



Paths to positive change since 1831

2022 Annual Report



mission

Driven by the belief that each of us can thrive when life has hope and opportunity, Rising Ground provides caring support and proven paths to positive change, helping children, adults, and families rise above adversity.

vision

Rising Ground envisions a future for New York where every child has an equal opportunity to succeed; where vulnerable individuals and families have the resources and support they need; where people with disabilities can access opportunity and fully participate in their communities; and where all are supported as they navigate life's challenges and positively direct their lives.

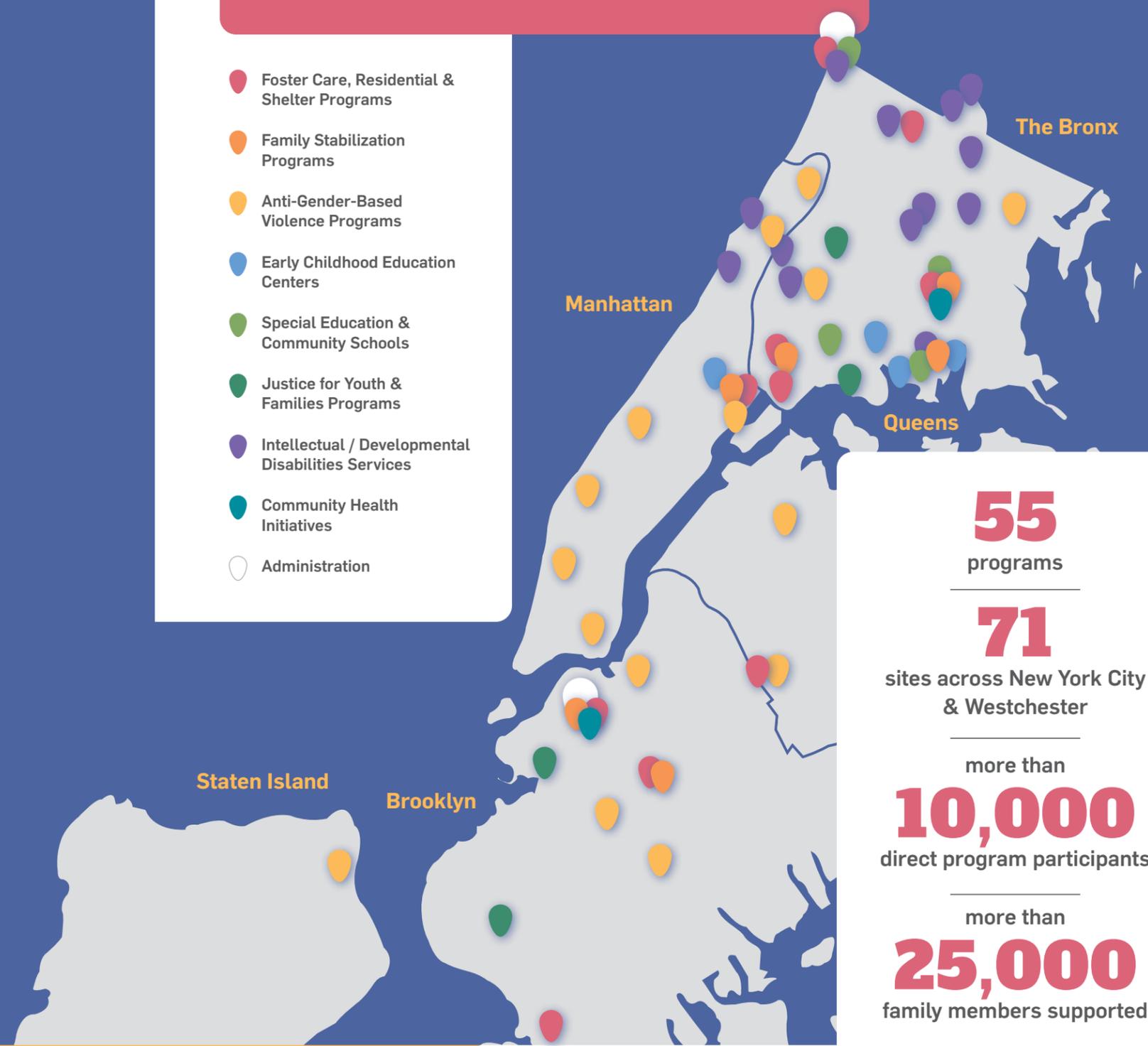
values

Rooted in an unshakeable belief in every individual's ability to change and grow, we value accountability, connection, tenacity, and service as we help children, adults, and families pursue their dreams and goals.

**Helping children,
adults, and families
thrive!**

Together, we forge positive paths across New York City

-  Foster Care, Residential & Shelter Programs
-  Family Stabilization Programs
-  Anti-Gender-Based Violence Programs
-  Early Childhood Education Centers
-  Special Education & Community Schools
-  Justice for Youth & Families Programs
-  Intellectual / Developmental Disabilities Services
-  Community Health Initiatives
-  Administration



55
programs

71
sites across New York City
& Westchester

more than
10,000
direct program participants

more than
25,000
family members supported

From Our Leaders

Your support is vital as we grow, expand our reach, and create hope and opportunity for New York!

For 192 years, Rising Ground has continually evolved to meet the needs of New York City communities. We are now in a time when that is particularly true, as Rising Ground continues to experience many changes and new opportunities to help New Yorkers create positive paths forward.

In December 2022, we finalized the sale of our Yonkers campus, which became the home of the Leake & Watts Orphan House in 1890. It has housed a wide range of programs that have touched the lives of generations of New Yorkers. As the move to the bucolic campus was the result of a trend to take children out of the City during a bygone era, we now seek to recenter our work in the heart of New York City, growing our presence directly in the communities we support.

As you will read in these pages, we are experiencing a period of significant sustained growth and evolution, with new opportunities arising regularly for us to provide essential services for children, adults, and families. Our mission remains the same — to give New Yorkers in need the resources and skills to overcome adversity, to help them find positive paths forward in their lives, and to thrive.

You will find in this Annual Report a few stories of how Rising Ground is creating hope and opportunity, as well as recognition and gratitude to our donors. It is the generosity of donors that makes our work possible and allows us to help thousands of New Yorkers.

The continuation of our life-affirming work requires the unwavering support and generosity of donors like you.

Thank you!



Matt Del Percio
Matt Del Percio
Board President



Alan Mucatel
Alan Mucatel
Chief Executive Officer



Top: Board Members Allen Waxman and Ellen Polansky, CEO Alan Mucatel, and Board Member Brigitte McLeod-Williams at the 2023 Annual Gala. **Right:** Sponsor Justin Riccio, Mohawk Insurance, with Board Treasurer Carol Chen and Board President Matt Del Percio at the 2022 Fall Benefit.



Rising Ground Leadership

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Growing Hope and Opportunity

Program Updates

In 2022, we launched new programs, expanded and enhanced our services, and adopted new and innovative practices to ensure the greatest positive impact on the lives of those we support. Like the communities we support and the world in which we live, our work and approaches to human services are ever-changing. In the past year, we saw several changes and shifts in the way we deliver services to New Yorkers in need. Rising Ground touches the lives of more than 25,000 New York City area children, adults, and families each year, and that number is growing as the need grows.

Rising Ground triples residential supports to homeless and runaway youth

Rising Ground began partnering with the New York City Department of Youth and Community Development five years ago to provide housing and case management for homeless and runaway teens when we opened our first **Transitional Independent Living (TIL)** facility in the Bronx. A year later, we added a second TIL in the Coney Island neighborhood of Brooklyn that supports LGBTQ+ female-identifying youth. This year, we were selected to operate five additional residences. We increased the number of youth we can support to 139, making Rising Ground one of the larger TIL providers in the City. We now support both male- and female-identifying young people ages 16 to 24 by providing them with much needed stability, independent living, education, and employment supports. Our staff work with these young people as they identify goals for the future and initiate the steps to achieve them. Rising Ground volunteers help supplement these supports by providing job-related skills workshops, financial literacy programs, and arts and crafts projects, broadening the networks available to the youth.

“This place has given me an abundance of stability and a sense of family that I didn’t know I needed, but I greatly welcome. I’m beyond appreciative for the opportunities that I’ve been given here.”

CAITLIN - Bronx TIL Resident

Recentering Our Reach



Sale of the Yonkers Campus ends an era while offering new opportunities

In December 2022, we finalized the sale of 30 acres of our 33-acre Yonkers Campus after several years of planning and negotiations. In 1890, the Leake & Watts Orphan House moved from Upper Manhattan to a farm overlooking the Hudson River in Yonkers, at the time removed from the hustle of the burgeoning City. On grounds designed by renowned landscape architect Frederick Law Olmsted, the campus saw many evolutions of support for children as it served as the heart of Rising Ground for more than a century. The campus had recently housed a Residential Treatment Center, the K-12 Biondi Education Center, the Ames Preschool, the Passage of Hope program, and a center of our administrative departments. Five residences providing permanent supportive housing to adults with intellectual and developmental disabilities will continue to operate on the land that was not included in the sale.

The sale of the campus reflects the drive to locate human services that are designed by and responsive to communities within the communities themselves. Much of the organization's recent growth is centered in the communities of the Bronx, Manhattan, and Brooklyn. Additionally, the sale will have a tremendous positive impact on the financial health of Rising Ground, allowing us to pay down debt that has hindered the organization for decades. As result of the sale, we created the Fund for Rising Ground, a separate non-profit 501(c)3 with the mission of supporting Rising Ground, that will invest the remaining proceeds and support Rising Ground's work on behalf of thousands of New Yorkers.

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190 Years!

Celebrating 190 years of helping New York City children, adults, and families find positive paths forward

Beginning with a kickoff anniversary celebration in March 2021 and culminating in a celebratory Anniversary Gala in March 2022, Rising Ground hosted a year of special events commemorating 190 years of helping New Yorkers in need. As part of our 190th Anniversary year-long celebration, we premiered a 22-minute film about the history of Rising Ground during a small event at the Directors Guild Theatre in Manhattan - a place where many commercial and independent films have been shown for the first time. The film may be viewed at: <https://www.RisingGround.org/190video/>

Fair Futures helps youth in foster care pursue college and career goals

This year, Ajani became a freshman at Dean College studying sports management and competing as a defensive lineman for the Bulldogs. All the while he has been making connections and plans for a career after college. However, this young man did not always have such a clear vision for his future. In 2016, Ajani was placed in foster care with Rising Ground after an aunt who had been caring for him became seriously ill. A native of East Flatbush, Brooklyn, Ajani entered his first of two foster homes as a teen and was without the system of support he had known all his life. "I basically fought through it.

It's pretty good now," he explains. With the support of Rising Ground's Family Foster Care team, things are different for Ajani. Working with College Specialist Debra Swire and Life Coach Tiffany Cooper as part of the Fair Futures initiative, Ajani navigated the challenges of applying for schools and financial aid. As a result, Ajani is one of 23 students in foster care with Rising Ground attending college.

"It is amazing to watch young people who have had so many challenges thrown at them at such a young age and still strive and have a passion in them to be successful."

DEBRA SWIRE - College Specialist, Family Foster Care Fair Futures



Unaccompanied Migrant Children Program

Passage of Hope, Rising Ground's unaccompanied migrant child program, provides temporary residential, health, mental-health, educational, and recreational programming for children while case workers identify and help reunite the children with family members or other sponsors here in the United States. We began supporting some of the first unaccompanied migrant children to arrive from Afghanistan as they prepared to join with sponsors and begin new lives in the United States. As with all unaccompanied migrant children,

providing support for Afghan children requires specific knowledge of their cultural and spiritual values. Throughout the past year Rising Ground staff have provided supports in a culturally competent manner, ensuring these children have had access to Halal foods, religious services, and that their cultural and religious traditions were respected and acknowledged at the same time as we have continued to support children from other countries, the majority of whom come from Central America.

One Boy's Journey

A 17-year-old boy from Afghanistan came to Rising Ground during the Fall 2021. Upon his arrival, he found it quite difficult to adapt and settle in, especially as he did not speak English. Throughout his time in Passage of Hope, staff learned and began to understand his culture, and adapted practices while he became more comfortable. As he adjusted to life in his new country, he developed positive relationships with staff and other youth, and learned a great deal of English and Spanish. Ultimately we were successful in placing him with a loving foster family that had extensive experience in working with children from Afghanistan so that he was able to leave our program.

"I can't say enough about the importance of what we do in this program by providing children what they need to feel safe, and to be advocates for themselves. They come to us humble and eager. They don't know who we are. These brilliant, resilient children leave us when ready, and they think to themselves 'now I can continue my journey.'"

LISA QUINONES - Vice President, Residential Services, Passage of Hope



Parents Supporting Parents

Throughout our organization we are employing more persons with lived experiences, recognizing their knowledge and wisdom but also how people we support feel even more comfortable working with people who understand what they are going through. In 2021 into 2022, we added Parent Advocates to our Family Foster Care work – first as part of a pilot program that ultimately is being extended to all New York City providers. In addition, this year, we were selected as the sole organization responsible for ensuring that an adult with lived experience is available as a resource to each family in Brooklyn and Queens at their initial contact with the foster care system.

Our Parents Supporting Parents program pairs parents with an advocate who is trained to provide guidance, support, and advocacy as they navigate the often daunting task of managing the ins and outs of foster care and as they seek to be reunified with their child.

Our Parents Supporting Parents program pairs parents with an advocate who is trained to provide guidance, support, and advocacy as they navigate the often daunting task of managing the ins and outs of foster care and as they seek to be reunified with their child. Parent Advocates can effectively inform and guide parents in the case planning process and bolster their self-determination so that families are more likely to reunite with their children.

In a recent conversation with a parent, she shared, “sometimes my Parent Advocate just calls me to make sure I ate a healthy breakfast. I need that kind of support. No one else has ever cared to make sure I was okay. Others just check in on the kids.” Rising Ground’s Parent Advocates recognize that a positive outcome for the family is only possible if the parents have the capacity to fight for what they want. They need help from people who understand the challenges they face.



Diversity, Fairness & Belonging

Rising Ground’s racial equity initiative has advanced over the past year, helping to create a more inclusive organization that seeks to undo the impact of institutional racism on our employees and the persons we support. These efforts include an Anti-Racism Workgroup and an LGBTQ+ Inclusivity Workgroup that target organizational practices and structures so that we do not foster or perpetuate inequity or injustice.

Throughout 2022, Rising Ground developed a guiding document that defines and sets expectations for our organization as an employer, a work community, and as a provider of services. It sets goals and outlines a framework for accountability toward outcomes. **The Diversity, Fairness & Belonging (DFB)** guiding document was added to Rising Ground’s Employee Handbook, and incorporated into our New Employee Orientation.

Other recent DFB activities...

Staff attended the Undoing Racism training conducted by the People’s Institute for Survival and Beyond, a national, multiracial, anti-racist collective of organizers and educators dedicated to building a movement for social transformation.

Training a cadre of trainers under the guidance of Dr. Ken Hardy on a curriculum on Racial Trauma that will soon be shared with all staff.

Engaging Trans Equity Consulting to conduct a Trans Day of Visibility workshops and support the development of policies.

Staff participation in the McKinsey & Co. management training program that focused on Black and Latino leaders.

As the calendar turned to 2023 we welcomed Travis Rodgers as the first Senior Vice President of Diversity, Fairness & Belonging. Mr. Rodgers is a member of the organization’s senior leadership team and provides a focused perspective as Rising Ground strives to create a more vibrant, inclusive, and affirming environment at Rising Ground.

“I am thrilled to fill this new role at Rising Ground and to help continue its historic commitment and connection to New York and New Yorkers. A large part of Rising Ground’s success has been its transformational leadership that often asks the question, ‘What more can we be doing to help repair the world around us?’ Today, we understand the answer begins with how we treat our employees, the people we support, and the people around us.”

TRAVIS RODGERS - Senior Vice President, Diversity, Fairness & Belonging



Mental health services for runaway and homeless youth

Young people run away or become homeless for a variety of reasons, many of which can be linked to physical, psychological, and emotional traumas. Whether it is abuse, the consequences of living in poverty, a lack of empathy, or support for their self-identity, runaway and homeless youth often experience significant challenges to their well-being. Once away from home, they are susceptible to a host of additional dangers and health risks. LGBTQIA+ youth and youth of color, in particular, represent a disproportionate number of runaway and homeless youth. A scarcity of accessible resources for this vulnerable population compounds the challenges they face.

In the fall of 2021, Rising Ground took over a contract to operate a drop-in Mental Health Wellness Hub to support youth ages 14-24 who are homeless or at risk of homelessness. Since early 2022, the Hub has operated from our downtown Brooklyn office, providing individual and group therapy by licensed clinicians, crisis intervention services, and referrals for psychiatric care. The Hub is also a place where the youth can readily find supplies of day-to-day essentials, space to work on school assignments or do other tasks, as well as a safe place to decompress and relax. We are excited to have added this important work to our continuum of care for runaway and homeless youth in New York City.

Community Education & Healthcare Navigation project

Navigating the healthcare system is extremely difficult, even for healthcare professionals and patients who are not fearful or skeptical of the system. The most vulnerable people supported by Rising Ground — the uninsured, those living in poverty, people facing instability at home or in their personal lives, non-English speakers — are more likely to receive lower-quality care (or no care at all), in part, because they lack the information and/or access to information to make the choices that would work best for them, or because they have had negative experiences which make them reluctant to seek out services.

Thanks to a generous grant from The Mother Cabrini Health Foundation, Rising Ground launched its Community Education & Healthcare Navigation project. Two Community Healthcare Navigators work with families from Rising Ground programs to obtain preventive healthcare, create family-centered health plans, address barriers to healthcare, obtain child developmental screenings, and receive practical health education. Through these efforts we are addressing chronic health disparities and challenges for the low-income, disadvantaged individuals and families we support.

During our inaugural year, the Navigator team supported 79 families.

Having access to quality healthcare helps individuals and families proactively manage health challenges, leading to positive long-term health outcomes. Many Americans lack the resources to receive the healthcare services they need. A new healthcare ecosystem where consumers can access the resources they need is possible as demonstrated in part by the success of our health navigation work.

Looking Ahead in 2023

New program to provide services and promote healing for victims of violent crimes

The New York City Council's Speaker Initiative awarded a contract to Rising Ground to open a Trauma Recovery Center (TRC) in downtown Brooklyn. The TRC is a nationally known, evidenced-based model that assists survivors in overcoming barriers to accessing mental health treatment, health care, and legal services while facilitating healing through comprehensive care, advocacy, and outreach.

Home visitors work with new parents to ensure well-being

Rising Ground assumed operation of the Healthy Families New York program, an evidence-based voluntary home visiting model that uses an infant mental health/relational development approach that promotes parent-child attachment to achieve its mission of preventing child abuse, neglect, and other adverse childhood outcomes.

Rising Ground opening second community hub to promote stability for families and connect neighbors

Rising Ground will operate a Family Enrichment Center (FEC) that in many ways will reflect the work of our Family Resource Center in the Soundview neighborhood of the Bronx. From its East Flatbush, Brooklyn location, the FEC will respond to community-identified needs, and will offer supports in a warm, inviting space where neighbors can connect, contribute to their community, find resources, support one another, and identify strategies that help community members thrive.



Financial Statements

For the fiscal year ending **June 30, 2022**



Public funding sources include the New York City Administration for Children's Services, New York City Department of Education, New York City Department of Youth and Community Development, New York City Human Resources Administration, New York City Department of Probation, New York City Mayor's Office of Criminal Justice, New York City Council, New York State Office of Children and Family Services, New York State Education Department, New York State Office for People With Developmental Disabilities, New York State Office of Victim Services, U.S. Department of Health & Human Services Office of Head Start and Office of Refugee Resettlement, Medicaid, Westchester County Department of Social Services, Westchester County Department of Health, and local school districts of Nassau, Westchester, Rockland, Putnam and Orange counties.

Operating Expenses

Intellectual & Developmental Disabilities
\$24,531,331

Children & Family Services
\$53,436,697

Juvenile Justice
\$15,289,679

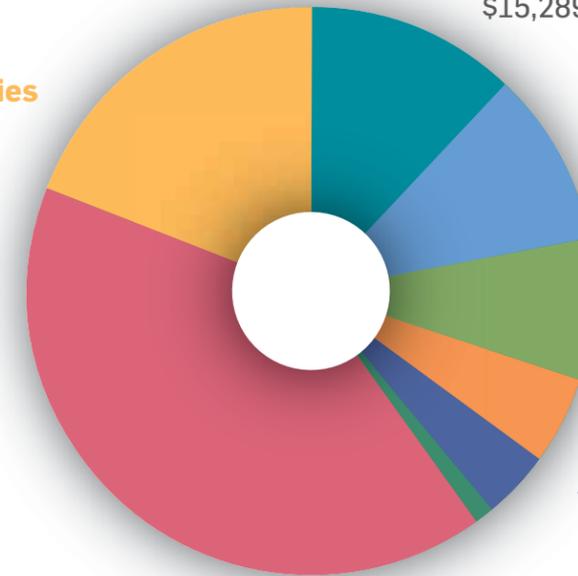
Management & General
\$13,688,360

Special Education
\$10,410,183

Early Childhood
\$7,063,933

Anti-Gender-Based Violence Services
\$5,799,922

Fundraising
\$781,822



89%
of funds received go to direct service

Rising Ground is funded through public sources, as well as through the generous support of individuals, foundations, and corporations.

Assets

Cash & Cash Equivalents	\$6,528,616
Investments	\$21,996,569
Accounts Receivable	\$22,731,947
Contributions Receivable	\$49,425
Prepaid Expenses	\$3,363,553
Assets Limited as to Use	\$13,612,612
Other Assets	\$8,410,816
Fixed Assets - Net	\$10,929,413

Total Assets \$87,622,951

Liabilities & Net Assets

Liabilities	\$86,309,279
Current Liabilities	\$61,470,509
Long-Term Liabilities	\$24,838,770
Net Assets	\$1,313,672
Unrestricted	(\$1,333,129)
Restricted	\$2,646,801

Total Liabilities & Net Assets \$87,622,951

While a large portion of Rising Ground's funding comes from public contracts, individual, foundation, and corporate contributions are critical to ensuring we can provide the highest quality of support to help New York City area children, adults, and families overcome adversity.

Operating Expenses

Program Services	\$116,531,745
Supporting Services	\$14,470,182
Management & General	\$13,688,360
Fundraising	\$781,822

Total Expenses \$131,001,927

Thank you for your support!

Learn more and donate at RisingGround.org/Donate

Revenue & Other Support

Program Services	\$125,150,156
including restricted contributed income	
Individual, Foundation & Corporate Contributions	\$9,276,368
Special Events	\$648,355
Direct Costs of Special Events	(\$148,984)
Other Income	\$127,499
In-Kind Contributions	\$23,662

Total Revenue \$134,966,861

Donors

Rising Ground is deeply grateful to all our supporters and partners!

For the fiscal year ending **June 30, 2022**

We have made every effort to create an accurate report of donors for the period from July 1, 2021, to June 30, 2022. If we have inadvertently omitted your name or listed it incorrectly, please bring this to our attention at Development@RisingGround.org.

\$100,000+

Neil & Roula Clark
The Edith Glick Shoolman Children's Foundation
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Special Thanks!

Thank you to our employees who took part in our Employee Giving Campaign!

Rising Ground employees contributed more than \$50,000 this year. Funds from this campaign support special initiatives in our programs, as well as assist persons in need during emergencies.

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Unexpected gift from noted philanthropist is largest since organization's founding

Since 2019, **MacKenzie Scott** has made more than 1,200 gifts worth billions of dollars to nonprofit organizations of varying sizes that have strong track records of serving those with under-supported needs. In March 2022, Rising Ground received an \$8 million gift from Ms. Scott. In current dollars, it is the largest single gift since the organization was founded in 1831 with a bequest from John Watts. "We are profoundly

grateful to Ms. Scott for this transformative gift supporting our mission-focused programs and services," said CEO Alan Mucatel. "With the support of Ms. Scott and our many friends and donors, Rising Ground will continue to help New Yorkers to move upward and forward in their lives as we assist them to create foundations for positive personal change and growth."

\$500 - \$999

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