



# IMPACT REPORT 2022

CHAT's mission is to increase access to life-changing speech-language services, removing systemic barriers to enable more equitable services and create communication justice. We work through a social justice lens to bridge the gaps of inequity and provide individuals with the communication tools needed for self-advocacy, while also contributing to systemic change.

This report details some of the past year's highlights of our work towards communication justice – effecting change for under-resourced and under-represented people whose communication disorders and differences contribute to their inequitable treatment.

## Increasing Access:

- CHAT continued to support record numbers of children with scholarships, providing over 1,400 subsidized 1:1 therapy sessions in 2022.
- In addition, CHAT enabled 206 summer group program sessions through scholarships.
- CHAT is now in-network with all regional Medicaid insurance providers, resulting in an increased demand for our services.
- CHAT clients utilizing Medicaid or scholarship funds increased by 12% from January 2022-December 2022 and by 21% since 2020.

## Program and Partner Expansion:

- CHAT delivered summer programming in-person at our Lombard clinic as well as at two community partner sites: Executive Functioning at Little Village Reconnection Hub and Language to Literacy at Great Lakes Academy.
- CHAT continued our community outreach, including hosting tables at two community fairs: Literary Fest in Pullman and Integrated Health & Wellness Expo in Woodlawn.
- We continued to expand partnerships with values-aligned organizations to bring accessible services into communities, including through one new west side Chicago charter school partner.

**ALMOST 90% OF OUR SUMMER PROGRAM STUDENTS RECEIVED SCHOLARSHIPS.**



## Board Representation:

- Governing Board is now 64% women and 45% people of color.
- Associate Board of community ambassadors is 100% people of color and 80% women.

## Team Inclusion:

Grew the Hallie Quinn Brown Internship to provide opportunities to aspiring SLPs of color.

- Paid internship for summer aides, a position that greatly increases graduate school opportunities, but which as a previously volunteer-based position was inaccessible to aspiring SLPs needing paid summer jobs.
- Class of four HQB interns worked as paid program aides in summer 2022, gaining clinical experience and mentorship from experienced SLPs.

**MORE THAN 90% OF THE STUDENTS WE SERVE ARE CHILDREN OF COLOR.**

**ALMOST 80% OF THE CHARTER SCHOOL STUDENTS WE SERVE COME FROM LOW INCOME FAMILIES.**





**CHAT continues our communication justice initiatives, including:**

**Juvenile Justice News**

- Began a collaboration with Cook County Public Defender Juvenile Justice Division, including retention as first ever speech and language provider to consult on a case, with a favorable outcome for the client.
- Launched DEI Continuing Legal Education training entitled "Communication Disorders and the Criminal Legal System" and presented to multiple legal and education audiences.

**Neurodiversity-Affirming Work**

- Recognized the need for a practice area dedicated to neurodiversity-affirming approaches, and created role of Assistant Director, Neurodiversity-Affirming Services.
- Began the process of adapting CHAT summer programming to be accessible and affirming for a wider audience of neurodivergent and disabled clients.
- Expanded hyperlexia consult model to include neurodiversity-affirming focus to provide more support to families of neurodivergent learners.
- Completed new Hyperlexia Handbook to be published by end of 2023.



**CHAT HAS GIVEN AWAY OVER \$173,000 WORTH OF SERVICES TO CHILDREN IN NEED SINCE 2020.**



**CHAT Visibility:**

- Continued newsletter, The Chatter, with two issues out in 2022.
- Launched monthly Story of Impact, with three issues in 2022.
- Grew social media following by 82% on LinkedIn and 116% on Instagram.
- Received NBC5 Comcast Universal Foundation's Project Innovation award and were featured on NBC5 News segment.

**Advocacy is our Middle Name:**

- CHAT SLP Zoë encouraged her student to disclose her stutter during a job interview, and her student reported that it made her so much more comfortable.
- CHAT SLP Nicolle's sixth-grade autistic student developed enough confidence and self-advocacy skills to speak on her own behalf to a room full of adults at her IEP meeting.
- When one of her students with selective mutism was given a failing grade for not being able to complete an oral presentation, CHAT SLP Maddie educated the teacher on the student's condition and advocated for alternate assignment options to be included in the student's IEP.
- CHAT SLPs continue to be a trusted resource to families navigating a complex system to get their children much-needed services.