



# COMMUNITY VOICE

Spring 2020

*We hired 339 new staff members last year to meet the needs of children and families in more communities!*

## Embracing the New

A lot can happen in a year. Looking back on 2019, it's been mind-blowing to see how much change occurred in our organization and neighborhoods.

*The year was marked by lots of “new” — new staff, new programs, new communities, new families, new volunteers, new mentors and new donors.*

Yet, much has stayed the same. We are still committed to providing trauma-informed care to the children and families we serve. And, like every year, we are blown away by how much you went above and beyond to support our work and care for those in your backyard and across state lines. Because of your generosity in 2019:

- \$550,000 was donated to our children and families through our partnership with the Super-Bowl-winning Chiefs at the Chiefs Charity Game.
- 2,081 volunteers gave 7,778 hours of their time to our youth.
- 1,600 foster homes opened their hearts and homes to children in crisis.
- 450 students received school supplies and 15 graduated from our day treatment schools.

- 443 youth received treatment at Homeroom Health, our medical, dental and behavioral health center for infants, children, teens and young adults.
- 373 Missouri families received intensive in-home services and intensive family reunification services to stay together.
- 117 Kansas families received family preservation services in order to stay together.
- We received recertification as a trauma-informed organization through the Sanctuary Institute\*.

*Whenever you give of yourself — whether it be financially, materially or by volunteering — you are joining thousands of others to make an impact greater than any one of us could make alone.*

Those who received hope and healing through our programs last year did so directly because of your support. This year, we commit to helping even more children and families overcome the impact of trauma. The need is still great, but together we can realize our mission of safer and healthier communities.

*See the full impact of your actions and contributions at [cornerstonesofcare.org/impact](https://cornerstonesofcare.org/impact).*



## Letter from the CEO

Denise Cross

*We're glad to have you by our side as we hit the ground running in 2020. Your trust and support in our growth is transforming more lives than ever before. This year, we expect to improve the safety and health of 15,000 children and families.*

### State Partnerships Resulted in 40 Percent Growth

In the last issue, I shared information about new signature programs. Each was made possible by the state of Kansas' and the state of Missouri's confidence in our team providing the best quality of care for children and families.

- **On August 1, 2019**, we expanded intensive in-home services (IIS) and intensive family reunification services (IFRS) to 48 counties across Missouri. We are now partnering with an additional 750 families to keep children safely in their home. We've opened offices in Bowling Green, Columbia, St. Joseph and Warrensburg.
- **On October 1, 2019**, we began providing foster care case management, reunification and adoption services to 1,139 children in Atchison, Leavenworth and Wyandotte counties. Within the first 30 days of providing care, 57 percent of children were placed with safe relatives or family friends. This is 90 percent higher than the state average.
- **On January 1, 2020**, we began providing family preservation services to families in 25 counties in eastern Kansas. Similar to IIS and IFRS, family preservation is an intensive in-home intervention to keep children from being placed in state custody. Our team, with offices now in Hiawatha, Independence, Ottawa, Pittsburg and Topeka, will serve 450 families in need over the next several years.

### Final Year of Partnership with the Kansas City Chiefs and the Hunt Family Foundation

We couldn't be more excited to cheer the Kansas City Chiefs to a Super Bowl victory! The excitement doesn't end there as we're preparing for the final Chiefs Charity Game benefiting our mission. Whether you join us at Trivia Night on June 19 at the Abbot, sport your limited-edition Charlie Hustle shirt or become a corporate sponsor, you are an important member on our team.

Visit [chiefscharitygame.com](http://chiefscharitygame.com) to learn more or contact Chad Harris at [chad.harris@cornerstonesofcare.org](mailto:chad.harris@cornerstonesofcare.org) to discuss joining the 2020 Chiefs Charity Game event committee.

### Seeking Board Members

Joining our Board of Directors is a significant opportunity to impact the communities in which we work and live. We are seeking individuals who are interested in advancing our mission by serving on the Governing or Foundation Board of Directors.

*Please feel free to contact me at [denise.cross@cornerstonesofcare.org](mailto:denise.cross@cornerstonesofcare.org) or Chad Harris at [chad.harris@cornerstonesofcare.org](mailto:chad.harris@cornerstonesofcare.org) to learn more.*

Thank you for supporting our mission to improve the safety and health of children and families in 2020 and beyond.



Denise Cross  
President/CEO

### 2020 Governing Board

John Burgess (Board Chair)  
*Walsworth Publishing Company*

Jon Appleby  
*Citizens Bank & Trust*

Julie Barnett  
*Cigna*

Amy Bradshaw  
*Dipasquale Moore*

Andrea Duckworth  
*Bluescope Steel*

Derek Feagans  
*Feagans LLC*

Jim Hogan  
*Burns & McDonnell*

Helen Jorski  
*Bank of America Merrill Lynch*

Thomas Kientz  
*Academy Bank/Dickinson Financial*

Stephanie Rawe  
*Chinquapin Trust Company*

Lindsay Santee  
*Populous*

Jennifer Seyller  
*Hallmark Cards*

Jody Vanarsdale  
*H&R Block*

Rich Wood  
*Polsinelli*

### 2020 Foundation Board

Johnny Orindgreff (Board Chair)  
*Capital Portfolio Management, LLC*

Kate Allen  
*Johnson County Community College*

Dan Cranshaw  
*Polsinelli*

Phil Frerker  
*Hallmark Cards*

Kathleen Jackson  
*MarksNelson CPA*

Steve Lawrence  
*Personal Financial Group*

Joe Pribula  
*Wells Fargo Advisors*

Latasha Wilson  
*Humana — Kindred at Home*

## Lending a Hand



Our intrepid team of volunteers made sure everyone's gifts were wrapped.



More than 400 bags of gifts were donated by Red Bags this year!



Families who shopped at our Gift Gallery chose quality, brand-new holiday gifts for their loved ones free of charge.



"We had a hard year with lots of unexpected difficulties. This is such a blessing!" —Gift Gallery Shoppers

With our expansion of services, we more than doubled the number of children and families who needed holiday support. When we put out the call for help, wow, did you answer! Because of you, **1,342 youth** received gifts through our Sponsor-a-Youth program and **115 families** received **2,000+ presents** through the Gift Gallery. Plus, **165 of you volunteered** to pull everything off. Thank you!

*You can make a difference, too! Simply visit [cornerstonesofcare.org/volunteer](https://cornerstonesofcare.org/volunteer) to submit your volunteer interests and we'll pair you up with the right activity.*

## Wish List

Physical safety is the first step to healing and overall health. When a child first comes into our care, we ensure that they are physically safe and that they have the necessary items to remain safe.

*You can help keep our children and families safe by donating and delivering one or more of the following items to any of our campuses.*

- Full- and Travel-Sized Hygiene Supplies (*shampoo, conditioner, liquid body wash, liquid hand soap, deodorant, hair picks and feminine hygiene products*)
- Bath Towels & Wash Cloths
- Men's Boxer Briefs and Women's Underwear (*both S — XL*)
- Men's and Women's Socks (*both S — XL*)
- Men's Shirts and Sweatshirts (*XL — 4XL*)
- 5-lb. Fire Extinguishers (*required for foster care licensing*)
- Carbon Monoxide Detectors (*required for foster care licensing*)



We respectfully request that all of the items be new. If you would like to donate used items for our benefit, please schedule a free pick up with our thrift store partner, MAJ-R Thrift, at [kcdonationpickup.org](https://kcdonationpickup.org) or deliver your used items to our Ozanam Campus.

*To learn more, please contact Sally Cook at 816-508-3678 or [sally.cook@cornerstonesofcare.org](mailto:sally.cook@cornerstonesofcare.org).*

## Winter Celebrations



Spirit Gala Committee Member Ashley Walchshäuser & Natalie Gudenkauf strike a pose before the event.



Chef Michael Faust introduces his creation.



Bob & Janet Velazquez and Board Member Tom & Danette Keintz take a break from bidding at the auction.



KC Ariel Art provides some spectacular dining entertainment.



Who is behind those masks? It's 2019 Spirit Award recipients Andrea & David Leavitt!



Calvin Arsinia performs, accompanied by Marshall Hylton.

In November, more than 800 guests came together for the Cornerstones of Care Spirit Gala. Thanks to the support of presenting sponsor Dynamic Fastener and all our sponsors, donors and volunteers, the event raised \$404,000! We were thrilled to honor 2019 Spirit Award recipients Swiss Re and David & Andrea Leavitt for their work in advancing the safety and health of children and families. We hope to see you at this year's Roarin' '20s Spirit Gala on November 6!

In January, 120 guests engaged all five of their senses at Savor the Sound, raising more than \$35,000 for our Build Trybe program. During the event, food, film, movement and music joined forces to give guests a completely immersive dining experience.

*Where does your donation go? Schedule a campus tour to see your dollars in action — you won't be disappointed! Just contact Sally at [sally.cook@cornerstonesofcare.org](mailto:sally.cook@cornerstonesofcare.org).*

# Keeping Children Safe in Eastern Kansas

## Family Preservation Services

Chronic stress, poverty, substance abuse, lack of healthcare and untreated trauma are putting 117 of our Kansas families in crisis this year. The impact of those situations often create an unsafe home for children, putting them at risk of being separated from their family and placed into temporary state custody. Similar to our intensive in-home services team in Missouri, our family preservation services team in Kansas is dedicated to helping families stay safely together by identifying and improving unsafe behaviors.



*In partnership with the Kansas Department for Children and Families, we began providing family preservation services in 25 Kansas counties on January 1, 2020. We have opened offices in Hiawatha, Independence, Ottawa, Pittsburg and Topeka to meet the need of each community.*

Through trauma-informed intervention, we believe families can improve functioning and access community support, enabling them to stay safely together. The program partners with the whole family in their home. Depending on the situation, families receive intervention for six weeks or up to three months.

*Learn more about family preservation services and other ways we're growing at [cornerstonesofcare.org/howweweregrowing](https://cornerstonesofcare.org/howweweregrowing).*



## Did You Know ...

When Cornerstones of Care united as a single organization in 2017, its legacy agency foundations also came together? Today, the Cornerstones of Care Foundation continues to support our mission through planned gifts from donors like you.

*Contact Laurie at 816.508.3608 or [laurie.minx@cornerstonesofcare.org](mailto:laurie.minx@cornerstonesofcare.org) to learn more.*



## Creating Trauma-Informed Homes

For anyone who has experienced trauma, environmental factors can be fundamental in the healing journey as well as triggers for emotional pain. We all want our homes to be warm and inviting. Here are three ways to make your home more trauma-informed.

- 1. Rethink physical spaces.** While you only have so much control over the number of windows, room layout, etc. of your actual living area, you can create spaces for developing deeper connections.
  - Arrange living room furniture to face each other instead of the TV for easy conversations.
  - Remove/politely ban all technology from the dining room so everyone can focus on the meal and each other at dinnertime.
- 2. Normalize talking about feelings.** Oftentimes, people who have experienced trauma bottle up their emotions to feel safe. Because of this, they may need coaching and practice to learn it is okay to express their feelings through conversation.
  - After hearing about a situation, incorporate feelings into the discussion by asking, "How did that make you feel?"
  - Celebrate happy emotions, validate painful ones and talk about your own feelings and healthy reactions.
- 3. Model self-care.** If you aren't taking care of yourself, you won't be able to take care of anyone else — friend or family — for very long.
  - Find practices to help you manage your stress — exercise, reading, etc. — so you can create a therapeutic home environment.
  - Help others in your life find self-care techniques that work for them. It shows them you think they are worthy of caring about.



*Learn more about trauma and the Sanctuary Model® of trauma-informed care at [cornerstonesofcare.org/traumainformed](https://cornerstonesofcare.org/traumainformed).*

# Lighting the Way for Children and Families

## Spotlighting Our Staff



*Melissa Diddle,  
intensive in-home  
service specialist*

Melissa Diddle is one of our lead intensive in-home service (IIS) specialists. She and her team work hard to help families who are struggling to acquire the skills they need to parent successfully. An avid kayaker, Melissa loves to spend as much time in the water as she can when she's not working.

**Why did you decide to work with children and families for a living?** I have always had a passion for helping others be their best selves. Working with children and families is just one way I can do that and make a difference.

**What is intensive in-home services (IIS) and why is it important?** IIS works with families who are at risk of having their children placed in state custody by the Missouri Children's Division. We work with the whole family to create safe and caring homes. Our goals are to help them create change, learn new skills and improve family functioning. IIS is important because we are allowed time to work with families through their struggles and teach skills that they need to safely care for their children.

**What do you wish people knew about the families you work with?** Our families are people too. They are not just words on a page or one person's opinion. They have survived trauma to get to where they are and do not always have all the skills necessary to create a safe and loving home for their children. Most families are just looking for someone to listen without judgment.

**What inspires you to keep going?** Making a difference, even a small one, in the lives of the families I work with.

Learn more about IIS and our intervention services at [cornerstonesofcare.org/intervention](https://cornerstonesofcare.org/intervention).

## Fostering a Family



### *The McKim Family Story*

Josh and Angie McKim received a call that a set of 3-year-old twins were removed from their home due to neglect. The twins were nonverbal and developmentally delayed. Their mother, June\*, struggled with alcoholism but was seeking help — she was motivated to do what was necessary to achieve sobriety. As the McKims got to know June, they empathized with her challenges and welcomed her as part of their family, too.

*“I think that, oftentimes, biological families have just gotten overwhelmed and given up,” Angie says. “While there is always a reason for children to be removed, these families are in the greatest crisis of their lives. To be met with judgment is not helpful to them.”*

As June worked on her recovery, she became more involved in the lives of her sons, the McKims and their biological children. June's sisters, parents and grandparents also rallied around the boys, lending their support and ensuring their familial ties stayed intact.

*“Through this process, I have learned the stigma that biological parents must feel after losing their children,” Angie explains. “Showing them that they can do this — they can have a positive relationship with the children and raise them — is half of the foster care journey. The ultimate goal of every placement is reunification.”*

After two years with the McKims, the boys are back on track developmentally and are as Angie describes, “chatterboxes.” Though the original goal was reunification, June decided that asking the McKims to adopt the boys was the best choice. But June and her family are still very much a part of the boys' lives, and will continue to be so even after the adoption is finalized.

*“We are raising the twins as a team,” Angie says. “They will live with us and take our last name but, in truth, we are inviting June into our extended family as well.”*

If you want to join the McKims in keeping children safe and families together, reach out to us at [cornerstonesofcare.org/foster](https://cornerstonesofcare.org/foster).

\*Name has been changed to protect the identity of the parent.

## Helping Young Artists Find Their Voice

Youth who have experienced trauma often feel a sense of powerlessness and have difficulty opening up about their experiences. One proven method of helping children work through their trauma is music therapy.

“Data trends towards the benefit of music therapy as an inviting, nonthreatening medium to explore feelings, thoughts and issues related to abuse and neglect,” says Dr. Lanette Madison, Cornerstones of Care regional director of Eastern Missouri. “It helps children in foster care find the confidence within to give voice to their trauma and words to heal their losses.”

We have provided music therapy in the Kansas City area for many years and have seen the difference it makes in the lives of the children who receive it. Nearly three years ago, we began talking with Music that RECLAIMS, the Foster & Adoptive Care Coalition and Midwest Music Therapy about providing music therapy to the children in St. Louis. Through this joint partnership, we began offering this service in January 2019.

Thanks to those partners, Dr. Cynthia Briggs and those who gave during GiveSTLDay, we secured funding later in the year to build a dedicated music therapy studio, which we finished in December. Located in the same building as our St. Louis office and designed by V Three Studios, this beautifully painted, soundproof space features keyboards, guitars, drums and other instruments to allow an easy entry point for youth at all skill levels.

*We're excited to open the program to serve more youth in the St. Louis area. Now any child in the Missouri Department of Social Services is eligible for our music therapy services, regardless of their placement type.*

Thank you to everyone who made this project a reality. We can't wait to see more young lives transformed through the healing power of music!



*If you would like to learn about our work in St. Louis, visit [cornerstonesofcare.org/stlouis](https://cornerstonesofcare.org/stlouis).*

## Honors & Memorials

Memorial and honor giving has a lasting impact on the children and families we serve by sustaining the long-term needs of our programs. You may remember a departed friend or loved one, or honor a living individual or significant event, by sending a gift in their name via the enclosed envelope or at [cornerstonesofcare.org/donate](https://cornerstonesofcare.org/donate). Please include contact information for those to be notified of your donation.

### In Memory Of

#### **Donna Beemer**

Mr. & Mrs. James Hadel  
Mr. & Mrs. Glenn E. Zumbahl

#### **James A. Berg**

Mr. J. Robert Cook

#### **Major Close**

Dr. & Mrs. Donald M. Lieberwitz

#### **Fred Dellett**

Mrs. Judith Dellett

#### **Jacqueline A. McCoy**

Heather L. McCoy

#### **Charles "C3" McDonald III**

Mr. & Mrs. Charles E. McDonald

#### **Patty Prouty**

Ms. Jill Allin  
Mr. & Mrs. Bob Bryon  
Mr. John J. Prouty  
Mr. James Schultz

#### **David Allen Scheible**

Mrs. Barbara Scheible

### **Roy William Scheible**

Mrs. Barbara Scheible

### **Sue Tehel**

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Ms. Aleta Russell  
Mr. & Mrs. Robert Salmon  
Mr. Randy Schultz  
Mr. Robert Thill  
Ms. Vick Westlake  
Mr. & Mrs. Perry Wilmoth

### **Styles M. White**

Mr. Richard White

### In Honor Of

#### **Scott Carleton**

Anonymous

#### **Kathy Couch**

Mr. & Mrs. James F. Muren

#### **James Ferrell**

Bloom & Blade, LLC

#### **Jeremy Hegle**

Mr. & Mrs. Rob Dowis

#### **J. Laubacher**

Mr. & Mrs. John Laubacher

#### **Dr. James Maliszewski**

Mr. & Mrs. Moulton Green

#### **Lauren Muren**

Mr. & Mrs. James F. Muren

#### **Hank Parkman**

Mr. & Mrs. John Laubacher

#### **Teresa Wollen**

Mr. & Mrs. James F. Muren

## Celebrating Successes

Building on the previous year's success, the 2019 Chiefs Charity Game was a huge win for our children and families. Raising \$550,000, the 2019 Chiefs Charity Game helped finalize the opening of Homeroom Health, which began seeing clients last August. It also funded the modernization of facility safety and security measures.



# CORNERSTONES OF CARE

300 E 36th Street, Kansas City, MO 64111

Partnering for *safe and healthy* communities.

- Education
- Mental & Behavioral Health
- Foster Care & Adoption
- Youth Support
- Family Support
- Community Training

1-844-824-8200  
[cornerstonesofcare.org](http://cornerstonesofcare.org)



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*The easiest way to positively impact thousands of lives is to join us at an upcoming event. With your help, we can ensure children and families are safe and healthy.*

## Join Us

**CHIEFS CHARITY GAME TRIVIA NIGHT**  
June 19 at The Abbott

Calling all trivia buffs — it's time to put your skills to the test! Invite your closest and most trivia-savvy friends for an evening of food, friendly competition and fun. Up for grabs? Drinks, door prizes and bragging rights, of course! Whether you want to show off your skills or just relax, this entertaining evening is right up your alley!

Visit [chiefscharitygame.com](http://chiefscharitygame.com).

## Don't Forget

**THYME FOR KIDS PLANT SALE**  
April 24-25 on our Ozanam Campus

Featuring a variety of herbs, plants and flowers grown by the children, the event is open to the public, free to attend and most items only cost \$2-\$8. Proceeds support our Build Trybe program, which empowers youth with employable skills in three career paths: culinary, construction and horticulture.

Learn more by visiting  
[cornerstonesofcare.org/plantsale](http://cornerstonesofcare.org/plantsale).

## Upcoming 2020 Fundraisers

**EASTER EGG 5K & LIL' BUNNY FUN RUN**  
April 11 at Southcreek Office Park  
[cornerstonesofcare.org/easteregg5k](http://cornerstonesofcare.org/easteregg5k)

**THYME FOR KIDS PLANT SALE**  
April 24 & 25 on our Ozanam Campus  
[cornerstonesofcare.org/plantsale](http://cornerstonesofcare.org/plantsale)

**CHIEFS CHARITY GAME TRIVIA NIGHT**  
June 19 at The Abbott  
[chiefscharitygame.com](http://chiefscharitygame.com)

**CHIEFS CHARITY GAME**  
August (date to be announced in the spring)  
[chiefscharitygame.com](http://chiefscharitygame.com)

**DISC GOLF TOURNAMENT**  
September 19 at Thornfield Disc Golf Course  
[cornerstonesofcare.org/disc](http://cornerstonesofcare.org/disc)

**PIES FOR A PURPOSE**  
October — December  
[cornerstonesofcare.org/pies](http://cornerstonesofcare.org/pies)

**QUESTIONS?**  
Contact Katie at 913-515-7951 or  
[katie.culbertson@cornerstonesofcare.org](mailto:katie.culbertson@cornerstonesofcare.org).

