



# CHILDREN'S AID AND FAMILY SERVICES

*Building brighter futures since 1899.*

We believe that strong families make a strong community.



WE ENVISION A  
WORLD WHERE

CHILDREN'S AID AND FAMILY SERVICES

SAFE

All children are **safe**, protected and nurtured.

RECOVERY

People suffering from the disease of addiction begin the road to **recovery**.

TRUST

Traumatized children learn to **trust** through loving, lasting relationships.

ESSENTIALS

Every family can provide **essentials** for their babies.



THRIVE

Individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities **thrive**.

SUPPORT

Teen mothers get **support** services and safe housing.

# THANKS TO YOU

everyday, lives are saved  
and hope shines.



Zoe's Place has been home to more than 80 teens and their babies since 2014.



11,000 children have been placed in loving, adoptive homes.



Drug and alcohol prevention education provided to over 12,000 adults and teens yearly.



Over one-and-a-half million diapers have been provided to families in need.



Since our inception, we've improved the lives of hundreds of thousands of children and families.



100% of teenagers in our care have graduated high school since 2009.

# YOU

**MAKE IT POSSIBLE**



We opened our 8th community home for individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities.

# PROBLEM

Over 3,200 individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities are on a waitlist for support services, including housing, day programs, after-school care and in-home support. Some of these individuals are currently living without any social interaction or outside experiences and some even live as shut-ins. Without social and skill-building programs they make little or no progress.

# SOLUTION

Children's Aid and Family Services has opened its eighth community home for individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities, lifting the burden from parents and families unable to care for their loved ones. Our STRIVE day program fosters independence, personal growth and essential life skills so adults with intellectual and developmental disabilities – like Sam and Danny – can reach their potential and experience fuller lives. Our after-school and weekend respite provide enriching activities for our members and mentoring and support services for their families.

*"I want to be as independent as possible. That is my goal."  
– Sam*

**SUCCESS STORY:** Sam and Danny live in our community homes and participate in STRIVE. Sam loves music and recently attended his first concert. Danny volunteers at the Bergen County and Turtle Back Zoos.



# PROBLEM

In 2017, more than 69,000 children across the country were waiting to be adopted from foster care. The average age of a foster child waiting to be placed with a new family is 8, and it takes two to five years for the majority of these children and adolescents to be adopted. Sadly, 20% wait even longer or “age out” of the system with little or no support.

# SOLUTION

Adoption is a life-changing experience for parents and children, and we offer a variety of services to support families through this challenging and rewarding process.

*“It was a relief to finally be adopted.”  
— Marcus*

**SUCCESS STORY:** Marcus was in foster care for nine years. John became his mentor five years ago and over time they formed a deep bond. At the age of 18, Marcus was officially adopted by John.

## ADOPTION

In our 120-year history, Children’s Aid and Family Services has placed more than 11,000 children with loving, nurturing adoptive families. We provide families with comprehensive support and guidance as they navigate this new terrain, which is especially reassuring for those adopting a child with behavioral or learning issues.

## PRE AND POST-ADOPTION COUNSELING SERVICES (PACS)

The majority of adopted children adjust well to their new families, but some experience grief, loss and trauma. Our pre- and post-adoption counseling services, including family and individual therapy, wraparound services, and support groups, are available to families with adopted children under age 21 that are facing challenges.

## VOLUNTEER MENTOR PROGRAM

Mentors make a meaningful difference in the life of at-risk children. We pair adults with children ages 12 to 19 who need a positive, stable and trusting role model to help prepare them for independent living. Mentees get support in areas such as developing essential life and relationship-building skills, improving self-esteem, engaging in enrichment activities and navigating the college application process.

# PROBLEM

The statistics on the impact of alcohol and drug misuse are alarming. Teens who start consuming alcohol before age 15 are seven times more likely to experience drinking-related problems than people who begin drinking after turning 21. Opioid overdoses are on the rise and on average, eight people a day will die from an overdose in New Jersey. The disease of addiction takes a toll on both the individual and their family, who often struggle to help their loved one.

# SOLUTION

The Center for Alcohol and Drug Resources is the place to turn to for information, expertise and support in understanding and preventing drug misuse and addiction.

The Center for Alcohol and Drug Resources battles the disease of addiction using a three-pronged approach that includes prevention, education and recovery support.

*"This is a life or death situation every day."  
— A mother speaking about her daughter's addiction to opioids*

## SCHOOL & FAMILY

All children need life skills to manage the stressors they experience in school, at home and in the community. We help children and families develop skills to help strengthen their relationships and support systems to decrease the likelihood of using alcohol and other drugs. On average, over 5,000 individuals are helped by our school and family programs.

## RECOVERY SUPPORT

The Center has launched critical services to help the community in response to the serious opioid and heroin crisis. Our Recovery Specialists work to guide those addicted to opiates into treatment and provide essential follow-up services. The Center also provides a support group for women dealing with a family member struggling with the misuse of alcohol or drugs.

## COALITION & COMMUNITY

The Bergen County Prevention Coalition (BCPC) brings together individuals and organizations committed to reducing the rates of alcohol, tobacco, and drug use among youth and young adults. The BCPC connects community sectors including law enforcement, healthcare, schools and parents to change public policy and attitudes towards substance use.

# PROBLEM

Every day, innocent children are neglected, abused and abandoned. These traumatized children often enter foster care with special needs and are at great risk for school failure, teen pregnancy and homelessness. While some will be adopted by new families, many youth will “age out” of foster care and one in five will become homeless after turning 18. Fewer than 5% will earn a college degree and only half will find employment by age 24. The average high school graduation rate for a child in foster care is 50%.

# SOLUTION

We understand the important role a foster family plays in helping a traumatized child heal. We match foster families with children who have been wounded by abuse and neglect and provide extensive training to help them learn to care for these children. As a result, 100% of teenagers in our care have graduated high school since 2009. We also offer financial assistance for education or emergency expenses and staff support to young people that have aged out of our care.

*“Jersie has found a place where she is accepted and encouraged to grow and become a better person.”*

*— Mya and Kevin Foster and adoptive parents*

**SUCCESS STORY:** 12-year-old Jersie spent six years in foster care before going to live with Mya and Kevin. Longtime therapeutic foster parents, they help vulnerable children thrive through consistency, structure, and playfulness. In 2018, Mya and Kevin adopted Jersie on National Adoption Day.



# PROBLEM

Struggling working families face countless challenges, from job loss and illness to earnings that fail to cover the cost of essentials for their children. The average infant will use more than 2,700 diapers in the first year of life and low-income families often have to choose between buying food or medicine, paying rent or purchasing diapers for their babies.

# SOLUTION

It is estimated that 1 in 3 families struggle to afford diapers for their babies. Since its inception, Baby Basics has provided one-and-a-half million diapers to families in need. The program provides hundreds of families with supplies, including diapers, wipes, and formula annually.

Baby Basics is the only program in Bergen County that provides free, tangible support to families whose incomes hover just above the federal poverty level, making them ineligible for government assistance. Baby Basics is fully underwritten by philanthropy and staffed largely by volunteers.

*"The diapers saved me money so I could buy food for us and keep a roof over our heads." – Single mother's testimonial about Baby Basics*



# PROBLEM

Pregnant teens and teen moms are the most vulnerable population in the country. In New Jersey, approximately 5,000 teens under the age of 20 give birth each year. While some have access to financial and emotional support, others have no one to rely on. Children of teen mothers are more likely to live in poverty, experience abuse and become teen parents themselves.

# SOLUTION

Zoe's Place provides pregnant teenagers, young moms and their children with safe, supervised housing. Our mentoring and support services teach critical life skills to become self-sufficient and raise healthy babies. Zoe's Place also provides free onsite childcare and a young mothers support group to address the unique needs of a teenage mother.

Our Mobility Mentoring program matches current and former Zoe's Place residents with a professionally trained mentor. Zoe's Place is 100% reliant on philanthropy.

*"I want my child to appreciate the gift we have been given, and to understand that not everyone has this kind of help." – Jaclyn*

**SUCCESS STORY:** Jaclyn was working full-time and struggling to make ends meet. With a three-year-old daughter to care for and nowhere to turn, she found comfort at Zoe's Place. In pursuit of a career path, Jaclyn went back to school to study skincare and makeup application and recently graduated. Her bright and sociable daughter, Nicole, is thriving and making friends in preschool.



# WHAT YOU MAKE POSSIBLE

"I adore my mom. She has motivated me and taught me to stand up for myself. We talk about everything."

— Tiyannah, adopted at age 12



"I love being a mother, and Zoe's Place is like a family. Thank you!"

— Sibó



"I was overwhelmed and anxious not knowing if I could support my baby as a single mom. This program saved my baby's life." — Single mother's testimonial about Baby Basics

"STRIVE is bright, cheery and so much different than my other day program. The staff is incredibly nice and goes above and beyond for all of the members." — Brad

"I learned my weaknesses and strengths as a parent and ways to help me be a better parent."

— Martha, Strengthening Families



"I love being a mom and want to do all the right things for my son to build a good life. If it wasn't for Children's Aid, I don't know where I'd be."

— Sapphire, former Zoe's and Mobility Mentoring client

# THE NEED IS NOW



**Tyler Mathisen**  
Board Chair

*“Power Lunch”  
Co-Anchor & Vice  
President, Events  
Strategy, CNBC*

For 120 years, Children’s Aid and Family Services has continuously evolved to meet community needs. What began as an agency to help orphaned children has become so much more. Not only does the agency provide safe space for abused, neglected and homeless children but it has dramatically expanded services for people with intellectual and developmental disabilities, whatever their age. In addition, we’ve created breakthrough programs to stem our communities’ burgeoning substance abuse problem, especially opioids.

Let me tell you a little bit about today’s Children’s Aid and Family Services. First and foremost, our 120-year commitment to vulnerable children remains strong. Right now, we have more than 30 programs for children in need. We are redoubling our efforts to recruit more foster families for youngsters who have experienced severe trauma. We focus on finding loving adoptive families for older children and, at Zoe’s Place, on providing supportive housing and mentoring for teenage mothers who have absolutely nowhere else to turn.

A second and growing focus is to provide quality community homes, day programming and after-school respite for people with intellectual and developmental disabilities. Imagine the comfort families feel knowing that their loved one has a safe, supportive place to spend the day or live. We’ve expanded our Disability Support Services program by opening new homes.

We also offer a top-notch day program for adults that features an arts and crafts studio, social café and commercial kitchen. Our goal: to help people with disabilities lead lives not of limits but of possibilities.

Yet another pressing community need today is alcohol and drug abuse prevention and education. Through our Center for Alcohol and Drug Resources, we provide prevention education to children and families. For those for whom prevention comes too late, we offer both recovery services and much-needed support to women whose loved ones have substance abuse problems.

For 120 years, our services and programs have evolved to meet ever-changing needs. Now more than ever, that adaptability is at the core of who we are and what we do. At this exciting time in our history, I invite you to get involved with one of our life-changing programs.

For me, Children’s Aid and Family Services is not just a community mission. It is personal. Yes, I am a board member. But far more important, Children’s Aid made me a father 25 years ago. Now, as my adoptive son grapples with addiction, as so many do today, I lean on it for resources, wisdom and support. My connection with the agency has been the relationship of a lifetime. It can be the same for you. Thank you.

C. Tyler Mathisen  
Chair, Board of Trustees

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*"At times our own light goes out and is rekindled by a spark from another person. Each of us has cause to think with deep gratitude of those who have lighted the flame within us." -Albert Schweitzer*



CHILDREN'S AID  
AND FAMILY SERVICES

Our Mission is to strengthen families and empower individuals -- children and adults alike -- to reach their fullest potential. Motivated by compassion and in partnership with the community, we make positive lasting differences in the lives of those we serve. We provide high-quality, innovative services to children, adults, and their families that advance social, educational and emotional development and well being.

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