



## Community Plays a Key Role In Preventing Abuse

In 2023, the Colorado Child Abuse and Neglect Hotline system received 117,760 calls related to concerns about a child's safety or well-being. El Paso County received the highest volume of calls of any other county in the state.

April is National Child Abuse Prevention Month, an important time to recognize the signs of abuse, and call the Colorado Child Abuse and Neglect Hotline (844-264-5437) if you are concerned about a child or youth.

We know 1 in 11 children will experience sexual abuse by the age of 18. As Coloradans, we can take a proactive approach in recognizing the signs of abuse like isolation, erratic behaviors, unexplained injuries, and trouble at school, by taking action to keep kids safe.

We can also promote protective factors in our community so that abuse and neglect never happen like parental resilience, social connection, support systems, parental and child development training, and social and emotional competence in children.

Every parent needs support from time to time. The [CO4Kids partner organization list](#) provides additional services parents and caregivers can utilize for extra support.



# Safe Passage launches in-house mental health services

At Safe Passage CAC, we are always looking for ways to better serve children and families who walk through the door.

In January, we launched in-house mental health services with the addition of two clinical therapists to the staff, including Nicole Eckles, M.A., LMFT, Safe Passage's Clinical Director, and Chloe Jones, M.A., LSW.

Safe Passage clinicians have a passion for supporting children and adolescents who have experienced trauma, specializing in helping young clients navigate the emotional challenges that arise from difficult life experiences.

Trained in trauma-focused support, our therapists integrate techniques such as trauma-focused cognitive behavioral therapy and play therapy to address the unique needs of each child. We are committed to providing individualized care that empowers young clients and their families to heal, grow, and build resiliency.

With a deep understanding of the importance of a holistic, supportive environment, therapists work collaboratively with families, schools, and other professionals to ensure the best possible outcomes for each client.

Learn more by visiting [SafePassageCAC.org](https://SafePassageCAC.org)

## Take **ACTION** to save VOCA

For countless Americans, Victims of Crime Act (VOCA) funding has been a critical lifeline for crime victims and their families that helped them not only heal, but also navigate the countless steps of a criminal justice system.

VOCA funding cuts have impacted Children's Advocacy Centers (CACs) like Safe Passage that provide evidence-based, child-centered care for children and families victimized by abuse. Efforts are being made to address these cuts and ensure long-term VOCA fiscal solvency. VOCA funding makes up 10% of our budget.

Join us in taking action to save VOCA. The Crime

Victims Fund Stabilization Act, H.R. 909 is a crucial step toward VOCA funding stability for years to come.

Champions in the House, Reps. Ann Wagner (MO), Nathaniel Moran (TX), Debbie Dingell (MI), Stephanie Bice (OK), and Jim Costa (CA) have introduced the bill.

The signature of every House Member, including [Rep. Jeff Crank](#) (CO/EI Paso County) and [Rep. Brittany Pettersen](#) (CO/Teller County), matters to get House leadership to call a vote on this important bill. Call or email them today and ask them to co-sponsor H.R. 909.

More information and sample call script [HERE](#).





# ELEVATE 30 an investment in kids, city

In honor of Safe Passage's 30-year legacy, we are looking for businesses, organizations, faith communities and individuals to stand with us to inspire hope and healing for every child in El Paso and Teller counties.

We know that those who have experienced sexual abuse or neglect and go untreated often adversely engage with education, criminal justice, behavioral health, domestic violence, addiction, self-harm, and unemployment.

At Safe Passage, we provide hope and healing to those who have experienced the unthinkable and are committed to creating healthy futures and strong cities.

With a gift of \$1,000 or more, you receive name recognition in our main lobby. See who is already an [Elevate 30 champion](#).

If children are brave and courageous enough to step forward, so can we.

**Interested in supporting kids and families in our community?**  
Contact Emily @ [ebowker@safepassagecac.org](mailto:ebowker@safepassagecac.org).

*What we liked most about the center is the care and support we received, along with all the support afforded to us. We felt heard. This Center is a great resource for our community and I appreciate all that is being done. I truly appreciate your support, effort and commitment to keeping children safe. Thank you and may God Bless this Center.*

– Caregiver





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“

I LIKE THAT I WAS ABLE  
TO SHARE MY STORY  
WITHOUT FEELING ANY  
KIND OF JUDGMENT  
AND I FELT SAFE AND  
UNDERSTOOD.

– Child

”

