

Child Family Services



COMMUNITY IMPACT REPORT 2022-2023

150th ANNIVERSARY EDITION



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A MESSAGE FROM ELIZABETH MCPARTLAND

"Your impact on others is the only proof on your existence."

-Silje Akselberg Iversen

When I consider all the ways we have made an impact this past year, the unspoken question behind our actions is, "Why?"

Why does Child and Family Services (C+FS) even exist?

The 2022-2023 year marks a historic milestone for Child and Family Services; we are celebrating 150 years of serving people and families like yours and mine. Although our organization's services have evolved, our dedication to creating safe environments for children, adults and families has stayed the same.

To kick off our anniversary, and to answer that question of "Why?", we have updated our mission and vision statements along with other visual brand identities including our logo and website. We did this to showcase the most integral part of Child and Family Services – individuals and families like you.



We exist to nurture a healthy and more equitable Western New York for the benefit of current and future generations. We envision a thriving community where all people live in safety with dignity. And we are fortunate to be supported by loyal friends, donors, funders and colleagues.

Our spirited C+FS team works to help our community, just as the Western New Yorkers who first began the Buffalo Children's Aid Society – the precursor organization to C+FS – did in 1873. This year, our Foster Care and Adoption Program certified its 1,000th foster family in order to provide a safe space for children. Seeing a growing demand for special education for young students, the Stanley G. Falk School began preparations to open its new Mullen Elementary school location. Essential services such as Haven House and our Residential Treatment Program remained open throughout the December 2022 blizzard thanks to the selfless efforts of our staff.

Why does Child and Family Services even exist? In short, we exist so we are here when you need us.

Sincerely yours,

Elizabeth McPartland, LMSW, MBA
President and CEO, C+FS

OUR HISTORY



1872:
Wealthy Buffalonians living along Delaware Avenue sponsored a Thanksgiving dinner for 180 orphaned and abandoned boys.

1877:
Charity Organization Society (COS) was created, marking the first city-wide charity in the U.S. At the same time, the Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children (SPCC) was formed.



1924:
The Foster Home Care department was started.

1962:
Property is purchased at 824 Delaware Avenue to begin a new program which is now known as Conners Children's Center.



1979:
Haven House is established.

1986:
Stanley G. Falk School for handicapped students begins operation with 17 students, chartered by the NY Board of Regents.

2005:
Center for Resolution and Justice established. Transitioned to C+FS from a program within the Better Business Bureau.

2023:
Child and Family Services celebrates its 150th anniversary.



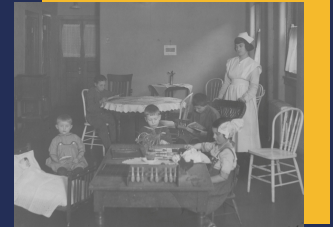
1873:
Buffalo City Children's Aid Society was established to defend the rights of children and protect from abuse, neglect and exploitation.

1916:
The COS, SPCC and Children's Aid Society merge to work towards their common goal under the name of Children's Aid Society and SPCC of Erie County.



1946:
Adoption Services started.

1972:
Merger of Children's Aid Society and the Family Service Society approved to form Child & Family Services of Erie County, Inc.



1983:
Employee Assistance Program becomes part of the Agency.

1996:
Lee Randall Jones Community Residence is built, under license from NYS Office of Mental Health.

2022:
Youth Assertive Community Treatment (Youth ACT) established under license from NYS Office of Mental Health.

150
YEARS OF CHILD
AND FAMILY
SERVICES

Child Family Services

The new C+FS logo.

A NEW C+FS BRAND TO RECOGNIZE OUR PAST, CELEBRATE OUR FUTURE

As part of Child and Family Services’ 150-year anniversary commemoration, we were thrilled to introduce a new brand this past year!

To ensure our brand best reflects the people in our community, members of our C+FS team and the work we do in the community, we conducted in-depth research and reviewed our current programs and offerings. We reflected on our long-standing history in the Western New York community in order to develop a new brand, mission and vision statements that firmly align the organization with its strategic vision for the future.



New Mission Statement: Nurturing a healthy and more equitable Western New York for the benefit of current and future generations.

New Vision Statement: A thriving community where all people live in safety with dignity.

Our new logo is a visual depiction of both our Agency and the community we serve. The standout element in this logo is the “plus sign” that also indicates a figure made of bright colors to represent inclusivity and multiculturalism.

STATISTICS + FIGURES

JULY 2022 TO JUNE 2023




**282 INDIVIDUALS
PROVIDED SHELTER**

**1,763 INDIVIDUALS PROVIDED
COUNSELING AND/OR ADVOCACY**

**1,965 CALLS
TO THE 24-HOUR HOTLINE**

Haven House



**56 CHILDREN
STAYED IN OUR
RESIDENTIAL
TREATMENT
HOMES.**

Residential Treatment



**38,829 TOTAL
CLIENT SESSIONS
(COUNSELING,
PSYCHIATRIC AND
HEALTH
MONITORING)**

Counseling



72 CHILDREN PROVIDED CARE

11 CHILDREN ADOPTED

**22 NEW FAMILIES CERTIFIED
AS FOSTER PARENTS**

**Foster Care and
Adoption**



**35 SENIORS GRADUATED IN
JUNE 2023**

Stanley G. Falk School



LEAVING A LEGACY WITH THE 1873 SOCIETY

On November 27th, 2018, Mark and Lauri Wierzbicki's life changed forever. The life of their beautiful twenty-two-year-old, daughter Rachael was cut short by the hands of domestic violence. To everyone who knew Rachael, they remember her big heart, her smile that lit up every room and her love for animals. Her village, also known as Rachael's Warriors, formed the Rachael Warrior Foundation, spearheaded by her parents, to help spare other families from dealing with a tragedy like this.



**Mark and Lauri Wierzbicki,
1873 Society Members**

The Rachael Warrior Foundation was formed to help protect, educate and support anyone who is experiencing domestic violence. Through its work, the foundation raises funds and awareness

to turn more victims into survivors. The foundation was created to keep Rachael's memory and legacy shining brightly throughout our entire community.

The Rachael Warrior Foundation partnered with Child and Family Services Haven House to help make a lasting impact on domestic violence prevention. To do this, they became members of the Agency's 1873 Legacy Society by supporting domestic violence survivors with a gift that will impact our community for generations to come.

Through the Rebuilding with Rachael Fund, the Foundation donated a planned gift of a \$125,000 endowment fund to help Haven House, Erie County's only licensed domestic violence shelter provide the space and resources for domestic violence victims in their healing journey.

Mark and Lauri whole heartedly believe in Child and Family Services, and we are thankful for gaining their longtime support. We are honored to continue Rachael's legacy and the work of providing safety for domestic violence survivors.

If you are interested in learning more about leaving a planned gift or becoming a member of Child and Family Services' 1873 Society, please contact Mary Czopp at 716-335-7050 or mzczopp@cfsbny.org.





5/14 VICTIMS LEGAL CLINIC

In the aftermath of the violence on May 14, 2022, staff at Child and Family Services Center for Resolution and Justice (CR+J) sought opportunities to assist those affected. CR+J and local civil legal service agencies partnered to provide legal referrals to victims receiving funds from charitable organizations. Between August and October 2022 alone, CR+J connected 65 victims with legal services, making additional referrals for behavioral health supports where appropriate.

“Having these partners come together and lend their legal expertise helped extend more comprehensive assistance to a large number of people,” said Alyssa Bergsten, Project Coordinator at CR+J.

One client was facing complex and interrelated legal issues, including bankruptcy, foreclosure and a lack of safe and stable housing. The client’s counselor saw May 14 as a major barrier to her engaging with attorneys to address the legal issues threatening her wellbeing. This counselor believed once the client had her basic needs met, she would be better positioned to continue down the path of healing.

CR+J connected with attorneys already working with the client, and the group met with the counselor and client to create a plan based on the client’s interests. Through this collaboration, the client was able to apply for both tens of thousands of dollars in assistance with back taxes and urgent repairs to be made to their home.

“We know some people struggle with daily life in the aftermath of traumatic events, let alone handling complicated legal matters,” explained Alyssa. “The partnership between behavior health and legal services allowed providers to take a holistic approach that eased communication and engagement and led to a life-changing outcome for the client.”

CR+J and its partners were able to build on this collaboration after securing funding from New York State Office for Victims Services (OVS) for a legal services clinic in the neighborhood most closely affected by the violence on May 14. The group has rotated the clinic each month between two locations on Jefferson Avenue. The unique collaboration between several agencies allows the clinic to offer a variety of legal services.

“We have seen that access to legal services can make a huge difference in people’s lives,” Alyssa said. “It’s crucial that we make this available to everyone in our community, and especially to those who have historically been underserved.”

CR+J can be reached at (716) 362-2323. Anyone interested in connecting with legal services is welcome to contact Alyssa directly at (716) 335-7535.



Falk Mullen Campus

"I'm a strong believer in the idea that if you meet a student's needs, they will be successful."

—Rachael Greene, Superintendent, Stanley G. Falk School

The Stanley G. Falk School (Falk School) started with four classes in 1986 and since then, has continuously grown to accommodate 630 students. Special education services and support is an ongoing need in the Western N.Y. community. The COVID-19 pandemic generated an increase in referrals from partnering school districts and a lengthy waiting list for the Falk School.

"Many school districts in our area have limited resources to provide proper special education, which includes having enough staff members," emphasized Rachael. "We knew we had to figure out a better model for serving the greater Buffalo community and actively break down these barriers."

A fourth main campus was the ideal solution and thankfully, a former Tonawanda elementary school was available. The Falk-Mullen campus will provide education for kindergarten through third grade students. Not only does a fourth campus alleviate the waiting list, but the schools gained 50 new hires across all campuses.

At the Falk School, students are taught in highly structured, individualized settings. Teachers utilize a therapeutic approach in classrooms to meet every student's needs. Eventually, the school hopes to expand their footprint to reach new communities who are struggling to provide formal special education services.

Seeing that every child receives the best education is just one of the many ways Child and Family Services has positively impacted families over the years.

"We are unique and different but needed in so many places," said Rachael. "Seeing the impact of relationships, quality teachers and different approaches is very powerful. The Falk School has changed so many students' lives."





WE ARE PROUD TO ANNOUNCE OUR NEWEST PROGRAMS, MINOR VICTIMS OF LABOR TRAFFICKING AND SAFE HARBOR.

“Human trafficking has no place in our community,” said Tiffany Pavone, Director of Victim Services at Child and Family Services. “Many of our youth are at risk of or have been exploited by traffickers who are profiting from their victims by compelling them to perform labor or engage in commercial sex. I am proud that we are committed to ensuring that there are safe, trauma-informed supports in place for some of the most vulnerable in our community.”

Child and Family Services is growing and expanding our services to continue serving as a beacon of hope and to create a thriving community where all people live in safety with dignity. The International Institute of Buffalo (IIB) and Child and Family Services have partnered to continue a Minor Victims of Labor Trafficking (MVLТ) and Safe Harbor program for our region that started in early 2022 through a grant from the U.S. Department of Justice (DOJ), Erie County, and NYS Office of Child and Family Services.

“The need for these services is vast in our community,” stated Bailie Murty, Program Coordinator. “The implementation of this program will have the potential to provide intensive case management to at-risk and youth survivors of human trafficking, linking them with crucial services.”

Through this arrangement, the organizations can provide continued services to a vulnerable population — minor survivors of human trafficking and youth identified as at risk for trafficking as well as their non-offending family members. The goal will be to build up organizational capacity and technical expertise at C+FS for trafficking case management services for the youth population, and to expand regional partnerships for trafficking work.

“My hope for this program is to not only serve identified youth directly, linking them with the appropriate services and support, but also to aide in providing necessary education and awareness surrounding the topic of human trafficking and ways to better identify the threat that exists in our very own WNY community,” explained Bailie.

To learn more about our programs, please visit our website at www.cfsbny.org.



Celebrating 150 years
of service to families
and people like you.

150
YEARS OF CHILD
AND FAMILY
SERVICES

Child  Family
Services

SUPPORTER SPOTLIGHT

Twenty Years of Heartfelt Volunteerism

Twenty years ago, Joleen and Joe Haniszewski saw an advertisement in a local magazine that sparked their interest in learning more about Child and Family Services. From this ad, they learned about Haven House, Erie County's only domestic violence shelter. They asked friends and family to donate essential items to help domestic violence survivors. This generous collection drive was the start of Joleen and Joe's story with C+FS, one that provides comfort, care and happiness to children and families in Western New York.



Joe and Joleen Haniszewski

Their impact on Child and Family Services throughout 20 years is nothing short of extraordinary. After learning more about what C+FS offered the WNY community, they were impressed with the broad scope of services the organization offers and how it is there for children and families during at point of their life's journey. "We've stayed involved with C+FS for the past 20 years because we have a lot of faith in this organization. It is a longstanding; trustworthy organization and we know all of our efforts are staying local. C+FS is close to our hearts, and this is where we make the biggest difference in the community." Joleen and Joe emphasized.

For over 20 years, Joleen and Joe have given much of their time volunteering with the Agency. They help organize Easter egg hunts, birthday parties, summer events and celebrations for the children in residential programming. In addition, they volunteer for many of the Agency's special events collecting auction items and helping to set up for the main fundraiser. "After spending time with some of the children, it brings the mission closer to home. Interacting with the kids is such a positive, wonderful, and emotional experience," said Joleen and Joe.

Many years ago, Joleen and Joe started the birthday club for all the children to help make this special day one each child could remember. Each month, Joleen and Joe are given a list of birthdays and wish lists from each child. As our Agency birthday elves, Joleen and Joe buy

everything on their wish list. You can only imagine a child's delight and surprise on their special day thanks to the generosity and good will of our special donors. Joleen and Joe described why they do this, "It's a fantastic feeling knowing we are a positive force for these kids and are a part of making a birthday so special for a child."

Thank you, Joleen and Joe, for your 20 years of dedication and support!



The Haniszewskis received the Susan T. Siewic Distinguished Donor Award at the 2015 C+FS Celebration of Friends.

RECRUITING FOSTER FAMILIES

“When you think about the magnitude of that number – 150 years – and how many families they’ve served... it’s amazing. What a legacy to have!” exclaimed Emily Murphy.

Emily and her husband, John, discovered Child and Family Services (C+FS) after their cousins attended an informational meeting at their church eight years ago. Emily and John always knew their family would extend beyond their three biological children.



Jack, Maizie, Ainzley and TJ Murphy

They realized that choosing to foster children opened not only their eyes, but also their biological children’s eyes, to seeing other people’s worlds and perspectives.

“It was something that was really important to us and something we’ve always wanted to do,” Emily emphasized. “I feel very blessed that we’ve been with C+FS for eight years. Every case worker and home finder we’ve worked with have been amazing. It makes it easier and more comfortable knowing C+FS has our back.”

The Murphy’s have had 20 placements, five of those placements were long-term stays of six months or longer. The primary goal in the Foster Care Program is to reunite the children with their biological families. All of the Murphy’s foster children were reunited with biological family members except seven-year-old TJ, who was adopted by the Murphy family.

For Emily and John, the relationship doesn’t always end after reunification. One of their former placements, who was reunited with her biological mother a couple of years ago, still stays with their family a few times each month.

“Her biological mother is comfortable asking us for help in times of need, and it’s beneficial to everyone for us to be the lifeline she’s never had,” stated John. “We love them as our own family, and I think she views us as her own family, too.”

“It’s important to be open-minded and flexible,” explained Emily. “Each experience has been vastly different, whether it’s the level of interaction with the biological parents or the number of doctor and family visits. It’s not always going to be picture-perfect, but, in the end, we’re so grateful each child was in our home and part of our family.”

FINANCIAL INFORMATION

Changes in Unrestricted Net Assets

Operating Activities

Tuition Revenue

\$22,051,931

Governmental Fees and Grants

\$18,702,393

Program Fees

\$8,128,687

Investment Income

\$897,294

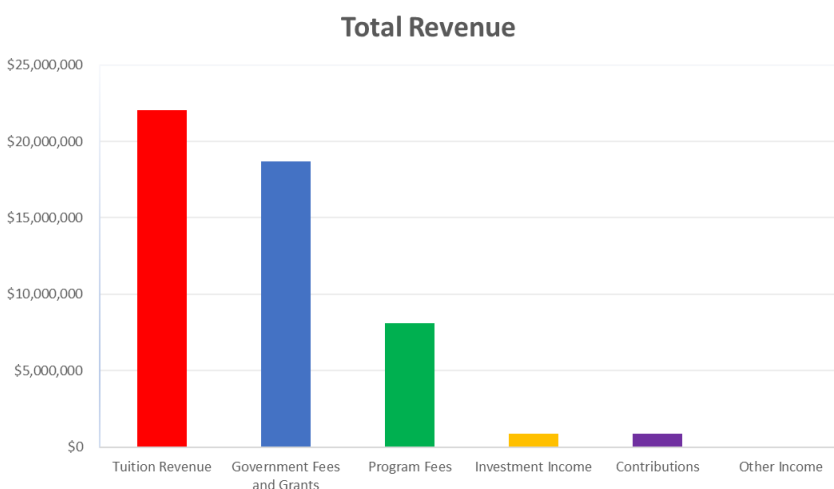
Contributions

\$895,166

Other Income

\$32,710

Total Revenue: \$50,708,181



Expenses

Program Services to Children and Families

\$42,741,127

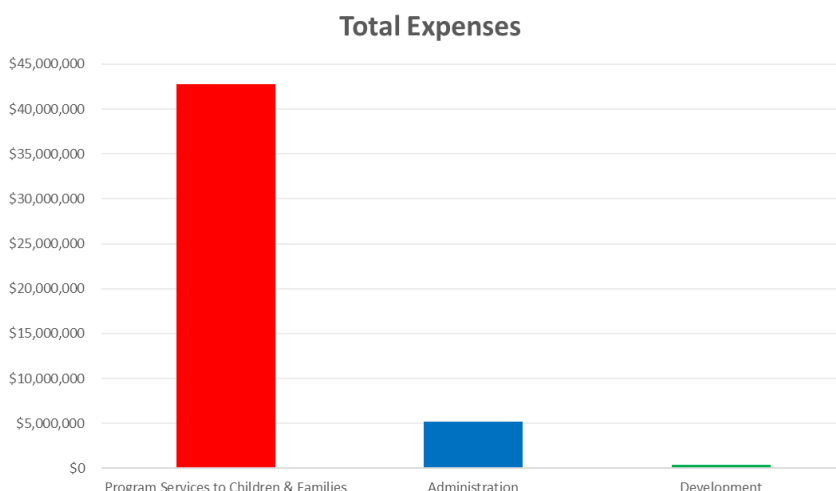
Administration

\$5,186,656

Development

\$411,917

Total Expenses: \$48,339,700



Net Income: \$2,368,481

GRANT RECOGNITION

Circle of Hearts (\$10,000+)

Peter & Elizabeth Tower Foundation
Garman Family Foundation

Circle of Family (\$5,000-\$9,000+)

John R. Oishei Foundation
National Fuel Charitable Foundation

Circle of Love (\$2,000-\$4,999+)

Evans-Devereux Memorial Fund
Community Foundation for Greater Buffalo



Circle of Hope (\$1,000-\$1,999+)

The Almar Family Foundation Inc.
The Maria M. Love Convalescent Fund

1873 SOCIETY MEMBERS

All members made a gift of at least \$5,000 to the Child and Family Services Foundation or named Child and Family Services in their will.

Cheryl Bell
Henry J. Brock
David Feuerstein
Cheryl S. Fisher
Barbara and Paul Harder
Hugh M. Jones III
William Loecher
Elizabeth and Kevin McPartland
Kathleen M. Moriarty
Michael and Kathleen Munster
The Rachael Warrior Foundation
Doris F. Rosen
John and Amy Spitzmiller
Michael K. Walsh





Mission

Nurturing a healthy and more equitable Western New York for the benefit of current and future generations.

Vision

A thriving community where all people live in safety with dignity.

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**Child
Family
Services**



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