



FOSTER VILLAGE AUSTIN
year end report
2019

TOGETHER WE ARE MAKING A DIFFERENCE

WHY WE CARE

THE PROBLEM



Foster Care is a pipeline to some of our most critical social issues. Former foster youth account for roughly:

50%

of our homeless population

80%

of our human trafficking victims



90% of youth with 5 or more foster placements enter the criminal justice system



80% of foster youth suffer from mental health issues such as PTSD and depression



About half of all licensed foster homes quit after their first placement, often citing lack of support as the reason.

THE SOLUTION Community

By bridging the gaps between this vulnerable population and a caring community, we believe that we can see these troubling statistics shift and generations changed.



“The support provided by Foster Village made it possible for us to continue fostering through the thick of it; in turn, shifting the entire trajectory toward healing for the children in our care as well as their parents”.

THE IMPACT

Thanks to your generosity and partnership in 2019, we are seeing **numbers for good**. How your support is filling the gaps:

- ✓ **393** urgent requests fulfilled for **licensed foster homes** needing critical necessities for emergency placements
- ✓ **170** urgent requests fulfilled for **kinship homes** (relative caregivers) needing critical necessities and ongoing support, making it possible for sibling groups to stay together
- ✓ **67** urgent requests fulfilled for **reunifying families** welcoming children back after time spent in foster care. Support included furnishing homes after homelessness, connecting to mentors and ongoing community services, providing transportation and babysitters for under-resourced single mothers overcoming domestic violence, addiction, and/or homelessness
- ✓ Therapeutic tools and resources provided for over **100 children and teens** in foster care through Project Soothe
- ✓ **104 Hours** of monthly support Gatherings provided throughout Austin
- ✓ **4 Parent's Night Out** events with free childcare for **120 children**
- ✓ Back to School supplies and new tennis shoes for over **200 children** in foster care
- ✓ **90% of surveyed foster and kinship families** report that the services provided by Foster Village was a sustaining factor in their ability to continue fostering
- ✓ **Over \$1million in resources** provided since launching in 2016
- ✓ **2,072 children** reached with community support
- ✓ **5 emergency shelter requests** for Children Without Placement
- ✓ **7 Independent Foster Village Affiliate locations** trained and launched nationwide

WHAT WE DO

EQUIP

Provide basic necessities & holistic support to foster parents, kinship caregivers, and reunifying families

CONNECT

Encourage community & connection through family gatherings, monthly support meetings, & parents night out

ADVOCATE

Build awareness and inspire community engagement to best serve children in foster care & their caregivers

WHO WE SERVE

Individuals and families in the child welfare system in need of holistic community support.



Children 0-18 years of age removed from homes due to abuse and/or neglect, often times with no belongings

Former foster youth who have aged out of state custody with little to no support system in place



Licensed foster homes who open their home to emergency placements, often times with less than a few hours notice



Kinship caregivers who are relatives or next of kin opening their homes to children in the child welfare system, often times with little to no state support services



Biological families who are working a family safety plan with Child Protective Services to avoid the need for their children to be removed and/or parents who have completed the requirements to safely reunify with their children, breaking cycles of generational homelessness, addiction, and poverty

A LOOK AT THE NEEDS

(these are just a sampling of real requests that we receive on a daily basis- your support made it possible for us to meet all of these needs)

- "We were just placed with a 5 month old and two year old in the middle of the night and they arrived with nothing. We are in need of a crib, warm clothing, diapers, bottles, and car seats."
- "We are getting two brothers who are part of a large sibling group. They are coming from a shelter where they have been for the past two months so they are coming with very few belongings. Our house is quite small and we are scrambling to make this work so these brothers can stay together. We are in desperate need of bunk beds if you can help."
- "This family recently moved to a new home for safety reasons and the mother is caring for six children under the age of seven. She is in need of a toddler and twin bed and warm winter clothing for the children."
- "Last night we had to remove 4 children and place them with a relative who lives alone on a low income and didn't expect to be taking in four children. The children are in need of everything and this relative can use help with groceries while waiting for approved food bank options."
- "I am the CASA volunteer on a case where mom was recently reunified with her seven children. She is doing well but there are currently no beds in the home. We would appreciate your help in providing beds for these children."
- "My grandson is currently in weekly therapy but he struggles with anxiety and fear of abandonment while sleeping. The therapist suggested a weighted blanket and white noise machine might help him at night."
- "I am requesting assistance for a 15 yo girl who was recently placed with a school friend's family. She really did not want to leave her school but her previous placement could no longer keep her. This new family is working on getting her added to their food stamps but are in need of assistance with the basic necessities while they wait."
- "Two month old baby girl is being released from the hospital and is still suffering from severe withdrawals from heroin. It is reported that an infant swing helps soothe her withdrawal symptoms. The foster family would greatly appreciate help with a swing."
- "We have a CWOP (Child Without Placement) situation and were told that you can help. We have a 17 year old boy in need of short term shelter and all children's shelters are currently full."



KIMBERLY & VANESSA

We first met Kimberly when she stepped up as a volunteer. Shortly after she got plugged in to volunteer and saw the extensive needs in the foster care world, Kimberly and her husband became a licensed foster home. As soon as their first placements arrived we had the opportunity to show up with the basic necessities and we have loved the opportunity to continue walking alongside them through the multiple placements they have had since. The Lloyds stay engaged in our ongoing Support Gatherings and have been able to gain the tools and encouragement they need to continue this work for the long haul.

While fostering siblings toward reunification, Kimberly introduced us to Vanessa (the children's mother) in hopes that we could extend the same wraparound support to her while she worked to bring her children home after overcoming homelessness, domestic violence, and addiction. Over the past six months we have been able to provide Vanessa with a donated vehicle to transport her four young children around, helped furnish her first apartment as a single mom, connected her to ongoing support services and mentors in the community, connected her to career opportunities, and helped her navigate childcare challenges.

Vanessa and her four children have continued to grow and thrive thanks to the support of an engaged community!



PEYTON

We were first introduced to Peyton about one year ago. After bouncing around in foster care, Peyton eventually landed with her grandmother who sadly passed away when Peyton was just 15. Without a safe and stable support system, Peyton was on her own to figure out housing, work, etc at far too young of an age.

Once she reached 18 last year, a wonderful family learned of Peyton's situation and invited her into their home. This family was also caring for their adult son who was battling cancer at the time and trying to make ends meet with limited resources, but they still didn't hesitate to open their hearts and home to Peyton. They just needed the community to help them give her some wings toward a bright future.

One of the biggest challenges that Peyton was facing was her inability to get a state ID due to a clerical mistake made on her grandmother's custody papers. "I don't technically exist" was what Peyton came to believe after unsuccessful attempts to get the clerical mistake worked out on her own. She needed an attorney, but unfortunately lacked the resources and connections to make that possible.

Shortly after meeting Peyton and learning her story, we were able to connect her to a local attorney who agreed to help pro bono. Within a couple of months, we had the issues amended and Peyton got the corrected forms that she needed to get an official state ID. With that ID in hand, she has been unstoppable!

We have had the opportunity to mentor and encourage Peyton through getting her driver's license, registering to vote, finding a new job that she enjoys, connecting her to a trauma-informed therapist, and joined efforts with a partner organization that is helping to cover her college costs (did we mention she's an official college student now!). We also had the chance to gift Peyton with a donated vehicle so that she can get around to work and school independently.

Through the support and encouragement of this Village we have seen this girl absolutely soar in just one year... we look forward to seeing all that God has in store for her as this journey of overcoming continues!

2020 vision

After two years of searching and praying, our goal of launching a second home-like, child-centered resource center for families on the north side of town is finally happening! We are so incredibly excited and hopeful for all of the healing, connection, and resourcing that will be made possible through this new location.

On a daily basis we have caregivers drive to our Oak Haven resource center from 1+ hours away from every corner of the four counties we serve. Achieving our ultimate goal of locations on the north and south ends of town will make it more feasible to fill the many gaps for our local children and families in crisis.

Similar to our Oak Haven resource center in Dripping Springs, this new location (off of Parmer Lane and Mopac) will be:

- ✓ A place where children can come to gather all of the basic necessities when entering foster care
- ✓ A place for foster and kinship parents to connect with others who will sustain them in caring for children from hard places
- ✓ A place for monthly Support Gatherings that will include trainings and enrichment topics from local professionals
- ✓ A place to synergize with our community partners
- ✓ A place for free professional trauma-informed care coaching for caregivers
- ✓ A place for children and families to experience supervised visitations in a large, child-focused sensory/play studio
- ✓ A place where the community can pour into the critical work of healing families

We have seen this model become a hub where our local foster, kinship, and reunifying parents are connected with a caring community. Thanks to a generous seed grant from a private foundation, we will be able to launch this north resource center in early 2020! Our goal is to still maintain our low administrative overhead (over 80% of every donation dollar goes to direct services) so we are inviting the community to help us reach that goal. Every contribution helps.

Together we can continue to achieve this vision of a more healing experience for our local children in foster care, Village!

Join the Village

Please join us for our annual Grow the Village Gala on March 13th, 2020. We will be sharing inspiring stories of children and families beating the odds thanks to your generosity as well as opportunities for continued community engagement.

Please visit www.fostervillageaustin.org/gala for details!

WE ARE ALL IN THIS TOGETHER!

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