



# 2021 IMPACT REPORT

**OHIO VICTIM WITNESS ASSOCIATION**

*ovwa.org*

*614-787-9000*

*info@ovwa.org*



*what we do:*

# PROMOTING EXCELLENCE



*Dear partner,*

In 2021, many communities experienced huge spikes in homicides and other forms of crime. Instances of family and domestic violence increased during stay-home orders in 2020 and continued to be high in 2021. When someone experiences a crime—whether it is elder abuse, fraud, sexual assault, drunk driving, stalking, or something else—they can access support services from a trained crime victim advocate. The advocate's role is incredibly important as the crime victim seeks justice and healing—and that is why our organization exists.

**Since 1978, Ohio Victim Witness Association (OVWA) has been a leading resource for crime victim advocates in the state of Ohio.** For more than 41 years, OVWA has sought to professionalize the field of advocacy by ensuring that advocates receive the highest quality training, technical assistance, access to best practices, and are represented in public policy efforts to improve victim services and uphold victim rights.

Ohio advocates provide a crucial service to victims in their time of need—ensuring that their voices are heard and that they are empowered to move from victimization to survivorship. Survivors are the faces behind the crime statistics, who experience physical and emotional injuries long after the crime.

As Ohio's advocate coalition, OVWA strives to ensure that advocates are well-prepared to provide ethical and impactful services. To this end, OVWA continuously seeks to uplift the field of advocacy and ensure that survivors receive consistent victim-centered and trauma-sensitive advocacy when they need it most.

We have accomplished so much, but we have more to do—keep reading to find out how you can help!

In service,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Elyse McConnell". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

**Elyse McConnell, MBA**  
**Executive Director**

2021 in review:

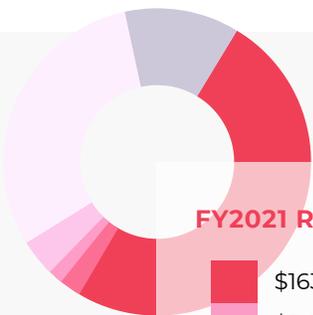
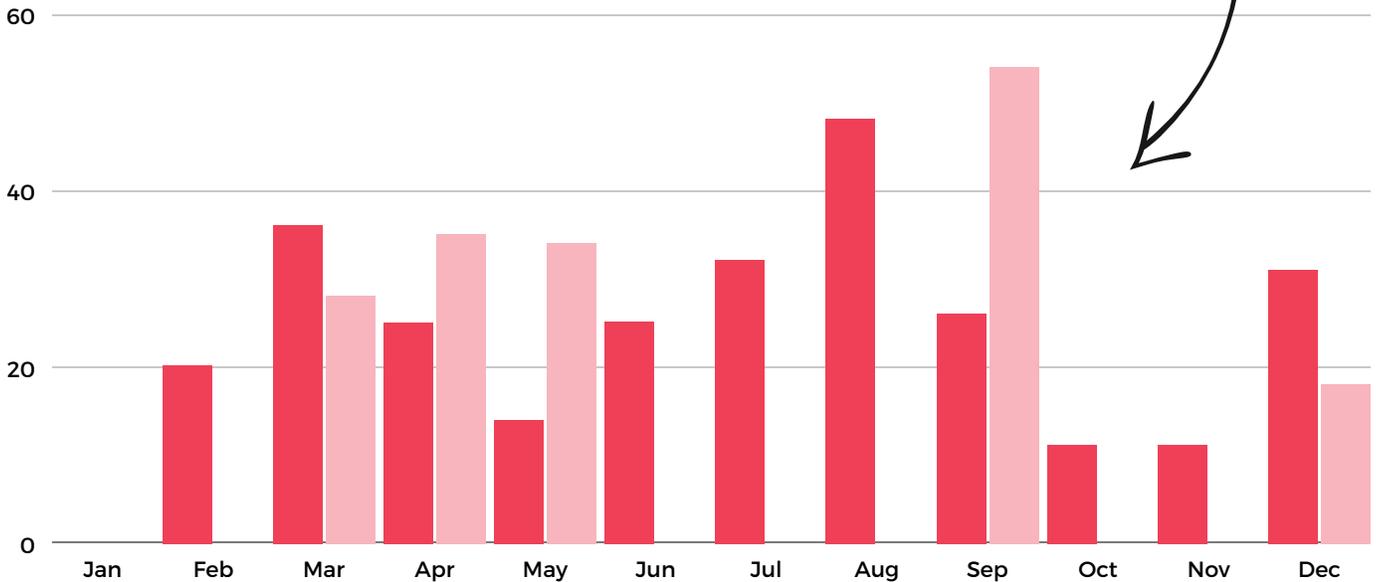
# OUR IMPACT

**Legislation:** In 2021, we advocated for **Aisha's Law**, which would require life-saving changes to how law enforcement respond to domestic violence calls. We supported language in a **bail reform** law that would take the safety of victims into account when determining bail. We worked to progress a law that would expressly **address strangulation**. We supported the essential **VOCA Fix** to ensure future funding for crime victim services. We advocated for amendments to **Marsy's Law**, which protects the rights of victims.

**16**  
*training events*

---

**448**  
*received training*



**FY2021 Revenue: \$328,681**

- \$163,546 VOCA Grant
- \$5,087 JAG Grant
- \$100,000 Contracts
- \$12,732 Donations
- \$7,531 Membership Dues
- \$39,654 All-Star Gaming

In 2021, we published "**Addressing the Needs of Homicide Co-Victims in Ohio**," based on our landmark needs assessment and policy recommendations. This publication is especially timely as we respond to an increased number of homicides in many communities.

**ADDRESSING THE NEEDS OF HOMICIDE CO-VICTIMS IN OHIO**

Landmark Needs Assessment & Policy Recommendations

Ohio Victim Witness Association  
September 2021

*2022 and beyond:*

## OUR ROADMAP

There is so much that we plan to do. With over **440 active members** in 2022, we will evaluate advocate needs and plan trainings; develop resources; and respond to advocate questions in order to ensure ethical and impactful services. We are advancing several legislative efforts that will protect the rights of victims and witnesses. We will be publishing and promoting a new best practice guide, aimed at best serving homicide co-victims. And, we have many other unique initiatives in the works!

**Our Mission:** To be an Ohio leader for crime victims, advocates, and allied professionals by promoting best practices that result in meaningful rights and quality services.

## DONATE

**At OVWA, your gift does more.** In 2021, less than 10% of all revenue to our agency was used towards our agency's administrative expenses. Please consider supporting our essential services by making a tax-deductible donation through our website at [ovwa.org](https://ovwa.org) or make checks payable to:

**Ohio Victim Witness Association**  
90 Northwoods Blvd, Suite B-6  
Columbus, OH 43235

## VOLUNTEER

**Seeking dedicated, change-minded volunteers!**

Utilize your skills or develop new skills by volunteering with OVWA. We have opportunities that fit your interests and your time—from event planning to internships to ongoing tasks. We are especially seeking volunteers in several key areas: public policy; social media and marketing; fundraising; and law.

OVWA has a number of topical committees, and our Board of Directors is accepting applications.

[ovwa.org](https://ovwa.org)  
614-787-9000  
[info@ovwa.org](mailto:info@ovwa.org)



[@ovwa1978](https://twitter.com/ovwa1978)

