



Prevent Child Abuse
Vermont™

Presentation to the Vermont Legislature 2026

Developed by Jonathan Williams, Executive Director

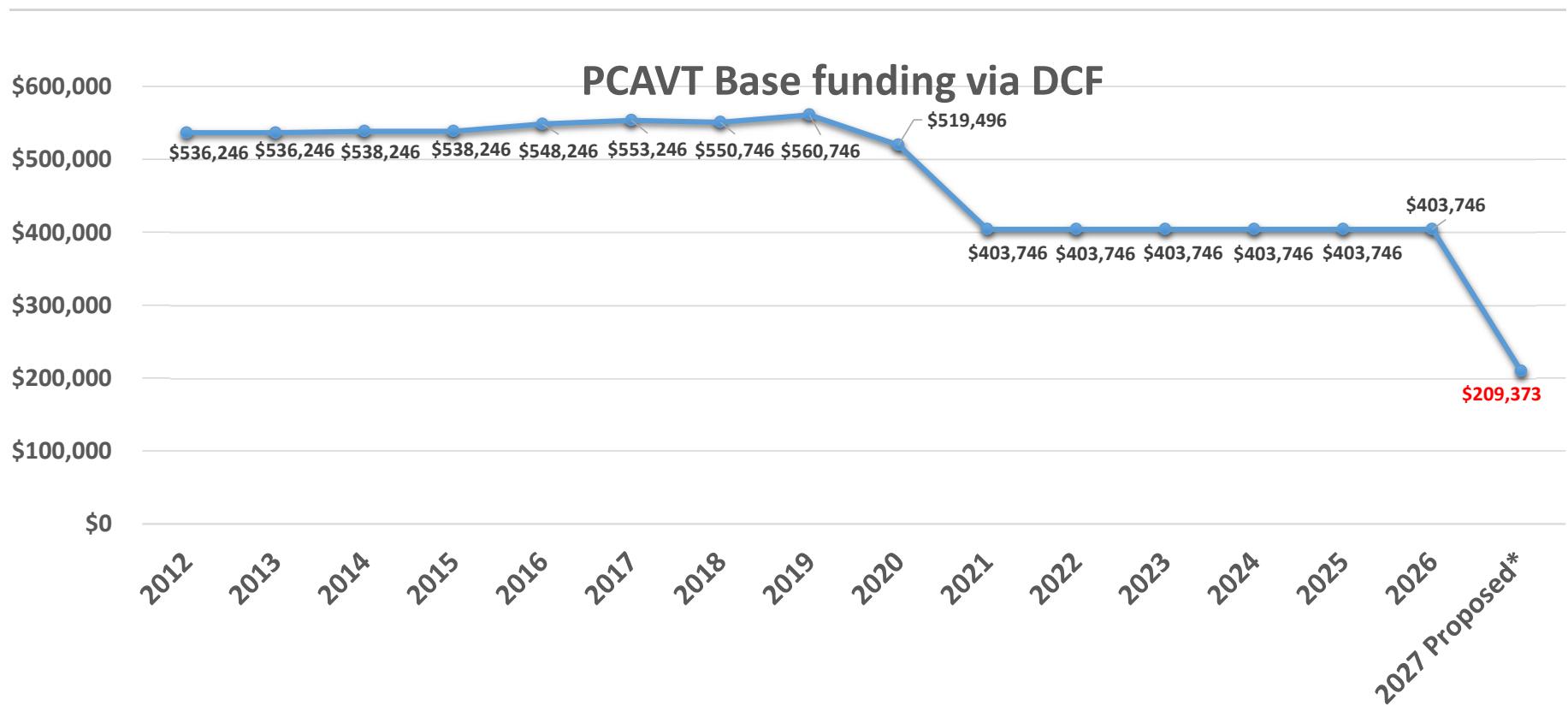
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PCAVT at a glance

- Prevent Child Abuse serves the entire state of Vermont, in all 14 counties; this year is our **50th** anniversary.
- In 2025 PCAVT served **7,694** adults, **3,451** children, and indirectly impacted an additional 86,481 children.
- 4 Key Programs:
 - Family Support Programs: Parenting education, support, and skill-building classes in community locations, parent child centers, corrections facilities, turning point centers, and other locations
 - Healthy Relationships Project: teaches abuse prevention and healthy relationship skills to students and educators in schools, day care facilities, and online
 - Safe Environments for Infants and Toddlers: teaches shaken baby prevention, safe sleep practices, and coping strategies
 - Vermont Parents' Home Companion: a trusted, published resource for parents and caregivers for more than 35 years.
- 10 employees, \$1.1 million budget.

What is being proposed

- Governor's FY27 Recommend cuts **50%** of PCAVT's base appropriation funding (**-\$194,373**).
- This funding is **1/5th** of PCAVT's budget. Impacts **3** very different programs:
 - Abuse prevention curricula and trainings for students and educators
 - Family Support Programs for parents in corrections facilities, parents and caregivers impacted by substance use disorder, facilitated peer support groups for parents
 - Safe sleep and shaken baby syndrome classes for students.



Our request of the legislature

- Do not cut PCAVT base funding
- Funding already cut once in 2020
- Funding has not increased in decades.

What these cuts will mean to PCAVT

- Impact to programming is disproportionate because staff and infrastructure can't shrink neatly, the service impact is usually larger than the budget cut. Estimated **30%** reduction in programming (conservative estimate)
- PCAVT has already had to restructure and lay off two staff persons last year due to funding delays imposed by state and federal government grants and reductions in philanthropic support. Cuts will potentially result in additional layoffs.
- The proposed cuts mean approximately **2,308** fewer Vermont adults and **1,035** fewer children in Vermont served, with **26,000** fewer children indirectly supported.



Ways to remediate proposed cuts

- A slight reduction in the \$31.4 million expansion of new shelter management contracts (PCAVT's cuts represent 0.6% of the housing initiative- legislature could scale back the startup costs of standing up shelter management contracts that have not yet been signed (i.e. administrative overhead)).
- Adjustments to the \$105M Property Tax Relief Fund - by shaving 0.2% off the \$105 million, legislature could redress both PCAVT's cuts and the Post-Permanence cuts that impact orgs like Easter Seals and Lund who also provide essential services for children and families
- Could use a fraction of the \$375m unreserved carryforward in FY27

Key Statistics

Child Sexual Abuse prevention programming works

- Research conducted by a team of researchers from Florida International University and John's Hopkins, in partnership with PCAVT, indicates that training adults reduces substantiated child sexual abuse.
- In seven Vermont counties, providing approximately two additional adult prevention trainings correlated to a decrease of one substantiated case. Additionally, three particular topics were also associated with reduced substantiated cases in Vermont ([source](#)).

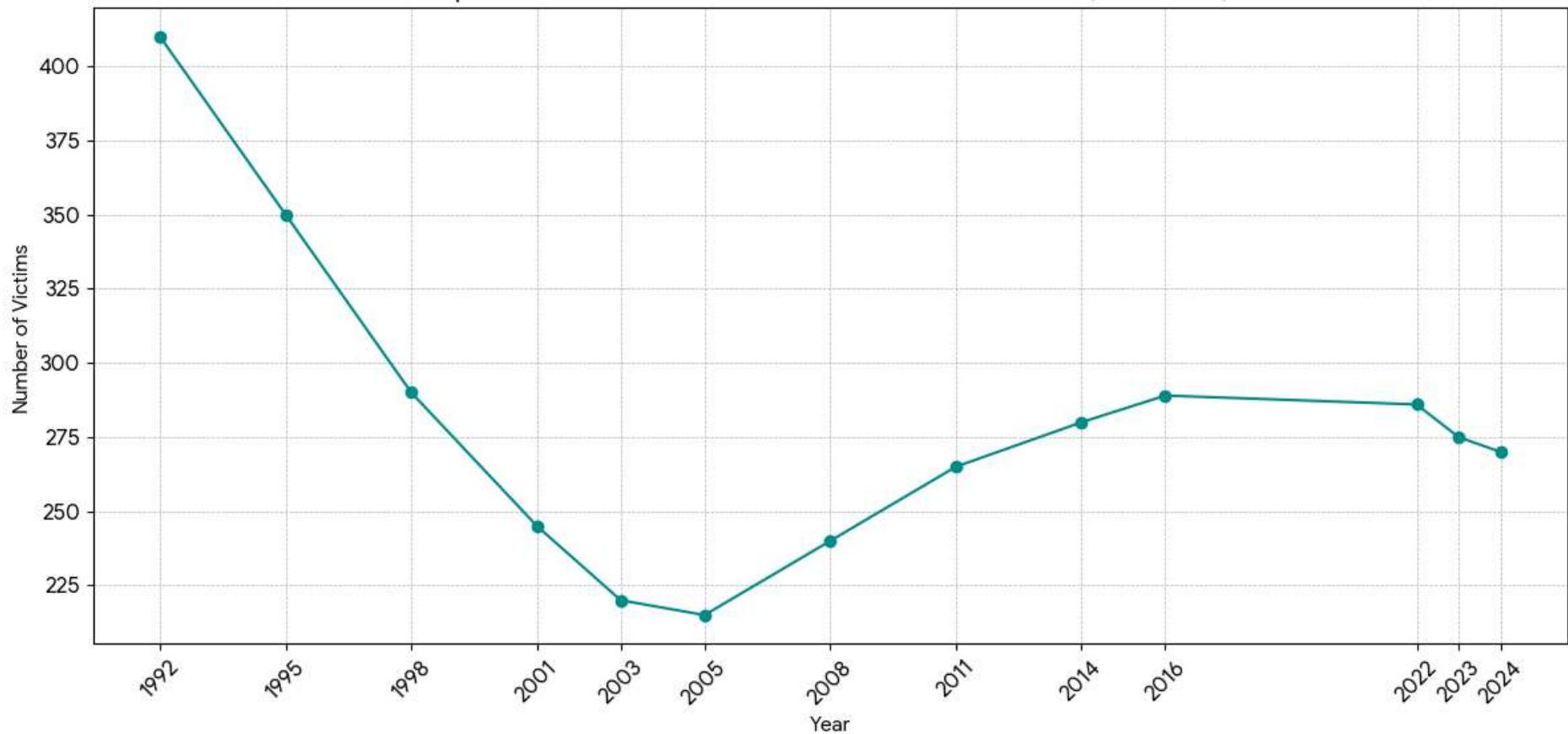
Abuse prevention saves the State of Vermont money

- Study from the University of Georgia (2019) highlights child sexual abuse in US costs up to \$1.5 million per child death, study finds. Costs include aggregate health care costs, productivity losses, child welfare costs, violence/crime costs, special education costs and suicide death costs ([source](#)).

More Key Statistics

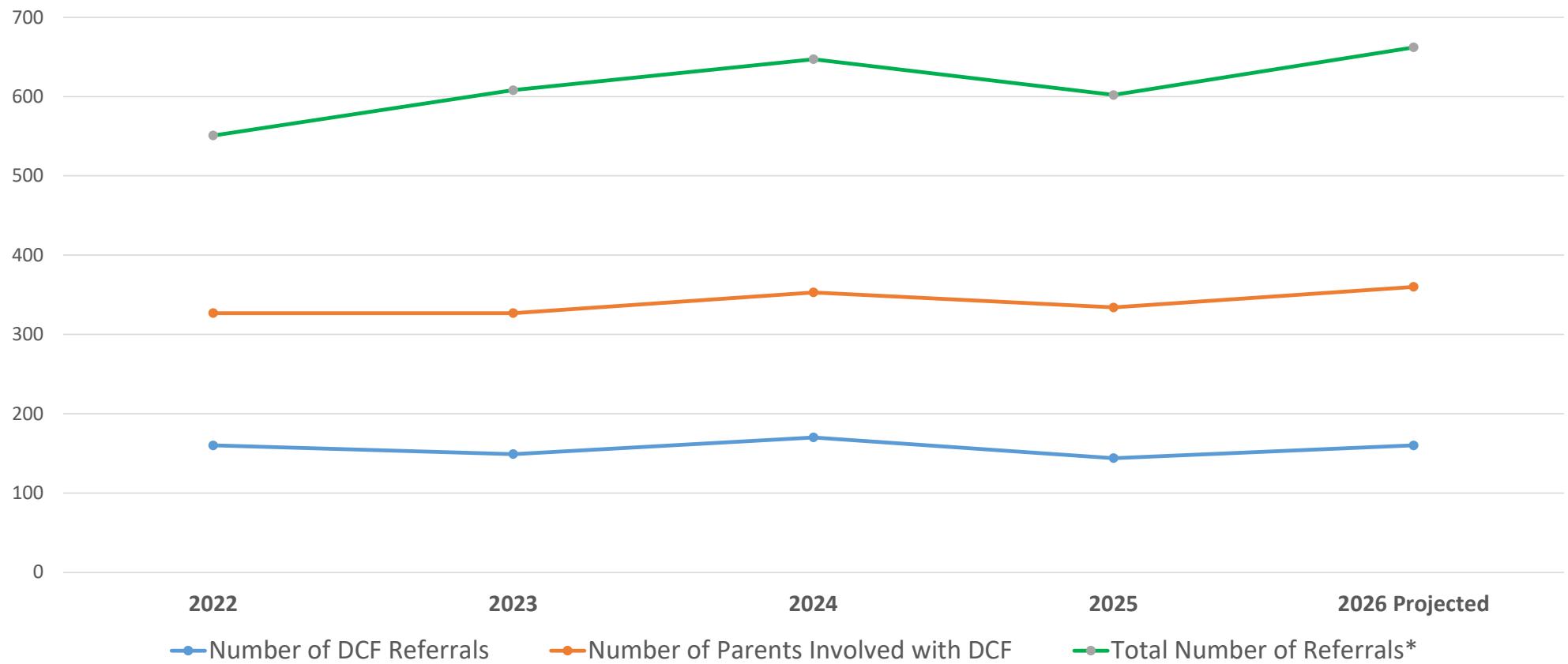
- According to [CDC data from last year](#), the lifetime cost of rape is **\$122,461** per survivor, including costs related to medical care, lost productivity from work, and criminal justice expenses. Some estimates range as high as **\$280,000** for incidents of infant abuse.
- The public cost of domestic and sexual violence in Vermont totals about **\$111 million** per year, per a [2021 economic impact analysis](#) published by the Vermont Network Against Domestic and Sexual Violence
- Preventing **100 incidents a year** under the lifetime cost amortized estimate → ~**\$500,000** per year in long-term avoided costs.
- In Vermont There has been a **72%** decrease in victims since 1992 and a **76%** reduction in children who sexually harm other children since 1990. PCAVT has received state funding since the mid 90's.
- In 2009, Vermont was the first state to enact a comprehensive health education policy that includes CSA prevention (An Act Relating to Improving Vermont's Sexual Abuse Response System, V.T. Act 1, § 13, 2009). The 2009 Act required annual training for all teachers and staff working in daycares and K-12 school settings on CSA prevention and reporting guidelines.

Expanded Trend: Substantiated CSA Victims in Vermont (1992–2024)



*Data via Dept. for Children & Families (DCF)/National Child Abuse and Neglect Data System (NCANDS)

PCAVT Participant DCF Referrals, Involvement



*Total Referrals include persons referred by: EasterSeals, VDH, WIC, CVOEO, Head Start, Lund, Probation & Parole, Family Court and VT public schools Elementary through High School, among others



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PCAVT requests that our funding remain level funded in FY 2027.



We able to answer any additional questions or requests for data.



Thank you for your time, work, and consideration.