

# Transforming TOMORROWS

FAMILY  
FORWARD

2023 Annual Report



# Dear Friends,



2023 was a year of remarkable growth and progress at FamilyForward, driven by our commitment to supporting children and families. Your unwavering dedication has been crucial in advancing our mission and expanding our impact across the region.

We have a lot to be proud of, and this annual report will highlight many of those accomplishments. Among the most significant are our innovative advancements in how we support children and families. Two key milestones stand out.

First, the opening of The Lesley Ann Waldheim Early Childhood Center in January 2023. This new facility is more than just a space;

it embodies our dedication to creating an environment where young children can heal and grow, reflecting our commitment to early, impactful support.

Equally significant was the integration of trauma-focused occupational therapy into our programs. We are proud to be the first agency in the region to offer these specialized services to youth impacted by trauma. After years of planning, hiring, and training, it is inspiring to see what our team of occupational therapists has achieved in this first full year.

Looking ahead, we remain dedicated to supporting and uplifting families throughout

the region. We are also advancing research to develop practical solutions for preventing and treating developmental trauma, helping us **transform tomorrows** for children and families in our community, and beyond.

Thank you for your support and partnership. Together, we are building a future where every family has the opportunity to thrive.

Gratefully,

*Karen*

**Karen E. Nolte**  
Chief Executive Officer





## A place for kids to be kids

In January 2023, we proudly opened The Lesley Ann Waldheim Early Childhood Center, offering a state-of-the-art space where children benefit from innovative therapies and enriching play. Scan the QR code to take a virtual tour and explore the facility.



## Leading with innovation

To better meet our clients' needs, we launched an integrated occupational therapy program focused on improving daily living skills, sensory processing, and motor development—helping children build the skills they need to thrive. Scan the QR code to learn more.



## Defining the need

During fiscal year 2023, 18,632 children in the St. Louis area were reported to the Missouri Child Abuse and Neglect Hotline.



## Making an impact

4,986 children, their families, and community members were served by FamilyForward in 2023.



# Vision

FamilyForward leads the community in providing innovative solutions for advancing safer, healthier relationships for children and families.

# Mission

FamilyForward moves vulnerable children in the direction of hope by delivering comprehensive therapeutic and educational services to support biological, foster, and adoptive families.

# Shaping the Future of Care

In 2023, we took a significant step forward by incorporating a research and training component into our work. This innovation bridges the gap between cutting-edge research and practical application, ensuring that our programs use the most effective, evidence-based practices. Our enhanced training initiatives equip caregivers and professionals with the latest insights and tools to better support children and families. By translating research into actionable strategies, we're improving our services and empowering those who support children impacted by trauma.

## Executive Team

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*Chief Executive Officer*

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# Supporting Children and Families

At FamilyForward, we are committed to transforming tomorrows for children who have experienced abuse or neglect. Each day, our dedicated team works tirelessly to build safer, healthier relationships for children and families through a range of services.



**1,089**

## Assessments

We provided trauma assessments and psychological evaluations for children and families, offering individualized recommendations to support them at home, in school, and through therapeutic interventions.



**1,635**

## Training and Education

Supported by our ongoing research and training efforts, we provided comprehensive education and training to professionals, community members, and caregivers through community presentations and targeted caregiver education.



**1,142**

## Foster Care

As a Children's Permanency Partnership member, FamilyForward provided foster care and adoption case management, recruitment, training, and licensing services to 1,142 foster and adoptive families.





## 582 Home Visiting

Our home visiting staff provided mentoring, parent coaching and education, and therapy services for young and pregnant parents. Through our support, caregivers created healthier, more stable environments for their children.



## 332 Occupational Therapy

Our integrated occupational therapy services addressed sensory and motor skill deficits, supporting children and their families in enhancing daily functioning and overall well-being.



## 120 Therapeutic Preschool

Our therapeutic preschool team provided a highly structured environment with developmentally sensitive interventions for children experiencing emotional and behavioral difficulties. We supported children and their families, offering a safe space for children to thrive and grow.



## 998 Therapy

Through individual, family, and group counseling, children and families received support grounded in evidence-based practices and therapeutic interventions.

# Creating the Path to Resilience

At just two and a half months old, Kiki's life was filled with abuse and neglect, resulting in emotional and psychological wounds. When she and her brother Oliver entered the care of their adoptive parent, Chris, they carried the heavy burden of their past traumas. Chris, driven by compassion and determination, sought to provide a nurturing environment but soon faced challenges, especially as Kiki and Oliver struggled during middle school.

The family sought the support of FamilyForward during this critical time. Our team worked closely with Kiki, Oliver, and Chris to address their educational and emotional needs with tailored interventions. By collaborating with teachers and offering specialized support, we helped them understand their trauma, navigate it, and develop healthier relationships both in and outside of school.

Kiki and Oliver have grown into resilient young adults, excelling both academically and emotionally. Kiki is now a parent advocate in the community, using her experiences to support other families, while Oliver has found his calling as a gymnastics coach, inspiring young athletes with his passion and positivity.







By addressing their unique challenges, Kiki and Oliver have built strong, safe relationships—something we aim to achieve for every child and family we support. Their journey underscores the value of personalized support and the role of dedicated caregivers.



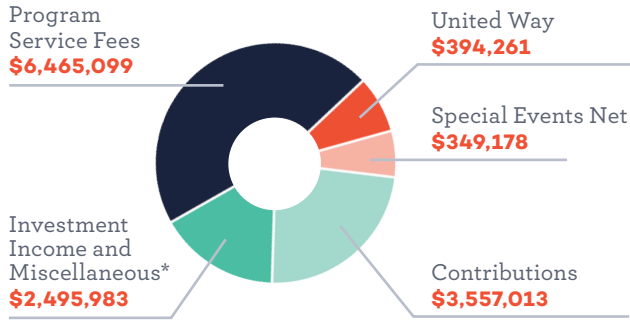
**“ I knew that I always had it in me to be a good kid. But when you have people that are willing to listen to you, understand your background, where you come from, and why you act the way you do, it makes it a lot easier to succeed and do well in those spaces.” - Kiki**

To learn more about Kiki and Oliver’s journey and the impact of FamilyForward’s support, please scan the QR code.



# The Numbers

## Revenue



Total Public Support and Revenue  
**\$13,261,534**

## Expense



Program Services  
**\$9,765,114**



Administrative Services  
**\$2,281,642**



Development Services  
**\$1,027,215**

Total Expenses  
**\$13,073,971**

## Net Assets, Ending Balance

**\$40,682,366**

Unrestricted Net Assets  
**\$20,627,862**

# Events



## The Rocket Ball

On February 10, 2023, a crowd of 455 supporters gathered at the St. Louis Union Station Hotel for an evening of hope and generosity. Presented by Edward Jones, the event featured silent and live auctions, a raffle, and live music. Together, we raised over \$600,000 – allowing our staff to continue to Light the Way Forward, helping children overcome the effects of trauma and work toward a brighter future.



**Join us in 2025!**

Scan the QR code for more information, to purchase tickets, or to become a Rocket Ball sponsor.



## Day of Giving

In 2023, FamilyForward hosted Better Together, an online day of giving that brought our community closer than ever. With the incredible support of our dedicated matching funders and over 200 individual donors, we raised more than \$125,000. These funds supported our programs, including providing a full year of therapy services for 60 children, ensuring they had the resources and support they needed to thrive.

# Thank you!

In 2023, our Guardian Society members played a crucial role in helping FamilyForward serve 4,986 children, their families, and community members.

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\*\*deceased

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contributions of \$1,000  
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safer, healthier relationships  
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