



Here's what that funding supports:

- Access to basic health care, therapy and a safe caregiver. When a child loses a parent to domestic violence homicide in Wisconsin, that child most often goes to live with a relative like a grandparent – whose life is also turned upside down by the homicide. Caregivers cannot give permission for therapy and other services unless they are a legal guardian. The free civil legal services provided by KIDS MATTER makes sure that kids who have experienced serious trauma can get the services they need.
- Home visiting. KIDS MATTER provides home and community-based services. When Grandma or an older sibling suddenly gets five children to raise after a serious crime, it is a lot harder to get all of the children everywhere they need to be. Even our attorneys do home visits to make it easier on kids and families. And yes, we meet with families in hospice care and wherever it is easiest for them.
- Crisis counseling. One cannot overstate the urgency created by a domestic violence homicide, sexual abuse of a child, a child victim of kidnapping/trafficking or any of the other crisis matters affecting children.
- Identity theft/Child pornography/Misuse of a child's image. When children are moved from one place to another, a lot of people have access to their social security number. Victims of one child crime are often victims of other child crimes such as identity theft or unauthorized use of a child's image. KIDS MATTER is one of the few

places that can help resolve identity theft of children or help remove inappropriate images of children.

- Specialized staff. KIDS MATTER is a multi-disciplinary team because child crime victims need help in multiple fields. All KIDS MATTER staff are trained to support child crime victims, provide trauma informed care and help children heal.
- Navigation, advocacy and so much more. One of the most common refrains from kids and families is that they just don't know where to start. (One grandmother said this: "With KIDS MATTER, I felt heard. If it had not been for their excellent services..., I would not have my granddaughter in my life today."

VOCA funding has been central to developing award-winning, multi-disciplinary services for kids. VOCA funding allows us to meet child abuse survivors where they are – emotionally, physically and financially. VOCA funding means that all our services are FREE. And honestly? We have not found another funding source to replace these funding cuts.

And requests for help and the number of kids served annually is higher than ever.

Where do we go from here?

Right now, we are doing what we always do: adapting, planning and putting children first. We built up our reserve funds so that we can weather some of the storm, and we are making challenging budget decisions to stretch every dollar. This includes:

- Using one-time state funds to help bridge the gap
- Scaling back training and travel costs
- Creating online tools to help “triage” immediate needs so we do not end up with unmanageable waiting lists

Unless sustainable, multi-year solutions are found, the cuts will reach further – into services, into programs, into the direct care we provide.

How can you help?

KIDS MATTER has been a trusted, valued community resource from the day we opened our doors nearly 25 years ago. We take this role very seriously. We work every day to make sure that no child falls between the cracks. If losing services for kids matters to you, or the idea of fewer supports for child abuse survivors makes you uneasy, now is the time to act:

[Donate \(click here\)](#). Every dollar helps bridge the gap.

[Advocate](#). Use this link to find and contact your legislators -- share your concerns and ask for long-term solutions for victim services for children.

Share this newsletter, so more people understand what's at stake.

When the funding disappears, so do services. And the kids we serve? They can't wait.