



freekind™

FREEDOM • HOPE • BELONGING

# Annual Report

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# 2023

[www.freekindva.org](http://www.freekindva.org)

EIN 45-5223463

“

*Mercy  
triumphs over  
judgment.*

”

*JAMES 2:13*



# *You are making the impossible possible!*

With every swallow of alcohol Mindy felt herself growing numb to the pain. It had become her nightly routine to escape from the nightmares on repeat from her past. Numbness felt better than feeling, and she was determined to stay numb.

Even the love Mindy felt for her children scared her because she knew it could all disappear in a second. She learned that early in life. People were not to be trusted. They use you and disappear. Family was there until the money ran out. Mindy was so afraid to feel anything, frightened that she would return to her past. Numbness was the only way to quiet her fears.

Then one day, Mindy woke up and couldn't remember what happened or where she was. She soon realized that she was in jail. People told her stories of what happened, but it was all so fuzzy. Fear gripped her body and she started shaking. HER CHILDREN. Where were her children? All the memories she tried so hard to repress came back to her, and she became violently ill. Were they in foster care now too? Would they be forced to sell themselves like she did to keep a roof over their heads?

Mindy was terrified and didn't know what to do. She begged to see a lawyer and soon the story of her past came out; a story that trapped her in shame for years. Mindy was convinced that something terrible would happen if anyone found out. It was beaten into her repeatedly that she could tell no one, so she buried it deep inside her scarred soul, unable to acknowledge it even to herself.

Until now.

Mindy slowly shared with her attorney what happened in her foster home. And that she had never talked about the trafficking and trauma that still haunted her. Her fears for her children. Her desire to get help. Mindy's lawyer listened intently, and then told her about Freekind.

Once she connected with Freekind, the case manager worked with the courts to get her accepted to a treatment program where she could participate in trauma therapy. Mindy was able to find a safe placement for her children which allowed her to focus on healing. Instead of using drugs and alcohol to numb the pain, Mindy realized that working through her trauma would give her the relief she so desired. It was less about being numb and more about being free.

Mindy found a community of support she had never before experienced. She no longer felt alone and isolated by her trafficking experience. She now knows healing is possible.

## A Message from Our Executive Director



*Lisa Kersey*

**Resilience.** That was our “word of the year” in 2023. We went through an organizational restructure to better position us to meet the increasing demand for our services. We onboarded new team members and crafted our new 3-year strategic plan. We also took a few intentional pauses to invest in trauma and resiliency tools, because the work we do is heavy. Beyond the mental toll of the subject matter itself and the emotional toll of the stories we hear from clients, the challenges of being a community nonprofit with no state or federal funding can be daunting. Yet we press on, because of supporters like you, who continue to invest in our mission.

And because survivors like “Sky” graduate from college and regain custody of their children. Because students like Marcus decide not to become part of the “family business,” as a result of our prevention program. And because our community needs us to continue educating, equipping and empowering them to understand what trafficking looks like right here in Virginia. Together, we can make our Commonwealth the safest place for our children to grow up and for survivors to heal. And we can be the last community where a trafficker even considers selling people for profit.





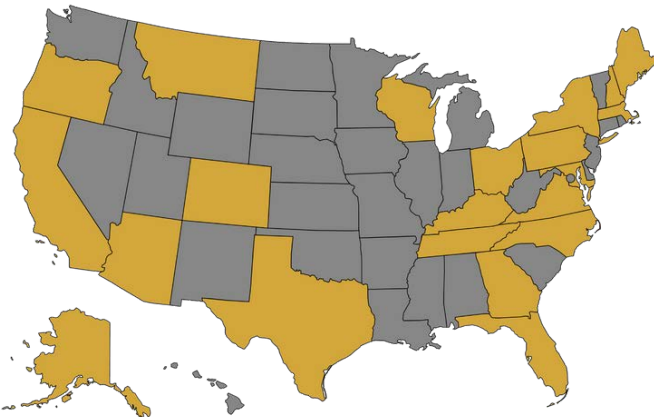
Since its inception, the Prevention Project program has equipped 1,500 classrooms, empowered more than 55,000 students and reached youth across 21 states through the 2022-23 school year! These students are now educated on the realities of human trafficking, equipped to understand the signs, and empowered to keep themselves and their friends safe! Prevention is a powerful tool that not only equips youth to avoid predators and recognize unhealthy relationships, but it also disrupts would-be buyers and would-be traffickers, like Marcus. Marcus came from a family where “pimping” was the family business, and it was normalized. According to his teacher, Marcus went from being resistant to the program to becoming the biggest driving force in his class to stop trafficking.

“

“We have to focus more on stopping trafficking in its early stages and stopping kids from perpetrating this!”

- Prevention Project Teacher

”



Prevention efforts continued in 2023 with the creation of a new edition of the program designed specifically for youth in the juvenile justice system, who are at increased risk compared to their peers. We are currently preparing to pilot the new edition, with the goal of making it available across the Commonwealth of Virginia by the end of 2024. We also continued our partnerships with local colleges and universities in 2023 to raise awareness and equip young adults, faculty and leadership on the unique vulnerabilities of this age group and how to better protect our college campuses from traffickers.

Youth and young adults are uniquely vulnerable to exploitation. That’s why the Prevention Project program exists, and why we are working to fill gaps in education that will help prevent the next generation from being trafficked.

If you have a heart for prevention, please email us, [prevention@freekindva.org](mailto:prevention@freekindva.org)

## Prevention Ambassador of the Year!



Anna Nalle, Transformation Freedom Initiative

# The Year in Review

Freekind would not have a story to tell apart from those we have the privilege of serving and supporting. Whether it's teaching students in the classroom, engaging with our donors and community partners, supporting survivors on their journey to freedom, or serving alongside our volunteers, the narratives of our lives are inextricably woven together in a beautiful tapestry. Our story is their story, and it is also **your** story.

And just like any good story, 2023 for Freekind was full of epic highs and deep valleys, plot twists we didn't see coming, and most of all, enduring love. We were reminded time and again that this work is both hard and holy, and there were great losses that we still mourn even as we turn our eyes towards a new year.

Because of what our work requires, we made intentional strides in 2023 to strengthen our team and continue building a trauma-responsive workplace. For us, being trauma-informed is only a first step. It's what we do with that knowledge that matters. How we show up for one another impacts how we show up for those we serve. And we serve people with complex trauma, who deserve our best, so that they have a reason to believe in themselves and in their future. That they have value and purpose. That they are loved and not alone.

As you read through these pages, we hope you will both celebrate and mourn the story they tell. It is one of survivors choosing freedom and others who didn't make it. It is about financial partners who could not look away, and school systems who declared "not on my watch." And it's the story of individuals like you, who made the impossible possible.

**76** New victims of human trafficking & commercial sexual exploitation identified and offered services

**46** Survivors began long-term restorative programs, and another 28 successfully completed them

**136** Court advocacy efforts resulting in 99% improved sentencing outcomes for survivors!

**1,085** Instances of tangible support for food, clothing, housing, transportation, healthcare, life skills and pathways to work



# Our Vision for Awareness Education

American author Flannery O'Connor once said, "The truth does not change according to our ability to stomach it emotionally." At the heart of our awareness education efforts is creating a gnawing revelation of the truth about exploitation and victimization of people right here in our community. It is only when people have knowledge of a situation that action can lead to change that can transform individual lives, families and communities.

To that end, our awareness education is focused on those who have the greatest likelihood of acting as agents of change and/or can provide healing for victims of human trafficking. This past year, Freekind conducted a host of industry-specific trainings to equip and empower members of the criminal justice continuum, faith communities, foster care agencies, college staff and students, business leaders and other non-profits.

Ignorance allows human trafficking to flourish. And if we turn our heads, shut our eyes and close our ears, it will remain in the dark, but it will be there nonetheless. Education casts a light in the darkness, bringing trafficking out of the shadows. Once we know what it really looks like, we can take action. But it will take all of us. Together, we can make Virginia the least friendly place for traffickers and a refuge of healing for survivors.



## What our partners are making possible.

No one person or organization can tackle the issue of human trafficking alone. That's why we are incredibly grateful for our many community partners who play a role in equipping our youth with the tools of prevention and empowering survivors of human trafficking to live a life of freedom. Partners like Junto Woman's Club and Newport News Woman's Club who share a passion for preventing the next generation from being trafficked, so they help to fund the Prevention Project curriculum in local middle and high schools. Partners like Betty Eastman & Associates and Lighthouse Counseling, who provide therapeutic services that help survivors work through trauma they've experienced, so they can find emotional and mental healing. And countless church partners who invest financially and provide for the tangible needs of our clients in the form of hygiene items, journey bags, clothing and household cleaning supplies.

As a nonprofit without any federal or state funding, Freekind is humbled by the financial, pro bono and promotional support of the business partners, churches and private foundations who fuel our mission.

Partners like Langley Federal Credit Union, Impact 100 Peninsula, Huntington Ingalls, Bon Secours, Annie Belle Reavis Tuccori Foundation, Orphan's Promise, AT&T, Sentara, and Dominion Energy. These organizations and others understand the value of nonprofits like Freekind and share a commitment to reinvesting in the region to equip our youth and empower survivors to holistic sufficiency.

Collectively, you are equipping more than 10,000 youth with the life-saving tools of prevention and helping 175 unique survivors to reclaim their freedom every year. **That's the power of community.**

“  
*Langley Federal Credit Union is proud to support Freekind's mission of restoring freedom to survivors of human trafficking across our community. We are dedicated to supporting those who need us most in Hampton Roads, and by supporting Freekind, we know survivors will continue to have the tools and resources needed to continue on the pathway to healing and self-sufficiency.*  
”  
-Langley Federal Credit Union



# Thank You to Our Partners!

3e Restoration  
Adelphoi Village, Inc.  
Alexander Baptist Church  
Alive Church  
AT&T  
Atlantic Bay Mortgage  
Atlantic Shores Baptist Church  
Atlee Community Church  
Barnhart Crane  
Beautiful Women Ministry  
Believers Church  
Bernardine Franciscan Sisters Foundation  
Bethel Temple  
Betty Eastman & Associates  
Birdies for Charity  
BLM Roofing  
Bon Secours Mercy Health  
Bonner Service Scholars  
Breakfast Club of Williamsburg  
Calvary Assembly of God  
CARITAS  
CELL-egration Christian Fellowship  
Charlottseville City Public Schools  
Charties Aid Foundation  
Chesapeake Public Defender's Office  
Chesterfield County  
Chick-fil-A (Christopher Newport University)  
Child & Family Services  
Christ the Redeemer Anglican  
Christian Broadcasting Network  
Christopher Newport University  
Christ's Fellowship  
City Church of Richmond  
City Life Church  
Coastal Church  
Commercial Real Estate Women (CREW)  
Community Feed  
COVA Church  
Cox Communications  
Crater Criminal Justice Academy  
Crestwood Presbyterian Church  
Crown & Joy Presbyterian  
DiGeronimo Wellness  
Dominion Energy  
Dominion Services for All People  
Duck Donuts  
Elder Law Solutions  
Emmaus Church Hampton Roads  
Faith Center Foursquare Church  
Faith Community Church  
Fear2Freedom  
Four Oaks  
Freedom Life Church  
Friends of Guest House  
Gather  
Godwin High School  
Grace & Faith Fellowship Inc.  
Grace Episcopal Church  
Great Exchange  
Greater Discipleship Center  
Greater Richmond YMCA  
Greek Orthodox Philoptochos Chapter 1097  
Grove Christian Outreach Center  
Hampton Public Defender's Office

Hampton Roads Community Foundation  
HarborPointe Community Church  
Harrisonburg City Public Schools  
HELP  
Henrico County  
HER Shelter  
Hermitage High School  
High Street United Methodist Church  
Hill City Church  
Holy Trinity Catholic Church  
Hope Church  
Hopewell Counseling  
Housing Development Corps of Hampton Roads  
HRCAP  
HUB 757  
Human Trafficking Justice and Freedom International  
Huntington Ingalls  
IFMA Hampton Roads  
Illuminate Justice  
Impact 100 Virginia Peninsula  
J McLaughlin  
Jacobs Womens Group  
James River Rotary Club  
Jamestown Hertiage Republican Womens Group  
Journey Christian Church  
Junto Woman's Club (Suffolk)  
Keystone Adolescent Center  
Kings Fork High School  
Knights of Columbus (3548)  
Kroger Foundation  
Langley Federal Credit Union  
Langley Foundation for Families  
Latinos En Virginia  
Latisha's House  
Life Church  
Lighthouse Counseling  
Made Global  
Magnola Rose  
Mangata Coffee  
Manna Church  
McGuire Woods  
Mechanicsville Christian Center  
Mercy Mall  
MOD Pizza  
Mount Pleasant Baptist Church  
Mt. Gilead Full Gospel International Ministries  
National Christian Foundation  
Nemmo Church  
Network Peninsula  
New Creation VA  
New Kent County Public Schools  
Newport News Police  
Newport News Public Defender's Office  
Newport News Public Schools  
Newport News Re-entry Council  
Newport News Sheriff's Office  
Norfolk Public Schools  
Norfolk Sheriff's Office  
Northside Christian Church  
Oak Grove  
OAR Richmond  
Olivet Christian Church  
Orphan's Promise  
OV Church

Overton Family Foundation  
Page County Public Schools  
Parkway Printshop  
Peninsula Community Chapel  
Peninsula Continuum of Care  
Persnickety Crane Cafe  
Philoxenia Culture, LLC.  
Point 2 Running Company  
Portsmouth First Friends Church  
Positive Vibes Entertainment  
Pray4MeMinistries  
Providence United Methodist Women  
Real Life  
Real Life Christian Church  
Recover Hope  
Redeemer Presbyterian Church  
Redemption Hill Church  
Reset 180  
Restoration and Hope House  
Richard Bennett Trust  
River Oak  
Rockingham County Public Schools  
Royster Memorial Presbyterian Church  
Safe Harbor  
Seaford Baptist Church  
Sentara Cares  
Sheltered Alliance Network  
Smithfield High School  
Southeastern Family Project  
Spark formerly Community Solutions  
St Mary's Catholic Church  
STARS (Structured Therapeutic Adolescent Residential Services)  
Stony Point Reformed Presbyterian Church  
The Center for Sexual Assault  
The Colorado Luthern High School  
The Good Feet Store  
The Salvation Army Peachcrest Boys & Girls Club  
The Woman's Club of Newport News  
THRIVE Peninsula  
Tidewater Community College  
Tidewater Friends of Foster Care  
Towne Bank  
Transformation Freedom Initiative  
Transitions Family Violence Services  
Trinity Church  
Trinity Evangelical Lutheran Church  
United Methodist  
United+Tru  
Virginia Attorney General's Office  
Virginia Beach Department of Human Services-  
Foster Care Program  
Virginia Beach Public Schools  
Virginia Beach Sheriff's Office  
Virginia Commonwealth University  
Virginia Law Foundation  
Virginia Peninsula Chamber  
Virginia Peninsula Community College  
Virginia Peninsula Ladies  
Wal Mart, Store #4220  
We are the Echo  
West End Assembly of God  
Williams Mullen

# What our advocates are making possible.

## Medy Cook, Survivor Advocate Coordinator

Since we began our Survivor Advocacy program in 2014, we have been able to equip lay people in our community to empower the survivors we serve. The heart of our advocacy program is to foster a culture of presence- continuing to show up for survivors as they navigate life after exploitation. Many of them have never had stable relationships, so we can truly see the difference it makes for people who have been through trauma to know that someone is there for them. And that one wrong decision or mistake does not end their relationship with us. We will continue to train advocates because the need is great. Through survivor empowerment, we are able to bring hope and belonging to some of the most invisible and marginalized in our community.

## Survivor Advocate of the Year!



Kathy Selfridge, Freekind Survivor Advocate

“  
*I have lived a life of privilege, and was content to believe that pain and suffering only existed 'over there', in the city, in other countries, anywhere outside my direct line of vision. My focus was on myself, until one day God planted this thought in my mind: when children are asked what they want to be when they grow up, they never say a victim of trafficking, a drug addict, or an object of abuse.*

*Inside every victim of human trafficking is a child that had other plans, better plans for their life. Many now struggle to get back and reclaim their dreams. I became an advocate to help people find their way back to who they want to be.”*

-Kathy Selfridge

”



# What our volunteers are making possible.

Tori Jones, Community Engagement Manager

Volunteerism is part of the heartbeat of Freekind. We don't mean to brag, but our volunteers are truly the best. New to the Freekind team this year, I was amazed by the level of commitment I observed from our volunteers. Many of them even helped with my on-boarding- that's how invested they are and how much the organization values their contributions. Freekind volunteers show commitment on a whole new level from what I've seen before. They eat, sleep and breathe the mission of Freekind. Their support and dedication to our team and the survivors we serve is monumental, making possible what would otherwise be impossible.

## Volunteer of the Year!



Doris Brown, Freekind Volunteer

“  
*After retiring, I knew I needed to do something, but I didn't know what. I prayed, and asked God to show me what He had for me to do. Months later the answer came to me in a very vivid dream! In the dream, I experienced firsthand the abduction of someone very close to me by traffickers. It was so real that I awoke shaking & crying. I knew God had answered my pray, by showing me the work He had for me to do. It took me a while to find Freekind, but when I did, I learned about the organization's mission and that it is faith based, and I knew that's what I was supposed to do.*

-Doris Brown

”

# Committed to Transparency

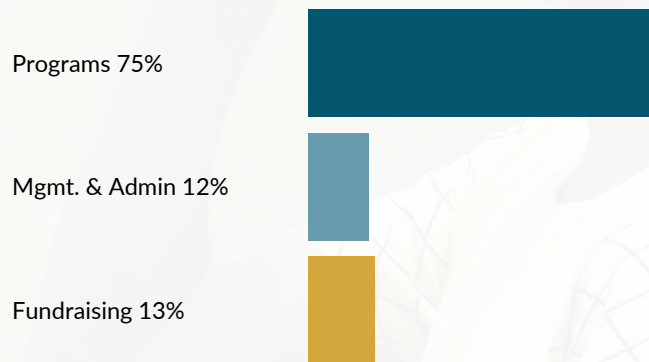
Platinum  
Transparency  
2023

Candid.

At Freekind, we are committed to the highest ethical standards and financial transparency. We recognize that there are many worthy causes that could benefit from your charitable giving, so we are grateful that you have chosen to invest in the mission of Freekind. In return, we will make every effort to steward wisely the funds you've entrusted to us. We have provided a financial overview below, and also invite you to visit our Guidestar profile to access our most recent Form 990.

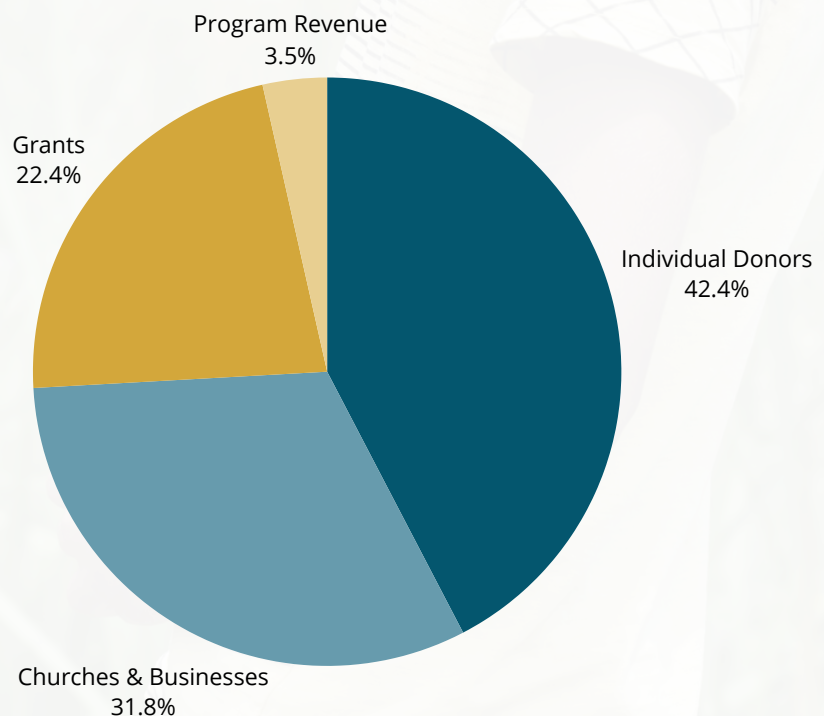
## Organization Expenses

FY 2022 Form 990



## Funding Sources

FY 2023 Year-end Financials





# Board of Directors



**Faye Antezana**  
Chair



**Jordan R.N. Brown**  
Secretary



**Nate Carl**  
Director



**Abby Credicott**  
Director



**Barbara Hamm Lee**  
Director



**Jose Iregui**  
Director



**Maureen Moslow-Benway**  
Director

## Richmond Advisory Cabinet

**Angie Collins, Towne Bank**  
**Cassandra Carter, Freekind Advocate and Mt. Gilead**  
**Mike Feinmel, Deputy Commissioner, Henrico County**  
**Debbie Lewis, Governor's Office**  
**Will Melton, Xponent 21**

**Maureen Moslow-Benway, Assistant Professor, VCU**  
**Kammie Mosman, Commercial Real Estate Women**  
**Kelly O'Keefe, Brand Federation**

Freedom  
Hope  
Belonging



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Together we can unleash the power of kindness to help restore the humanity stolen from trafficking survivors, offering grace to the most vulnerable in our communities as they regain their freedom, their sense of hope and their sense of belonging.

# Show Your Support



## Visit our website

Be a force for good in the **local** movement to end human trafficking.



## Partner with us.

Whether you're an individual, church, or business, we have a place for you!



## Join us!

We offer multiple opportunities to learn more and have fun. Register for our events!







“ —  
*In every community,  
there is work to be done.  
In every nation, there  
are wounds to heal. In  
every heart, there is the  
power to do it.*  
— ”

*Marianne Williamson*





# Join Us In Our Work

Be a force for good in the local movement to end human trafficking.

Together, we can educate others about human trafficking, prevent the next generation from being exploited and help restore a sense of hope and belonging to those on their journey to freedom.

Engage with us on social media:

@freekindva



@freekind-va1387

freekind™

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Phone Number

1-877-227-2321



Email Address

info@freekindva.org



1705 Todds Lane  
Hampton, VA 23666

EIN 45-5223463

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Consider signing up for a one-time or recurring cash donation, or learning about other smart ways to give.