



CORNERSTONES
OF CARE

Impact
Report

2025

A Message From Our CEO

Throughout 2025, we embarked on a clear-eyed analysis of our business model as we prepared for Cornerstones of Care's next phase in serving children, families, and our community.

As the first quarter of 2025 began with concerns about federal policy changes and their impact on state funding, Cornerstones of Care's leadership was already moving forward on taking a fresh look at our structure, plans, and processes.

We understand that our work must be reimaged to continue to serve children and families as they work through trauma and as we partner with entities to build safe, healthy communities.

Last year, we engaged consultants to conduct an in-depth analysis of our nonprofit business and fundraising models to maximize our strengths, minimize our weaknesses, be cognizant of threats, and capitalize on opportunities. That analysis will continue into 2026 as we begin to lay a foundation that will lead us to 2030 and into the future.

As many of you who have supported us over the years know, your generous support fills the financial gap between what we receive from government-funded programs and the actual costs of programs that help families thrive. You also know that some of our successful programs, including Build Trybe and Behavioral Intervention Support Team (BIST) rely on earned income to support their programs.

As you will read in these pages, we continue to serve children and families through youth and family support, foster care and adoption, and education and trainings. You will also learn about our new Education Campus at the site of the former Archbishop O'Hara High School, which will open in August for the 2026-27 academic year. This campus will foster enhanced collaboration among students, teachers, and our educational programs.

Most importantly, thanks to our donors, volunteers, team members, and others committed to supporting families, we were able to help thousands of children and families in Missouri, Kansas, and beyond.



Merideth Rose, President & CEO

Our mission: Partnering for safe and healthy communities.

We believe that children thrive within families, and families flourish within caring communities.

In 2025, Cornerstones of Care served more than 14,000 children and families in Missouri, Kansas, and beyond through our programs.

Cornerstones of Care serves families in three ways:



Youth & Family Support

We equip youth with essential life skills and social support to help them build independence, while supporting families with the tools and resources they need to thrive and stay together.



Foster & Adoption

We bring families together, whether through reunification or adoption, while providing unwavering support to foster parents and youth. Our dedicated efforts ensure children have the stability, love, and care they deserve.



Education & Trainings

We empower students to succeed academically, equip educators with tools to foster safe and supportive learning environments, and provide innovative opportunities that strengthen skills and knowledge across the community.



Our Leadership Team

Cornerstones of Care is accredited by the Council on Accreditation, a service of Social Current, as a behavioral health agency and is certified in trauma-informed care by the Sanctuary Institute.

As an organization, we are committed to ongoing growth and excellence, striving to provide the highest standards of care for the communities we serve by being dedicated to the principles of being welcoming and inclusive for diverse families and individuals through our Welcoming, Inclusive, Diverse, and Equitable (WIDE) commitment.



Cornerstones of Care is a 501c3 nonprofit registered in Missouri. In 2025, Cornerstones of Care was led by President and CEO Merideth Rose and our Executive Leadership Team:

- Jamie Stevens**, Chief People Officer
- Jill Beck**, Chief Financial Officer
- Sarah Scharinger**, Chief Administrative Officer
- Justin Horton**, Chief Programs and Innovation Officer

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2025 In Review

- ◆ In Kansas, the Department for Children and Families reported a 7.5 percent reduction in youth in out-of-home foster care in Cornerstones of Care service areas in Atchison, Leavenworth, and Wyandotte counties.
- ◆ In Missouri, we secured a \$725,000 one-time Family First Prevention Services Act bridge award to expand Intensive In-Home Services and Intensive Family Reunification Services across our 55 county service area, strengthening crisis response and keeping more children safely with their families.
- ◆ In May, we partnered with 15 and the Mahomies Foundation to launch the #Foster15 campaign during National Foster Care Month, recruiting and supporting foster families.
- ◆ We earned recertification from the Andrus Sanctuary Institute, including first-time certification for our Kansas team—affirming a strong culture of safety and trauma-informed practice.
- ◆ Build Trybe’s director, Theo Bunch, was recognized as a semifinalist for the Ewing Marion Kauffman Foundation’s Uncommon Leader Impact Award.



- ◆ Our Build Trybe program expanded through strategic partnerships. In October, in collaboration with Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Kansas City and the DeLaSalle Education Center, we launched a hands-on urban garden that integrates workforce development, nutrition education, and food access to neighbors in the community.
- ◆ In November, we announced the launch of the Cornerstones of Care Education Campus in South Kansas City for the 2026–27 school year, consolidating our K-12 day treatment schools, expanding capacity, and enhancing trauma-informed academic and therapeutic services.
- ◆ Cornerstones of Care advanced organizational culture and equity through WIDE 3.0, creating a dedicated role to embed inclusive and equitable practices across programs, leadership, and staff engagement.
- ◆ President and CEO Merideth Rose was recognized as a 2025 Pinnacle Prize winner for her significant impact in Kansas City.
- ◆ Special events fundraising reached record levels, generating \$454,728 at the annual Spirit Gala and \$261,068 at Build Trybe’s Savor the Sound. Collectively, these accomplishments demonstrate disciplined growth, strong public-private partnerships, and sustained impact for children and families.

Grants & Donations

Much of our work would not be possible without the support of donors and organizations like these, who provided grants in 2025. Their generosity has enabled us to launch new initiatives and expand our reach in our communities. We are deeply grateful for their continued trust and partnership in helping us fulfill our mission.

Donor	Awarded Amount
15 and the Mahomies Foundation	\$15,000
Advisors Excel	\$3,000
Children's Services Fund of Clay County	\$85,000
Children's Services Fund of Jackson County	\$744,812
Clay, Platte, Ray Mental Health Levy	\$125,758
Community Foundation of Southeast Kansas/Fort Scott Area Community Foundation/Knights of Columbus Endowment Fund	\$5,200
Greater Kansas City Community Foundation (Board Discretionary Fund)	\$50,000
Health Forward Foundation	\$50,000
Hunt Family Foundation	\$20,000
Jackson County COMBAT	\$276,000
Jackson County Community Mental Health Fund	\$1,870,482
Jackson County Legislature	\$260,000
Missouri Department of Conservation	\$200,000
Missouri Department of Economic Development (Neighborhood Assistance Program)	\$150,000
Sherman Family Foundation / John & Marny Sherman	\$200,000
United Way of Greater Kansas City	\$75,000
Wyandotte Health Foundation	\$30,000

Sanctuary Certification Highlights our Commitment to Trauma-Informed Care

Cornerstones of Care has been recertified as a Sanctuary Model organization by the Andrus Sanctuary Institute. The recertification is evidence that Cornerstones of Care continues to actively connect to its core values.

Being Sanctuary recertified is an affirmation of our continued commitment to creating a trauma-informed environment for everyone we serve and for one another. This marks the fourth time the Cornerstones of Care Missouri team has been certified, dating back to 2015, and the first certification for the Kansas team. Cornerstones of Care passed the recent recertification process with flying colors. In completing the onsite review, Sanctuary Adjunct Faculty Consultant Pamela Harper said, “[Cornerstones of Care] is a role model for the entire [Sanctuary] network. You excelled in every area of the assessment.”

At its core, the Sanctuary Model helps organizations become safe and more supportive places. It gives team members a shared language and framework to understand trauma, respond to stress, and build resilience in both the children and families we serve and our team members.

The recertification process, which happens every three years, is rigorous and comprehensive. Team members spend months of preparation for the organization-wide process. Over several days, the Sanctuary Institute evaluation team met with an assortment of staff from all levels of the organization, families receiving support across a range of therapeutic services, youth from our residential schools, and teens in our programs such as Build Trybe and Pathways. They reviewed documentation that the team spent months preparing to demonstrate how Sanctuary is woven into day-to-day operations, toured three campuses, sat in on meetings, and listened closely to how the Sanctuary Model is crucial to our daily work.

In the final review, the Sanctuary review team summarized their findings: “There’s a reason you’re at the top of the bell curve. People [feel] cared for and listened to. They can be who they are in the workplace, and trust others.”

The Sanctuary Model shapes more than our services. It shapes our relationships with each other. It gives us tools to process stress, speak honestly, and build trust across teams. During the interview, several staff shared that they feel deeply proud to work at Cornerstones of Care.

Lesla Chandler, Director of Collaborative Learning and Training, believes that the Sanctuary Model is more than theoretical. It equips team members and the families we serve with real tools that lead to healing.

“It helps us to be aware of when toxic stress is having an impact on the organization and gives us tools to address it,” Lesa said. “It gives us the language to talk about sensitive things in a normal way, without shame or blame.”

It also matters because it affirms our commitment to doing this work together. Whether someone is a case manager, a therapist, a foster parent, or part of our support team, we all play a role in creating safe, healing-centered spaces. Sanctuary helps us stay grounded in that shared purpose.

“While we aren’t perfect, our recertification shows that we are committed to our aspirations to being a really trauma-responsive community that promotes healing and growth,” Lesa said. ■



Our Program Highlights

In 2025, we served our community through the following programs:

- Behavior Intervention Support Team (BIST)
- Build Trybe Vocational Development Program
- Community-Based Training
- Continuing Education Classes
- Day Treatment Schools
- Education Transition Support
- Family Focus Treatment
- Family Preservation Services
- Family Resiliency Initiative
- Foster Care Case Management
- Functional Family Therapy
- Independent Living Services
- Intensive Family Reunification Services
- Intensive In-Home Services
- Outpatient Counseling
- Parent Management Training—Oregon
- Pathways Transitional Living Program
- Residential Treatment & Aftercare
- Resource Development—Recruitment & Licensing
- School-Based Counseling & Case Management
- ShowMe Healthy Relationships
- Treatment/Therapeutic Foster Care
- Wendy's Wonderful Kids



Build Trybe

85% of youth engaged in a Build Trybe pre-apprenticeship completed it.

61% advanced into employment to gain further experience.

In-Home Family Services

826 families received in-home services focused on crisis prevention and strengthening protective factors within the home.

93% of families remained safely together, highlighting the success of trauma-informed relationship-centered supports.

70% of clients report positive change following counseling.

Day Treatment Schools

82% of IEP goals for Day Treatment students showed progress across academic, behavioral, and therapeutic domains.

Residential Treatment

63% of our youth successfully transitioned to a less restrictive level of care.

86% of Aftercare families report being a partner at the table and actively involved in treatment and transition planning.

Transitional Living

100% of youth in Independent Living gained meaningful life skills.

73% felt empowered in decision-making and planning for the future.

Cornerstones of Care Announces Education Campus and Learning Academy

We are pleased to announce we are consolidating our day treatment schools from the Gillis and Ozanam campuses into the K-12 Learning Academy beginning in August 2026 in a new location.

The Learning Academy, which will enroll more than 100 students the first year, will be part of the Cornerstones of Care Education Campus, located at the former Archbishop O'Hara High School at 9001 James A. Reed Road. In addition to the Learning Academy, the Education Campus will also house several education-related programs, including the Behavior Intervention Support Team (BIST), Build Trybe, and Collaborative Learning. Opening the new campus will close the K-8 Gillis School and signal the beginning of sunsetting the Gillis Campus, and move grade 9-12 students from the Ozanam school to the Learning Academy.

"Growth and change are part of Cornerstones of Care's core values as a trauma-informed organization," said President and CEO Merideth Rose. "This was a tremendous opportunity to align our schools and key education programs within the same location."

Cornerstones of Care has agreed to a 10-year lease with Blue Ocean, the owner of the O'Hara High School building. In addition to the 22 Learning Academy classrooms, the Education Campus will

include therapy rooms, a resource center, and a kitchen for serving meals to the students. The Education Center will have room for other education and skill-building programs. Build Trybe, which teaches marketable job skills to youth, will build an outdoor education center with a five-acre space to teach youth in its Seed-to-Plate programs.

BIST, which provides training to teachers and administrators that support youth with behavioral issues and increase learning time within the classroom, will move its offices from the Gillis Campus. The Collaborative Learning and Training team will implement plans for a simulation lab with a home setting to train case managers and foster parents on best practices for serving children and families working through trauma.

Along with the K-8 school's departure from the Gillis Campus, all team members with on-site offices will leave the campus when the lease ends in December. Facilities on the Gillis Campus would require costly upgrades and the availability of the O'Hara High School building made the move a logical decision.

"Cornerstones of Care's roots go back to the Gillis Campus, and while we feel nostalgia as our time ends there, we see a tremendous opportunity with our new education campus," Meridith said. ■



2025 Financial Highlights



In 2025, Cornerstones of Care implemented the first full year of the Hall Family Foundation-funded Anchors of Tomorrow grant in which our behavioral health team works directly with youth and families in Kansas City area early childhood education centers. This led to Cornerstones of Care nearly doubling our therapists and behavioral health team and working directly with our new littlest clients, their families, and education center teachers. This partnership increased revenues by over \$1.3 million last year.

Our Pathways program responded to a growing need from older unhoused youth by expanding the number of available units in the Kansas City metro area. At the close of 2024, we had 34 youth in care, but by the end of 2025, that number had increased to 51. Leveraging our experienced leadership, we added six apartments to help meet the need by being able to accept more youth into the program.

In Kansas City, Kansas, a \$30,000 grant from the Wyandotte County, Kansas, Health Foundation supported further expansion in that community allowing us for the first time to serve underhoused

and unhoused teens. Overall, these program expansions generated \$700,000 in additional program revenue.

Our Treatment Foster Care program also thrived under new leadership in 2025, expanding to add five youth to caseload in 2025 over 2024 leading to over \$210,000 of additional revenue.

We worked with our Kansas Department for Children and Families partners in 2025 to fully fund our shelter for foster youth in need of temporary placement, keeping these youth in safe, shelter environments rather than offices.

A combination of increased enrollment at our elementary Therapeutic Day School combined with rate increases across all K-12 grades led to an increase in education revenue in 2025, allowing us to invest more into the schools to improve outcomes.

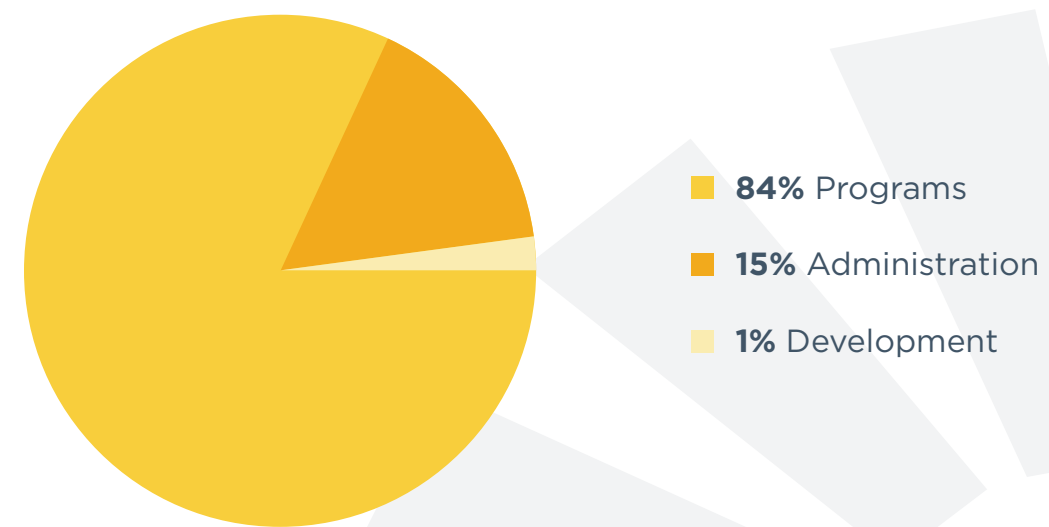
We also worked towards raising funds for capital improvements as part of our Bridging to the Future campaign in 2025, leading to \$763,000 in donations related to that cause. ■

Financial Overview

We are grateful to our donors and other funders who support our work with children and families. In 2025, our administrative expenses were below the industry benchmark, and 84% of our revenue went toward our programs.

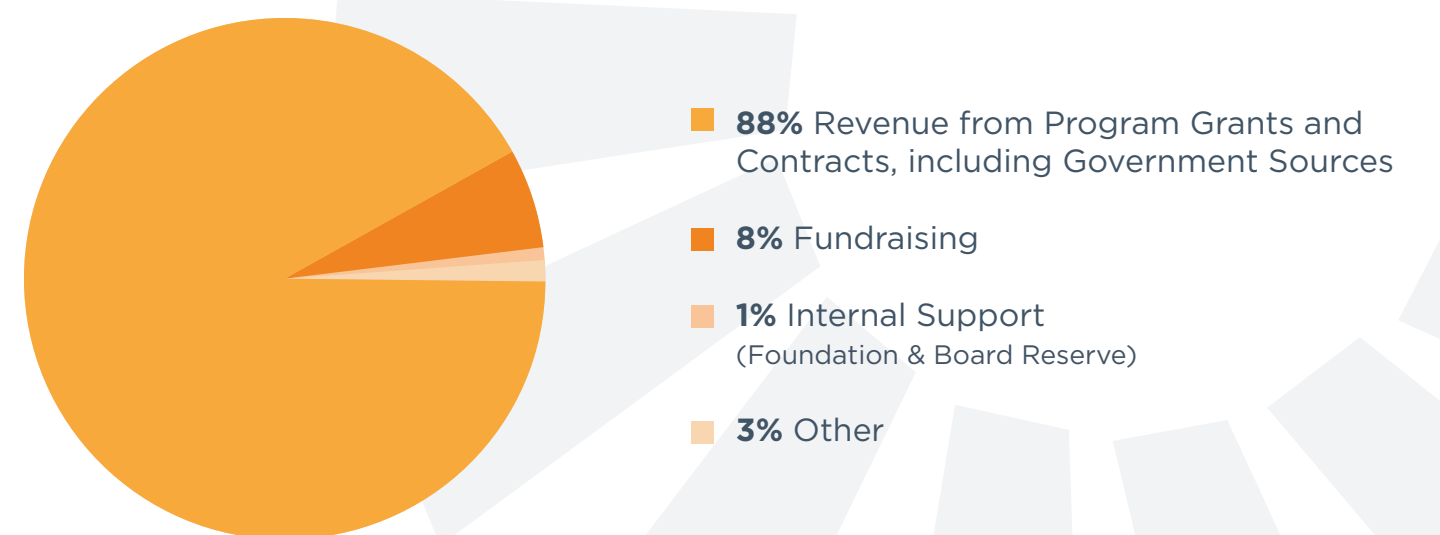
Expenses: In 2025, we reduced non-program expenses to provide more support to the children and families we serve.

Source: 2025 Approved Audit*



Revenue: In 2025, we achieved a steady increase in fundraising over 2023 and 2024 levels.

Source: 2025 Approved Audit*



* Financials in this report are those we provided to auditors. Final numbers will be provided upon request when the audit is complete in second quarter, 2026.



CORNERSTONES
OF CARE

Partnering for safe and healthy communities

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