



**WINNER: YWCA USA**  
*2023-2024 Association Excellence Award:  
Mission Impact in the Field of  
Women's Empowerment*

**eliminating racism  
empowering women**

**ywca**

Metro St. Louis



Dear Friend,

## **YWCA is on a mission and YWCA Metro St. Louis is making it our own!**

To empower women and eliminate racism, we meet our clients where they are most vulnerable, and provide a continuum of care that places them on a path to self-sufficiency and prosperity.

This requires a focus on the future, anticipating the needs of our clients, and creating innovative solutions to the problems they most often face – poverty, sexual and/or domestic violence, lack of reliable and affordable childcare, unstable housing, and under- or unemployment.

We are continuously reimagining and improving our services to meet the changing needs of our clients today and for the future. We remain rooted in rich history, but our approach to the future is strategic and innovative.

We are fierce advocates for our clients and families, providing crucial services that strengthen our community by ensuring that all are safe, stable, connected, and thriving. Empowered!

With gratitude for your continued support,



Dr. Cheryl Watkins, MBA  
President and Chief Executive Officer





# DID YOU KNOW?

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Metro St. Louis

We were **founded in 1904** to provide safe housing for women who traveled to St. Louis to work at the World's Fair.

YWCA Metro St. Louis pursues accreditation to assure the St. Louis community that our agency provides excellent services and is a trustworthy steward of its financial support.

We are **nationally accredited by Social Current/ Council on Administration as an Outstanding Provider, a nationally accredited Program of Excellence by the National Head Start Association,** and accredited by Missouri Accreditation (MOA).

We are the recipient of **YWCA USA's 2023-2024 Association Excellence Award for Impact in the field of Women's Empowerment.**

YWCA is the **only St. Louis agency that provides essential, wraparound services (at no charge) to sustain women while they are in our programs,** so they are prepared for self-sufficiency upon completion.



# DID YOU KNOW?

We are the **largest provider of sexual and domestic violence services** for women in the region.

We are the **only dual services agency** (serving victims of sexual and domestic violence) in the region that offers a **24/7 Crisis Help Line and a Drop-in Center.**

We are **one of only two YWCAs** in the United States with a Sexual Assault Response Team (SART). SART works with area hospitals and police departments to continuously improve the response to survivors of violence.

We are the **largest provider of Housing Services** for individuals and families fleeing violence, trafficking, and stalking in St. Louis City and County, and **we hold one of the largest HUD contracts with the City of St. Louis.**





# DID YOU KNOW?

We are the **largest provider of direct Head Start services in Missouri**, concentrated in St. Louis City and County, serving all children, regardless of ability. More than 90% of our children meet or exceed goals and exit our program kindergarten-ready.

We are the only program in the state, one of only 13 in the country, and the only YWCA to receive a five-year **National Program of Excellence accreditation (2021)** from the National Head Start Association.

We receive more Head Start funding than any other agency that provides direct service in St. Louis City and County, and we are the **second largest recipient of funding in a four-state region.**

We are partnering with St. Louis Innovation Districts to build new Early Education Excellence Centers and to enhance curriculum with ag-tech and bioscience at all YWCA centers, **helping to support the community and prepare the workforce of the future.**

**DELIVERING**  
**ON OUR YWCA**  
**MISSION TODAY**



Our agency has supported women and children since 1904, in areas such as housing, health and wellness, childcare, job training, women’s rights, racial justice, violence prevention, and crisis support. We are proud of our history and our track record of being ahead of our time.



Today, our holistic, integrated services support, sustain and improve the lives of women and their families.

## Women's Crisis Services & Housing

- Intervention and support services for victims of sexual and domestic violence
- Sexual Assault Response Team (often the first call made by hospitals and first responders)
- Rapid re-housing for victims of violence and Permanent Supportive Housing for homeless women
- Sexual health education for people with disabilities and the community-at-large

## Early Education Excellence

- Nationally Accredited Program of Excellence by National Head Start Association
- Early Head Start and Head Start grantee since 1991
- All teachers have at least a Bachelor's degree
- 2023 Missouri Head Start Teacher of the Year, and 2023 and 2024 Head Start Support Staff Member of the Year
- Enhanced STREAM (Science, Technology, Reading, Engineering, Art, Math) curriculum in all centers
- Employment opportunities and services for parents

## Career Readiness, Economic Empowerment & Development (CREED)

- Our promise to help place women on a career path and achieve economic stability within a 3-5 year period
- Career Readiness: training, development, coaching and support
- Empowerment Services: financial literacy, banking, credit building, saving, and investment
- Development: equity and racial justice education, entrepreneurship, business development
- Essential wraparound services: food, transportation, housing, rent/utility assistance, childcare

**OUR INNOVATIVE  
SOLUTIONS ARE  
OVERCOMING  
OBSTACLES TODAY  
AND SOLVING  
FOR THE CHALLENGES  
OF TOMORROW**



## Challenge

Lack of training for first responders and nurses on treatment for domestic violence and sexual assault often causes victims to opt out of reporting the crime and/or seeking treatment.

## Solution

YWCA works with Sexual Assault Nurse Examiners (SANE), first responders and law enforcement officers to approach and understand victims of assault as an Advocate would. This crucial approach increases the likelihood that a woman will complete the treatment she needs to support her physical and emotional healing.

## Challenge

Lack of high-quality childcare and early education and the shortage of early childhood teachers is a problem for families and employers.

## Solution

We have partnered with Innovation Districts (39 North, Donald Danforth Plant Science Center, Cortex and others) to build Early Education Excellence Centers to serve those communities and to provide childcare in those communities and to build the future workforce.

This new revenue model for YWCA will support agency programs and serve three demographics: Employer families, Head Start families, and underemployed families (who work but cannot afford quality childcare).

Further, we have developed the award-winning **Successful Pathways™**, a Department of Labor Registered Apprenticeship Program for individuals interested in a childcare career that pays them while training and prepares them to earn a CDA® (Child Development Associate) credential. Successful Pathways is **solving for a critical lack of childcare in real time** - supporting families by keeping classrooms open and supporting the workforce by allowing parents to go or return to work.

These 2GEN approaches cultivate family well-being and add to today's workforce while preparing the workforce of the future through exposure to high-growth industries.

# **YWCA BY THE NUMBERS**

**2023 RESULTS**



**10,037**  
women and  
families served

**100% clients**  
in Housing due to sexual/domestic  
violence remained in or transitioned  
to improved/stable living situations  
at the exit of our program

**100% callers**  
to 24-Hour Crisis Help Line  
received information or referrals

**1,233 children**  
graduated “kindergarten ready”  
from our Head Start program

**95% Crisis Intervention  
clients** reported gaining healthy  
coping and stress management skills

**100% CREED clients**  
enrolled in/completed  
job training, college, or  
vocational training

**CREATING  
IMPACT AND  
TRANSFORMING  
LIVES**



When Vicky arrived at the hospital, staff immediately called the YWCA Sexual Assault Response Team (SART). With our SART Advocate's help, Vicky was connected to a YWCA therapist and subsequently was identified as a victim of human trafficking. YWCA immediately provided safe housing for her and began treatment.

Over the next year, she received intensive treatment for her trauma, assistance with outstanding medical bills through VOCA (Victims of Crime Act), and help purchasing a car so she would have reliable transportation to and from work. YWCA also connected her with resources where she obtained assistance finding an apartment, plus financial assistance for her deposit and three month's rent.

Today, Vicky lives in stable housing, has a good job and has returned to college. She believes YWCA transformed her life. We agree. Our holistic approach to supporting victims of sexual assault indeed changes lives and leads to inspiring success stories like this one.

*Read more Life-Changing Stories at [ywcastl.org](http://ywcastl.org)*

***“I could not have done it alone. The fact that there's a place where we can all come together and face our monsters is pure magic. I love the YWCA.”***

— Vicky, YWCA Crisis Services client



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Metro St. Louis

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