

2021 year at a glance

CONNECTION AND HEALING

Our Community Engagement team fostered togetherness and healing despite the pandemic. **They created 36 virtual gatherings where more than 250 people took part** in writing workshops, performances on survivorship, and featured performances in partnership with the Guild Literary Complex and The Voices and Faces Project. Additional public programs were offered, such as a series on victims' rights and a supportive group for survivors working in the anti gender-based violence movement. CAASE also collaborated with allied organizations to spark change throughout the city.

Community Engagement **helped develop and lead the #ProtectBlackGirlsCoalition**, which holds systems and institutions accountable for protecting and affirming the rights of Black girls. They also presented on the power of community engagement and collaboration to people who regularly interact with survivors. CAASE engaged our community through news media too, **appearing in more than two dozen published pieces**. Our Community Engagement Director, Nikki Patin, was interviewed by the Chicago Reader, WTTW, WBEZ, Fox SOUL, and Newsy.

EMPOWERING YOUTH TO END SEXUAL HARM

CAASE met varying needs by facilitating workshops in virtual, hybrid, and in-person settings. In every forum, school staff praised our programing, leading to work with eight new schools and the learning organization Embarc. In total, we **empowered 4,487 young participants—that's twice as many as last year!** Our virtual reach is extending beyond Chicago too. We're exploring partnerships in Canada, New York, New Jersey, and Germany.

We're fostering our growing reach while **staying tuned to students' interests, concerns, and feedback**. They led us to develop our new session on pornography's impacts on sexual behavior and our Sexting & Digital Harassment workshop. In 2021, it empowered 1,029 students to make respectful choices while communicating. Student feedback motivates us to keep innovating. Like this note from a Junior at Nelson Mandela School: **"I think the best way for me to be able to help other girls... [is] to educate myself first. I think this is the perfect opportunity to do so."** We look forward to providing more students with the knowledge to become allies against sexual harm.

BETTER LAWS FOR SURVIVORS

We worked tirelessly with allies to advocate for survivors through public policy, and it paid off. The Illinois General Assembly **passed five of the six bills CAASE prioritized!** Our efforts included two bills centered on criminal justice reform, one on protecting and enforcing victim's rights and one on survivor privacy. The fifth was the **Ensuring Success in School Law, for which CAASE led the statewide campaign**. It provides a roadmap for schools accommodating K-12 students who have experienced gender-based violence or harassment and those who are pregnant or parenting so they can complete their education.

On the local level, we worked with the wider anti-gender-based violence advocacy community to gain city support for services. With a total of \$25 million in new funding plus \$10 million in existing funding, adult survivors of sexual harm will see **city dollars dedicated to supporting their needs and healing for the first time** ever through Chicago's 2022 budget. It's a significant first step in working towards genuine community safety.

WORKING TOGETHER FOR JUSTICE

Last year, our Legal Services team took on 286 matters while serving 199 clients, a **28% increase over 2020**. They addressed a range of legal issues, including removing a trafficking survivor's image from multiple online newspapers and helping police locate and test a rape kit. Our Pro Bono Project also **connected 22 private attorneys with meaningful work supporting survivors**. But the impact goes beyond individual cases as we strive together to improve the broader landscape for survivors.

Our attorneys served **more clients from historically underserved communities**. That's thanks to working with our Community Engagement team, whose outreach focused on the south side of Chicago—which is disproportionately impacted by sexual harm—leading to increased referrals. Our legal and public policy departments also partnered to **amend a bill related to Rape Crisis Privilege, helping protect survivors' privacy**. It was signed into law by the Governor in 2021. CAASE's multi-faceted approach to ending sexual harm allows for powerful and effective collaborations like these.



199
survivors
received our
legal services



250+
survivors
connected in
virtual events



2x
more youth
empowered
with education



5
CAASE
supported bills
became law



CAASE addresses the culture, institutions, and individuals that perpetrate, profit from, or support sexual exploitation. Our work includes prevention, policy reform, community engagement, and legal services.



About CAASE

VISION

CAASE envisions a community free from all forms of sexual exploitation, including sexual assault and the commercial sex trade.

MISSION

CAASE addresses the culture, institutions, and individuals that perpetrate, profit from, or support sexual exploitation. Our work includes prevention, policy reform, community engagement, and legal services.

OUR WORK

Prevention Education

CAASE creates and implements educational curricula that empower high-school-age students to help put an end to sexual violence and exploitation.

Public Policy and Advocacy

CAASE advocates for legislative and policy reforms that provide support for survivors of sexual harm, and hold systems accountable for addressing and ultimately preventing the root causes of sexual violence.

Community Engagement

CAASE encourages a better understanding of sexual harm among diverse communities and helps them take action against it.

Legal Services

CAASE represents survivors of sexual violence and exploitation in civil litigation, as victims' rights representatives in the criminal justice system, and as advocates for public policies that increase the efficacy of criminal and civil laws pertaining to sexual violence and exploitation.

VALUES

Social and institutional systems do not adequately serve survivors of sexual violation which disproportionately harms people from marginalized communities, including girls and women, people of color, LGBTQ+ people, people with disabilities, people living in poverty, immigrants and undocumented people. To best support survivors, CAASE confronts the inequities that fuel or intersect with sexual harm. Our dedication to this work is reflected in our values.

Dignity

We respect the inherent humanity of all people and strive to expand opportunities for personal autonomy.

Accountability

We answer to survivors and collaborate with allies as we seek to hold those responsible for harm accountable.

Progress

We create individual, institutional and cultural change by using innovative approaches to ending sexual harm.

Equity

We commit to building a world where every person, with consideration for their intersecting identities and unique circumstances, has the same access to opportunity and power.

Learn more at caase.org
and follow us @thecaase

