

ANNUAL REPORT

2022-2023



Oak Centre

Child and Youth Advocacy

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Land Acknowledgement

Oak Child and Youth Advocacy Centre (Oak Centre) acknowledges that our work takes place within the northern part of the unceded traditional territory of the Syilx First Nation and that many descendants of the Suqnaquinx (Suk-anok-can) still live here.

Introduction

Oak Child and Youth Advocacy Centre (Oak Centre) is a welcoming, child-friendly environment where children and youth who have experienced abuse or violence can share their story with police and social workers. Oak Centre works in partnership with other local agencies to make sure a child's experience is as comfortable as possible, and that the child and their families are supported on an ongoing basis.

Fiscal year 2022-2023 was the second complete year of Oak Centre aligning data collection with the BC Network of Child and Youth Advocacy Centre's (BC CYAC) evaluation process. This evaluation process involves two primary components:

1. **Evaluation data:** collection of case characteristics, processes, and services provided by Oak Centre; and
2. **Feedback** on services and processes using anonymous surveys:
 - a. *Multidisciplinary team (MDT) brief feedback*
 - b. *MDT long form feedback*
 - c. *Caregiver feedback*
 - d. *Child feedback*
 - e. *Youth feedback*

In addition to the data reported in detail in this report, Oak Centre also hosted 44 Partner Clients¹ for interviews. This number brings use of the centre closer to pre-pandemic levels (N = 125 in 2018-2019), and points to a process of return to regular usage.

It is critical to note that although this report aims to capture the scope of work that took place at Oak Centre in 2022-2023, the cases are highly complex, often unpredictable in scope, and can span multiple years. For example, in addition to the direct services described in this report, and the many meetings and consultations that are evident in the feedback responses, there is substantial time providing information to those outside of Oak Centre (27.73 hours), responding to requests for service (22.83 hours), and supporting Partner Client interviews (32.92 hours). Oak Centre served 102 new clients² throughout the fiscal year.

This report undoubtedly underrepresents the wide range of activities undertaken by Oak Centre staff.

1 Partner Clients are those that do not require a multidisciplinary team response. Clients are brought to Oak Centre by partner agencies to use the facilities for interviews and meetings without engaging Oak Centre staff for follow up.

2 Children or youth with existing files were not counted in this report, unless otherwise noted.

Child and Family Characteristics

A total of 58 new clients were seen at Oak Centre during the fiscal year. Children were primarily from Vernon (N = 37), with an additional 12 from the communities of Armstrong, Cherryville, Coldstream, Enderby, Falkland, Kelowna, Mara, Okanagan Indian Band, and Salmon Arm. Children were 3-to-18 years of age, primarily female, white or indigenous, and all spoke English as a primary language.

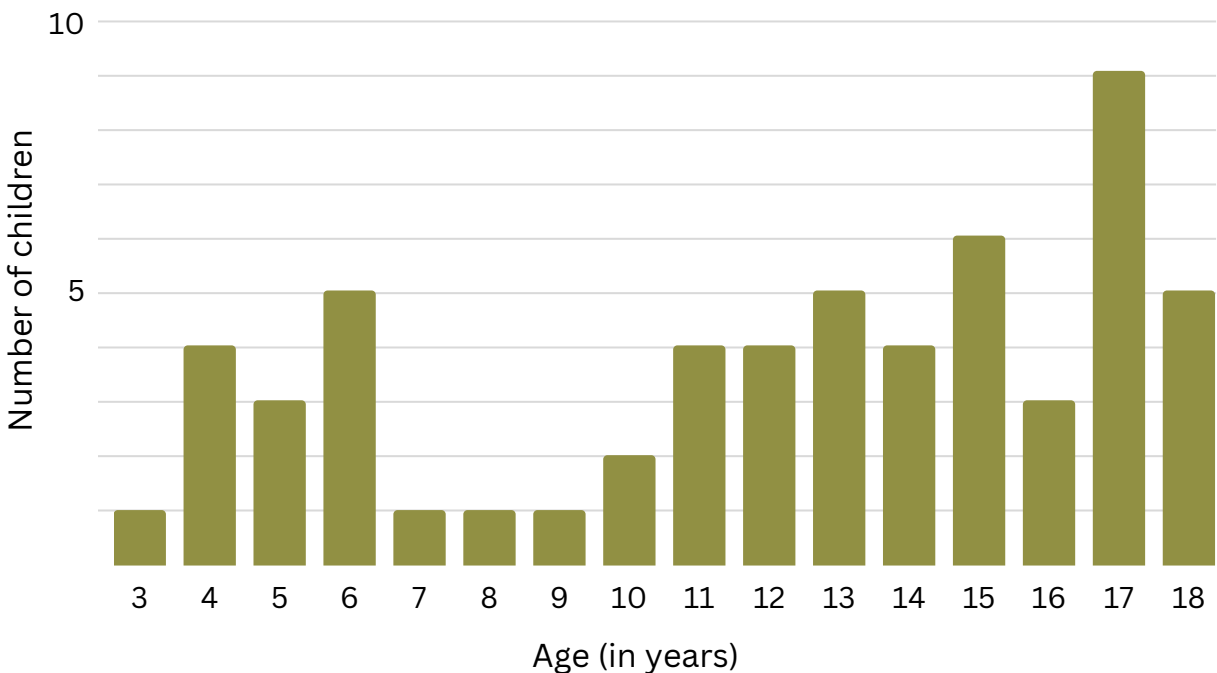
Average Age: **12.1 years**



72.5% Female
22.5% Male
2% Transgender
3% Other



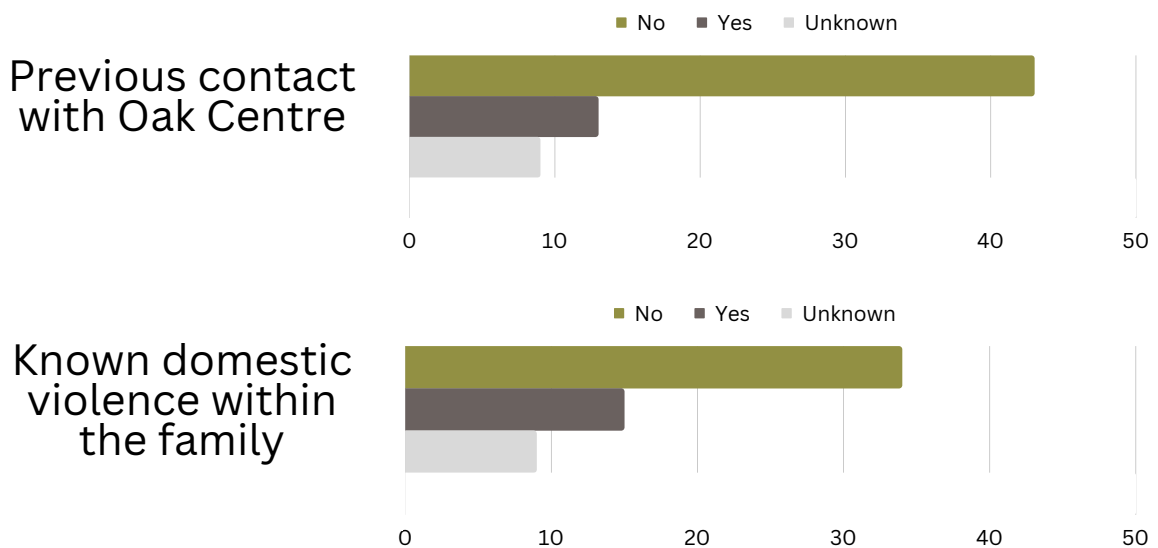
White (70%)
Indigenous (28%)
Filipino (2%)



Child and Family Characteristics

Many children or youth reported one or more complex characteristics, such as anxiety, attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD), depression, symptoms of trauma, and many others.

Thirteen children had been to Oak Centre in the past, and fifteen children experienced domestic violence in the family.



Nature of the Allegations

Most children or youth who attended a CYAC reported a single instance of abuse, with the most common forms being sexual (62%) and physical (16%). Fifteen children reported repeated abuse.

Type of Abuse	Instances
Sexual Abuse:	42
Physical Abuse:	11
Witness to domestic violence	10
Sexual Abuse & Neglect:	1
Sexual & Physical Abuse:	1
Other:	3

Note: Types of abuse were recorded at time of intake.

Alleged Offenders

Gender Identity of Alleged Offender(s)

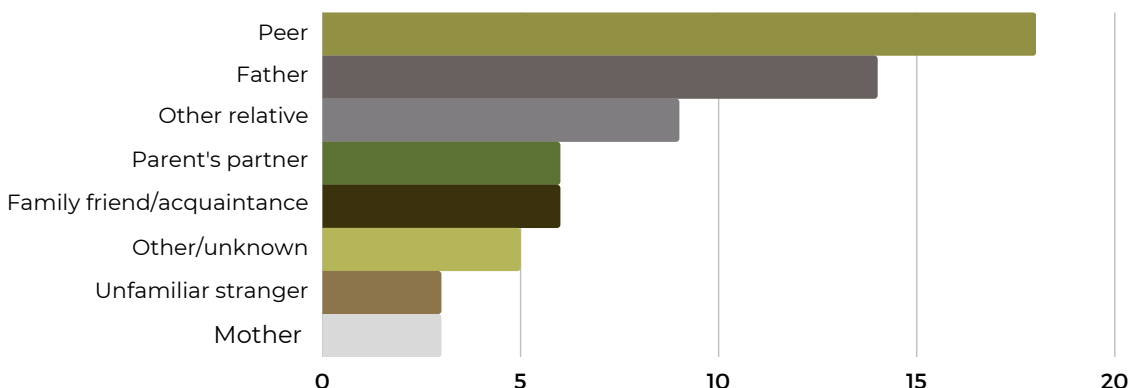


81% Male
17% Female
2% Unknown

Age of Alleged Offender(s)



Alleged offender's relationship to victim

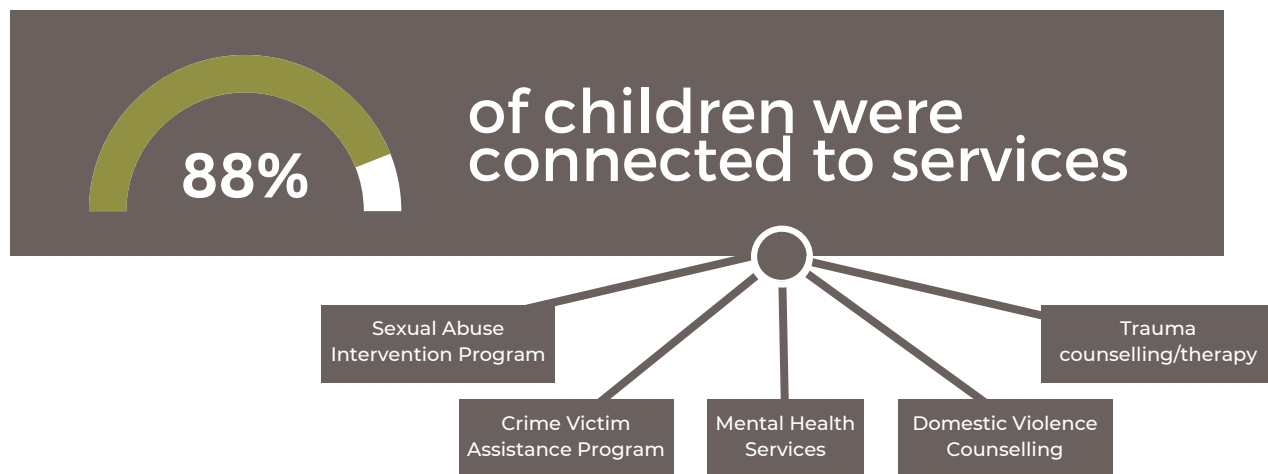


The CYAC Experience

Forty-seven interviews were conducted, most by skilled interviewers. Thirty-four interviews took place at Oak Centre and ten interviews were conducted at a police detachment.

Skilled Interviewer

=
recognized training
+ recent experience
+ demonstrated competency



Thirteen formal health assessments, 20 wellness/general health exams and 9 forensic medical exams were conducted for Centre Clients.



Our accredited facility dog, Cirque, assisted before or after 4 interviews, attended 41 meetings, and accompanied clients at the courthouse 6 times.



Court Experience

Children testified:	8
Child received court preparation:	12
Child received court accompaniment:	8
Child was assisted with Victim Impact Statement:	8
Court accommodations provided:	12

Note: Court statistics include all prior and new clients that attended a court process in 2022-2023.

— ” —
Cirque was great in the interview room. The child victim appeared to feel more comfortable.

Feedback from Multidisciplinary Team (MDT)

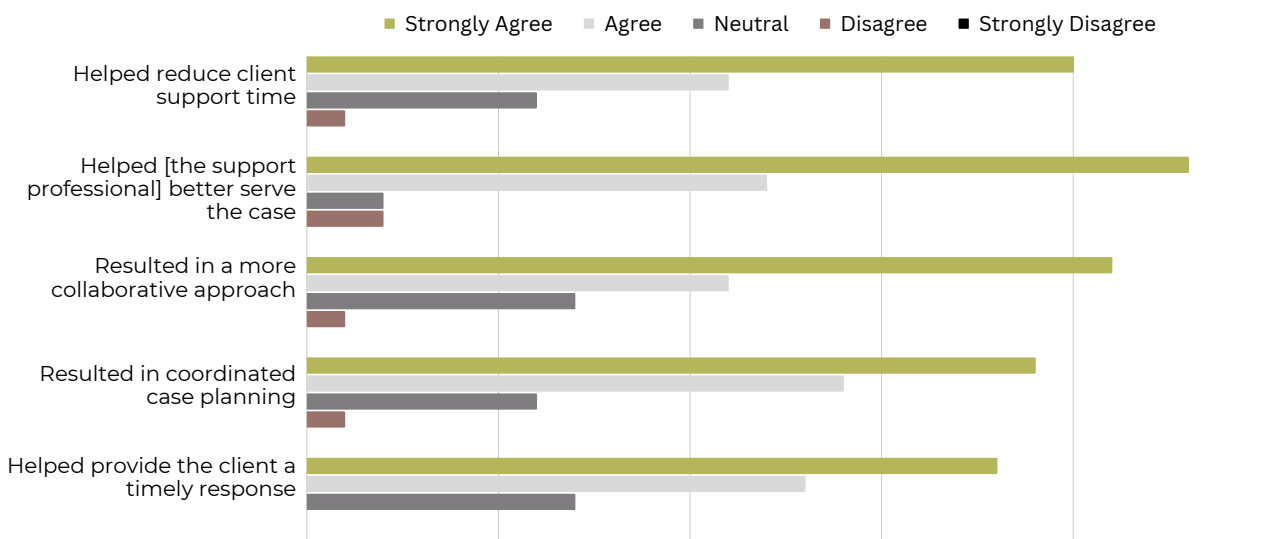
Brief survey

multi-disciplinary team >

“Frontline staff representatives of each of the parties named in the Oak Centre Partnership Agreement, who work to provide a collaborative and integrated response to children and their families, and are employed by and report to their home agency.”

After each interview conducted at Oak Centre, members of the MDT completed the brief survey form anonymously, using an on-site tablet. Respondents reported **highly effective** working relationships within the MDT. Survey results also indicated that the CYAC model has a **strongly positive impact** on the case.

What impact did the CYAC Model have on the case?



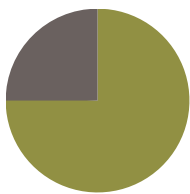
The value [the CYAC model] provides to police by assisting families to get the resources [they] need is an asset we are lucky to have.



Feedback from Multidisciplinary Team (MDT)

Long survey

Oak Centre staff sent a link for the long survey form for every third case, and to all MDT members involved in each case, at least 2 months following intake. Communication among the MDT was rated as **highly effective**, as well as the value of case review meetings.



75% of MDT members who answered the long survey reported participating in case review meetings.

All respondents agreed or strongly agreed that the case review meetings were a **benefit** to the overall case, worth their time to attend, **relevant** to their agency's work and were **useful** in development of the case.

Most respondents **strongly agreed** that the CYAC model had the following impacts:

- Client benefitted from the collaborative approach
- Resulted in coordinated planning
- Helped better serve the client(s) and case
- Helped provide a timely response
- Resulted in a more collaborative approach



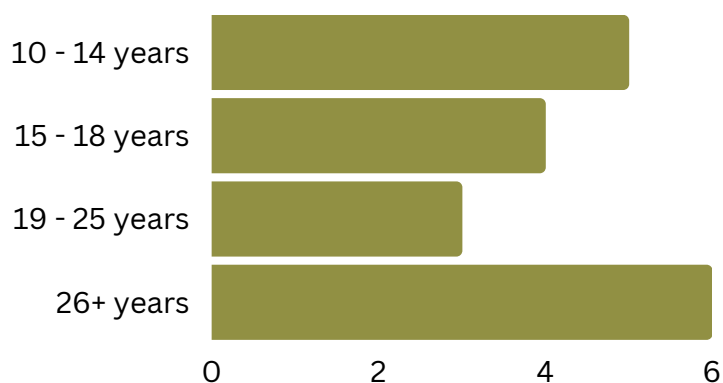
**Better [interview]
statements are
acquired [at Oak
Centre]**

Communication with Victim Service and Advocate workers, Police, and members of Child Protection, was rated as **very effective** or **effective** by all survey respondents.

Individual Therapy Program

There can be many barriers to receiving counselling services, such as program or practitioner waitlists, financial strains, or the location of the client. Oak Centre piloted an Individual Therapy program from September 1, 2022 through March 31, 2023 to try and fill this gap for clients.

Number of clients by Age range



The Individual Therapy pilot program was extremely successful. It filled a gap in service, particularly for youth clients who were otherwise unattached to therapeutic services. In creating a connection with these youth clients, we became aware of emerging safety issues and were able to make the appropriate child protection reports and safety plans. The pilot program also helped to provide a bridge to the Family Therapy Program (FTP) – individuals who were not ready for family therapy were provided service individually, and when ready, moved over to the FTP. This ensured there was no conflict of interest for the Family Therapist, allowing a safe space for the entire family unit. The piloting of this program area showed that it is an important and much needed part of the Oak Centre service.

Total clients served



Total number of sessions



Average number of sessions per client



Family Therapy Program (FTP)

The Family Therapy program (FTP) is designed to support families where one or more child members have experienced trauma. The aim of the program is to support families to regain a sense of safety within their relationships with one another and their surrounding support systems or environment. This can appear in the form of attachment concerns between parent and child, lack of trust between family members, and difficulty communicating in healthy ways. Cases engaged in the FTP can span multiple years.

Total number of Individuals



Total number of clinical consultations

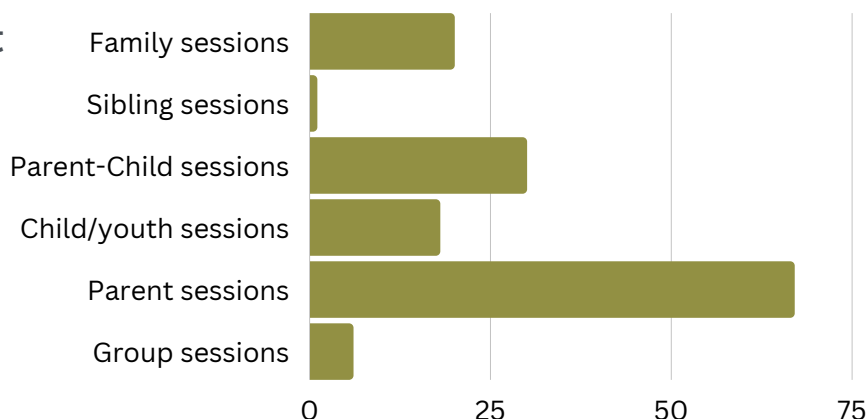


Total number of families



Clinical consultations are sessions held between the Family Therapist and other service providers, co-workers, or clinical supervisor to discuss matters on a case-by-case basis. Similar to the multidisciplinary approach of the CYAC.

Total number of client sessions





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