

AVALON HEALING CENTER

2020-2021 IMPACT REPORT



LETTER FROM THE BOARD



SCOTT STEWART
OUTGOING BOARD CHAIR, AVALON

Seven Years. What can an organization accomplish in seven years? For an extraordinary organization like Avalon Healing Center – radical transformation.

I have been engaged on the Avalon Healing Center Board of Directors since 2016, the last four as the Board Chairperson. I remember walking into my first meeting and seeing the small, but mighty staff and board members working day in and day out to make a difference for survivors. Since that time, we have grown tremendously – serving over 19,000 survivors since inception.

A few of the key accomplishments since I started:

- Rebranded the organization, moving from Wayne County SAFE to Avalon Healing Center, including a revitalized mission, vision, and values, that reflect our leadership role in empowering survivors and our commitment to addressing systems change and justice
- More than tripled our budget from \$1.5 million in 2016 to \$4.6 million in 2023
- Doubled our staff from 17 in 2016 to more than 30 in 2023
- Expanded our programs extensively, including the creation of the Avalon Institute for training and education, development of a robust Human Trafficking program, offering new and innovative therapeutic methods such as art therapy and yoga, and establishing a follow-up Wellness Clinic
- Developed two robust strategic plans to guide the organization's growth and meet our long-term vision, including establishing a Survivors Advisory Council to ensure the voices of those we serve are an active part of our work

Without a doubt, all of the hard work that the team at Avalon Healing Center has put in has been worth it. Avalon Healing Center has always been a quiet, powerhouse organization – focused on providing the most empowering and healing services for survivors and our community. Now, we are seen as a foremost leader in empowering survivors and creating systemic change for the communities that we serve.

Serving as the Board Chairperson for the last four years has been the honor of a lifetime. As I leave my position as Board Chairperson, I am excited to help lead our next initiative: establishing one of the first comprehensive healing centers in the country. By moving into our own building in Detroit, we aim to become a safe haven for our survivors one their healing journey. I hope that you will join us on this journey and thank you for your continued commitment.

Sincerely,

SCOTT STEWART
OUTGOING BOARD CHAIR, AVALON

LETTER FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

To our community,

Thank you to our many partners who support Avalon and survivors of sexual violence. The impact of your contributions have helped Avalon continue to provide support throughout the pandemic at no cost to survivors who truly needed our resources and services. During the last two years, research has revealed that the incidence of sexual violence had significantly increased as often times survivors were trapped in situations with their abusers due to the stay-at-home restrictions in place. As a community we have worked together to ensure that individuals in need received the highest level of care and support, despite the barriers the pandemic presented.

The gifts Avalon received were used to fund services that included acute and non-acute medical-forensic healthcare, crisis response & intervention, personal & legal advocacy, counseling and alternative healing opportunities for over 1,000 survivors and their families. Thank you.

The entire team at Avalon is grateful for your outpouring of support and generosity, including all the in-kind donations and volunteer work. It is because of you that we are able to continue to reach hundreds of survivors and continue to carry out our mission, as the largest sexual assault center in the State of Michigan.

Warmly,

Kimberly Hurst

KIMBERLY HURST, PA-C

FOUNDER AND EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
AVALON HEALING CENTER



KIMBERLY HURST
FOUNDER & CEO

VOICES THRU AVALON PODCAST



HOSTED BY:
SHARRON FINCHER AND KATIE SMITH

**Every first and third Friday of the month,
join us for conversations on:**

Community • Advocacy • Self-love •
Empowerment • Healing • Activism •
Social Justice • Self-Care

...And all the work we are doing at Avalon!

Interested in being on the podcast?

Contact Sharon!
SFINCHER@AVALONHEALING.ORG



AVALON SUPPORTS SURVIVORS GETTING JUSTICE

When Wayne County Prosecutor Kym Worthy approached Avalon's Executive Director, Kimberly Hurst, in August of 2009 -- after finding more than 11,000 untested rape kits in an off-site evidence warehouse in Detroit -- requesting support for the victims/survivors, there was no hesitation. The answer was always yes.

As of December 31st, 2021, per the Wayne County Sexual Assault Kit Task Force report, 831 suspected serial sex offenders had been identified; 40 states were impacted; 198 cases were actively being investigated; 104 cases were awaiting investigation; 225 convictions had been made; and 4,306 investigations had been completed.

In 2021, Avalon Healing Center provided over 4,545 instances of support and advocacy to these specific groups of victims and survivors alone -- not including group sessions and other instances of healing support. Some of those additional services provided by Avalon staff, among others, were Criminal Justice Advocacy/ Court Accompaniment, transportation advocacy, law

enforcement interview advocacy/accompaniment, crisis intervention, safety planning, housing advocacy, and secondary counseling for friends and family of the survivor and victims.

An initiative of the Wayne County Prosecutor's Office and the Wayne County Sexual Assault Kit Task Force has launched a campaign called 11,000 to Zero Untested Rape Kits, with the goal of finding and supporting any victims/survivors that had a rape kit done in Detroit between 1984 and 2009, and never got answers. You are not forgotten, and your case still matters. The hotline for this project is 313-224-4111 and the website is myrapekit.com. If you need support services, advocacy, or any additional information, please visit our website at www.avalonhealing.org, or call 313-964-9701 and speak to someone who cares today.

225 & **4,306**
CONVICTIONS **INVESTIGATIONS**
HAVE BEEN MADE **HAVE BEEN COMPLETED**



*"YOU MIGHT NOT THINK YOU'LL BE ABLE TO SURVIVE,
BUT YOU WILL. IT WILL GET BETTER."*

EVERY PAIN HAS A PURPOSE."

LAQUETTA "ELLE" TRAVIS | THE ACTIVIST

Growing up on the eastside of Detroit, Laquetta "Elle" Travis had seen a lot. "So much happens there, some of it good, some of bad," she shares. "I was sexually assaulted twice -- once when I was 19 and again when I was 22 -- and I reported those rapes in 2006 and again in 2008, but nothing ever happened. Then, in 2016, I got a call from Wayne County Safe -- what Avalon used to be called -- and they let me know that they had finally processed my rape kits, and found my attacker."

Travis is far from alone in this experience: In 2009, Wayne County Prosecutor Kim L. Worthy's office found nearly 12,000 untested rape kits in a storage warehouse. Working in concert with area agencies such as Avalon, Worthy's office engaged in a ten-year project to ensure that every kit was tested and every assault was investigated. "I really had internalized my sexual assaults, especially because I didn't receive any justice or even follow-up regarding my reports," she recalls. "I turned that pain inward, and, really, I wasn't living. I thought I was because the trauma happened at such a young age, I was living with it, but it had broken me. I was just barely surviving, the silence had broken me."

Avalon's outreach was in support of sexual assault survivors who were about to embark upon the criminal justice process. Their advocates work with people to guide them through the legal aspects, help them understand what to expect, and stand with them during heavily emotional experiences such as depositions, testifying, and verdicts. "I felt a lot of pressure because my rapist was a serial rapist, but my case was the only one they could prosecute because of the statute of limitations," she explains. "Of course, they couldn't bring in his history of assault or talk about it, although his DNA had showed up in multiple rape kits. So we knew that this was a bad guy who had a long history of hurting others, but there was only so much that could be shared."

This reality was even more infuriating for Travis when the verdict in her case came back as not guilty. "It was a body blow, I wasn't prepared for that," she remembers. "But my advocate was there with me, stood with me, and supported me as the verdict was read. I know that the people working on the case are trying to do their best, but the only person who was there for me -- who is there for any survivor -- was the advocate from Avalon. Without them, I'm not sure that I would have survived the experience."

Working with Avalon actually refocused her and helped her embark upon a new path in her life. "When all of this was happening, I had a 15 year old daughter, and I knew that I couldn't just sit back and not make my voice heard," Travis says. "I wanted to make it painfully clear to everyone who had had the power to help women and instead chose to ignore them: This is not okay. You cannot do this again. We will not let you. And so Avalon created a space for me to begin my activism in the community, to ensure that something like this, this miscarriage of justice, never happens again."

While the rape kit backlog was cleared a few years ago, Travis knows that it's just one small piece of the overall puzzle. "It's really about education in the community, about talking to kids and teaching them the skills they need to keep themselves safe," she explains. "That's a lot of the work that I do now, but I'm also here as an advocate and support for other survivors of the rape kit stockpile. I've been through what they're going through, and I can hear them and empathize. As a member of Avalon's Survivor Advisory Committee, I speak out regularly and often. They were instrumental in creating this space for me to engage as an activist."

In terms of the potential benefit that Avalon could have in other communities, Travis sees that their holistic approach could change lives. "It sometimes feels like everyone you're working with, especially on the legal side, just wants you to show up, tell your story, shut up, and move on," she shares. "They don't understand the trauma involved, the pain and shame and terror that just showing up and telling our stories revisits upon us. But Avalon does, they know that, every time we're speaking out and not staying silent, we're reopening the wounds and, if not cared for properly, they will get infected. So they're the medicine; they provide us the care we need in order to do this important work."

One thing that Travis would love to see is for Avalon to expand the resources, outreach, and advisory work that they do in the community. "It would be phenomenal for us to have a speakers bureau, of sorts, a group of us who can work with schools, churches, community centers -- whoever will have us -- to provide real-world advice to kids," she says. "I know that I will never meet the people who are coming up after me, who are hurt by others, but I also know that hurt people hurt people. We have to stop the cycle of violence somehow, and it starts with us, stepping up, being honest, and showing our community our strength of spirit."



ENDING SEXUAL ASSAULT BEGINS WITH EDUCATION

Education is a key component to combating sexual assault.

In 2021, Avalon provided multiple forms of education to our community. Our highly trained staff works closely with partner organizations to determine their needs and what tools are necessary to best support survivors. Raising general awareness about the dynamics of sexual violence and how it impacts society, the work place, and individuals themselves is paramount to ending this problem.

For the medical/health care community, Avalon provided lectures and education workshops regarding the acute medical forensic exams (otherwise known as a rape kit). This information is not taught in medical, physician assistant, or nursing school, and -- in many cases -- after an assault, a survivor is seen in the emergency room by a medical professional that has not had any training in how to perform this procedure. This lack of education can retraumatize a survivor and can even cause more harm if the medical professional is not trained in how to be trauma-informed or to perform the exam itself.

For law enforcement and criminal justice professionals, Avalon has educated and taught best practices around being victim-centered and offender focused in their approach to victims. As many survivors are first seen or responded to by law enforcement, it is essential to educate these professionals to provide the best response possible in these situations.

Avalon also works intentionally to educate other disciplines that a survivor could potentially interact with. Legal teams, OBGYN and other medical professionals, schools, hospitality venues, and social service organizations all need education around trauma-informed responses and dynamics of sexual assault. We also frequently address issues around handling disclosures and best practice policies for the workplace.

If you are interested in having any of these education services for your organization or school, please contact Benita Robinson, LLMSW, Avalon's Director of Crisis Services and Education at brobinson@avalonhealing.org.



DID YOU KNOW...
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AVALONHEALING.ORG/SHOP

100% OF PROCEEDS GOES DIRECTLY TO SURVIVORS





AVALON'S HOLISTIC APPROACH TO CLIENT-CENTERED CARE

Last year, researchers Sally Henin, MD, CMQ and Lauren Page Black, MD, MPH, conducted an observational study of sexual assault survivors in order to better understand the long-term trauma related to the assault they experienced. In their final report, *I Still Feel So Lost': Experiences of Women Receiving SANE Care during the Year after Sexual Assault*, they noted three key lessons:

The long-term burden of sexual assault has characteristics that overlap with post-traumatic stress disorder, including difficulties with social interaction and major disruption of daily routines.

Sexual assault patients have challenges accessing care and health services. Emergency caregivers should be aware of the need to provide comprehensive resources to sexual assault patients.

Sexual assault patients struggle with guilt and need to hear that the assault was not their fault from the emergency caregivers.

A key takeaway is that the primary response and support that survivors receive is at the beginning of the process -- when they report the assault and receive emergency medical care and engage in activities related to collecting evidence for possible criminal prosecution -- but that ongoing care is limited at best. Mental healthcare that is trauma-informed is especially lacking for this group of survivors, and long-term positive outcomes are rooted in a multi-disciplinary approach that provides a more holistic and integrated experience for survivors wherever they may be on their healing journey.

That's why Avalon's model is so unique -- not only within Metro Detroit, but the entire United States. By offering support that begins with the initial reporting, providing guidance through the criminal prosecution process,

offering group and individual therapeutic services, Avalon's transformational approach creates the opportunity for highly effective healing.

In 2021, Avalon supported 1,397 victims/survivors of sexual violence. Services that were provided, but not limited to, acute medical-forensic examinations with crisis response provided 24 hour a day/7 days a week, hotline/crisis calls, individual counseling, group counseling, human trafficking case management, wellness clinic services, secondary client supportive counseling, transportation, rehoming, art therapy, yoga therapy, court advocacy, shelter location, safety planning, and more.

Sexual violence is not just a women's or girl's issue, it is a human issue. Of those clients we served 1,307 of them were women and 90 were men. A break down of age for our first response services alone:

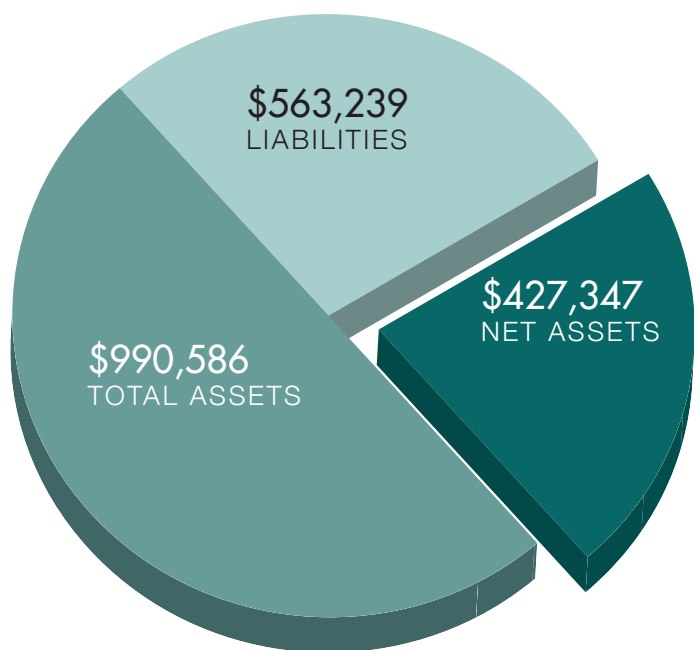
0-17 years of age Avalon supported 365 victims/survivors
18-24 years of age Avalon supported 306 victims/survivors
25-59 years of age Avalon supported 648 victims/survivors
60 + years of age Avalon supported 30 victims/survivors
unknown Avalon supported 49 victims/survivors

By taking a trauma-informed approach and centering survivors, Avalon can offer a space that offers the people we work with the opportunity to create a different narrative about their experiences, and to share them with others. In the end, this kind of interconnectedness creates lasting change within the community.



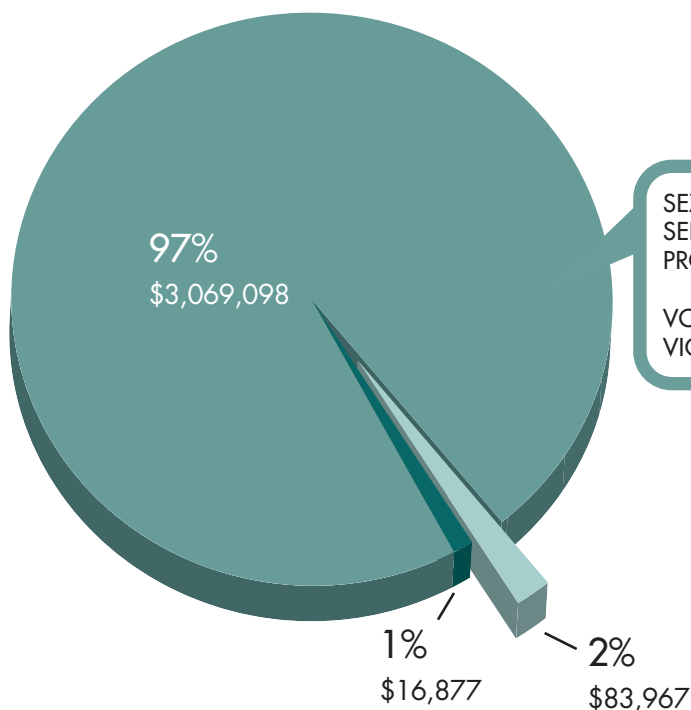
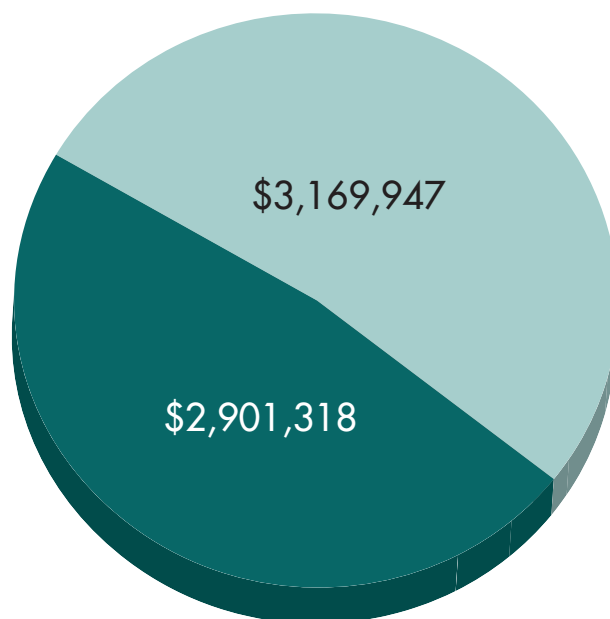
ANNUAL FIGURES

2020



OPERATING PERFORMANCE

- TOTAL REVENUE
- TOTAL EXPENSES



SEXUAL ASSAULT
SERVICES FORMULA
PROGRAM

SERVICES TO
UNDERSERVED
VICTIMS OF CRIME

IMPROVING CRIMINAL
JUSTICE RESPONSES
PROGRAM

VOCA CRIME
VICTIM ASSISTANCE

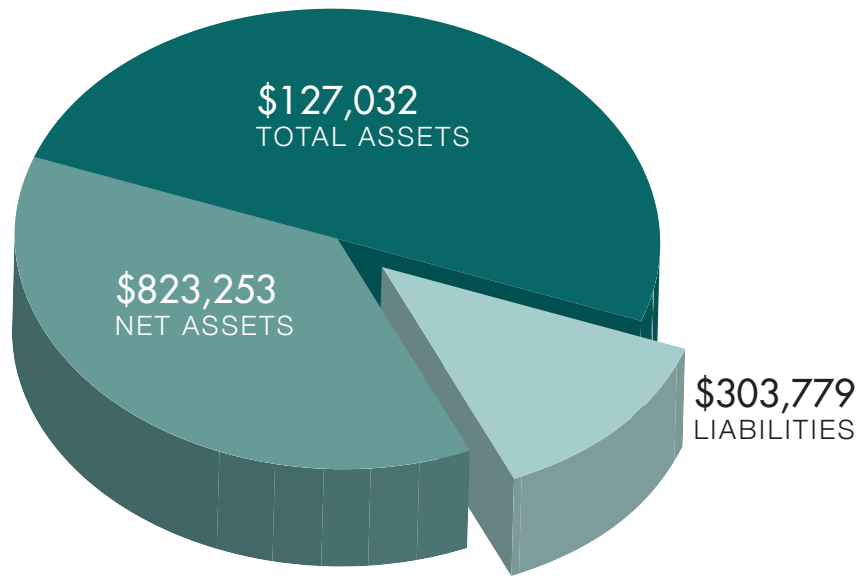
SEXUAL ASSAULT
VICTIM SERVICES

NATIONAL SEXUAL
ASSAULT KIT INITIATIVE



ANNUAL FIGURES

2021

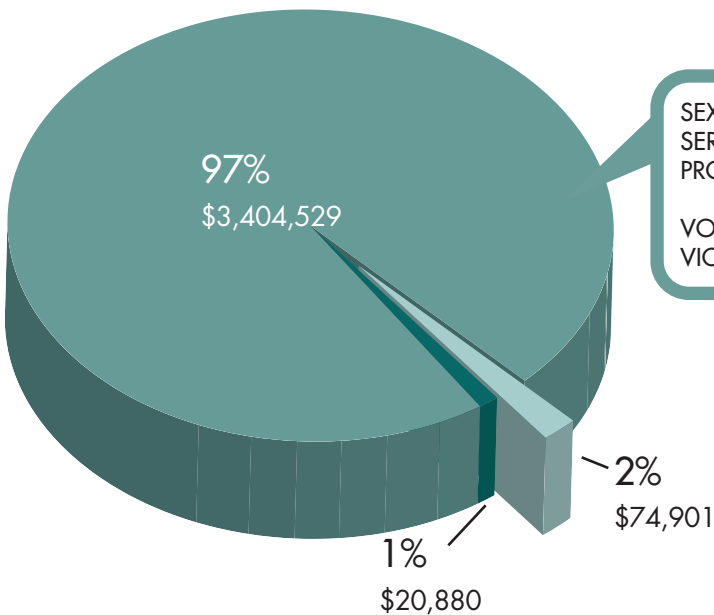
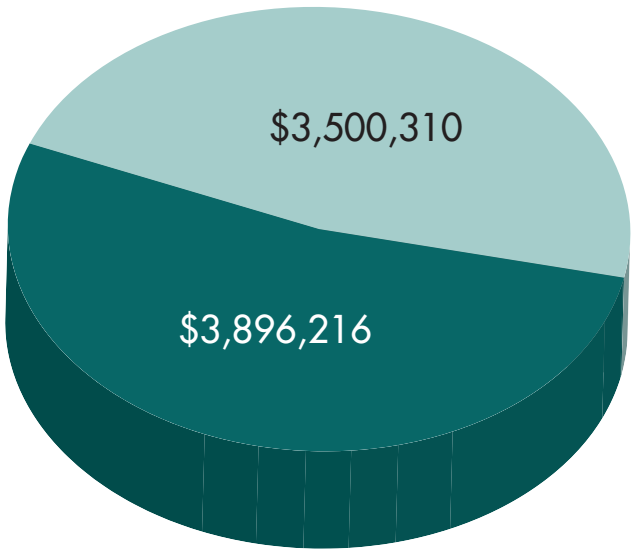


FINANCIAL POSITION

- TOTAL ASSETS
- TOTAL LIABILITIES
- NET ASSETS

OPERATING PERFORMANCE

- TOTAL REVENUE
- TOTAL EXPENSES



- | | | |
|---|--|--|
| SEXUAL ASSAULT SERVICES FORMULA PROGRAM | SERVICES TO UNDERSERVED VICTIMS OF CRIME | IMPROVING CRIMINAL JUSTICE RESPONSES PROGRAM |
| VOCA CRIME VICTIM ASSISTANCE | SEXUAL ASSAULT VICTIM SERVICES | NATIONAL SEXUAL ASSAULT KIT INITIATIVE |

IMPACT & PROGRAMS

- PROGRAM SERVICES
- MANAGEMENT
- FUNDRAISING

Avalon Healing brand change took place mid-2020. • Fiscal year ends December 31.



AVALON'S IMPACT AND PROGRAMS

Avalon Healing Center's services are provided to survivors of sexual assault 24 hours a day, 7 days a week and 365 days a year. Services are provided to anyone who identifies as a survivor despite without a time limit. Services to the community include:

ASSAULT RESPONSE

A team of specially trained Forensic Examiners and Advocates available to respond immediately to the hospital and clinic sites throughout Wayne County. This specialized team provides support, information, resources, and referrals to survivors and their families.

COUNSELING

Counseling services are led by a team of diverse professionals who follow an empowerment model and provide empathy towards survivors. Counselors receive on-going training to remain up to date on survivor-centered practices that are trauma informed and culturally and age appropriate. Individuals ages twelve and up can be seen by an Avalon Healing Center professional and survivors under 12 years of age are referred to our community partners in Detroit. These Services are available to survivors as well as their support system and loved ones.

ADVOCACY

Advocates serve as a liaison and support to survivors, ensuring their needs are met and rights are honored. Advocacy services may include assisting a survivor and/or their family with navigating the many resources that may address challenges they are facing as related to their experience with sexual violence or otherwise.

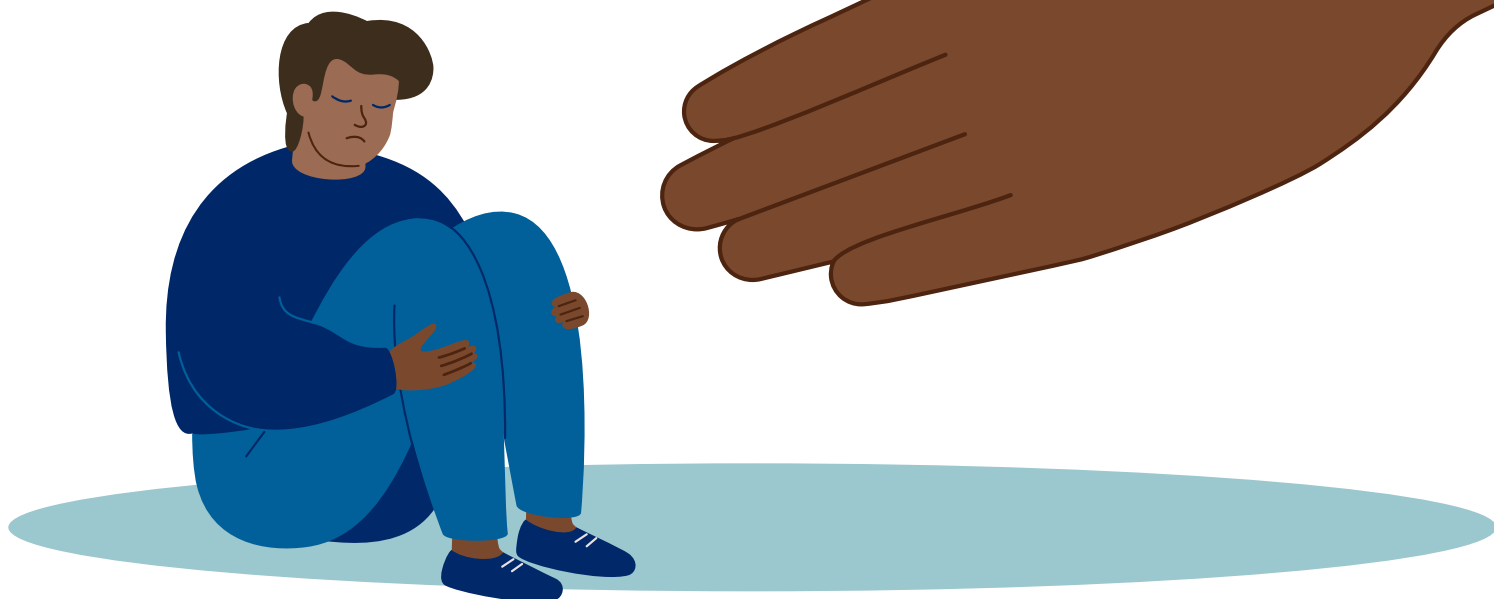
PEDIATRIC SERVICES

Acute medical-forensic exams and crisis intervention is available for all ages (24/7/365 days per year) in collaboration with community partners such as KidsTALK and Children's Hospital of Michigan to survivors. Survivors in the ages range of 0-17 can be seen at the Taylor clinic, St. John Medical Center and KidsTALK CAC Medical Clinic (both in Detroit).

HEALING AND RECOVERY

YOU ARE NOT ALONE. Every survivor's experience is different, and their healing and recovery will be unique. No matter when the sexual assault happened, survivor's canto come to Avalon Healing Center to receive support and help they need. While there may be many factors that can impact a path to healing the cost to receive services should not be one. Avalon Healing Center provides all the services listed above at no cost.

If you or someone you love needs supportive care and compassionate services, please have them call the crisis number at [313-474-SAFE \(7233\)](tel:313-474-SAFE).





AVALON

HEALING CENTER

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4 FACILITATORS

CRISIS RESPONSE TEAM

5 DEDICATED FIRST RESPONDERS

TRAFFICKING TEAM

5 SPECIALISTS



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