

# Enduring



# & Evolving

# Our mission endures

# Our approach evolves



This has certainly been a year like no other! Like so many others, in March, we found ourselves facing unforeseen changes, challenges and opportunities as the world grappled with a global pandemic. And as we saw schools and businesses in our communities shut down, and the community struggle with levels of stress, anxiety and uncertainty previously unknown, we grounded ourselves in our enduring mission while focusing on how The Conflict Center could continue to serve and meet the needs of our clients and the larger community.

They say that necessity is the mother of invention. At The Conflict Center, it was also the catalyst for innovation. We are proud of our ability to quickly adapt and evolve programming in all areas. For example, our Addressing Conflict and Anger Effectively classes were only paused for one week as we made the transition from in-person to virtual. Our Restorative Denver cases continued as we immediately shifted all conferences to a virtual format. In fact, all programs found a new virtual venue or transitioned to meet immediate needs as we worked with participants, schools and the community. In addition, recognizing the relevance and necessity of our mission, we launched new offerings

and resources to provide dialogue and support throughout this difficult time. Many surprising strengths and benefits have resulted from these new approaches. On-line platforms have pushed us to add new tools to our toolbox and allow us to expand our reach to new populations and locations. As a result, participation has grown from individuals and schools who traditionally would not have had access to our in-person programs and trainings, including participants from across the country.

Our Evaluation Committee is engaged in a process of analyzing and strengthening evaluation tools for the Youth Skill Building Program. This work was carried out through technical assistance from the Impact Rapid Cohort funded by the Tony Grampas Youth Services Fund, allowing us to create sustainable evaluation practices that can be replicated in other programs.

Amidst the changes and challenges, we have remained committed to our values and recognize the necessity of acknowledging and addressing racial and structural inequities. TCC has been engaged in ongoing professional and organizational development to strengthen our policies and practices through an equity lens and we know

our innovation is not complete without a focus on equity and inclusion. In March we were selected to participate in The Denver Foundation's Landscape Project on racial equity in Metro Denver. With the Foundation's support, TCC and more than a dozen other area organizations are undertaking research and learning projects to embed practices that promote internal and external racial equity. Our participation in this Cohort helps amplify our deliberate, continuous engagement in all aspects of our work.

We know that we are moving in the right direction. We have seen an increased level of interest and inquiries from both long-time and new donors and volunteers who see the clear social and emotional needs of children, youth, families, schools and workplaces and share our determination to respond to these needs through creativity, innovation and equitable solutions. Working together we will not only weather these challenges, we will strengthen and evolve our practices to better serve all of you.

With Gratitude,

Beth Yohe, Executive Director

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# Program Highlights

## Demographics

Despite the upheaval in services and school programming, a total of 3,088 individuals were directly served in the past fiscal year with the following demographic breakdown:

### RACE

Asian/Pacific Islands 3%  
Black 18%  
Latinx 39%  
White 33%  
Native American 2%  
Other/Mixed 5%

### ECONOMIC STATUS

Of those served in the past year, 71% were people facing low income life experiences.

### AGE

0 – 13	23%
14 – 18	33%
19 – 59	42%
60+	2%

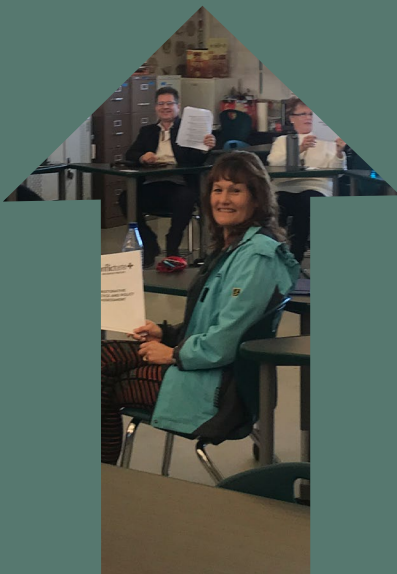
### GENDER

Female 49%  
Male 49%  
Other 2%

## Volunteers

A total of 121 volunteers provided 5,113 hours of service, valued at approximately \$139,074\*, serving in all program, fundraising and administrative areas.

\*based on the Independent Sector's estimated value of volunteer hours.



## ADDRESSING CONFLICT AND ANGER EFFECTIVELY

### Highlights:

- ▶ Skill Building classes were all adapted to online platforms in response to the pandemic.
- ▶ New virtual platforms enabled us to serve participants across the country including Washington, Florida, New York, Nebraska, and Maryland.
- ▶ A total of 769 individuals and 17 agencies were served through tailored community-based workshops, using both in-person and online formats.
- ▶ COVID-specific offerings were designed for individuals and businesses to provide opportunities for support, skill-building and relationship building; 130 individuals participated in these online offerings which included Community Conversations and de-escalation techniques for small businesses reopening during the pandemic.
- ▶ Eleven new contract instructors were trained to build a diverse pool of 15 instructors.

### Youth Classes:

*"It's okay to have conflict, it's how you handle it that's good or bad."* - Youth participant  
*"I learned the secondary emotion of anger and identifying the primary emotion."* - Parent

- ▶ A total of 98 youth and their parents/guardians were served through in-person and virtual classes, in both weekly and weekend formats through a total of nine classes.
- ▶ 87% of youth completing the series showed increases in understanding healthy alternatives to violence; 73% showed increased use of critical decision making skills.

### Adult Classes:

*"I learned techniques that I can use in my professional and personal life, vocabulary and lessons to refer to in the future."* - Adult participant

- ▶ 71 adults were served through in-person and virtual classes, in both weekly and weekend formats through a total of nine classes.
- ▶ 72% of adults participants showed an increased ability to recognize effective ways of dealing with conflict and expressing anger; 63% showed increased understanding of the connection between internal feelings and outward expressions of anger.

## RESTORATIVE PRACTICES IN SCHOOLS

*"I'm excited to modify what I've been doing for years in my classroom with RP guidelines to be even more effective and intentional in building relationships with and between students."*

- RP201 participant

- ▶ 22 schools sent staff to basic RP 101, 201 and 301 trainings, serving a total of 280 people.
- ▶ 13 school districts were represented.
- ▶ Five schools participated in our 5-Strategy Approach, including schools from Denver, Aurora and California.
- ▶ It is estimated that this work impacted approximately 17,000 students based on the enrollment numbers from participating schools.
- ▶ Overall, responses to TCC's basic RP 101, 201 and 301 trainings reflected a positive interest in applying restorative skills both personally and professionally.

## RESTORATIVE DENVER PROGRAM

*"I feel different doing the program than court - I feel like I am not treated like a criminal - this program gave me respect. This process was a great choice for me."* - Program participant

- ▶ A pool of 21 RD Facilitators were trained to handle RD cases.
- ▶ 33 cases were referred between November 2019 and June 2020.
- ▶ 17 cases were successfully resolved and sealed while the remainder are still in process.

## SOCIAL NORMING AND HOT SPOT MAPPING PROGRAMS

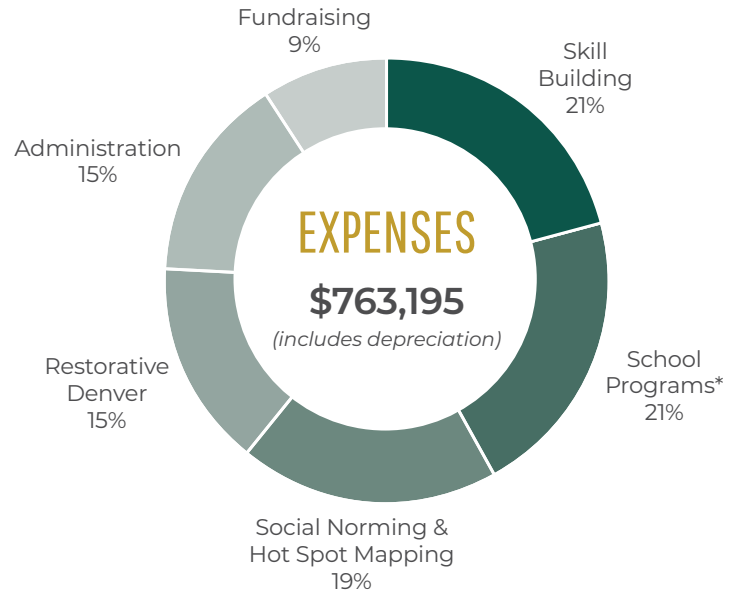
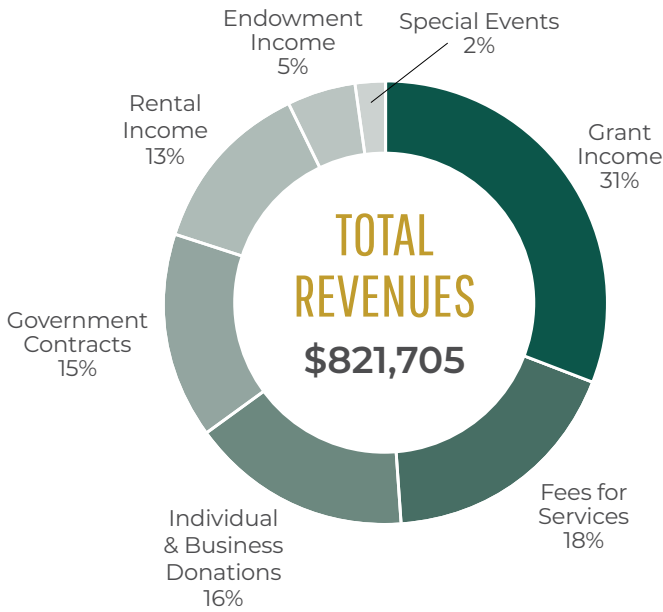
*"The work you've done with the Social Norming Campaign has been highly visible and impactful in the school. The support you've given our families during quarantine has been simply amazing."* - Vice Principal, Career Education Center Early College

- ▶ Served two high schools, Career Education Center (CEC) and Northeast Early Colleges.
- ▶ Reached a total of 954 students.
- ▶ Implemented a youth leader model, through workgroups at both schools.
- ▶ 100% recall rate of Social Norming messages created by students at CEC.
- ▶ Launched a new virtual Hot Spot Mapping survey, in partnership with students, that maps safe and unsafe locations within the school based on emotions felt in those spaces.
- ▶ 91% of students surveyed had a safe adult they could identify to talk to at school.
- ▶ Distributed \$5,000 in COVID relief funds to students at partner schools through TGYS.

## READING FOR PEACE

*"I think literature and storytelling are some of the best ways to build compassion in children."*  
*"Reading for Peace aligns with skills we have been learning and practicing and a great way to check in with class culture and conflict management skills."* - teachers at participating schools

- ▶ In the shortened program year, Reading for Peace served eight schools in Denver and Jefferson Counties, including public and private schools.
- ▶ A total of 720 students were served.
- ▶ Work was begun on creating a training manual to be used to train older students to read to younger students.



\*Includes Restorative Practices and Reading for Peace

## Who We Are

**Vision:** Communities embrace conflict as an opportunity to sustain safe and thriving relationships.

**Mission:** Equip people with practical skills to navigate, transform and embrace everyday conflict.

**History:** The Conflict Center was started 33 years ago, inspired by the vision of founder, Elizabeth Loescher, who started The Conflict Center in 1987 in the basement of her home. The original school curriculum was entitled Peacemaking Made Practical, which still embodies the spirit and approach of all TCC's programs today. Over the years, The Conflict Center has continued to evolve programming to fit the changing needs of families, schools, businesses and communities while maintaining our fundamental philosophy of conflict transformation. As one example, in the past year the Restorative Denver Program was started to offer alternatives within the criminal justice system, moving away from punishment and incarceration to dialogue, accountability and problem solving. We continue our long standing commitment to provide at least half of our services to people facing low income life experiences.



**Our Approach:** Through our classes, workshops and trainings, we empower individuals to see and use conflict as an opportunity to grow, learn, and create positive change in their lives. We partner with schools to foster a community of inclusion, where students feel safe to be themselves. We shift school culture to build nurturing, positive relationships, and to implement a restorative culture where students are held accountable within the school community, making punitive discipline the exception rather than the norm. At The Conflict Center, we believe that all of us are capable of and responsible for building healthy relationships in our homes, schools, congregations, workplaces, and communities. We continue to evaluate programs measuring if new skills were learned and applied and by asking two key questions: Did it solve the problem? Did it build the relationship?

**Commitment to Inclusivity:** In keeping with our values, The Conflict Center is committed to inclusion and equity and to social justice in the elimination of organizational structures and actions that oppress, exclude, limit, or discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion, creed, sex, national origin, ancestry, age, status as an officer or enlisted members of the military forces, veteran status, disability, genetic information, sexual orientation, gender identity, family status, or any other characteristic protected by law. We welcome all who share our mission and vision. We are committed to providing our services to all people where individual differences are respected and valued.