



# CHOICES

CHILDREN HAVE OPTIONS IN CARING ENVIRONMENTS

## 2022 Annual Report

FY 2021-22



# #WeBringTheChangeToYou

# About Us

## Our Mission

CHOICES brings change to youth and families by providing personalized services and building safe environments.

## Our Core Values

**Compassion** - We believe in meeting individuals in their current reality with understanding.

**Trust** - We believe honesty is essential to our culture. Our transparent and ethical actions build trust with youth, families and the community.

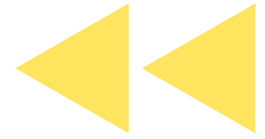
**Commitment** - We believe in consistently delivering on expectations and go the extra mile to get the job done.

**Teamwork** - We believe great ideas and best outcomes happen in inclusive environments.

**Innovation** - We believe in developing new and creative ways to serve people. We listen to all ideas.



# History & Vision



## About CHOICES

CHOICES – Children Have Options in Caring Environments – was founded in 1986 by Gina Frazier and Anita Johnson Patten. Led by their dreams and dedication to provide options in safe and caring environments for youth, they started a foster care agency. In April 1988, the Independent Living Program was added. Through this important program we provide scattered-site apartment living for older teens aging out of foster care. The CHOICES program was one of the first in Ohio and has continued to grow over the years. In addition to Foster Care and Independent Living, CHOICES has identified ways to help even more youth and families in our community and added Home-Based Services in recent years. Our services within this program are designed to provide stability and keep families together or help with reunification.

Gina Frazier served as Executive Director until 1997. Anita Patten then led CHOICES through many years of growth before retiring in 2005. Furthering the vision and mission of the organization was picked up by Ann Thompson from 2005 to 2009, Shellie Stolfo from 2009-2017 and now lies with current Executive Director, Jane Anderson.

## Our Vision

CHOICES will be recognized as a leader for foster care, mental health, independent living and family preservation services in Southwest Ohio. Over the next 3 years CHOICES will increase capacity to continue to strengthen our communities as well as improve outcomes for those we serve. We will provide high quality services to youth and families while maximizing relationships with established partners. We will continue staff development and support through progressive and innovative employee training and retention programs. Funding streams will be diversified and financial stability will be increased across all programs.

# Year in Review

## *From Our Executive Director*

During this past fiscal year CHOICES has maintained its focus on our most valuable resource, our people. We have remained dedicated to our mission of bringing change to youth and families despite the threat of COVID and a national workforce shortage. This year we have had to tap into our core value of innovation to recruit and retain quality staff. We have returned to in person meetings and trainings and love being together again. Leadership development opportunities for our managers and team leads have brought us together and given us an opportunity to spend time with each other exploring our strengths and strengthening our team.

Due to our ability to retain committed staff, our foster care licensing team has licensed a record 33 foster homes, 4 more than our established goal. Due to the increase in the number of foster homes licensed, we accepted 97 youth into our foster care program and provided them with safe environments this past year. CHOICES was successful in securing a grant for FY22 and FY23 to assist with marketing, recruitment and retention of foster parents which will set us up to continue our mission of building safe environments.

Our transitional aged youth programs have remained committed to serving one of our most vulnerable populations despite challenges with housing, employment and rising costs.

Our home based services program has seen a decrease in the number of referrals from our county partners. This has led to increased teamwork across all three of our programs to ensure all eligible youth in CHOICES programs are receiving mental health services. This collaboration has led to a record number of youth in foster care and independent living engaging in addressing their mental health needs.

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# Year in Review

## *(continued)*

In August of 2021, CHOICES successfully obtained re-accreditation from the Council on Accreditation, a national accrediting body. Our 3-year strategic plan, implemented in 2019, with some small revisions will continue to guide us in carrying out our mission and vision over the next 2 years. Despite the pandemic spanning a majority of those 3 years we have been successful in achieving several of our goals.

CHOICES continues to educate the communities we serve that we are more than foster care. After over ten years of our puzzle piece logo, we move forward with rebranding, creating a new look, and building a new website. This effort aligned nicely with receiving the grant funding to increase our recruitment efforts for foster parents. In conjunction with our partners, we worked to make our website more user friendly with a look that represents our services. As we have been saying in the office, “It’s a whole new vibe!”

We want to thank our on-going and new partners in the community for supporting CHOICES and our mission over the last year. We are grateful for supporters who have continued to donate time, money and in-kind items to help our kids and families. This year we were excited to bring back our Summer Activities for families and Camp trips for youth.

Through generous sponsorships, we hosted our first CHOICES Summer Classic Golf Outing in July of 2021. Nearly 30 teams joined us to raise money for our mission and programs.

Our focus has been to provide safety to our staff and families, and at times that has meant doing things differently. We are so grateful for our partners who have continued to give generously, even when things had to change, and sometimes with a moment’s notice.

On the following pages, you will see how your efforts have supported our mission, kids and families! We look forward to working with new and current partners as CHOICES grows to help more youth and families in Southwest Ohio.



# Foster Care



106 licensed foster homes  
33 new homes added this year

**2,158**

Referrals  
received

207 unique youth served  
97 youth entered our program  
115 left our program



**29,642**

safe nights of  
sleep for kids

**8**

kids adopted by  
CHOICES foster  
parents

**41**

kids reunified  
with family



CHOICES operates a Foster Care Program with the philosophy that youth benefit from being in a least restrictive, safe, structured environment that stimulates and supports positive change. The youth served by CHOICES are resilient, determined, strong-spirited and independent thinkers. They demonstrate a great ability to adjust to difficult circumstances, to overcome loss and trauma, and to learn new behavioral techniques allowing them to be successful. Our collaborative approach with parents, child welfare workers, and the community is designed so that the interaction our dedicated team has with a family is a chance to change a life and bring children, families and communities together.

The Independent Living Program benefits youth ages 17-21 and provides them with the experience of maintaining their own households, in an apartment, while receiving support in the form of caring, nurturing, and teaching adults. CHOICES IL program personnel provide such supportive services in order to help youth meet their needs. The pillars of this program are education, vocation and mental health.

# Independent Living

8,887

nights of safe sleep

43 unique youth served  
13 youth entered our program  
18 left our program



78% youth achieved their educational goal  
83% youth maintained employment  
49% youth addressed their mental health needs

# Bridges

12,240

nights of safe sleep

91 unique young adults served  
33 young adults entered our program  
68 left our program



CHOICES provides services available through Bridges, a post-emancipation support program in Ohio that extends housing and other supportive services to eligible former foster youth. These young adults are eligible to apply and participate at the age of 18, until they reach the age of 21. CHOICES continued to see higher numbers of young adults in this program due to extension of services as part of federal legislation related to the pandemic. The expansion ended in September of 2021.

# Home-Based Services

328 unique clients served



4,458 total hours of mental health services provided to clients

1,791 total hours of parent aide services provided to clients

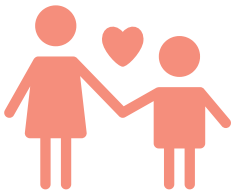


39%

of foster youth received mental health services

49%

of IL youth received mental health services



33 families reunified

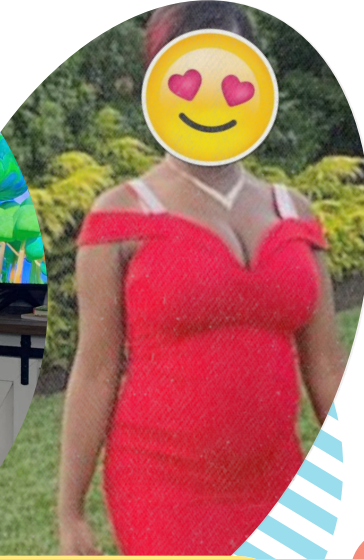


CHOICES Inc. has a third line of services referred to as Home-Based Services. Home Based-Services consists of individual programs aimed at supporting families. These services are provided to children and families in the community focused on preventing removal of a youth from their biological family, assisting families during the reunification process and/or providing in-home mental health assessments, therapy, and skill building supportive services. Whether we are keeping families together, bringing families back together or supporting the overall mental health of our clients Home-Based Services play an essential role in achieving CHOICES mission.





# Your Donations at Work



191

the number of individual requests fulfilled with your donations.

14

the number of Class of 2022 Graduates! Each received gift cards.

109

youth served

This fiscal year we started a new fund to help meet the needs of foster youth as they enter care. Our Welcome Initiative provides \$100 for each new placement. The funds are to specifically help purchase clothing, personal hygiene items, baby needs and hair care/maintenance.

**"The first few weeks can be pretty expensive while getting foster youth settled in. It was so nice to have this donation to help with both clothing and personal care items. Our youth loved picking out her own shampoo and sparkly sandals!"**

13

agency events

While the pandemic prevented us from having our Christmas parties we still were able able to plan a number of events for foster families and independent living youth. Some favorites included Zoolights and Woodland lights, summer camp, Reds and Dragons games, an outdoor movie and our first annual Easter egg hunt!

# Your Donations at Work

## Holiday Outreach

- 64 new coats
- 51 adopt a teen sponsorships
- 18 adopt a family sponsorships
- Over 400 gifts for foster youth
- 37 holiday meals/gift cards
- Hundreds of smiles & memories



The fiscal year started out with us going through the motions of pandemic life. We made the decision not to have our holiday parties, but still were able to plan some outdoor events for our families alongside our gift drives. Christmas is the most joyful time of year at CHOICES, and we thank each of you who donated. Additionally, many kids were able to participate in activities ranging from school sports to swim lessons. Due to special funding we even had some that were able to receive tutoring to catch up reading levels. Finally, we held our First Annual Summer Classic Golf Outing which raised over \$20,000 for our mission and programs. Thank you to our sponsors and golfers. It is only with your generosity and kindness that we are able to provide enhancements and extras to our programs.



# Major Funders & Partners



**100 + Women Who Care Dayton**  
**Big Smiles Dayton**  
**Buckeye Fabricating**  
**Barbara Driehaus & Joe Bockelman**  
**Talmage Porter**  
**Meijer Store 103 - Moraine, OH**  
**Ohio Credit Union League & Day Air Credit Union**  
**RSM**  
**Ticket to Dream Foundation**



## CHOICES Board of Trustees

**Chairperson - Joe Varabkanich**  
**Vice Chairperson - Lori Simms Parks**  
**Treasurer- Chris Brill**  
**Secretary - Samuel A. Gradwohl**

**Trustees: Quatez Scott, Ph.D, Tina Lastowski,  
Heather Heinz-Buttery, Kate Clark, Eve Mayes**



## FY22 Financial

### ASSETS

Cash and cash equivalent	\$	588,996
Accounts receivable—trade		773,749
Prepaid expenses and deposits		109,203
TOTAL CURRENT		1,471,948

### PROPERTY AND EQUIPMENT

Land	\$	64,833
Building		244,253
Office Equipment		124,972
Vehicle		11,855
Building and leasehold improvement		419,744
Less: accumulated depreciation		(389,795)
Property and equipment - at net book value	\$	475,862

### Rent Deposit

	\$	2,366
TOTAL ASSETS		1,950,176

### LIABILITIES AND NET ASSETS

Current liabilities	\$	548,183
Long-term liabilities		-
Net assets - unrestricted		1,307,081
Net assets - temporarily restricted		94,912
TOTAL LIABILITIES AND NET ASSETS	\$	1,950,176

### CHANGES IN UNRESTRICTED NET ASSETS

Support and revenue		
Public support		
Contributions	\$	367,652
Revenue		
Service fees		2,172,988
Administrative fees		2,531,334
	\$	5,071,974
Functional expenses		
Program services		
Foster care		2,020,136
Independent Living		900,902
Home-Based Services		697,532
OCWTP		51,220
Bridges		783,215
	\$	4,453,005
Supportive services		
Management, general and administrative	\$	810,100
Other Income		
Investment income		599
Total Other Income	\$	599
Change in unrestricted net assets	\$	(190,532)
Net assets, beginning of year	\$	1,592,525
Net assets, end of year	\$	1,401,993