



CATHERINE CUTLER INSTITUTE **IMPACT REPORT**

2022-2023



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ABOUT THE IMPACT REPORT

Data was gathered for this report from several sources including our staff, project work products, local news stories, and the Research Service Center. This report is intended to show highlights of the myriad of work produced at the Catherine Cutler Institute and is certainly not exhaustive.

For more information about our projects, staff accomplishments, and areas of expertise, please visit our website at usm.maine.edu/cutler.



A MESSAGE FROM OUR DIRECTOR

Today, we live in a time where the role of government and public service is being questioned at best and derided at worst. We, at the Institute, embrace the role of service and our social responsibility to address societal needs. While our work is often difficult, it is profoundly rewarding. However, showing progress can be challenging. There is so much to do to improve society as a whole and change is incremental.



Throughout my years at the Institute, I have often said that our work must be outward leaning, responsive to needs, targeted on outcomes, and fully engaged. To address these criteria, we need to measure our impact in a comprehensive and thorough way. I believe that this Impact Report demonstrates our successes and shows a strong path forward.

A couple of years ago, we revisited our vision and strategic priorities. We asked ourselves:

- What are the goals and values that we share?
- What are the outcomes that we are collectively striving to achieve?
- How do we make measurable progress on these goals together?

Below, you will find our vision and mission statements. These are the philosophies that anchor our thinking, what we do, and how we do it. They are exemplified by our work in this Impact Report.

I thank those who have been a part of our work thus far. Your contributions on advisory boards, as clients, as former students, and as funders have allowed us to refine and perfect our mission. If you believe in the power of public service as much as we do, I hope that you will join us in the future as partners and allies. We are here to serve.

Warmly,

Kris

Kris Sahonchik, Director
Catherine Cutler Institute

Vision Statement

At the Catherine Cutler Institute, we strive in a cross-disciplinary manner to create an equitable, inclusive, and healthy world where all individuals and communities flourish.

Mission Statement

The mission of the Catherine Cutler Institute is to address critical health and social policy issues across disciplines through research, evaluation, public policy, training, and capacity-building support to improve the health, well-being, and opportunities of individuals and communities. We achieve this mission by partnering with individuals and with local, state, and global partners.

WHAT IMPACT MEANS TO US

At the Catherine Cutler Institute, we truly care about the lasting impact our work has on the communities around us. These are our communities. We see the faces and hear the voices of those who benefit from our work each day.

- They are healthcare professionals obtaining the latest information on keeping themselves and their patients safe using personal protective equipment.
- They are early childcare educators working their way up a career path to increase their skills and knowledge to better teach our youngest citizens.
- They are town managers learning about the financial and environmental benefits of a new stormwater system.
- They are new foster parents gaining support and skills to prepare for the challenges they will face.
- They are legislators looking for reliable information to inform policy.

These are just a few examples of the communities we have supported.

We do our work in a collaborative way. We work with community stakeholders, our funders, other partner organizations, students, and each other. The Catherine Cutler Institute is comprised of people with diverse skills, talents, and passions. We are researchers, scientists, lawyers, doctors, artists, educators, social workers, practitioners, and more. Because of our wide range of knowledge, we love working with each other to broaden our understanding of the world in collaboration to find the very best methods, techniques, and approaches to solve real-world issues facing our communities.

Although we have a long history of providing state and national training and technical assistance, our expertise in **training and developing Maine's workforce** was abundant this past year. You will see throughout this report that each of our program areas impacted how Mainers in key industries do their jobs effectively. We're proud to be at the forefront of helping our community increase their skills and competencies.

TRAINING AND DEVELOPING MAINE'S WORKFORCE

The Catherine Cutler Institute plays a vital role in training critical members of Maine's workforce:

Early Childhood Professionals <ul style="list-style-type: none">• 57,125 hours of training to providers and 421 virtual and on-site consultations to early care and education programs across the state through the Maine Roads to Quality Professional Development Network.	Child Welfare Caseworkers <ul style="list-style-type: none">• 93 newly hired child welfare caseworkers were trained through the Maine Child Welfare Cooperative Agreement. Nearly 100 seasoned caseworkers received training on the Indian Child Welfare Act through the Maine ICWA Workgroup.	Resource Parents <ul style="list-style-type: none">• 891 resource parents trained in the Resource Family Introductory Training required as part of the licensing process. As of the Spring of 2023, 67% of those graduates were licensed (this will rise as families move through the process).
Frontline Health and Human Services Workers <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Nearly 4,000 Maine workers trained to date (i.e., EMS personnel, in-home and community-based behavioral health workers, early care providers) in the prevention and mitigation of infectious disease transmission.	Mental Health Rehabilitation Technicians <ul style="list-style-type: none">• 551 applicants for the Mental Health Rehabilitation Certificate trained. The Institute's Center for Learning administers several mental health certification programs on behalf of the Maine DHHS Office of Behavioral Health.	Physicians, Nurses, and Physician's Assistants <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Over 140 prescribers attended a day-long conference on evidence-based treatment to individuals and their families affected by Substance Use Disorder and Opioid Use Disorder to promote recovery and reduce drug overdose deaths.
Long-Term Care Workforce <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Over 200 healthcare workers in skilled nursing and assisted living facilities trained in the prevention and mitigation of occupational risks and safety hazards. The online training is now also available in French and Somali. This training is available through the Institute's Workforce Protection Online Training Portal funded by OSHA and the U.S. Department of Labor.		

STUDENT IMPACT

Our student employees and interns bring new excitement, energy, and perspectives to our project work. Many of our projects build student employees into the budget because we take seriously the responsibility we hold to encourage and mentor the upcoming stewards of research, training, and technical assistance. Over the years, some of our strongest employees began their careers with us as students.

Again, with our wide range of projects and staff expertise, students reach out to us to learn more and engage in our work making student positions at the Catherine Cutler Institute competitive and distinguished. We attract highly motivated, curious individuals with a thirst for knowledge, an interest in applied research, and a desire to impact the community positively. Our students come from departments throughout the University. This past year, we were honored to work with students in the following degree programs:

Experiential Learning for Law Students and Child Welfare Caseworkers

UMaine Law students bring their expertise to the Mock Trials delivered throughout the year as part of the Foundations Caseworker Training led by Catherine Cutler Institute staff. The students act as parent attorneys and Assistant Attorneys General during the “trial”. This is an invaluable experience for all involved, with the students and new Office of Child and Family Services caseworkers learning more about what to expect in court when working with or representing parents and feeling more prepared and confident in their future jobs.

Graduate Programs

- Master of Science in Adult Higher Education
- Master of Social Work
- Master of Public Health
- Master of Public Policy and Management
- Master of Science in Counseling
- PhD in Public Policy

Undergraduate Programs

- Biology
- Economics
- Environmental Science
- Geography
- Math
- Social Work

This year’s student employees worked with us outside of their classroom pursuits to:

- Conduct qualitative analysis
- Transcribe interviews
- Monitor outcomes of tidal restoration projects
- Track how salt marshes respond to the impact of sea level rise
- Develop communication materials
- Organize events
- Build resources for manufacturers
- Conduct presentations
- Facilitate group sessions
- Write literature reviews

BUILDING A POOL OF QUALIFIED CHILD WELFARE CASEWORKERS

The Catherine Cutler Institute houses the [Maine Child Welfare Field Instruction Program \(FIP\)](#), a University-State agency partnership between the Maine Office of Child and Family Services (OCFS) and Social Work/Human Services programs at universities across the state. For the 2022-2023 academic year those included: University of Maine, University of Maine Presque Isle, University of Southern Maine, and University of Maine Augusta.

The program's goal is to prepare undergraduate students in social work and other related fields for successful careers in public child welfare, increase caseworker retention, and improve outcomes for children and families in Maine. The student program includes a 20-hour per week internship at OCFS and introductory caseworker training, mentorship, and supervision provided by Cutler staff. In addition to the hands-on experience, students receive a stipend, and upon completion of their degree and the training program, they sign on to work with OCFS with the intention that they remain employed for at least one year. The agency would be bringing on a new staff member who has already completed the required training, has worked in their offices, and has shadowed experienced workers in the field – a win-win-win situation for the students, the agencies, and families.

As one student shared, “There is a wealth of knowledge to learn when working for the department, so getting a year's head start is really incredible. I feel very prepared going into my position with the department because of this program.”

ENHANCING THE DATA CAPACITY OF USM GRADUATE STUDENTS AND LOCAL ORGANIZATIONS

The [Data Innovation Project's](#) Applied Research Fellowship Program places DIP-trained graduate students from the University of Southern Maine in community organizations to support their applied research and evaluation efforts. This program both enhances community organizations' data capacity and provides USM graduate students with hands-on education and skill building on program evaluation. Thanks to the support of the Maine Economic Improvement Fund, fellowship positions are paid work experiences and available at no cost to selected organizations.



STUDENT PROFILE

In May 2023, Catherine Cutler Institute Director Kris Sahonchik received an email from Kate McCarthy at [Birth Roots](#), a Maine non-profit providing community-based education and support focused on pregnancy through the early years of parenting. Kate had this to say about Alexandra Hood, USM graduate student in the Counselor Education program and Data Innovation Project (DIP) [Applied Research Fellow](#) working with her organization:

“We couldn't possibly have had a better experience hosting Alexandra this year. She was organized, engaged, inspired, and always accommodating to the ever-changing needs and capacity of our organization throughout her fellowship. We ended the year with a complete Theory of Change and Logic Model, and a solid prenatal class evaluation survey - tools that are now being utilized on a weekly basis at Birth Roots. **We also had a wonderful experience working with the DIP team at USM. Their webinars were well-designed, impactful, and accessible to the typically busy nonprofit staff.** I could go on and on, but I also want to share some exciting news that relates directly to DIP!

We just learned that our proposal to the Maine Community Foundation's Community Building grant was fully funded, an award of \$10,000! **I attribute the success of this proposal directly to Alexandra and the DIP program at USM.** In writing the proposal, I was regularly returning to the TOC/LM documents to make sure that our descriptions of the whys and hows of what we do at Birth Roots were clear, concise, and tied directly to outcomes. Not only did it make the writing stronger, but it also saved me a significant amount of time. In the past, I've had to pull language from 6 or 7 organizational documents to write grants. Now, I have everything I need in two well-organized, easy-to-read documents. It's a DREAM.”



ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT

Under the leadership of two longstanding centers—the [Casco Bay Estuary Partnership](#) and the [New England Environmental Finance Center](#)—the Catherine Cutler Institute supports local, regional, and community partners as they adapt to a changing environment.

- The Casco Bay Estuary Partnership (CBEP) supported eight habitat protection projects with six land trusts that together **protected 115 acres of forest and coastal habitats** in 2022-2023. Since 2000, CBEP grants have helped **permanently protect over 10,000 acres** of important habitat in the Casco Bay Watershed.
- In 2023, CBEP provided technical expertise and funding to help **reconnect over five miles of rivers and streams** in the Casco Bay watershed for species like landlocked salmon, wild brook trout, and river herring. This was done in partnership with nine organizations that fixed barriers to the movement of aquatic organisms, including four dams, three culverts, and a remnant stone bridge.
- In FY2023, the New England Environmental Finance Center’s Southeast New England Program Network **trained a total of 839 attendees from Massachusetts and Rhode Island** in stormwater financing, low-impact development, bylaw/ordinance review, stormwater management, and green infrastructure.



Photo Credit: Robert Guillemain

HEALTH AND WELL-BEING IMPACT

The Catherine Cutler Institute has a long history as a leader in enhancing health and well-being for those in Maine and beyond. Through innovative research, policy analysis, and community collaboration, the Institute empowers individuals, families, organizations, and communities to access vital resources and support systems to create a healthier, more resilient population.

IMPROVING THE HEALTH AND WELL-BEING OF INDIVIDUALS AND COMMUNITIES IMPACTED BY SUBSTANCE USE

The [Substance Use Research and Evaluation \(SURE\)](#) team continues to grow its portfolio of work and positive impact on the community. Through the U.S. CDC's Overdose Data to Action program, the SURE team will work in partnership with the city of Portland to provide data collection in determining which interventions lead to the best and most sustainable outcomes for patients. The data will be used to “drive action steps that reduce overdose deaths and related harms in communities as fast as possible,” according to Mandy K. Cohen, MD, MPH, Director of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

INFLUENCING NATIONAL HEALTH POLICY ON THE FUTURE OF RURAL HEALTH

John Gale, Senior Research Associate, presented on the future of rural health to a capacity audience of 150 people at the 2023 National Rural Health Association Annual Conference in San Diego, CA; he and his team were selected for five separate presentations on their work. He was also selected to lead a special section of the *Journal of Rural Health* on the 25th Anniversary of the Critical Access Hospital (CAH) Program.



Providing further support to CAHs in assessing and reporting their activities, John and his team created a brief that identifies outcome measures to monitor the financial and operational performance of CAHs. This was recognized as the most useful Flex Monitoring Team publication of 2022.

AWARD-WINNING REPORT

The [Maine Statistical Analysis Center \(SAC\)](#) won two publication awards given by Justice Research and Statistics Association. These awards represent half of all the awards given to SACs across the country in 2022. The Maine SAC won awards in Excellence in Statistical/Management Reporting for its [“Bias and Hate Crimes in Maine: Reconciling Reported and Investigated Crimes”](#) authored by Catherine Cutler Institute staff Hannah Brintlinger and George Shaler, and Jack McDevitt from Northeastern University, and Excellence in Research/Policy Reporting for its [“2022 Maine Crime Victimization Report: Informing Public Policy for Safer Communities”](#) authored by **Clare Murray, Robyn Dumont**, and George Shaler.

POLICY IMPACT

Leveraging its research and data analysis expertise, the Catherine Cutler Institute provides evidence-based recommendations to policymakers that prioritize the safety, well-being, and rights of children and young people. By collaborating with stakeholders, including government agencies, community organizations, and businesses, the Institute ensures that policies are informed by best practices and reflect the diverse needs of children and youth. Our work aims to create more effective and equitable policies that support the healthy development and empowerment of families.

SUPPORTING POLICY REVISIONS WITH THE MAINE OFFICE OF CHILDREN AND FAMILIES (OCFS)

The Maine Office of Children and Families identified the need for updated and revised child welfare policies, so they reached out to the Catherine Cutler Institute for assistance. In collaboration with OCFS, Cutler staff developed an approved policymaking process focused on engaging a wide variety of staff, parents, content experts, and other key stakeholders, a thorough legal review, and an assessment of race equity implications.

Over the past fiscal year, seven policies were completed and approved. It is important to note that 24 existing policies were incorporated into what became the seven approved during this fiscal year, making it easier for caseworkers to find needed procedures in one comprehensive policy. The policies approved in this fiscal year include:

- Permanency
- Background Checks
- Resource Home Licensing
- Entry into Care
- Youth Transition Services
- Domestic Abuse and Violence
- CPS Investigations

The effort will create family-informed, up-to-date, and accessible procedural guidance for child welfare caseworkers and their supervisors.

RESEARCHING NATIONAL BEST PRACTICES TO CREATE MAINE POLICIES HELPING YOUTH IN CARE

Maine's Driving Workgroup is a partnership between the Catherine Cutler Institute, the Office of Child and Family Services (OCFS), the Bureau of Motor Vehicles, the Secretary of State, Adoptive and Foster Families of Maine, and youth who have lived experience with the foster care system. This group was formed in 2018 to identify the challenges and barriers youth in care face while trying to obtain their driver's license before aging out of Maine's Foster Care System.

Shannon Saxby, Policy Associate, organizes and facilitates this group. Maine's Driving Workgroup did extensive research on best practices nationwide to complement the Department of Health and Human Service's current driving policy for youth who are within the custody of OCFS.

Federal legislation provided one-time funding post-pandemic for states to receive technical assistance (TA) around this issue; Maine was one of 10 states to receive this TA through Embrace Families.

Based on the TA recommendations, a soft pilot was launched in October 2022 through a small amount of funding provided by a national funder. There was a total of \$11,900 with each youth applicant eligible for \$1,500. The pilot illustrated the importance of financial literacy training to support the young person's ability to afford costs associated with car ownership and licensure. Young people who received funds through Maine's Driving Pilot were encouraged to enroll in the first available Opportunity Passport training through Jobs for Maine's Graduates to gain financial literacy skills and develop a plan with the OCFS and their resource parent(s) to supplement their driving costs once the pilot program concluded.

The pilot served nine young people within 30 days. Thirty-three percent of those served are young people who receive the Foster Youth to Independence voucher through the Portland Housing Authority, which was an intentional equity strategy because they do not receive other state funds. **55% of those who received funding put the funding towards a down payment on a vehicle.**

Because the Deputy Secretary of State had participated in the TA and the Driving Workgroup, they were able to take the tailored recommendations and develop support for legislation (LD 1712) that was heard in May 2023 specific to the needs of youth in care. Additionally, in April 2023, there was a proposed bill, [LD 1200](#), that would make driver's education more affordable for all young people across Maine. This bill was moved to a workgroup started in December 2023 of which Shannon Saxby is a member.

MAINE ROADS TO QUALITY PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT NETWORK (MRTQ PDN)

MRTQ PDN supports early childhood and out-of-school-time professionals in developing the expertise necessary to provide high-quality, inclusive, and culturally responsive care to Maine's children. MRTQ PDN consists of a partnership between Maine Roads to Quality and the Maine Afterschool Network, both housed at the Catherine Cutler Institute, and the University of Maine's Center for Community Inclusion and Disability Studies



The MRTQ Early Care and Education (ECE) Professional Registry has been part of Maine Roads to Quality since 1999. Over these 20+ years, the Registry has been a source of data regarding Child Care Providers and Programs statewide in Maine. Maine was one of the first three states in the US to develop their Registry. **Today, the MRTQ Registry currently has over 21,000 members, representing professionals in the Early Care and Out-of-School time programs statewide.** The Registry tracks ECE providers' training hours, education, employment, and professional certification. The data is invaluable and has been used for national research.

Recently, in response to a need identified by the field and district coordinators, MRTQ PDN collaborated with the Somali Bantu Association to offer a Community of Practice (CoP) to a cohort of Association members. This CoP is focused on supporting cohort members' understanding of the logistics of opening a childcare center, including business practices and licensing. In addition, the CoP provided cohort members with the opportunity to meet with licensing staff. This allowed members to ask questions, express challenges, and establish a relationship with licensing staff. Finally, the CoP offered an opportunity for cohort members to discuss child engagement, play, and developmentally appropriate materials and their impact on program quality and positive child outcomes. Participants in the Somali Bantu Association Cohort CoP received Quality Initiative funding for the purchase of developmentally appropriate play materials for use in their childcare.

ENSURING ALL VOICES ARE HEARD TO INFORM MEANINGFUL SYSTEMIC CHANGE

- In partnership with the Maine Office of Behavioral Health, the Catherine Cutler Institute's Place Matters team on **The Community Listening Project** is engaging community members who have direct experience utilizing the Maine Crisis System. This invaluable feedback will help the agency to develop a trauma- and data-informed approach to improving the Maine Crisis System for those experiencing mental health crises or at risk of self-harm. These voices will inform improvements, a performance measurement plan, and future community engagement strategies.
- The **Youth Leadership Advisory Team (YLAT)** has remained committed to enhancing youth and adult partnerships for over 20 years. YLAT helps youth in the child welfare system to develop and practice their leadership skills and offers the opportunity for the Office of Child and Family Services and other committed adults to hear directly from current youth in care and those formerly in care about how we can improve our child welfare system to meet their needs.

On April 20, 2023, YLAT and the **Maine Youth Transition Collaborative** held the Third Annual Policy Summit at the Augusta State Capitol. The Summit is a statewide effort to engage youth in learning about the legislative process and how they can use their experience and voice to create systems change. Young people engaged in conversations with staff from Maine Children's Alliance and the Associate Director of OCFS to learn about the impact of youth voices in policy making.

- The **Young People's Caucus (YPC)** builds pathways for young people who have been directly impacted by systems involvement and systemic oppression to have a genuine voice and power in decision-making in Maine. We build pathways and connect young people, agency partners, and policymakers to work together to create public systems that support and empower all young people, with a focus on youth who have experienced the juvenile justice and foster care systems.
- The Catherine Cutler Institute collaborates with the Office of Child and Family Services (OCFS) and community stakeholders around **Family Engagement**, engaging parents impacted by child welfare services. During this period, the parents met with the OCFS Associate Director of Child Welfare and Regional Associate Director to learn about the OCFS vision for family engagement, shared their experiences with new caseworkers by serving as panelists during their introductory training, and brought their perspective to workgroups dedicated to revising child welfare policies.

INFORMING JUSTICE SYSTEMS TO IMPROVE COMMUNITY HEALTH AND PUBLIC SAFETY

- **Providing the data necessary to more effectively address serious crime** - The Catherine Cutler Institute houses the Maine Statistical Analysis Center (SAC), which informs policy development and practice improvements in Maine's criminal and juvenile justice systems. The SAC partnered with the Maine Prosecutors Association (MPA) to establish statewide and by-district prosecutorial data for five years (2017-2021). These baseline data are for a variety of criminal cases, charges, and outcomes - the resulting report is the first of its kind for Maine.

The MPA sought to detail these baseline figures and trends in an annual report to both support the ongoing work of Maine's District Attorneys to address serious crime through data-informed decision-making and to enable key stakeholders and the public to better understand how limited public resources are being used by their respective offices to protect and serve Mainers.

- **Illustrating the scope and burden of violence** - The Violence Against Women Act Measuring Effectiveness Initiative (VAWAMEI), housed at the Institute for over twenty years, collects and analyzes data from nearly 5,000 VAWA grantees across the country. Grantees report on the impact that their VAWA-funded work has had on victims of domestic and sexual violence, their families, and communities.

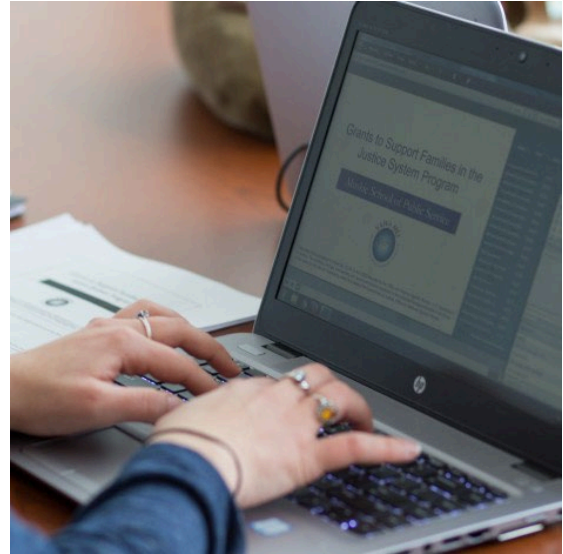
This year, the team trained nearly 1,500 grantees in data reporting and responded to over 140 requests for assistance in only six months. The team publishes these data in various ways, including annual reports to the U.S. Department of Justice's Office on Violence Against Women and biennially to the U.S. Congress.

- **Informing a statewide community-based system of care** - The Place Matters project aims to support the state of Maine and its communities in redesigning, implementing, and evaluating a community-based continuum of care through systems innovation, data resources, and community inclusion. The Place Matters team informs systems change, develops solutions that are responsive to community needs, and directs resources to communities to support young adults and families impacted by the justice system. An example of this is a 2022 report, Emerging Adults: An Analysis of Young Adults with Justice System Histories in Maine, which examined the population of Maine's emerging young adults with histories of involvement with the Maine Department of Corrections.

The report seeks to inform the development of strategies and opportunities to improve the outcomes of these young people as they transition into adulthood and improve the safety and well-being of Maine's local communities.

PROVIDING TIMELY DATA AND INFORMATION THAT GOVERNMENT AGENCIES NEED

- The Catherine Cutler Institute is evaluating the Respite for ME Grants program. The Office of Aging and Disability Services reported the findings from the first year of implementation to the **Governor's Cabinet on Aging** on December 1, 2023. The positive findings from the first year show that the program has been able to reach its target population, improve their stress and burden levels, and lessen the financial strain of caregiving.
- The Violence Against Women Measuring Effectiveness Initiative (VAWAMEI) compiles a bi-annual report to the **U.S. Congress** on the data collected from VAWA grantees across the country. The new Office on Violence Against Women Director commented on a recent report, "It is an excellent document with so much rich information and will be great to get this to Congress."
- Every four years, the State of Maine must develop a State Plan on Aging. To inform the plan, Cutler staff conduct a statewide needs assessment, which the **Office of Aging and Disability Services** uses to learn about the needs of older adults across the state.
- The Catherine Cutler Institute conducts an annual Survey of Children Served by MaineCare. The **Office of Maine Care Services** uses this data to inform their management of the MaineCare/CHIP program, to meet their federal reporting requirements, and to monitor member experience within state Medicaid programs.
- Analysis of the Maine Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System Survey provides valuable data to the **Maine Department of Health and Human Services** which they use to inform policy development, program planning, and public health interventions.
- The Catherine Cutler Institute partnered with RTI International for the third year of the evaluation of the New York Appeals and Grievances Demonstration. The findings were presented in a report to the **U.S. Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services**.
- Catherine Cutler Institute staff worked with the Office of Aging and Disability Services to develop an annual report of **Adult Protective Services** data, fulfilling a recommendation in the Maine Elder Justice Roadmap created by Governor Janet Mills' Elder Justice Coordinating Partnership to publish data on Maine's response to elder abuse, neglect, and exploitation.
- Catherine Cutler Institute staff provide technical assistance on data use to the **Maine Center for Disease Control and Prevention** and the **Maine Division of Licensing and Certification**.



RESPONDING TO FUNDERS' TECHNOLOGY NEEDS AND REQUESTS

Even before the increased technology needs resulting from a global pandemic, the Catherine Cutler Institute's staff has worked with our funders to research and develop systems, applications, and resources that focus on timeliness, ease of use, and flexibility for our community members. Some examples of our work over the past year include the following:

BRANDING AND E-LEARNING SUPPORT FOR THE NATIVE CHILD ADVOCACY RESOURCE CENTER

[The Native Child Advocacy Resource Center](#) based at the University of Montana promotes the expansion and enhancement of accredited Child Advocacy Centers serving American Indian and Alaska Native children, families, and communities. The University of Montana contracted with the Catherine Cutler Institute to create the branding, marketing, and dissemination strategy for the Center. During a conversation, the funder expressed concern that they also had e-learning that needed to be developed and didn't have staff with those skills. Institute staff were able to provide this support, saving the funder the time and stress of finding another contractor.

STATE OF MAINE MANDATED REPORTER TRAINING

Catherine Cutler Institute staff built and continue to maintain the online [State of Maine Mandated Reporter Training](#), completed by 33,399 people in the last fiscal year. There was a very quick three-month turnaround for the work of building this online training, the downloadable certificate process, and a searchable database.

CAPACITY BUILDING CENTER FOR TRIBES: TOOLS FROM TRIBES

Catherine Cutler Institute staff built and continue to maintain [Tools from Tribes](#), a web-based resource where tribal child welfare professionals across the country can share commonly used forms, tools, and templates. As a testament to the cooperative spirit of the tribal child welfare community, Tools from Tribes is the most frequently visited page on the Center's [Tribal Information Exchange](#) website, with 3,716 visits and nearly 53,000 downloads in the last fiscal year. This request arose from a federal regional officer recognizing that she was sharing the same documents with multiple tribal programs and asking if it would be possible for the Institute's staff to create a central, easily accessible hub.

FEATURED STAFF PROFILES



NICK CURLEW

Nick Curlew, Web Programmer/SQL Developer, turns the data collection needs of state and federally-funded clients into working systems, able to quickly generate meaningful reports and save the time of staff who often have been compiling this information by hand.

Nick is currently updating a system to collect mental health certification data for the Maine Office of Behavioral Health and worked for many years managing the extensive childcare provider registry database used by the Maine Roads to Quality Professional Development Network. Nick is working closely with staff from the Capacity Building Center for Tribes, funded by the U.S. Children's Bureau, to build a system to efficiently collect data on the technical assistance provided to tribal child welfare programs across the country. In addition, Nick is building a system to automate training registration tasks and track completion data for the Resource Family Introductory Training funded by the Maine Office of Child and Family Services.



AMY GEREN

Amy Geren, Policy Associate, brings her expertise in community planning and economic development to her role as the One-Stop Operator for the Coastal Counties Workforce Board. Serving six of Maine's coastal counties through a network of many service providers including the Maine Department of Labor, Maine Department of Health and Human Services, Maine Community College System, and others, Amy's role is focused on overseeing a coordinated approach to the delivery of workforce services in the region. She also focuses on employer engagement and

the development of memoranda of understanding between partners. Amy also partners on the CAREER National Emergency Grant, a collaborative project between the State of Maine's Department of Labor and the three workforce development boards in Maine. The project is focused on researching, developing, and deploying a multi-faceted virtual American Job Center that will expand access to workforce development services for job-seekers and employers. During this period, a contract was awarded to a local firm to create the virtual American Job Center, the first in Maine!



KIMBERLY SNOW

Kimberly Snow, MHSA, is a Senior Research Associate at the Catherine Cutler Institute where she conducts program evaluation and research and analysis on Medicare and Medicaid policy, elder abuse, caregiving, and workforce issues impacting older adults. Her work has assisted state and federal partners in understanding how public resources are used to their best effect in helping older adults live healthy, active, secure, and engaged lives. With a particular interest in elder abuse detection, prevention, and impact, she is a Maine Council for Elder Abuse Prevention member and assisted the Maine Elder Justice

Coordinating Partnership to produce Maine’s Elder Justice Roadmap. She has also investigated the impact of elder abuse on service use and cost among older adults who are dually eligible for Medicare and Medicaid.

This year, Kim’s portfolio of work has expanded to include several exciting initiatives including the [Consortium for Aging Policy Research and Analysis \(CAPRA\)](#). CAPRA is a partnership between the Catherine Cutler Institute and the University of Maine Center on Aging, in association with the Margaret Chase Smith Policy Center and the University of Maine Institute of Medicine, to focus exclusively on aging-related policy issues. It will provide a “go-to” entity for accessing cross-campus expertise to those looking for independent policy research, analysis, guidance, or technical assistance on issues relating to aging or older people. Age-related demographic shifts are underway in Maine and across the country, and organizations, businesses, advocates, the public, and all levels of government are focusing attention on how best to adapt. We all deserve a comfortable and secure future as we age. CAPRA supplies a wide range of substantive and methodological policy expertise to address current and emerging opportunities and challenges and contributes to the broader use of policy research and analysis amid today’s demographic changes.

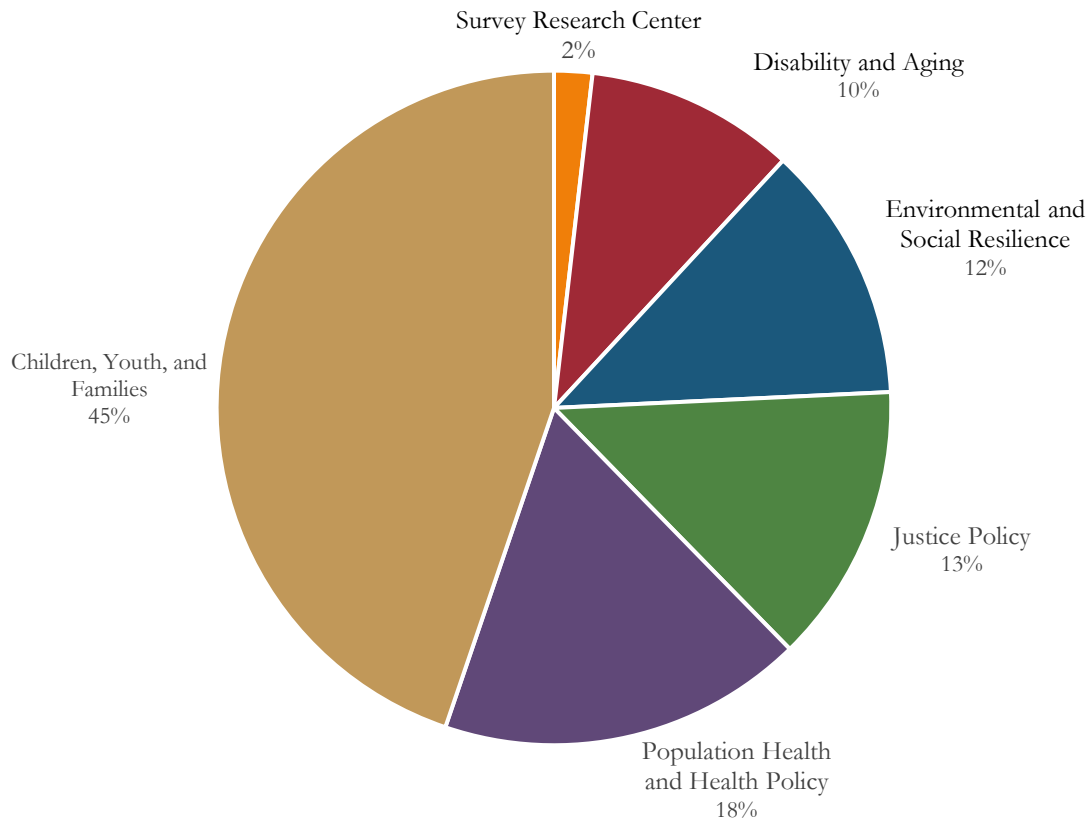
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2022-23 FUNDING PARTNERS

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U.S. Office of Rural Health Policy
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University at Plattsburgh
University of Maine, Orono
University of Minnesota
University of Montana
University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill
Vermont Child Welfare Training Partnership
Western Maine Addiction Recovery Initiative

FUNDED PROJECTS BY PROGRAM AREA, FY23



PROPOSALS AWARDED BY FUNDING TYPE, FY23





Catherine Cutler Institute
University of Southern Maine
34 Bedford Street, Portland, Maine

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