

 **FAMILY & CHILDREN SERVICES** A SOURCE OF HOPE

2019 ANNUAL REPORT



R

RESPECT

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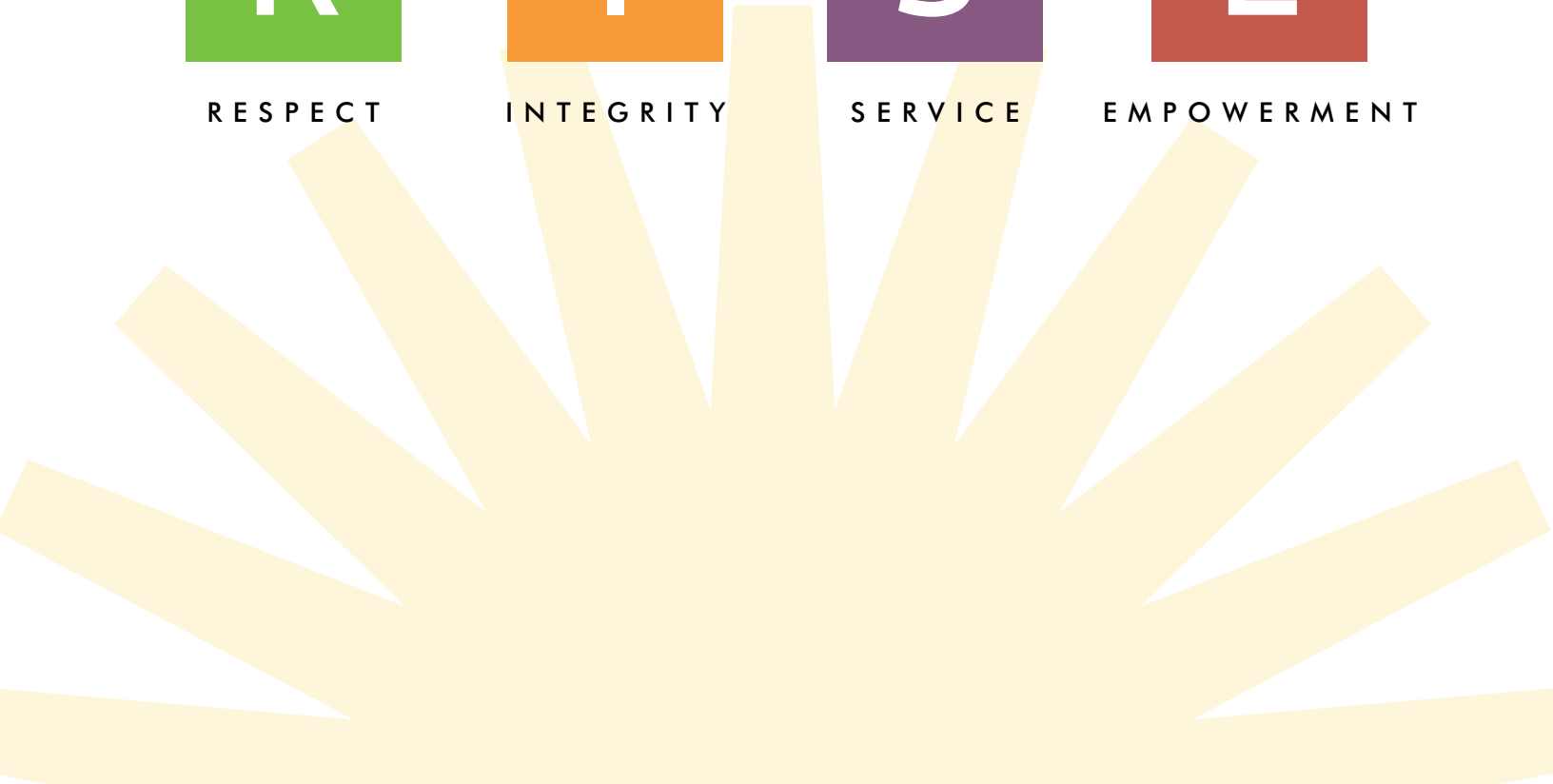
INTEGRITY

S

SERVICE

E

EMPOWERMENT





Dear Friends:

Looking back at the year of 2019, we can't help but reflect through the lens of today and the COVID-19 pandemic of 2020. In many ways, the challenges of the pandemic have been a test of all we have put into place and accomplished in 2019. It was a year that, beyond our knowing at the time, prepared us to take on what was to come.

If in 2019 we gathered as a team to identify our organizational values, then in 2020 those values have guided us, even under the most challenging conditions. Staff and board members, partners and clients reflected on the work that we do, why and how we do it, and from that evolved our values, summed up in an acronym—RISE. And so, this year's annual report is a closer examination of our values and how they serve us so that we may better serve our clients and community.

Through the value of RESPECT, read how we earned high praise on our accreditation by COA, the Council on Accreditation, a nationally recognized, independent accreditor of community-based behavioral health care and social service organizations. They measured Family & Children Services by best practice standards—and we earned their respect. We earned it by the respect we give to our colleagues, our community partners, and our clients.

Read about INTEGRITY and how this value informs who we are as stewards of our resources and who we choose to help us as partners. This is the story of our long-term partnership with Greenleaf Trust, alongside us every step of the way to ensure our future is financially sound for many years to come.

In SERVICE, we highlight four Family & Children Services employees, although we could easily have chosen any among our 160 staff members, each one a servant leader in her or his job and through personal community service.

Finally, EMPOWERMENT, a story of how we empower our employees to go out into the world and empower others to make changes that improve their lives. When COVID-19 prevented us from going out into our world in person, we found new ways to reach our clients. Virtually, we kept showing up in living rooms and on porches and at kitchen tables in so many homes, listening, consulting, offering healing. In so doing, we showed that whatever the challenge, we can overcome it together.

We RISE. Our values keep us strong in our belief that we can and will make a difference in the lives of our clients and our community. We do it right. We do it for all who need us.

Sherry Thomas-Cloud, MSW, LMSW
Chief Executive Officer

Brian K. Hudson
President, Board of Directors

Our Mission

Family & Children Services supports, strengthens and preserves the safety, well-being and dignity of children, individuals and families.

RISE: The Values of Family & Children Services.

Every successful individual, business or organization holds one aspect in common: a well-defined value system. At Family & Children Services, our values guide our every decision, our every action and interaction, from our interactions with our clients and community partners, to our hiring practices and employee relations.

Who are we? What do we stand for? Who do we want to be?

We developed our values by asking these questions of our 160 staff and board members and incorporated the responses in focus group conversations. The result was RISE.

RISE is an acronym for Respect—Integrity—Service—Empowerment. RISE sums up who we are among ourselves, as colleagues, and how we treat our clients, our partners, and anyone who needs help.

RISE is who we continuously strive to be. RISE is how we engage with our community and stand out as a guiding light of hope to others.

Together, we RISE.

R

RESPECT

Respect underlies our **relationships** with our clients as well as our colleagues and partners. Respect is what we owe ourselves and to all with whom we come in contact throughout our day.

Our relationships are based on **equity and inclusion, acceptance and mutuality**. We succeed together and value our differences.

We walk alongside in partnership with the families and children who need our help, honoring their **dignity**.

We take the time to learn about the experiences of our clients, help identify their individual **strengths** and find ways, together, to use those strengths to improve their lives.

I

INTEGRITY

When we work in an atmosphere of **trust** and **transparency** we feel safe to bring up difficult issues to be solved as we are on a journey of continuous improvement.

We take **ownership** of obstacles in our work and are free to take action so as to improve and grow. We hear the concerns of our clients and act on them. Ownership means not only identifying a problem, but developing ideas on how to solve the problem.

When we receive gifts from our donors, whether material or in service, we must be worthy of the trust bestowed upon us. We are responsible **stewards** of our resources, honoring the intentions of our donors and using those resources to the maximum benefit of all.

S

SERVICE

We are **results oriented**, committed to serving our clients and our community.

We do not ask if something is within our **job description**—it all is. If it is **the right thing** to do, we do it. Above and beyond, we extend ourselves to our clients.

To be successful means that we don't let our mistakes hold us back—we are **accountable** and learn from them, creating tomorrow's successes out of today's lessons. Rather than evaluate, we coach for success. We provide constructive feedback, but even more readily—recognize each other for a job well done.

We work hard and recognize the benefit of maintaining a healthy life/work **balance**. When our own needs are met, we are able to give our best to others.

E

EMPOWERMENT

Imagine what you can do when empowered—and then do it. When we are empowered to do our work, we provide the tools and opportunities for others to be their best, too.

We embrace learning and take **initiative**, responding to change with creative solutions.

Family & Children Services strives for **excellence** in all we do. Possibilities are here to be discovered and pursued. Through **teamwork**, we come together to solve problems.

We hold the vision of who we are as our best selves and work toward achieving it. We hold that same vision of our clients. We imagine a future where **hope** can flourish.

We RISE to exceed our expectations and exemplify our values.

We RISE to excellence in our service to the families and children of our community and in our workplace.

We RISE to continuous improvement, making each day better than the day before.



R E S P E C T

RESPECT: How We Earn It and How We Give It.

RESPECT underlies everything we do at Family & Children Services. It is the cornerstone of our every relationship—whether those are relationships that we nurture and sustain between staff members and business partners or in the relationships we so carefully build with our service recipients.

There is no greater honor, surely, than to be recognized for the respect we give than to earn that respect in return.

In January 2020, we received the news that we have earned high praise by COA, the Council on Accreditation. COA is a nationally recognized, independent accreditor of community-based behavioral health care and social service organizations. When they review organizations for accreditation, COA looks at quality, risk management, continuous improvement, transparency and accountability, and recognition. In other words, the COA evaluates an organization or program against best practice standards.



To earn this accreditation, a national team from COA conducted interviews with staff members, board members, supervisors, staff, community partners, and service recipients. The team reviewed our programs and services, visited our facilities, and examined case records and other documents. They also evaluated our administrative and management practices.

Feedback from COA included commentary on the dedication, passion and pride that we have in our jobs; our well-trained and

highly skilled staff; the praise community stakeholders shared about our organization; the rich diversity of our teams; our evidence-based programming; continuous quality improvement practices; and Lean Management. They were impressed that our clients were given copies of case notes, something they had not seen among our peers, and determined to recommend this to other organizations as an example to follow.



We were especially gratified by the feedback from our service recipients. A mother told the COA team that she would have lost her children without the help she received through our services. Another mom talked about the meaningful relationship she and her children have developed with our caseworker, and that her eldest son is now teaching some of the life skills he's learned to younger siblings. Another young woman talked about the help she received to get her life back on track—she has been able to break free from an abusive relationship and is now able to look for work. She thanks Family & Children Services for all of it.

This is what we do. And we do it with respect. We treat each and every Family & Children Services client with the dignity and respect every person deserves—and it makes a difference. The respect we have received in return, earning us accreditation for excellence in our work, is an honor we wear with pride and intend to earn again and again in future years.

“The organization has earned the community’s trust, respect, and support. It operates with integrity and strong ethics that are aligned with their mission... We are proud to be associated with you and your colleagues. We wish you the very best in your continuing service to persons in your community. That is the power of accreditation.”

— President and Chief Executive Officer, Council on Accreditation



I N T E G R I T Y

INTEGRITY: Brightening Tomorrow Today—Our Partnership with Greenleaf Trust.

Family & Children Services could not thrive if it were not for the generous gifts of our donors. What we do with those gifts—and how we do it—is a matter of integrity. Integrity means that we are responsible stewards of our resources, honoring the intentions of our donors and using those resources to the maximum benefit of all.

Helping us maintain high integrity in handling our resources is where Greenleaf Trust comes in. Greenleaf Trust is a privately held wealth management firm with specialized disciplines in wealth management, trust administration, and retirement plan administration.

“Greenleaf Trust celebrated our 20th anniversary in 2019, and that’s how long we have enjoyed a partnership with Family & Children Services,” says Melinda Shull, senior trust relationship officer at Greenleaf. “We were chartered in 1998, and in 1999, we started a retirement plan to help Family & Children Services employees save for their retirement. In 2000, we began to manage their endowment funds.”

Another aspect of the partnership between Greenleaf Trust and Family & Children Services is the commitment the wealth management organization has made to our work in the community. Our partnership goes beyond business to take on a more personal commitment.

“There’s a cultural initiative among our staff to help our community,” Shull says. “Collectively, we have clocked more than a thousand hours volunteering at non-profits, including Family & Children Services. We look for those opportunities to make a real difference.”

Along with volunteering, Greenleaf Trust is also a frequent donor to Family & Children Services. The Holiday Giving Program has been a favorite over the years.

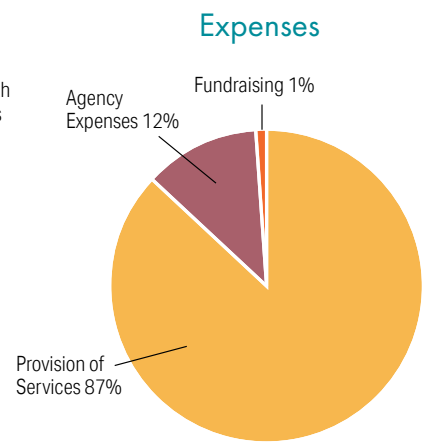
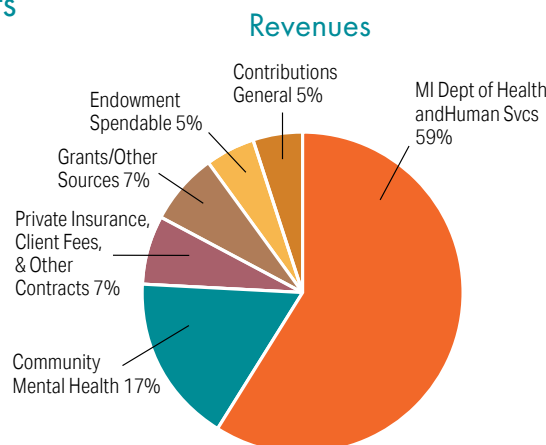


“During the holidays, we adopt 10 families, and we have a lot of fun with gift-giving and wrapping,” Shull smiles. “One of the things we do is auction off a reserved parking spot. Staff bids on a spot and the proceeds go to Family & Children Services. Last year, we donated close to \$7,000 from the auction.”

With an unwavering focus on meeting client needs, Greenleaf Trust has become an even more valuable partner over time, managing risk and providing fiduciary consistency in normal and extraordinary circumstances. It is a partnership built on integrity that benefits everyone involved.

2019 Financial Highlights

Family & Children Services operating revenues for 2019 were \$10,079,000. Family & Children Services’ friends generously donated \$599,000 in contributions. Agency Endowment Funds supported programs with \$1,017,000. Non Cash Gifts had an estimated value of \$145,000. Operating expenses, excluding depreciation were \$11,596,000.





SERVICE

SERVICE: Doing for Others.

The work we do at Family & Children Services is not always easy. We put the needs of others ahead of our own and answer the call when there is a cry for help. Easy or not, we always strive to do the right thing. We are here to serve.

In everything we do we are accountable, taking responsibility for each task, so we can learn—as individuals and as an organization—what is effective and where opportunities are to improve. We are results and outcome oriented.

There is a story behind everyone who proudly calls themselves an employee of Family & Children Services. We highlight a few here for their SERVICE, but there are more than 160 exemplary staff that represent our organization.



Bruce Bosier,
Facilities Manager

A nine-year-old boy had already been through so much trauma in his young life. He was in yet another foster home, facing two new foster parents. He hid in the closet of his new bedroom, refusing to come out.

They couldn't possibly understand.

But they did understand. Bruce Bosier, a facilities manager at Family & Children Services, and his wife Cindy had been foster parents since 1997. Since then, they have fostered more than 30 children.

Bruce opened the closet door and quietly sat down on the floor beside the boy. For a long time, they simply sat together. In time, the boy started to talk and trust in his new foster family.

Dedicated to serving at home, Bruce Bosier does the same at work, caring for his Family & Children Services family with the same level of commitment. Kitty Scheffers is operations director and oversees Bruce at work.

"It makes my job easier to know how well Bruce cares for our facilities," she says. "I regularly get emails from others, telling me how much they appreciate the service Bruce provides."



Nikeesha Settles, Family Preservation Specialist

For Nikeesha Settles, working as a family preservation specialist in the Battle Creek office of Family & Children Services was a happy mistake. The "mistake" happened when she decided to return to school.

"I thought I was signing up for a class in human resources, but I actually signed up for human services," she says. "I found I had a passion for developing empathy in others, especially in child protective services."

Nikeesha spends her days at Family & Children Services finding ways to overcome the obstacles families face that often tear them apart. Her focus is always on keeping children in their homes.

"We do whatever is needed, whether it is to assist with household management, or learning how to budget finances, or cleaning," she says. "And we always try to model the behaviors we teach."

When COVID-19 changed all the rules, Nikeesha found ways to maintain connections with the families she serves. "We had someone whose house needed cleaning. Each session, we would pick a corner of the house to work on. One corner at a time so that it wouldn't get overwhelming."

After she finishes her day at Family & Children Services, Nikeesha heads to Kellogg Community College to teach evening classes in their human services program. She doesn't mind the full schedule. Service, Nikeesha says, completes her.



Melinda Lussier,
Adoption Supervisor

Nothing can replace going through an experience yourself to understand the experiences of others. It's what drives Melinda Lussier's service as an adoption supervisor. She's worked in adoptions for more than 30 years.

"I was adopted as an infant, and in fact my adoption was arranged by Family & Children Services," Melinda says. "For me, it was a positive experience, but I always had this sense of loss because of it."

The loss, Melinda explains, is one she finds many adoptees experience as they wonder about their biological roots. "I get a lot of calls from people looking for their biological families," she says. "Dealing with this loss, this curiosity, is a key piece of the process with adoptees."

Melinda works with a team of five adoption specialists to assess the needs of each child and the families seeking children. She works closely with other agency programs to find that perfect family.

In 2019, Melinda was awarded the Child Welfare Adoption Excellence Award, recognizing her high level of service to children.

Melinda says: "I am so humbled, so lucky to be a part of these children's journeys."



**Nancy Mitchell,
Clinical Therapist**

Nancy Mitchell knew early on that she wanted a career working with children. In 1984, she started working for The Counseling Center at Family & Children Services, with individuals and families in the

areas of developmental disabilities, mental health, attachment, parenting, and behavior issues.

When Kalamazoo County Ready 4s reached out to Family & Children Services for help, Nancy was ready to do her part.

"KC Ready 4s advances high-quality preschool education for children in Kalamazoo County," Nancy says. "They needed help reaching children with challenging behaviors. We did a pilot with them—I collected information about the children, did classroom observation, and provided teachers with strategies and support."

Nancy noticed that one strategy was having particularly successful results. She began to weave a strategy for Mindfulness into all of her children's programs.

"Research shows that short, mindful moments can teach children skills they will use for a lifetime," Nancy says.

When children get stressed, are upset or overactive, Nancy plays a game called Cocoa. The children pretend they are holding a hot cup of cocoa in their hands. The teacher tells them to blow on the cocoa to cool it, sip a tiny bit at a time and focus on breathing. Playing the cocoa game helps the children take a pause, be in the moment, and calm their bodies and their minds.

During the COVID-19 pandemic, Nancy also offers help through online workshops as teachers care for the children of essential workers during the workday.

"It's a joyful experience," she says. "There are so many people who care deeply and want to help."

2019 Agency Demographics

7,414 individuals served

4,356 children

76% income under 200% federal poverty

66% under age of 19

57% White/Caucasian

5% Hispanic/Latino

20% Black/African
American

1% Asian

13% Multi-Racial

4% Declined

2019 Program Outcomes

Customer Satisfaction

96% felt treated with respect

91% felt satisfied with all services

92% felt staff were sensitive to culture/ethnicity

Child Welfare

Family Preservation and Parenting Support – **1,912** individuals

Foster Care – **869** individuals

Foster Care Days provided – **69,176** days

Adoption – **210** individuals, **67** adoptions completed

97% of high-risk families remained together after services

Behavioral Health

The Counseling Center – **1,422** individuals

Substance Use Disorder Services – **215** individuals

Community Based Mental Health – **1,474** individuals

92% of youth /families improved or maintained functioning

Crisis Services

Mobile Crisis Response – **1,005** individuals

Crisis Residential & Respite – **262** individuals

Shelter Foster Care – **45** youth

96% of youth discharged as planned

99% of youth with no return after 90 days of discharge



EMPOWERMENT

EMPOWERMENT: The Power to Create Change.

What differentiates Family & Children Services is our resilience, extending ourselves when others give up. When times are difficult, we empower our staff to come up with creative solutions to challenging circumstances. When COVID-19 arrived in our community, we found innovative ways to continue our work and stay in contact with our clients—because a crisis never takes a day off.

Whether in person or through various forms of tele-communications, we continue to build healing connections with our clients. Kylie Bader, a clinically trained therapist working in our Family and Community Treatment Program (FACT), is an example of someone empowered to work through the challenges of COVID-19 to reach out to those who need her help the most.

forced to leave due to incidents of aggression toward his family. The girls and their mom had recently moved into a small apartment when Mom landed a new job.

Bader had heard variations of the same story many times before. Typically working on eight to nine cases at a time, she has worked with families coping with addiction, mental illness, sexual abuse, domestic violence, runaways, developmental issues, and more.

"As it turned out, my young client opened up more on the phone than in person," Bader said. "She told me how an older cousin had sexually abused her and her sister, and how angry she was, feeling alone because her mother was juggling a new job leaving her with little



"I met the younger of the two sisters first," Bader said. "She was having trouble in school and at home just when things shut down in our community due to the pandemic. I switched our in-person therapy sessions to teletherapy, only to find out that the girls' family had no internet access, no smart phones."

Bader turned to HANDLE WITH CARE for help. The donor-based program provides emergency funds in these situations. Bader was able to buy smart phones for the sisters, and with that— their teletherapy was underway.

Connecting through her new phone, the teen began to share her story. She and her sister were living with a single mom. Dad was

energy or time for her at the end of the day. She didn't know how to handle her feelings, and she was feeling abandoned."

While Bader felt that she had less control over a situation by using teletherapy rather than meeting with her clients in person, the teen took to it almost instantly. Talking into a phone seemed to give her a sense of just-enough distance.

"I am not able to make observations about my client's surroundings or other family interactions, so I have to work harder to ask the right questions," Bader said.

Through her questions Bader learned that the older sister had expressed suicidal thoughts. "Over Zoom I was able to assess her

for suicidal ideation that actually turned out to be suicidal intent, which is much more serious. I was able to gather all the information necessary to make an appropriate referral for a short stay at Glen's House, our residential home for youth who are experiencing an acute psychiatric crisis."

A few months later, talking with Bader on their new phones two to four hours each week, both girls have made great progress. Both have learned coping skills for those moments when depression looms or anger surges. They have learned relaxation techniques, and have learned how to express their feelings—even to Mom, who now schedules time each evening to be with her girls.

Empowered herself to use innovative approaches with her clients, Kylie Bader empowered her clients to stand strong under all the challenges life has given them.



"As a young clinician I always appreciate the support more experienced clinicians give me. My supervisor was right there ready to assist me through the suicide assessment and pre-screening process for this youth. She processed the severity of the situation with me and made the call to Glen's House to ensure we had openings while I was still on the Zoom call with the youth. Once she got the approval for a referral, I was able to inform the youth and her family of the details they needed to keep her safe and get her to Glen's House. The FACT team has ongoing communication that we use to ask each other questions, receive feedback, and give each other encouragement. There is always someone available to help out. As a team we definitely have a culture of empowering each other to do the best work we can with our client families by going the extra mile for each other."

– Kylie Bader, FACT Therapist

With your help, we can RISE to meet current and future challenges.

Your gifts are more important than ever to support the critical needs of our clients both today and into the future.

HANDLE WITH CARE Annual Fund is a unique safety net providing agency clients with basic needs and critical services where there is no other source in the community.

Pack a Child for Camp provides camp scholarships for children served by the agency.

Holiday Giving matches client families and children with individuals, schools, community groups and corporate donors to provide holiday gifts and meals.

Year 'Round Pantry collects in-kind gifts from the community to support client needs such as blankets, bedding, coats, household items, personal care products, diapers, back to school items, toys and books.

Visionary Club donors provide planned gifts to support future generations of children and families.

THANK YOU! To make a gift, please contact Courtenay VanderMolen, Director of Resource Development at 269-344-0202 extension 4417.

Secure online donations are accepted at fcsource.org.

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James B. and Maggie Woodruff
Chuck and Carol Yager



Thank you very much. If it weren't for people like you, people would do without.



Thank you

Words Cannot Describe How you have helped my family with your kind hearted actions and By employing one of the best people ive met throughout my life of 30+yrs and from every family you are in contact with thank you from my soul+family and being for helping us see some light at the end of this tunnel

My family & I are so grateful that ~~there~~ there are people out there willing to help out those in need. I look forward to continuing our journey of making myself better so I can better my family & our lives. Thank you so much for helping us.
Sincerely
My Family

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Thank You

!! Thank you more than I got words to say

My family and I are so grateful to receive the help that you've been able to provide to my family and I. It's people like you that give people like me hope and motivation. No matter how difficult the situation we as individuals can overcome them and pass it or pay it forward. Thank you so very much. Our greatest gratitude sincerely a Thankful & Grateful Family

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Our most sincere appreciation to everyone who contributed to Family & Children Services throughout 2019.

* Funds are held at the Kalamazoo Community Foundation
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 ^ All or a portion of this gift was made to "Pack a Child for Camp"

I want to take the time just like u all did for everything is a house done for our family we are very appreciative on everything and for the special done for the gift card on behalf of my family and myself Thank You So Much may God Bless You it was a wish come true never have we been blessed like this before can't never stop saying thank you 😊



THANK YOU

*I would like to say thanks to all of you who helped me and my family in our time of need. We really appreciate everything you all did for us.
 Thank you*



THANK YOU FOR YOUR HELP

Thank you from me and, My family, we've had a far very rough couple of years when we first moved to Kalamazoo, but it makes the world a lot better knowing that there are people like you and your organization that helps people like us who need it. I hope that you continue to Bless other families the way you Blessed!!! ours

Those who help us RISE:



Social distancing is a crucial aspect of keeping ourselves and others safe during the COVID-19 pandemic. In a matter of months, our world has changed from coming together as a group to coming together as a grid. Although there may be boundaries between us in a grid, Family & Children Services board members have overcome those boundaries with the help of technology. We continue to reach our colleagues, our partners, and our clients, offering all of our services with the same level of care.

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