

Steps to

BETTER



 Children's Bureau, Inc.

2017 ANNUAL REPORT



We RISE by
LIFTING
others



Dear Friends,

2017 was a year that rushed by as we expanded services to meet the growing needs of communities across Indiana. Our staff served 43,056 children from 23,296 families. Over half of the families received services that prevent child abuse and neglect. Children's Bureau works with numerous community partners to create awareness of child safety, build helpful support systems and identify community resources; all the steps necessary for better, stronger families.

The year wasn't without challenges. Unfortunately, the number of children entering the child welfare system continued to grow due to the addiction epidemic gripping our state. We focused on helping those who unexpectedly found themselves caring for the children whose lives have been torn apart. When a parent has a critical illness, such as cancer, their children are encouraged to talk about their feelings and acts of kindness regularly occur. But there is deafening silence and often shame for children with an addicted parent. From the child's perspective the effects of both situations are much the same. Their parent may be too sick to help them with their homework, they miss their games, they can't work and they are gone away from the home. Children's Bureau staff are trained to encourage these children to talk about their feelings and cope with their sadness in positive ways.

The adoption program started offering Attachment Focused Therapy to address the devastating effects of trauma on children. Most of the kids we serve through our adoption programs come to us through the child welfare system and have suffered unspeakable traumas. Attachment Focused Therapy helps these families thrive by building connection and trust in the family unit.

Ninety-two of the foster youth we served earned high school diplomas and twenty-four started college. A successful dorm drive provided all the items needed to outfit dorm rooms for those who were college bound. The older youth services team work closely with these young adults so that they learn to navigate barriers and take the steps that lead to better.


I am grateful to each staff person, donor, volunteer, board member and corporate partner for all that you do to help us preserve families and protect children. We absolutely could not do this work without your help and we are forever grateful for your support. This year, you helped many children and families begin to take the critically important steps to making their lives better. For each of these families, I offer you my heartfelt thanks. I encourage everyone to embrace and support the families devastated by addiction. Ask how they are doing or show them an unexpected act of kindness. All of us are needed to help the child and the family begin taking steps to better.

Fondly,



Tina





Do you **WANT** to just
SURVIVE
or thrive?

KALIE'S ROAD TO STABILITY

You are not going to live with me anymore. The words echoed in her head. She felt like she was choking. She started to cry. The eight year old sat in front of her foster mother in disbelief. She was only four when she and her older brothers were removed from their biological mother. After multiple placements in group homes and foster care, she thought they had found stability. Now she feared that was coming to an end.

"Listen to me. Look at me. She wants you to live with her now," Kalie's foster mom said pointing to a very familiar face in the room. That face had a name, it was Becky, her foster mother's granddaughter. "I always liked Becky and I enjoyed her visits," Kalie remembered. Becky, a 22-year-old mother of two, was fourteen years older than Kalie. "I was a scraggly, awkward child who, like Becky, had endured a rough childhood." Becky and her husband decided to adopt Kalie, making her former foster mother her adoptive grandmother.

Kalie was relieved to find a permanent home. She was officially adopted at age 10 and her mom changed her name (previously Toni) as a lasting symbol of the new family bond. Her adoptive mother even rented a building and hosted a huge adoption celebration. "She made sure I knew I was a part of this family forever," Kalie said. Kalie's new name was a combination of two names; the two most important people in her adoptive mom's life. Kalie's middle name stayed the same as a piece of her history.

Kalie has dealt with the long-term impact of childhood trauma. When she was eighteen she found her biological mother. "I've forgiven her," Kalie said, "I had my adoptive family because she gave me up." She

says balancing her adoptive family and her biological one isn't always easy but there is a place for both.

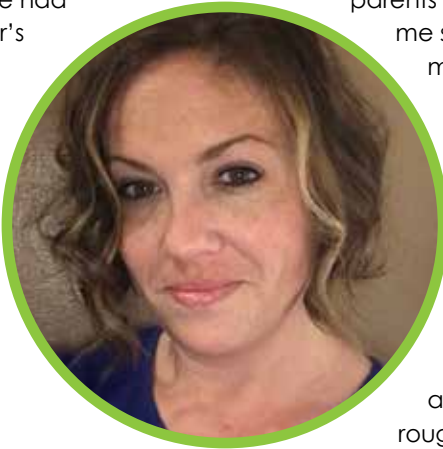
Kalie today, a mother of three, is happily married. She balances a successful career with raising a family and pursuing an education. 'Do you want to just survive or thrive?' is the mantra she heard as a girl and the one that still motivates her as an adult. Like her childhood, her adult life was not without struggles. She was once a single mother living in a one bedroom apartment and struggling to make ends meet. But, her adoptive parents were always there for her. "They let me struggle," she said, "but they never let me go without." She says her work ethic and parenting style was influenced by her adoptive parents. Family time is incredibly important to Kalie. She describes herself as a "hands on mother", just as Becky was and still is today.

While adoption is not what defines her, it continues to impact her life. "It's not a secret that I was adopted. It's not a secret that I had a rough childhood," she said. If Kalie could go back and talk to her young self, the self that was living in uncertainty, scared about her future, she would say, "It's going to be okay. If you keep pushing, it will be okay."

She feels grateful that she had the chance to escape a cycle of poverty and drug abuse.

"I like me. I like my life," she said. Kalie has earned that happiness, and she hopes to pay it forward. Kalie and her husband would love to grow their family with adoption someday.

Kalie's adoption was made possible in part by Children's Bureau, Inc.



The steps to
HEALING

are just that, steps



THE STEPS TO BETTER

When I was a child, I planned to save the world. The whole entire world. In 4th grade, my teacher shared pictures of an ocean filled with plastic bottles and soda straws. I committed to recycle. When I was in 10th grade my ecology teacher warned us of the plight of the timber rattle snake. I promised to care for their habitat. When I was 12 my parents watched a documentary on the orphan crisis in impoverished countries. By the time I was 16, they adopted my youngest brother from Bulgaria. I would never again be unaware of the suffering in the world. I knew without a doubt that I would make a change.

When Mike and I first visualized foster care and adoption, we painted our vision with broad strokes. We thought of children without a home. We thought of the families who were unable to care for their precious little ones. We had some knowledge of what a child in need looked like. My grandfather grew up in foster care and my grandmother was adopted by a family member. My youngest brother was adopted at the age of 8. My beloved aunt was just a young adult when she made the difficult decision to place her newborn baby for adoption. For me, the portrait of adoption was filled with lovely colors. I recognized the loss involved but I also saw adoption through the lens of those I loved deeply. I could only see the beauty and love I had for those whose lives had been touched by foster care and adoption. At first, I glossed over the hard parts and placed adoption in a favorable light. At the edges of that beauty was something else, something blurry, jagged, broken and hard. The larger picture was there all along but it took becoming a foster parent for the rest of the picture to come into focus.

We adopted our first daughter Jaala, at birth. She was 8 minutes old when I met her. Mike held her first while I counted her tiny fingers and toes. We were in awe of her. Her birth mom chose us out of all the waiting families at the adoption agency. We were honored beyond words and committed to love her deeply for

our whole lives. When we carried her out of the hospital two days later, we were filled with joy. Immediately that joy was mixed with sorrow as we realized her first mother had left the same hospital with empty arms.

That same year, a girl from our community, Rachel began spending a lot of time at our house. She was an honorary big sister to our daughter and a ton of fun to be with. Her dad passed away when she was 3 and her mom was very sick. She came from a deeply loving family who welcomed us with open arms. Two years later, we grieved her mother's death alongside Rachel. We felt the loss deeply for ourselves and faced the reality that we were ill equipped to help Rachel heal. Despite our inadequacies, she continued to be a part of our family. She chose to consent to her own adoption at the age of 25. Her extended family welcomed our family in a way that was humbling. We learned that even those who desire to save the world, need to be accepted and loved too.

Noelle and André joined our family the year Rachel's mom passed away. Their parents were friends of ours who just needed some help. We agreed to watch the kids until they were back on their feet but found out that we had to get our foster license first so we scrambled to obtain it. Three months after the children went into foster care, we were able to bring them into our home. We were able to work alongside mom and dad toward reunification for years. It was our first encounter with the intricate struggle that those who come from poverty deal with. We were equally crushed and relieved when mom and dad consented to Noelle and André's adoption after 3 years in the system. More than four years later, we legally adopted them.

Krystal came to live with us when she was a young teen. We weren't new to fostering teens and very much enjoyed having Krystal live with us. We felt torn as we watched her grieve the loss of her first family and thrive in our family at the same time. After 2 1/2 years in care, she asked to be adopted. Her adoption day was just
(continued on next page)

two weeks before her 18th birthday.

Eli, Jake were our greatest surprise. They were foster to adopt but we had to go through an interview process first. Four couples completed the interview which was done by their two biological grandmothers. They were lovely women. We felt immediately drawn to their story and fell in love with the boys before we even met them. To this day, Eli and Jake's extended biological family is a part of our life.

Sam joined our family "for the weekend." As anyone from the foster care system knows, one should always take the estimated amount of time and add four years. We got to know Sam's biological family over the next three years and grew to love them even as his case moved from reunification to adoption. He was

adopted just before his 4th birthday.

My once blurry portrait of foster care and adoption has become clearer now. In my painting I see the faces of those I love, they are bright and filled with light. I see the shadows too. I see addiction, poverty and mental illness. The shadows often try to overshadow the light. I no longer wish to banish the darkness because it is what creates the depth. The picture is clearer now, it's deeper and more painfully beautiful than I ever could have imagined.

I no longer plan to save the world. That is too lofty a goal. I see overwhelming need everywhere I look. I see the need in my own life as well. The steps to healing are just that, steps. With each step we love others. With each step we accept love. With each step we create change. These are the steps to good.

AN EXTRAORDINARY GIFT FROM LILLY ENDOWMENT, INC.

The Children's Bureau Foundation received a grant of \$10 million under Lilly Endowment Inc.'s 2017 round of financial sustainability grants to central Indiana human services agencies.

The grant was one of 10 grants totaling \$80 million that were designed to help agencies that serve persons with disabilities and vulnerable children and youth enhance their long-term impact by building stronger financial futures. Lilly Endowment believes that the programs and services these agencies provide help central Indiana be a more caring community.

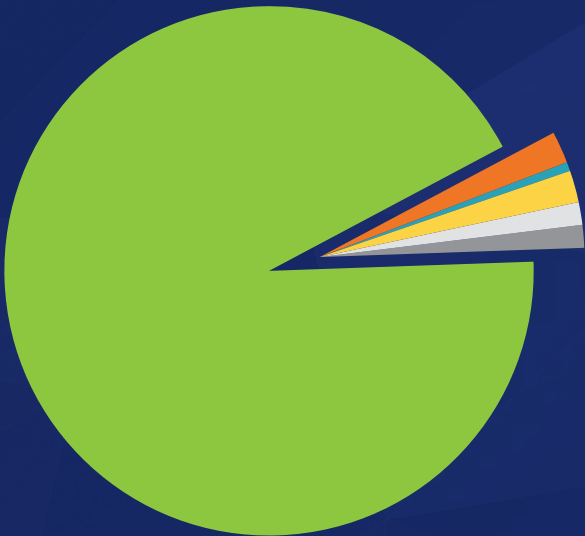
The majority of the grant was placed in the agency's existing endowment. A modest portion was used to address some of the initiatives outlined in Children's Bureau Inc.'s five year strategic plan.

The financial sustainability grant and the grants to the nine other agencies complement Lilly Endowment's regular support of human services organizations through direct grants and grants to the United Way of Central Indiana.

"The staff and leadership of these agencies work

every day to help children, adults and families who are among the most vulnerable residents in central Indiana," said Ace Yakey, the Endowment's vice president for community development. "These grants don't take the place of ongoing support for day-to-day operations. Instead, the funds will help the agencies build financial infrastructures that will position them better to weather financial challenges and serve more people more effectively."

This grant was approved under the third round of grants Lilly Endowment has made since 2015 to support the long-term sustainability plans of charitable organizations based in central Indiana. In 2015, the Endowment made grants to 14 arts and cultural organizations totaling \$100 million. In 2016, the Endowment made grants totaling \$100 million to support the long-term sustainability plans of 15 human services organizations that are primarily focused on providing services in low-income neighborhoods in Indianapolis.



REVENUE

Contributions/Special Events	\$684,886.00
In-Kind	\$438,862.00
Grants	\$416,707.00
Government Contracts	\$28,941,297.00
United Way	\$646,229.00
Other Income	\$129,644.00
TOTAL	\$31,257,625.00

EXPENSES

Programs and Services	\$26,108,226.00
Management/General	\$3,533,659.00
Fundraising	\$606,615.00
TOTAL	\$30,248,500.00

Net Surplus **\$1,009,125.00**

A photograph of a man and a young child walking on a paved path. The man, wearing a blue and white striped shirt and blue jeans, is holding the child's hands. The child, wearing a blue and white striped shirt and dark jeans, is looking towards the camera. The background is a blurred green lawn and trees.

IT'S

ABOUT *bringing*

DADS

back to the TABLE
and EDUCATING *them*

A PROFESSIONAL JOURNEY PROPELLED BY PASSION

Carl Scheib has spent 36 years working in social services. His career journey has included several different paths and his belief and commitment to helping people still gets him up in the morning.

He started his career working with juveniles who were on probation. He has been a supervisor at a detention center and has worked for a state welfare agency. Today, he is the Director at Children's Bureau's Connersville office. He and his team are focused on helping families in a six county region stay out of trouble.

As a child, "I wanted to be a police officer," Scheib said. In college, he became interested in social work and sociology. It was then that he decided he wanted to be "on the clean-up side of it."

After working nine years in Juvenile detention, a friend in state government called and recruited Scheib to the job of deputy commissioner of the welfare department. He described the experience as eye-opening. "I thought I was in a position where I could make a difference that would trickle down," he said. But, he didn't enjoy the politics of that job and left -- without a job prospect in sight -- after three years. For about 18 months, he worked three jobs to help his family stay afloat.

Scheib then went to work at a mental health center, offering adults and children what is now called "wraparound services." He worked on an access coordination team for 14 years, helping families connect with needed services. Today, he manages the delivery of the same kind of services at Children's Bureau.

Keeping families together is the goal. He cites the example of a single mom who isn't working due to a fractured hip. She's not getting paid so she can't pay her rent. She becomes homeless and DCS steps in and removes the children from the homeless situation. "We are all just one paycheck away from being in her

situation, under the bridge with her kids," Scheib said, "It doesn't have to be that way. The family could stay together. DCS doesn't want her kids."

Some families come to the Children's Bureau on a DCS referral when there is substantiated proof of child abuse or neglect in the household. In those cases, a home-based caseworker is assigned to keep the children safe. Sometimes it involves showing people how to budget their money. Other times, the adults may need to learn good parenting skills. "If you weren't parented well, you're not going to know how to parent your own kids," Scheib explained. "You only know what you know."

Scheib also manages the administration of the father engagement program for his region. According to Scheib, DCS looked at why fathers are not present in so many households. In several cases, the male wants to be a father but feels as if he isn't wanted. The feeling use to be that these dads are "a bunch of deadbeats that have babies and run away." But, DCS found that many are scared, believing the mother only wants them for child support or that they'll be thrown in jail if they show up and owe support. The father engagement caseworker wants to work with these men. They are asked, "What kind of father do you want to be? Do you want to be involved or do you want to sign your rights (to the children) away?" Scheib said. The goal is to get mom and dad on the same page about their children so they can co-parent "because of their love for the child. It's all about bringing dads back to the table and educating them."

Scheib is passionate about his work. He believes the program and the professionals with whom he works are making a difference. And, he said, "That's why you get up in the morning."



I am
NOT *what has*
HAPPENED
to me

I AM *what I*
CHOOSE
to
BECOME
 *-Carl Jung*



PROJECT ESTEEM

The women of Project Esteem are successful. They work full-time jobs. They excel in their careers. They balance busy schedules and juggle many responsibilities including children of their own. In addition to all of this, these five women decided that they wanted to give back to their community, and in 2015 Project Esteem was born.

Catherine Le, the Executive Director of Project Esteem, said she can still remember some of the first children the group mentored. After training with the Indiana Youth Institute, Catherine and her fellow Project Esteem founders began a pilot program. Now, Project Esteem is a valued partner with Children's Bureau, Inc., visiting the Courage Center twice a month and the Family Support Center at least once a quarter.

The mission of Project Esteem is simple: "building self esteem", according to Le. Realizing that mission can be a challenge considering Project Esteem typically works with high-risk youth who frequently lack stability and positivity in their home lives. The group talks about self-image, self-worth, respect, leadership, etiquette, and health, topics that Le said would benefit all youth.

Le knows that keeping the attention of young people can be tricky, so her activities are always very participatory. For instance, in one of her favorite lessons, participants are asked to "Create Your Own Selfie". They imagine that they have the very best lighting, the very best filters, and the very best background, and they

illustrate how they see themselves and what they like. It makes the participants focus on all the good things about themselves, both physical and more spiritual. This gives confidence to kids and teens using a language that is very familiar to them. Le never wants the youth to feel like they are in school, even though they are often learning quite a bit.

Le, who works full time as a Physician's Assistant in Gastroenterology, initially started Project Esteem when a friend's niece asked her about etiquette for a formal event. Le was taken aback when this young woman called her "bougie" for displaying manners. Le and her peers are all professional women for whom etiquette seemed like second nature. Le decided that some social guidance and mentorship could be really helpful, so she and her friends began volunteering their time. In addition to working with Children's Bureau, Inc., Project Esteem partners with Step Over, Westminster Neighborhood Services, Global Prep Academy, and Warren Central High School.

"Everyone has a story," Le said about the youth she and her friends mentor. It can definitely be challenging to relate to every child and teen, but Le tries to remember that every person has their own set of experiences, limitations, but also possibilities. "Our goal is always to engage every student," Le said, "To see them come into class with their heads down and then slowly start raising their hands is rewarding for all of us."



Our
GOAL IS *to always*
engage every student

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Each of the companies listed provides an annual, unrestricted gift to Children's Bureau. The impact of this support is felt throughout each of the services we offer. In addition to providing needed resources, our partners' employees take part in volunteer activities, special events and advocate for Indiana children.

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YOUNG PROFESSIONALS ADVISORY BOARD

It was a busy year for the Young Professionals Advisory Board (YPAB), a group that exists to support Children's Bureau's mission to preserve families and protect Indiana children. YPAB members planned two fundraisers, volunteered with kids in CB's residential facilities, and served as ambassadors for the agency in the community. Their generosity and caring spirits make a lasting, positive impact on children's lives. We thank this group of dynamic young people for the difference they make year after year!



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CHILDREN'S BUREAU AUXILIARY

The women of the CB Auxiliary focus on helping Children's Bureau through fundraising and volunteer service. Each year members issue a regular newsletter, hold meetings and raise money through a spring luncheon/fashion show and an angel fund patrons drive. Funds raised go toward refurbishing CB facilities, sending kids to summer camp, assisting with special client needs, and staff education and appreciation.

