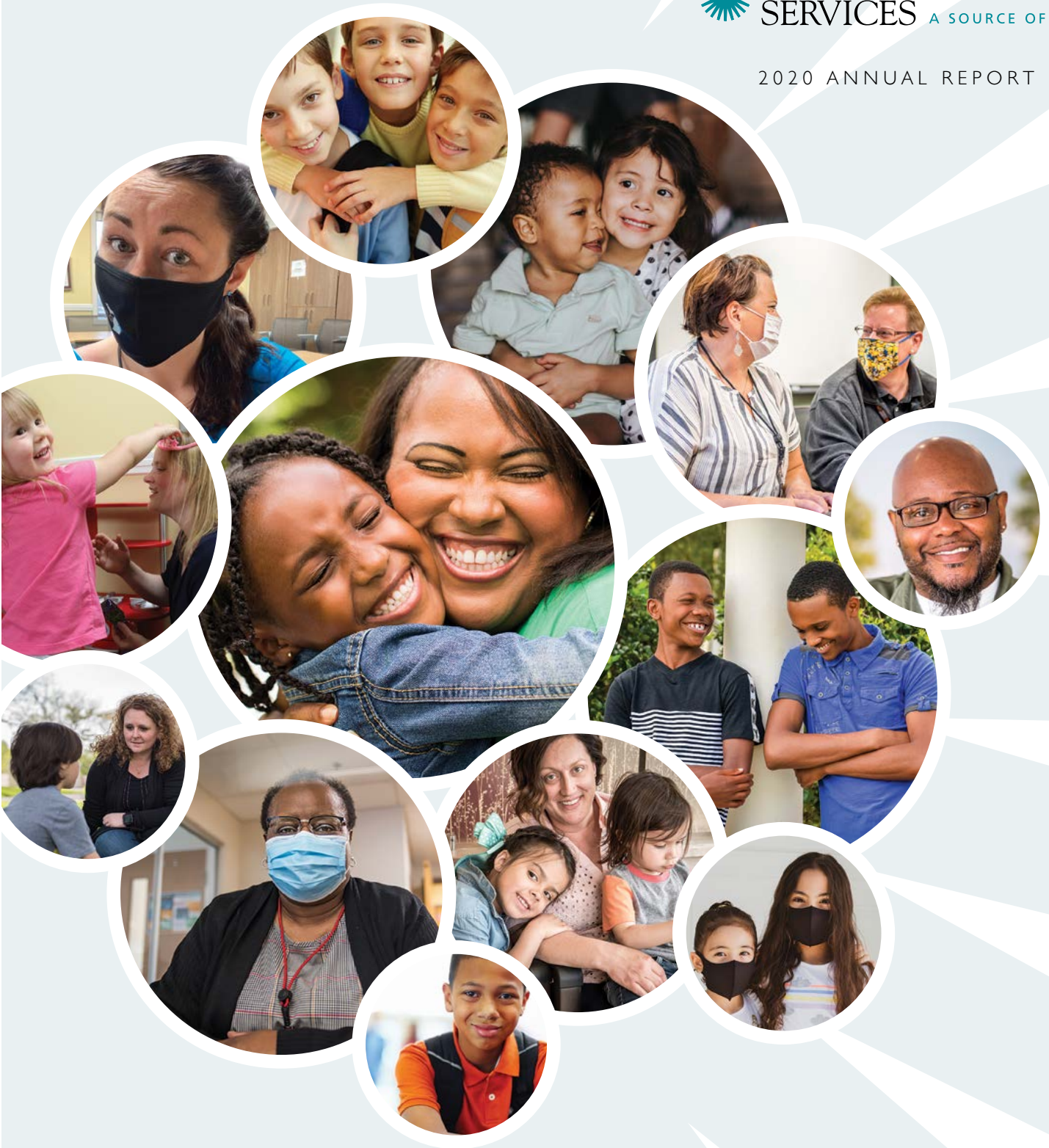




FAMILY & CHILDREN
SERVICES A SOURCE OF HOPE

2020 ANNUAL REPORT



The Best of Us. Together.

Dear Friends:

You have no doubt heard about heroes on the front lines during this past year, marked by the COVID-19 pandemic. At Family & Children Services, we have watched our own heroes venture out into a changed world every day, reaching out, supporting, healing those in our community who



have needed help the most. Masked and protected by personal protective equipment, they were only missing the capes of superheroes. In our eyes, however, they are that.

In this annual report, you will read stories about this year that has no comparison. You will read the stories of clinicians and caseworkers who found creative ways to stay connected when human contact was no longer allowed. You will read about the brave people who struggled through countless obstacles to keep their families together—because during a pandemic such as this one, whatever problems a family was facing seemed to multiply tenfold. You will read about the impact these challenges have taken on all sides, on those needing help and on those giving it. No one has come through this experience unchanged.

Another kind of courage is required when we look into the mirror at ourselves. Always seeking ways to improve on our services, our Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) Committee has worked with all staff and board members to examine our biases, with honesty and without judgement. We have examined our hiring practices, too, because our staff should reflect the community in which we live and those we serve. Read about how we have used the Intercultural Development Inventory to assess where we stand today in cultural competence—and how we intend to grow in our DEI journey.



In our report, we have included our service outcomes and our financial highlights, along with deep gratitude to our many donors—we can do what we do because of you. As we stand on the other side of this past year, our gratitude has only grown. You have come through for us, for our community, in unprecedented ways.

Thank you.

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.

2020 - A Year of Challenges, Perseverance and Gratitude

When the COVID-19 pandemic swept across the country in early 2020, Family & Children Services staff came together to create a comprehensive plan—[The COVID-19 Preparedness and Response Plan](#)—to ensure that we would adhere to government guidelines and balance public health concerns with the needs of our organization and the health and safety of our clients.

For a time, many of our facilities had to close, but staff maintained essential services to our clients. We used creative technology, video conferencing, cell phones and tablets when possible but connected in-person when technology was not enough. Those who could work remotely, did so. Those who could not, held to pandemic protocols in our facilities and in the field, undergoing daily health screenings, wearing personal protective equipment, maintaining social distancing, and completing training for infection-control practices.

Because of the generosity of our community, we upgraded our air filtration systems, enhanced our cleaning to medical grade, and added plexiglass barriers in common areas. Hazard pay was available to our frontline crisis staff who put themselves at personal risk caring for youth who were experiencing a psychiatric, substance abuse, or foster care placement crisis.

During this challenging time, we were able to keep our staff and clients healthy and safe. We adapted to changing circumstances and frequently changing health regulations. We were there for our clients in whatever way they needed us.

Children arguably have had the most difficulty in this year of isolation and illness. As schools closed and many parents lost employment, children faced changes in their lives never experienced before. Recognizing the special needs of children, we once again offered creative services to alleviate trauma as experienced by children. Clinicians and caseworkers educated parents and caregivers about the signs of distress in children

and how to help them cope. Our Mobile Crisis Response team remained available when critical cases arose—the increase in stress in homes that could lead to a rise in substance use, suicidal ideation, or abuse and neglect.

Now, as vaccination rates increase and COVID-19 rates drop, we have gradually resumed contact as we knew it prior to COVID-19. Every step of the way, we are following the guidelines of the State of Michigan and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. We take pride in our ability to persevere through adversity, dedicated to staying connected to those we serve. And we are grateful to a community who has supported the work and mission of Family & Children Services as

never before, during a time of such immense need.



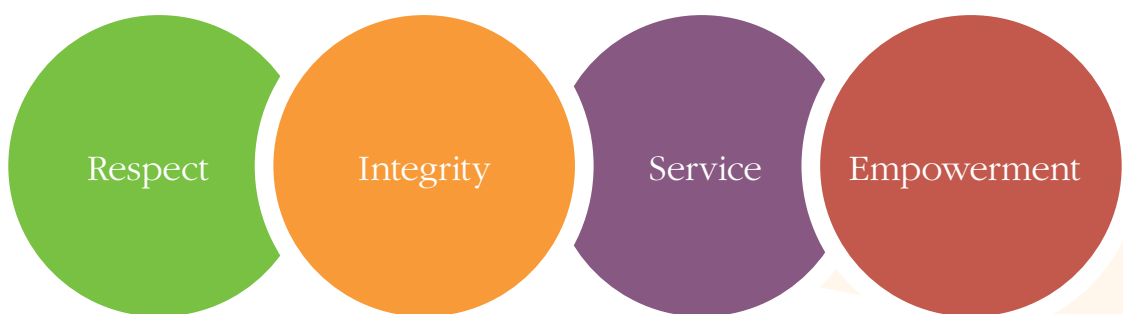
Rising to our Values, Committed to Serve

Our core values of **Respect, Integrity, Service** and **Empowerment (RISE)** are more than just words. These values define who we are, what we stand for, and who we strive to be.

Our values statement:

- We RISE to exceed expectations and to 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.

Our core values have never been more relevant. In 2020, we served more than 6,300 individuals, more than half of them children, the majority living 200% below federal poverty guidelines. Overcoming the challenges of a pandemic, the services we provide are more essential than ever. We are committed to remaining strong as an organization, in alignment with our values, so that we can continue to improve outcomes for those we serve and for our community.



2020 AGENCY DEMOGRAPHICS

6,352 individuals served
3,460 children
80% income under 200% federal poverty
60% under age of 19

57% White/Caucasian
20% Black/African American
13% Multi Racial
5% Hispanic/Latinx
1% Asian
4% Other/Declined

CUSTOMER SATISFACTION

98% felt treated with respect
93% felt satisfied with all services
94% felt staff were sensitive to culture/ethnicity

CHILD WELFARE

Family Preservation and Parenting Support – 1,385 individuals
Foster Care – 835 individuals
Foster Care Days provided – 70,417 days
Adoption – 184 individuals
99% of high-risk families remained together after services

BEHAVIORAL HEALTH

The Counseling Center – 830 individuals
Substance Use Disorder Services – 163 individuals
Community Based Mental Health – 1,294 individuals
97% of youth/families improved or maintained functioning

CRISIS INTERVENTION

Mobile Crisis Response – 1,000 individuals
Therapeutic Residential Youth Services – 321 individuals
97% of youth discharged as planned
99% of youth with no return after 90 days of discharge

Fiscal Resilience Through a Challenging Year

The year 2020 tested us all in many ways, including from a financial perspective, and the nonprofit sector was no different. Although Family & Children Services experienced the negative impact of the pandemic along with the rest of the world, we remained fiscally resilient. Throughout the year, we actively looked for new ways to serve our clients during pandemic conditions, financially supporting client needs while continuing to support our staff.

Our financial success can be attributed to our following the principles of Lean Management, a philosophy of managing a business by eliminating wasteful and inefficient practices, and the use of our Program Assessment and Services Screen Tool. No less important was a competent and hardworking leadership team and the generous support of the community. Because of these factors, Family & Children Services was able to maintain fiscal resiliency throughout the year.

Our current financial position is stable, but the past year has provided an opportunity to look at many aspects of our business model as we move forward, including our staffing and information technology infrastructure. We have completed an analysis of our Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats (SWOT analysis) in preparation for a new three-year strategic plan.

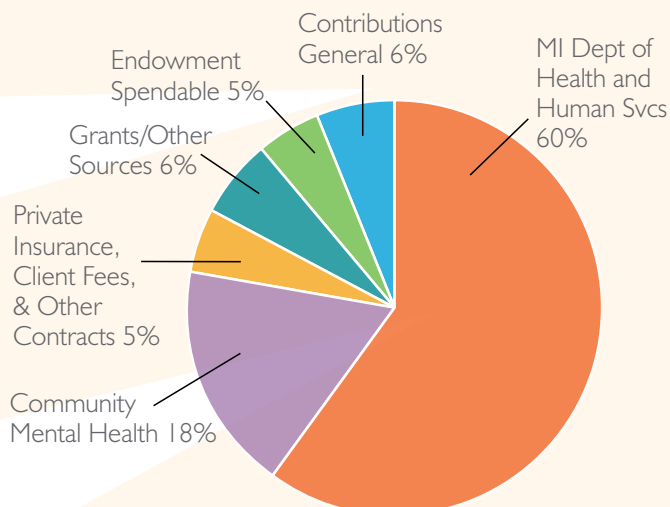
Family & Children Services was approved for a Payroll Protection Program (PPP) loan through the Federal CARES Act, and we have applied for loan forgiveness. Disaster Relief Funding, grants from the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services and MIOSHA offset the costs of PPE and other pandemic related expenses, including hazard pay for qualified staff.

Overall, we concluded 2020 with a smaller budget deficit than we projected last summer. We have learned a great deal from this challenging year on how to maintain our ability to deliver the long-term services needed to support children and families.

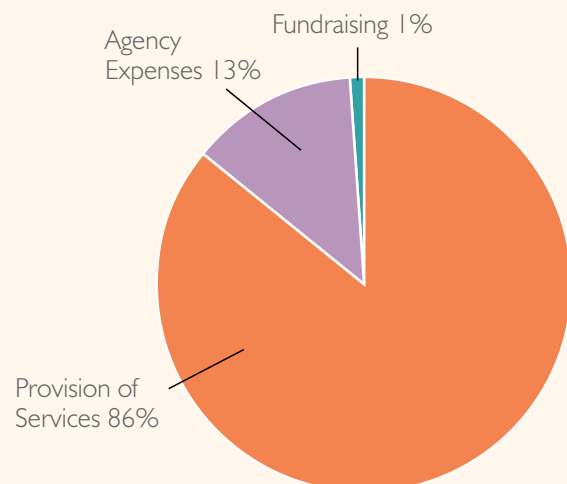
2020 FINANCIAL HIGHLIGHTS

Family & Children Services operating revenues for 2020 were \$9,601,253. Family & Children Services friends generously donated \$634,286 in contributions. Agency Endowment Funds supported programs with \$618,407. Non-Cash Gifts had an estimated value of \$140,000. Operating Expenses, excluding depreciation were \$11,106,855.

REVENUES



EXPENSES

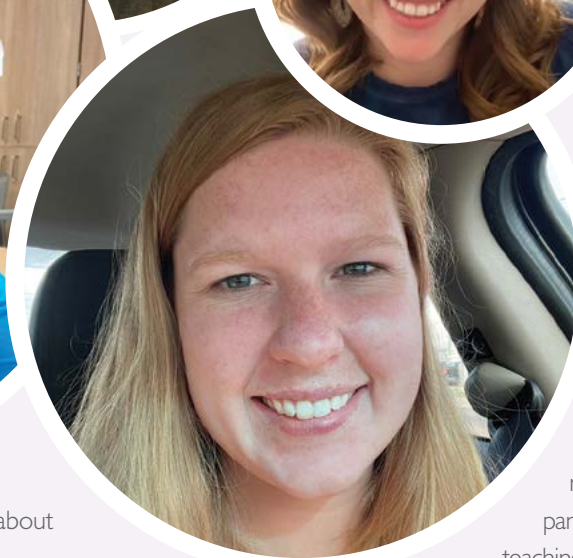


Overcoming Obstacles, Breaking Down Barriers

It was hard. 2020 was hard for everyone, but perhaps for no one more than those in our community who were already suffering from mental illness, homelessness, domestic violence, and other challenges. COVID-19 settled over them with tenfold impact.

Yet—alongside those who have relied on Family & Children Services for help during a crisis—are those who bring them that care.

At a recent meeting of those who work on our front lines, our essential clinical staff shared



some of their thoughts and emotions about the past year that tested them, too.

Angela Johnson, MS, LPC, FACT Program Supervisor, said, “When the pandemic began, we had to use technology instead of meeting with our clients face-to-face. It felt awkward at first, but the camera eventually was forgotten. Sometimes we witnessed difficult situations, and we would feel powerless to help when we were not there in person. We had to learn to adapt to the circumstances and develop new superpowers.”

“Part of it was much harder, but part of it, with teens, worked better,” said Kylie Bader, FACT Therapist. “They’re used to screens. We found teens could be more honest in tele-therapy sessions. They could take the phone or laptop into their rooms for more privacy, and they seemed to feel less vulnerable opening up virtually than in person.”

Other clinicians recalled instances of having to talk to clients hiding in closets for fear of abuse, while others witnessed physical abuse on camera.

“It’s been a long year, for us and for our clients,” Bader said. “COVID has had a tremendous impact on mental health. And now, as schools open, we are finding a whole new set of problems and challenges.”

“We do this every day, this is our breathing in and out,” Johnson said. “This is who we are.”

As clinicians shared their stories of the year behind, of the difficulty of feeling helpless being physically removed from their clients, unable to jump in to stop a problem in the moment or even just to offer a hug and wipe away a tear, some welled up in tears themselves. Conversations turned to secondary trauma, of lessons learned along the way, and of much needed self-care.

“We think about the losses we’ve faced,” Keith Hewitt said. “We have staff members who started their jobs during the pandemic. We have parents among us, teaching children at home while still working. One went through a divorce; one had a baby. It’s cumulative.”

Jeanette Kiewit added, “When working with a five-year-old over the phone who is hungry, it’s so hard. We had times when we would drop off grocery bags on doorsteps because buses weren’t running, and some of our clients had no transportation. I had a child write about her anxiety on paper and then destroy that paper with whatever she had on hand to alleviate the anxiety, but unfortunately I’m not a miracle worker.”

“Oh, but she is,” another clinician responded, hearing Kiewit’s story.

Melissa Kellogg reached out to her youngest clients by delivering bags of goodies containing crayons, coloring books, clay pots with seeds to plant, small toys from the corner dollar store, picked out to match the child’s interests. Lisa Davis made calls late into the night to her clients, checking on them. Some clients needed food, others needed medication, still others ran out of toilet paper. Dressed in protective gear, hand sanitizers in their pockets, faces masked, our clinicians delivered.

“We have been back out into the field since June 2020,” Jennifer Lorenz said. “We did everything we could to keep our clients safe,

even as we ourselves sometimes didn’t feel safe. We did what we needed to do.”

“When a teammate needed help, we stepped in,” Kellogg said. “We worked together to meet needs. In all that we do, we are a team.”

At Family & Children Services, we consider all our clinicians miracle workers, making miracles happen every day. During the COVID-19 pandemic, we learned a great deal—about our clients, about ourselves, about our agency. We learned that we could do more than we thought we could. We learned our limitations. We learned that even when it is hard—we still love what we do.

Case Study – A Story of Community Strength

Callista Cook is interim manager of Residential Services, and she has collected years and years of stories to tell about the families and children she and her staff have met along the way. Cook works with five staff members, each serving six families for an average of three months.

This past year of dealing with a pandemic, however, is a year without comparison, Cook said.

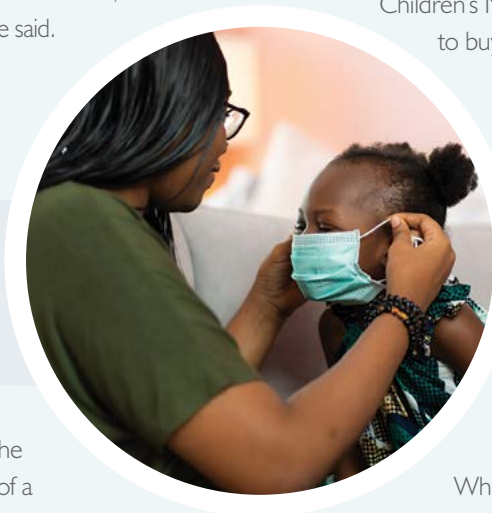
“It has also been a year that has shown us the endurance, the resilience, and the strength in our clients,” she said.

One family in particular will remain in Cook’s memory. A single mother with four small children under her care stood strong for her family. Backing her up, Cook and her team stood strong in support.

“One of her children, a girl, 10 years old, came down with a life-threatening disease,” Cook said. “The diagnosis came at a time when COVID-19 closed down the place where she worked, so she was out of a job. Alana had just moved into a new, better apartment in a safer neighborhood that she had long wanted for a home for her babies. Her previous home had burned down in a fire, destroying all of the family’s belongings. Without her job, she didn’t have the money to buy any furniture or appliances. They had nothing. And now—she was facing losing a child.”

Day after day, the mother sat at the bedside of her daughter in the hospital. Day after day, Cook and her teammates took turns checking in on her other children and working with a local church to provide volunteer babysitters.

“We used our HANDLE WITH CARE fund to help with Alana’s bills,” Cook said. “We worked with Social Security to make sure she received payments. We found community resources to help watch her kids, cook meals, clean, provide transportation. We used the Children’s Medical Needs Fund administered by the agency to buy items the child needed to survive.”



When the sick little girl was finally able to come home, she required a special diet, and Cook and her team once again came to help.

“An appliance store heard about her plight and donated a refrigerator, a microwave, and a stove, and with our funds, we got a blender to puree the foods the girl needed,” she said. “Local food pantries made sure the family had enough food.”

While the road to recovery for the little girl is a long one ahead, Alana and her family know they are not alone. Cook recounts the story as a victory for the community, with businesses, churches, and neighbors coming together to support a family in crisis—a community with Family & Children Services at the hub, organizing efforts and weaving a safety-net to catch Alana and her children.

We Succeed Together When We Value Our Differences

When CEO Sherry Thomas-Cloud joined Family & Children Services in October of 2016 she looked around her and realized that something needed to change. She saw herself as one of the only people of color in a management role at the agency.

Always thinking about opportunities to advance the work Family & Children Services does in the community, she realized it was time to think about how to improve things first within the agency—and how that, in turn, could improve the quality of services offered to the community.

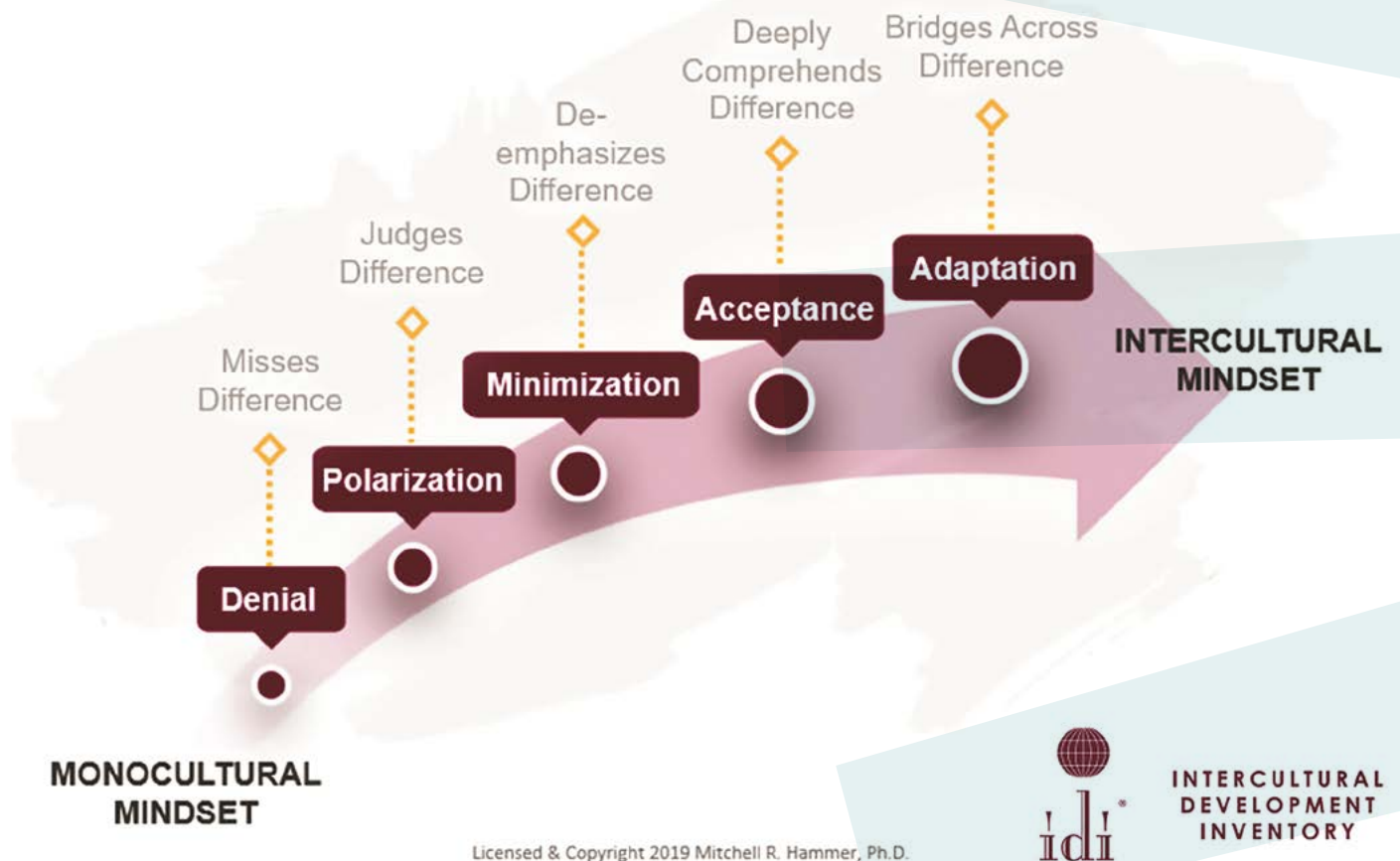
“It started from the top down,” said Kitty Scheffers, Director of Operations and advisor to the Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Committee. “We started talking about how to make changes in hiring and how to raise our level of awareness in who we are and how we do things.”

In 2018, a consultant was brought in to assess organizational and Board readiness and baseline knowledge for an initiative to improve on diversity, equity, and inclusion. The Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) Committee, consisting of members from all levels and positions within the agency, was formed soon after. The DEI initiative was incorporated into Family & Children Services strategic plan and was funded in part by the Kalamazoo Community Foundation and the agency’s Donald VanderKooy Executive Director’s Endowment Fund.

Next, the Intercultural Development Inventory, or IDI, was given to assess every staff and board member with a cross-cultural, research-based process that builds intercultural competence and achieves diversity and inclusion goals.

“By the end of 2020, everyone at Family & Children Services had completed the assessment and debrief,” Scheffers said. “In April 2021, we rolled it out for every new hire. The IDI provides an

Intercultural development Continuum (IDC™)



individual baseline for people, shows them where they are, and provides recommendations on how to move to your leading orientation. Research shows that it takes a minimum of 18 to 24 months to move to the next orientation on the assessment. Change requires an investment of time.”

“The IDI assessment helps us to become more culturally aware and sensitive,” Tony Shepherd, Family Preservation Supervisor and Chair of the DEI Committee, said. “It consists of a series of questions that requires you to be honest with yourself—and it is confidential. It can lead to some very personal conversations and sometimes gets very emotional, too.”

For most participants, there is a gap between where they think they are on the assessment and where they land. That gap is the place where learning and growth happen. The DEI Committee helps to fill that gap with meaningful conversations, activities such as a book and movie club with discussions, events such as a Lunch and Learn series, and team meetings.

“Even those of us who deny that we have a bias are soon surprised to find that we do,” Shepherd said. “It’s an a-ha moment. But we are judgement-free. We are not here to ‘fix’ or to ‘save’ you. It’s about respect, listening, and being open-minded. We are here to support and encourage people along their personal journey.”

Some of that involves uncomfortable conversations, because of the discomfort of vulnerability and honesty. Monthly Lunch and Learn events have featured the “Uncomfortable Conversations with a Black Man” series led by former NFL player and sports analyst, Emmanuel Acho.

“We have talked about what makes some conversations so uncomfortable,” Shepherd said. “That takes bravery. We call that our Brave Space.”

“Some of us have been brought to tears when we share our personal experiences,” Scheffers said. “It’s one thing to read about someone else’s experience academically and another to hear a colleague share what they have lived through. Tony and I—we’ve had those moments, too.”

Participation in DEI events can be applied toward annual training hours. All job descriptions now include DEI values, and the IDI assessment is a part of new hires orientation.

“I am proud of how far we have come, but this journey is ongoing,” Scheffers said. “We are even being asked by others about our initiatives and how they might introduce the IDI into their organizations.”

The ultimate outcome, however, is to have a workforce that accurately reflects and understands the community it serves. We recognize that every individual, child, and family that turns to us as a source of hope has experienced a unique set of challenges and barriers in their lives.



“The commitment of the agency is to do all we can to ensure that we have staff that experience a culture that is informed by our DEI values to meet the diverse needs and challenges our clients face, both today and into the future,” said Sherry Thomas-Cloud.

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Introducing Tesi Klipsch!

Tesi Klipsch recently joined Family & Children Services as our new Special Programs Coordinator. She will oversee the Children's Medical Needs Fund as well as the Holiday Giving program. Tesi has spent years in the Marketing and Communication fields for International Non-Governmental Organizations, NGO's, but had been looking for an opportunity to serve locally as well. With Tesi's experience in communications, development, and marketing, we are hopeful more people will learn about the great work our generous donors continue to make possible. Tesi and her husband, Zach, have 5 children, three of whom came to them through adoption. After the adoptions were complete, Zach and Tesi became foster parents as well. Tesi's work and personal experience make her a perfect fit for our organization that continues to draw top notch talent and a staff dedicated to serving the needs of our community!



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We Needed You—and You Came Through

The support individuals, children and families needed this year increased—and you responded! We were able to meet our HANDLE WITH CARE goal because of your compassion and generosity. With the funds raised, we were able to attend to emergency needs as they arose and to provide direct services when there was no other source available in the community.

Thousands of donors volunteered as matches for families and foster children to brighten their holidays. We were able to organize touch-free delivery and pickup for 1,300 individuals and 200 children in foster care while keeping everyone safe.

While face-to-face contact was not always possible due to the pandemic, those who benefited from your generosity felt that vital human connection through your gifts.

Thank You!



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The Best of Us. Together.

With your help, we can 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 269-488-7936.

Secure online donations are welcomed at fcsource.org.

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We would like to extend a special thank you to the following United Ways and to those who supported Family & Children Services with their Designated Gifts

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This Annual Report recognizes those who gave between January 1, 2020 – December 31, 2020. While every attempt was made to report names accurately, please accept our apology if we have made an error. If you would like a change in the way your name is reflected in future reports, please contact the Development Office at 269.488.7936. Our most sincere appreciation to everyone who contributed to Family & Children Services throughout 2020.

* 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"



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