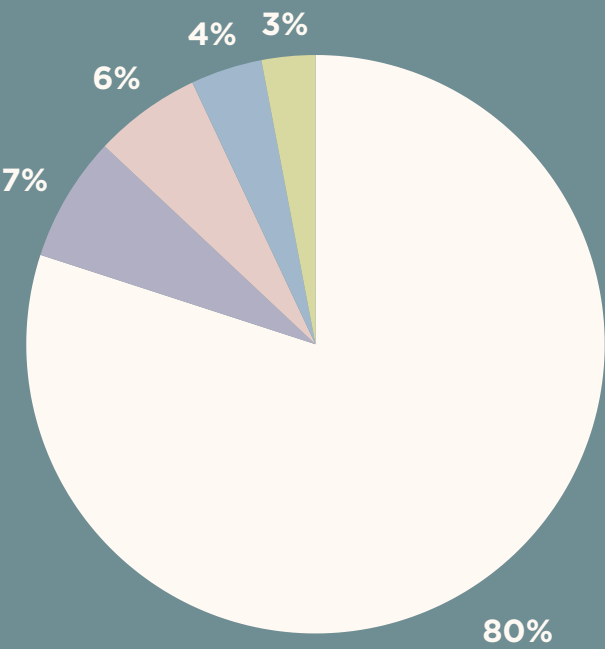
Trapped in a cycle of manipulation and danger, Nia's hope for a different life felt like a distant dream - until she found Grow Free. It was here, through the Phoenix House program, that Nia began a journey she never thought possible. Though healing felt overwhelming at first, she made a courageous decision: to fight for her freedom, her dignity, and her future.

With remarkable strength and resilience, Nia not only completed the Phoenix House program—she transformed her life. Today, she lives independently, surrounds herself with healthy and supportive relationships, and is boldly reclaiming the narrative of her life.

Nia has applied the life skills she gained through the program in every area of her life. She was recently promoted to manager at her job—an achievement she's deeply proud of—and she just bought her own reliable car, a milestone that fills her with joy and pride.

When she speaks with her care coordinators, Nia shares how proud she is of the woman she's become. Her journey is a testament to her courage and perseverance.

# financials



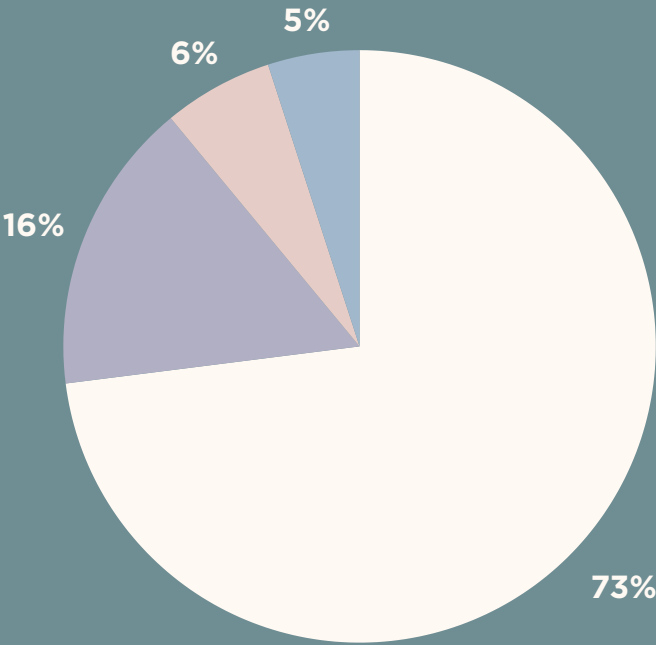
## revenue

\$2,388,193



## expenses

\$2,459,510



# partners for change

## funding ambassadors

Alan & Dianna Brizzolara  
 Bill and Crissy Haslam Foundation  
 Cherokee Distributing Company  
 First Horizon Foundation  
 Jenkins Family  
 Johnstone Supply  
 Karen & Michael Rodgers  
 Knoxville Utilities Board

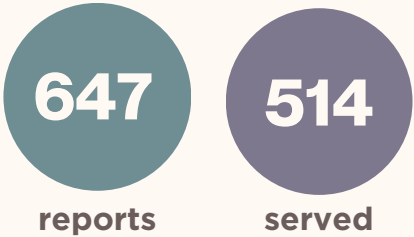
Martin Family Foundation  
 Mount Rest Fund  
 Office for Victims of Crime  
 Pilot Company  
 State of Tennessee  
 TN Office of Criminal Justice Programs  
 Tennessee Valley Authority  
 United Way of Greater Knoxville

## funding partners

A-1 Certified Service, Inc.  
 Abacus Hive  
 ARKEMA  
 Charles & Marie Atkins  
 Axle Logistics  
 Sherry & Justin Barrett  
 Teri Baxter, JD  
 Brooklyn Sawyers Belk, JD  
 Josh & Elizabeth Birdwell  
 Melissa Blanchard  
 Cindy Brennan  
 Joe & Emily Butler  
 Ralph Cianelli & Richard Fox  
 Richard & Linda Cramer  
 Antoinette & Michael Davis  
 Cynthia M. Deitle, JD & Kristy Norris  
 Erv & Holli Doane  
 Denise & Steve Douglas  
 Paul & Rochelle Duncan  
 Enterprise Holdings Foundation  
 Cindy & George Ewart  
 George Armour Ewart, Architect  
 Farragut Presbyterian Church  
 The Fox & Fogarty Team  
 Kristoph & Pegah Gustovich  
 Harper Auto Square

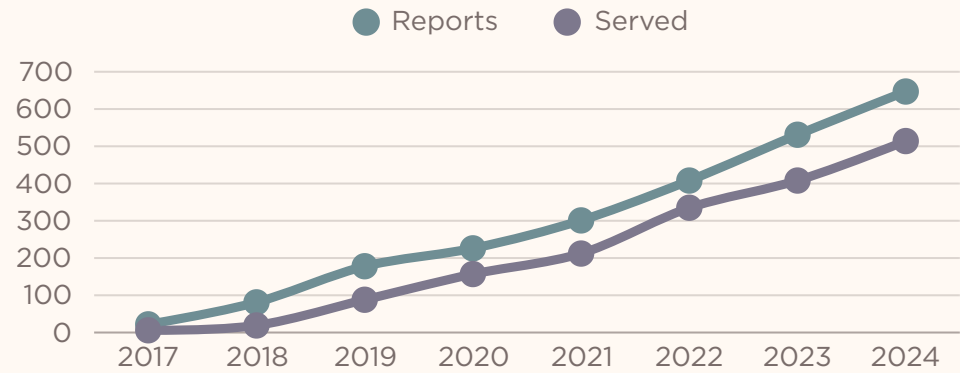
Tolly & Trisha Harris  
 Jacqueline & Keith Holdbrooks  
 Michael Hughes  
 JP Lamborn Company  
 JRF Properties  
 Junior League of Knoxville  
 Knoxville Diocesan Council of Catholic Women  
 Knoxville Utilities Board  
 Victoria & Shameek Konar  
 Joseph Mathew  
 Theresa Miller  
 Douglas F. Moody  
 Navarro Research & Engineering, Inc.  
 Ryan & Clarise Oettinger  
 Laura Pinzon  
 Positively Living & Choice Health Network  
 Kevin & Cindy Sanford  
 Paul & Sheramie Shore  
 TALA Logistics, LLC  
 Tennessee Valley Authority  
 Michele Thomas  
 Randy & Louise Trudell  
 Wesley Memorial United Methodist Church  
 White Oak Logistics  
 Kim Wood  
 Lindsay Wynne

# impact overview

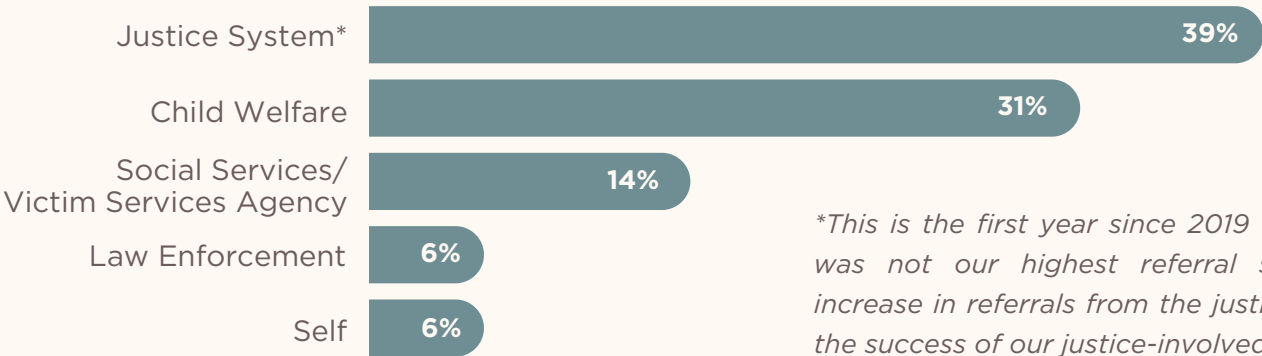


*\*Reports and served are tracked separately. Not all those reported to Grow Free TN receive services due to survivor preference or screening/eligibility.*

Since launching our direct services programming in 2017, reports to Grow Free TN have increased by over **3,300%**.



## report sources



*\*This is the first year since 2019 that Child Welfare was not our highest referral source. A drastic increase in referrals from the justice system reflects the success of our justice-involved programs.*

## reports by county

In 2024, we received reports in **30** out of the **33** counties in East Tennessee, as well as counties outside of East Tennessee.\*

Anderson	8	Hamblin	5	Roane	9
Bledsoe	100	Hamilton	16	Scott	1
Blount	29	Hawkins	6	Sevier	10
Bradley	1	Jefferson	8	Sullivan	25
Campbell	1	Johnson	6	Unicoi	2
Carter	6	Knox	294	Union	7
Claiborne	5	Loudon	5	Washington	25
Cocke	4	McMinn	6	Outside of ESTN	43
Cumberland	3	Monroe	3	Not Reported	1
Greene	12	Morgan	3		

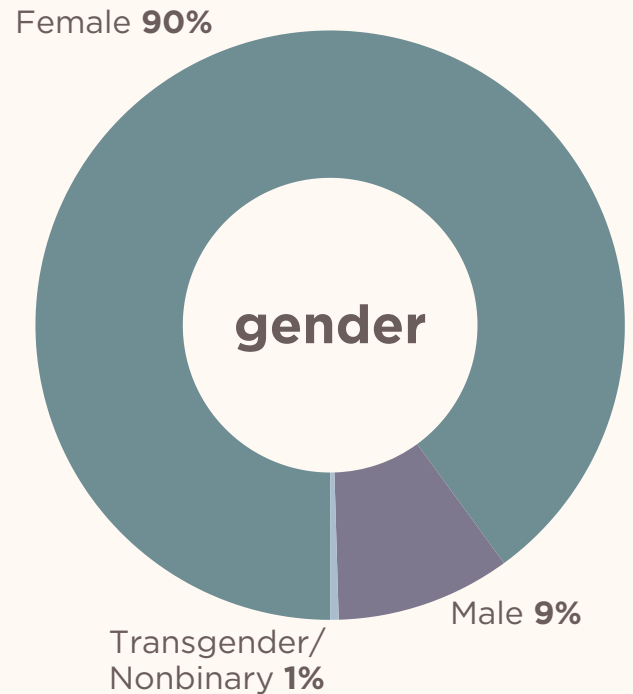
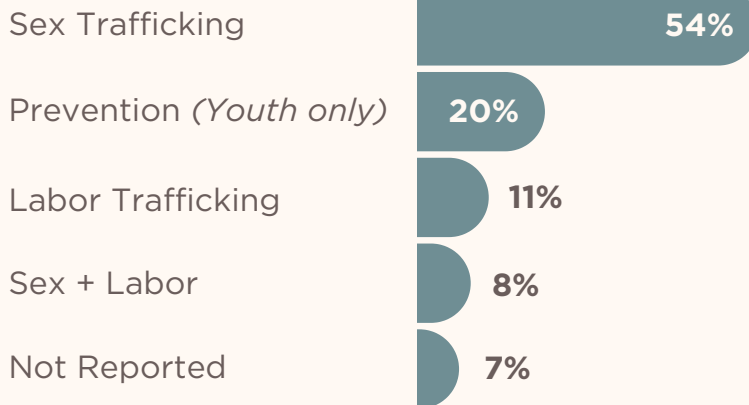
*\*Higher reports of human trafficking reflect the awareness and availability of services for survivors, which then disrupts the crime of human trafficking from going unseen.*



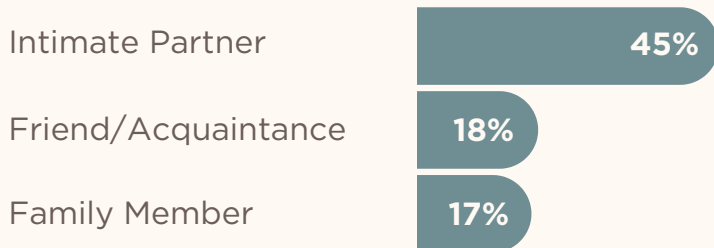
# demographics

## report insights

Breakdown of trafficking type identified in reported cases to determine care provided.

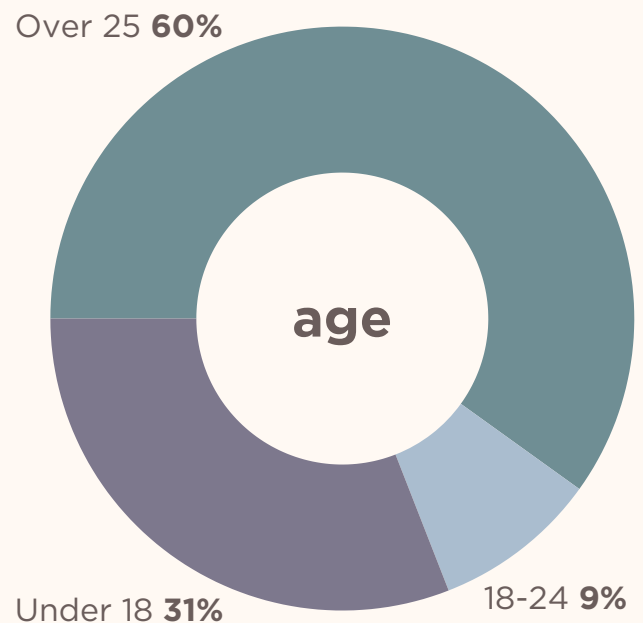


## relation to trafficker



### top 3 force/fraud/coercion tactics reported:

1. Threat to harm self/loved one
2. Offering/withholding drugs
3. Relationship manipulation



“

The foundation of *hope* and *care* you provided played a big part in helping me rebuild my life. I will *forever* hold you in my heart. - TS, Survivor served by Grow Free

# adult services

## *programmatic impact:*



# 366

adult survivors served



# 10,341

unique services provided

*therapy, case management, transportation support, warm meals, a listening ear, and so much more*

↑ 29%  
increase  
from 2023



# 131

justice-involved survivors served



# 1,655

nights of safety

*average length of stay in our ERC increased due to lack of viable options - our ERC remained at capacity most nights of the year*

↑ 17%  
increase  
from 2023



# 1 year

of The Sisterhood

## how we serve adults:

### Emergency Receiving Center (ERC)

Low-barrier emergency housing

### Phoenix House

Long-term supportive housing program

### Community-Based Support Services

Individual therapy, case management, safety planning, and more

### As You Are

Collaboration with TDOC / KCSO to provide support for justice-involved survivors

### The Sisterhood

Survivor-led support group and safe space

*All services are free, individualized, and all-inclusive.*

“

Resiliency is one of the traits that most inspires me about the survivors we serve. One survivor shared with me that she feels she may not have survived without our love and support. I have watched her continue battling with dysfunctional family relationships, an unsteady romantic relationship, work challenges - and yet she knows her inner strength helps her prevail in her sobriety and persevere toward her goals. So many survivors lack a support system and it's rewarding to see that we have an opportunity to provide a stable foundation that helps them build their future.



**Becky Wilson**

*Activities Coordinator*

# youth services

## *programmatic impact:*

### how we serve youth:

#### Therapy

In-home, community-based, and tele-health options to meet various therapeutic needs

#### Care Coordination + Advocacy

Youth-guided, family-driven coordination, and individualized community-based services to achieve positive outcomes

#### Psychoeducation

Complex trauma education to encourage and empower survivors to engage in their own treatment process

#### Prevention Intervention Classes

Group education for youth on how to navigate positive and negative influences to stay safe from exploitation

 **280**

youth survivors served

 **1,877**

unique services provided

*advocacy, therapy, case management, transportation support, life-skills development, and so much more*

 **120**  **14% increase from 2023**

youth served through prevention programming

 **Erin's Law**

through the children's advisory council, supported the development of an updated curriculum guide to include trafficking & CSEM prevention education



**Demi DeBusk**

*Asst. Director of Youth Services*

Whether we're working with an individual kiddo or the whole family unit, we have an opportunity and responsibility to show up and foster connection with each person we serve. When we lead with love and consistency, we witness youth and their families continuously reach out for support. Through the connections I've made, I've seen kiddos adopt new life skills they never thought were possible - like asking for help at the store, setting boundaries with family members, or engaging in group activities with other peers. I've had parents reach out for comfort and support after the loss of their child. Even through the difficult times and really hard emotions, youth and their families are genuinely touched by the love and consistency we show.

# specialized training *impact*



4,003

↑ 49%  
increase  
from 2023

individuals trained



119

↑ 47%  
increase  
from 2023

training events facilitated

*Trainings provided across multiple groups and professions including: local law enforcement, private sector companies, faith-based groups, legal professionals, healthcare professionals, hospitality groups, and more.*

## trainings offered:

**Human Trafficking 101:**  
Recognizing & Responding

**Human Trafficking 201:**  
Advanced Professionals & Service Providers

**Human Trafficking Response Protocol Consultation**

Human trafficking is a complex and covert crime that requires a highly informed and coordinated response. Specialized training equips officers with the knowledge to identify indicators of trafficking, understand victim behavior, and apply trauma-informed practices during investigations. It enhances the ability of law enforcement to disrupt trafficking operations effectively while prioritizing victim safety and long-term recovery.

**Detective Luis Vazquez,**  
*Knoxville Police Department, Special Crimes Unit*

The Walters State Regional Law Enforcement Training Academy (RLETA) is grateful for the human trafficking training that CCAHT provides to our cadets. This training is vital to helping to recognize and prevent the crime of human trafficking, learning how to assist and support victims, and bringing awareness to this tragedy that, unfortunately, is rampant across the United States and the world. We are thankful for this partnership and look forward to future collaboration.

**Travis Stansell, M.S., INCI**  
*Regional Law Enforcement Training Academy  
Walter State Community College*

**Partner with us! Schedule  
your free specialized  
training today:**





# community collaboration *impact*

As the primary regional point of contact for East Tennessee within the Tennessee Counter Trafficking Alliance (TCTA), CCAHT leads intentional efforts to strengthen comprehensive, coordinated care for survivors. In this role, we also support statewide systems through subject matter expertise, interdepartmental engagement, and the delivery of required human trafficking awareness resources and guidance to state agencies.










Through these collaborative efforts, in 2024 we successfully:

Offered on-site victim support for counter-trafficking operations conducted by the TN Bureau of Investigation in the East region

Advocated for stronger counter-trafficking legislation in Tennessee

Supported the launch of the Businesses Against Trafficking program by the Tennessee Secretary of State's office

**Below are the Tennessee state agencies we've supported through tailored training, subject matter expertise, and practical tools to enhance their trafficking response:**

-  Department of Health
-  Department of Children's Services
-  Department of Education
-  Department of Mental Health
-  Law Enforcement
-  Tennessee Bureau of Investigations
-  Tennessee Department of Corrections
-  Tennessee Department of Human Services
-  Tennessee Alcoholic Beverage Commission

Human trafficking cases often intersect with healthcare, social services, and legal systems. Working closely with prosecutors, victim advocates, medical personnel, and community organizations ensures a comprehensive approach that improves case outcomes, supports victims holistically, and strengthens the community's ability to prevent future exploitation. When agencies align their efforts, they create a more resilient, effective network against trafficking. By prioritizing both officer education and multi-organization collaboration, law enforcement can lead a more strategic, compassionate, and successful fight against human trafficking.

**Detective Luis Vazquez,**  
*Knoxville Police Department,  
Special Crimes Unit*

## volunteer impact

Community collaboration thrives thanks to the invaluable time and dedication of our volunteers. In 2024, over 50 volunteers contributed their energy and talents in countless ways—tending to our therapy garden, organizing donations, preparing for events, and much more. We are deeply grateful to each person who invests their time to help ensure more survivors have access to the care they deserve.



**500+**

volunteer hours served



**85**

meals provided through  
The Family Table





## Connor's Story

Connor was once a very successful businessman, running his own company and living a very comfortable life. However, behind that success was a slow unraveling. A few wrong connections and moments of misplaced trust, what started as business dealings soon spiraled into coercion and exploitation. Manipulated by those who saw him as a means to their ends, Connor was convinced to sell sex under the illusion of survival, control, and obligation.

He lost everything: his career, his independence, and his sense of self. Eventually, he had no choice but to move in with family, carrying the weight of shame, trauma, and mistrust.

When Connor first connected with Grow Free Tennessee, he trusted no one. Years of betrayal had hardened his view of the world. But through patient and persistent support, things slowly began to shift. He started with the basics: relearning what it meant to feel safe, both physically and emotionally. With the help of care coordination and therapy, he developed vital life skills, and learned to navigate healthy relationships.

As his confidence grew, so did his ambitions. He returned to work in his previous field and found renewed purpose through volunteering and joining a church community. He even took a brave step toward total transformation: legally changing his name. It was more than paperwork—it was a symbolic and tangible reclaiming of his identity.

Now, Connor has not only graduated from care coordination but is setting his sights on a new goal: helping others. Inspired by his journey, he's seeking work in the helping professions, where he can offer the support he once needed so badly.



At CCAHT, we believe in doing the work that lasts, not just the work that reacts. As we look ahead through 2025 and beyond, we're embracing a new chapter of strategic growth, collective action, and upstream impact. We're focused on strengthening survivor pathways to healing, challenging the systems that allow trafficking to persist, and building a future where safety, dignity, and love are the norm, not the exception.

**We're dreaming big—and we're grateful to be dreaming together. Here are some of CCAHT's goals for the future:**

# looking ahead



## enhance health outcomes

Strengthen trauma-informed care across the full continuum—from prevention to long-term wellness—to foster resiliency and improve physical, mental, and social well-being.



## expand access to care

Increase capacity in housing, justice-based, and rural programs to reach underserved and marginalized communities.



## elevate survivor voice

Grow peer support initiatives like the Sisterhood group and center lived experience in advocacy, outreach, and systemic reform.



## embed excellence in practice

Pursue housing program certification and invest in comprehensive, strategic evaluation to strengthen program quality, accountability, and scalability.



PO Box 20937  
Knoxville, TN 37940

National Hotline: **1 (888) 373-7888**

TN Hotline: **1 (855) 558-6484**

Be Free Textline: **Text HELP to 233733 (BEFREE)**

CCAHT Grow Free Hotline (24/7): **(865) 292-0285**

**growfreetn.org**

