

2020 ANNUAL REPORT

# We are Why



**Children's Aid Society**  
of Alabama

# Serving Critical Needs in a Pandemic



Dear Friends,

Thank you for taking a few moments to review our 2020 annual report to the community. When we sent our 2019 annual report out last spring, we had no idea how different 2020 would be for all of us. I hope as you receive this that you and yours are well and that we are all looking toward a safer, healthier world. For all the children, youth and families we served last year, the pandemic amplified already traumatic situations and created unprecedented barriers to care.

Thanks to our community partners, our passionate and professional staff, and financial support of all sizes from individuals and organizations, we were able to develop and implement new and adapted ways to meet these rising critical needs.

In many ways, we were able to serve more people, but in every way their needs were great and we met them. We served them virtually, in the front yard, side-by-side in cars, or with an abundance of caution and strict safety protocols—in person. Children's Aid Society of Alabama is a lifeline to so many children, youth and families in Alabama and with your help we have been able to continue to be there for them. We have highlighted just

a few in the following pages, but as you read about the ways, please don't forget about the whys—the faces of families in crisis, the waiting children who deserve a family, the older youth who have never had a permanent home, and the homeless youth who are pregnant and parenting. They are why we cannot stop.

We are grateful for so many people who helped us carry out our mission in 2020. Since our beginnings in 1912, we know that the needs will grow and change and unexpected and unprecedented circumstances will occur. Thank you for being a part of the solution and for your support of those we serve.

Thank you for caring,

Gayle Watts, LICSW  
CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

**Changing Lives**  
**Building Families**  
**Strengthening Communities**

# Who We Served

Children's Aid Society of Alabama serves children, youth and families throughout the state in a variety of programs.

### FAMILIES PRESERVED

90% of at-risk families served remained together 12 months after intensive in-home services ended.

### FAMILIES STRENGTHENED

- 276 parents successfully completed the Effective Parenting Instruction Course.
- 3,593 counseling sessions were provided for adoptive families' support.

### FAMILIES CREATED

- 675 families received orientation for adoption and post-adoption services in Alabama.
- 63 families trained and prepared for adoption.
- 42 of Alabama's waiting children now have forever families.

### YOUTH PREPARED FOR INDEPENDENT LIVING

- 4,884 direct services were provided to 576 youth (ages 14-21) in foster care and 350 professionals that serve them.
- 120 youth, ages 14-21, participated in Camp Cargo, an interactive virtual camp experience.

### HOMELESS YOUNG WOMEN PREPARED FOR STRONGER PARENTING

- 45 young mothers and their children spent time in transitional housing, and 102 young parents received support services and follow-up adapted to COVID restrictions.
- 100% of those who participated in Project Independence for at least 3 months gained employment or enrolled in vocational training.

### PROFESSIONALS AND PARENTS TRAINED TO BETTER SERVE

3,770 participated in online webinars or in-person trainings to better serve children, youth and families.



SERVING THE STATE OF ALABAMA SINCE 1912

26,284

Participants in CAS programs

2,155

Additional individuals and families received community outreach from CAS statewide

## How We Served in a Pandemic



As in most human services organizations, the critical needs that existed before 2020 were still critical, but with the added complexities of a global pandemic. In addition, more children, youth and families experienced crises and trauma as a result. It was not a time to scale back but rather a time to **scale up and innovate**.

### PRESERVING FAMILIES

*Family Partners* is an intensive in-home counseling and aftercare service to families at risk of losing their children. CAS Family Partners staff quickly sought PPE for themselves and the families they served. When possible, in-person meetings were side by side in cars (though it is not unusual for clients to be without a car) or in front yards. Virtual meetings occurred when feasible, but many clients do not have internet access and/or cell phones. Families already in crisis were experiencing job loss, hunger, postponed court dates, and significant health risks. Family Partners counselors were committed to providing continuing services for their clients.

### STRENGTHENING FAMILIES

*EPIC (Effective Parenting Instruction Course)* teaches skills that build stronger parents and caregivers. Open to all with priority to court referrals, classes are offered

at no cost in both English and Spanish. Due to the pandemic, classes were shifted from all in-classroom to all virtual. In a silver lining impact, the shift to online enabled 276 to participate, a 62% increase over the prior year.

### CREATING AND SUSTAINING FAMILIES

*Alabama Pre/Post Adoption Connections (APAC)* prepares and reinforces the path to forever families. With a temporary halt of in-person adoption preparation and training classes, 675 families participated in online orientation to help them assess their readiness for the next step. Ongoing counseling, information and referrals remained steady until the feasibility of in-classroom training could resume. Demand for classes never let up and once available, reduced class sizes with strict protocols resumed and 63 families were able to complete their training. Remarkably, 42 children were adopted from foster care by families who were trained by APAC.

For youth who were adopted from foster care, the annual Camp APAC became “Camp in a Box” and was developed by the staff to allow the entire family of each youth to have a camp experience at home.

### PREPARING OLDER YOUTH IN FOSTER CARE FOR INDEPENDENT ADULTHOOD

*Independent Living Camps and Conferences (ILCC)* offers a network of support services and training in basic life skills, paving the way for resilient adulthood. The camps and conferences are held in person, when there is not a pandemic, and youth build relationships as well as new skills. The ILCC team produced interactive videos and created “pop up” activities at group homes in place of larger regional gatherings. The team developed an interactive virtual “camp” experience for the youth and celebrated the foster youth in the Class of 2020 with a power packed virtual graduation. They delivered 152 “Grad Bags” throughout the state to honor their achievement and celebrate their resilience.



### PREPARING HOMELESS YOUNG WOMEN WHO ARE PREGNANT OR PARENTING

*Project Independence (PI)* interrupts the cycle of homelessness by providing up to 18 months of transitional living through which participants develop skills to establish strong and stable homes for their family. Throughout 2020, the PI team continued to provide uninterrupted services to young women and their children. In addition to the “typical” skills that PI participants build, they experienced unprecedented tests of their ability to transition to successful adults and parents and in many cases exceeded expectations.

### SUPPORTING THE LIFELONG ADOPTION JOURNEY

*Adoption Support Services* including information, counseling, and monthly group discussions are provided to birth families and adults who were adopted. Due to the nature of these services there was minimal interruption and the support groups were moved to virtual sessions.

### TRAINING TO INCREASE THE IMPACT

Typically a series of webinars and in-person conferences throughout the year, a complete shift to virtual trainings in 2020 enabled 42% more professionals and parents to improve or develop skills to better serve Alabama's children, youth and families.



# Creating a Legacy Gift



Dr. Robert (Bob) Glaze has served Children's Aid Society of Alabama in many roles since 1976, providing his own special brand of energy, experience, enthusiasm and wisdom. His service has included both the Children's Aid Society and Children's Aid Foundation Boards, including terms as President of each. Bob's support of leadership efforts to grow the agency to meet emerging needs has been critical. His mentorship, vision, tenacity and critical thinking are gifts that have helped build and sustain the agency through changing times. In keeping with those fundamental traits, Bob and Barbara (Bobbie) established the Robert and Barbara Glaze Endowment Fund ensuring that their support will continue beyond their lifetime.

## IN APPRECIATION OF OUR LEGACY LEADERS

- |                          |                     |                    |
|--------------------------|---------------------|--------------------|
| Meredith Calhoun         | Heyward Hosch III   | Alice Ricks (d)    |
| Robert and Barbara Glaze | Dottie King         | Bob Straka         |
| Joyce Greathouse         | Patti Hendrix Lovoy | Gayle Watts        |
| Ben Holmes               | Cathy Miller        | Alice Williams (d) |
| Will Gaines Holmes (d)   | Michael Mims        | Anonymous          |

Please consider the impact you can make with a legacy gift. For information, call Patti Lovoy at 205-943-5333.

## OUR LEADERSHIP

### 2020 Board of Directors

- Dottie King, President
- Michael Latta, President Elect
- Bob Straka, Vice President
- Teresa Zuñiga Odom, Secretary
- William Carroll, Treasurer
- Amber Anderson
- Amanda Brasher Black
- Meredith Calhoun
- D. Maddox Casey
- Anita Clemon
- Kelly Thrasher Fox
- Heath Haddock
- Leigh Inskeep
- Brittany Mathis
- Walter Monroe IV
- Amy Myers
- Barvette Patterson

### Staff Leadership

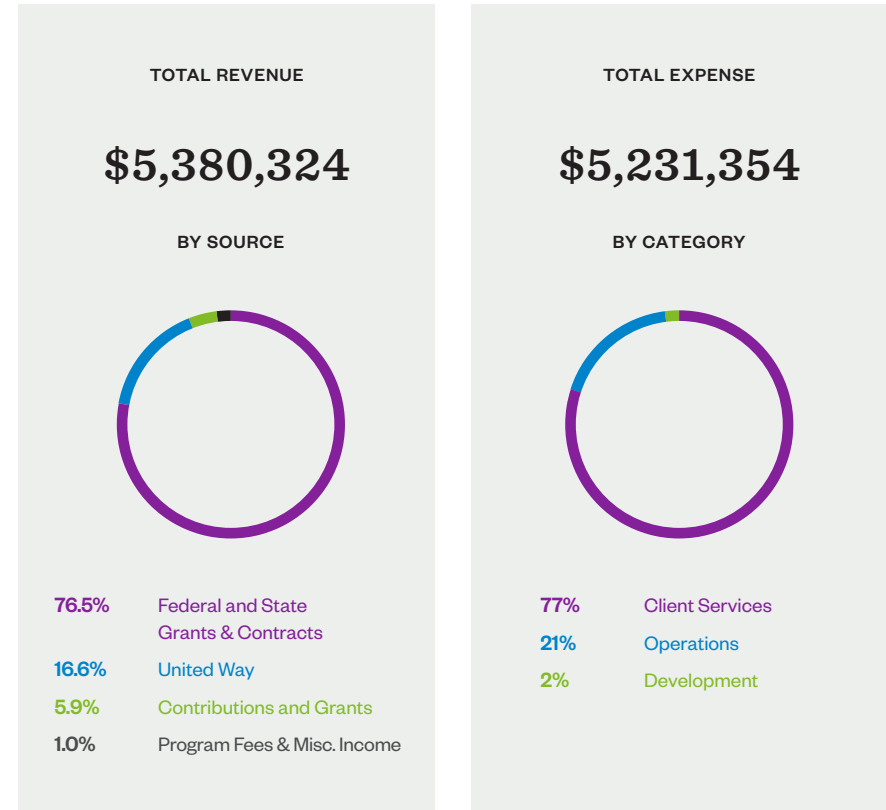
- Tan Phillips
- Helen Braswell Rand
- Nathan Salter
- Todd Santello
- Gayle Watts, CEO
- Jeff McGee, COO
- Jon Coupland, CFO
- Janita Hayes, Director of HR
- Caron Sandefur, Director of Service Advancement and Excellence
- Lisa Maher, Director of Grants & Contracts
- Patti Hendrix Lovoy, Director of Development & Marketing

### 2020 Foundation Board of Directors

- Michael Mims, President
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- Donny Donald
- Mary Elliott
- Robert Glaze
- Joyce Greathouse
- Heyward Hosch III
- Creig Hoskins
- Bailey Knight
- Cathy Miller
- Nancy Kane
- Bob Mitchell
- Charlotte Murdock
- Myra Roberts
- Mark Walton

# Financial Information

Source: Derived from unaudited financial statements. Complete IRS Form 990 may be viewed at [childrensaid.org/financials](http://childrensaid.org/financials).



## With Gratitude to Our Funding Partners



BCBS of Alabama/The Caring Foundation  
 The Community Foundation of South Alabama  
 The Daniel Foundation of Alabama  
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