



**Walden
Family
Services**
A Foster Family & Adoption Agency

2016 IMPACT REPORT

LETTER FROM BOARD CHAIRS

Dear Friends,

This past year was so exciting for Walden Family Services as we celebrated forty years of serving children and families throughout southern California. Our organization was founded in 1976 by a group of individuals dedicated to being champions to and for the children and families who need it most, and we continue to do just that.

Thanks to you, last year Walden programs touched the lives of more than 1,500 children, youth and families. Because of you and your generosity, thousands and thousands of children and families over the years have received the high-quality services that Walden is known for.

Among the children and youth we serve, there are those who have medical and physical fragilities, have developmental delays, require special healthcare needs, or identify as LGBTQ. For many, our organization offers a place of comfort and care, and of stability and hope. A place of solace that might not otherwise be found. We believe that when you change one child's life, you are unlocking the potential to change the world.

The mission of our organization is personal to each and every one of us and we all have a reason for serving and supporting Walden Family Services. We have both been moved by our time spent mentoring Walden youth and seeing firsthand the difference that our programs make in the lives of some of the most vulnerable children and youth.

On the following pages you will see the faces and words of the youth and families that your donations have impacted. As you read through these pages, we hope you take a moment to look into the eyes of these individuals. The eyes of those who have seen some very dark and difficult days, but whose lives are now brighter and full of hope because of your support.

Thank you for all that you do.

With much appreciation,



Arlene Lieberman
Governance Chair

Arlene Lieberman



Art Candland
Foundation Chair

Art Candland

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PROGRAM OVERVIEW

Our program reach is far and wide, spanning southern Ventura County to Imperial County, and in between.

Corporate Office
8525 Gibbs Drive, Suite 100
San Diego, CA 92123
T: (619) 584-5777
F: (619) 584-5757

LOS ANGELES

Counties served include:

- Los Angeles County
- Southern Ventura County
- Kern County

Programs offered:

- Foster care and adoption
- Transitional housing plus foster care

RIVERSIDE

Counties served include:

- Riverside County
- San Bernardino County
- Orange County
- Eastern Los Angeles County

Programs offered:

- Foster care and adoption
- Transitional housing plus foster care

SAN BERNARDINO

Counties served include:

- San Bernardino County

Programs offered:

- Extended Care/Aftercare
- Cal-Learn
- Family Visiting
- Nurturing Parenting/FAMILY Program
- Mental Health Services

SAN DIEGO

Counties served include:

- San Diego County
- Imperial County

Programs offered:

- Foster care and adoption
- Transitional housing plus foster care



OUR VISION

Every child has a loving family and the ability to realize their greatest potential toward becoming a self-sufficient and productive member of their community.

OUR MISSION

Supporting the lives of children and families through lasting relationships.

OUR GUIDING VALUES

INTEGRITY

We engage each other honestly. We value our community's trust. We do what is right.

COMMITMENT

We are passionate each and every day about meeting children's needs and supporting lasting relationships. We do whatever it takes.

RESPECT

We equally value each voice at our family table regardless of background, experience, education or title. We treat others as we wish to be treated.

EXCELLENCE

We go above and beyond to ensure excellence in our foster families, staff and services. "Good" is simply not good enough.

DIVERSITY

We continually weave our quilt of diversity. We celebrate and honor differences.

COMPASSION

We listen with a caring heart and a deep desire to make a positive difference. We assume good will.

INNOVATION

We are dedicated to lasting success through courageous creativity. We think outside the box.

LETTER FROM THE CEO

“You were there for me when it felt like no one else was.”

“Thank you for giving me a family.”

“My life is forever changed thanks to you.”

One of the most meaningful aspects of my job is spending time with the children, youth and families for whom Walden makes a difference. The quotes above represent just a fraction of the many things I’ve heard over the last year from the people that we serve.

I’m so proud to be a part of an organization with such remarkable donors, staff, and volunteers. And let’s not forget our incredible foster and adoptive families – the real heroes of Walden – whose stories you’ll read in the pages of this Impact Report.

Our organization started forty years ago with the intention of providing quality care for children placed in residential group homes. It’s amazing to take a look at how far we’ve come since 1976. This is only possible because of your incredible support.

We believe that all children and youth deserve a loving family that offers guidance, love, respect, unwavering dedication, and support. Because of you, we were able to serve over 1,500 people last year. And we are committed to continuing this great work and expanding our programs in the coming years.

The years ahead are full of hope and promise for Walden. We understand the difference that one person, and one organization, can make in the life of a child or youth. The people in these pages are a testament to that.

Because of your compassion and support, we are able to continue this life-changing work. On behalf of Walden Family Services and the children and families we serve, I thank you.

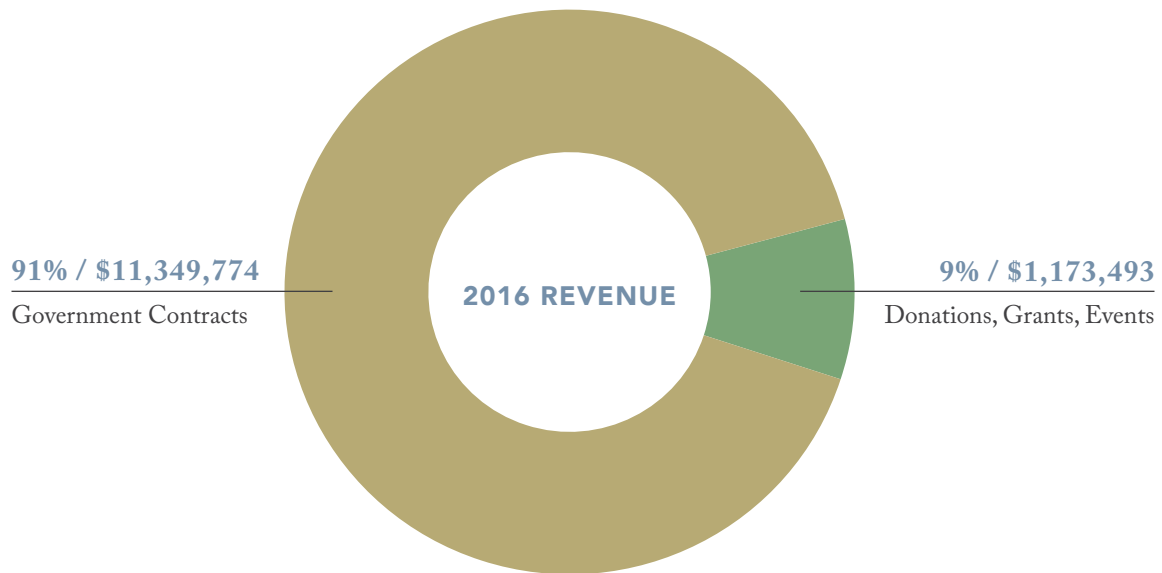
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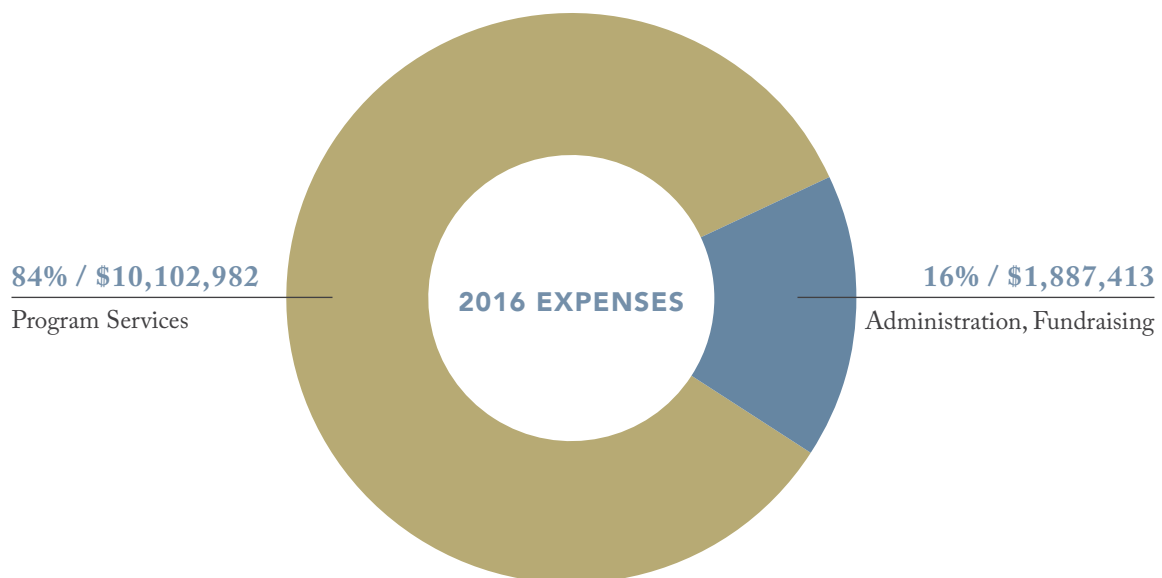
Teresa Stivers
CEO
Walden Family Services

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Teresa A. Stivers".

FINANCIALS - AT A GLANCE



84 cents of every dollar goes directly to our programs



**These are our unaudited financials for 2016.*

For a final, audited version, please check our website www.waldenfamily.org in June.



We provided **429** families a total of **13,834** hours of coaching and birth family visitation.

Our foster care program served a total of **294** children. Of these children, **58** required specialized care and support due to disabilities or healthcare needs.

Less than **1%** of Walden's children experience more than one placement compared to California's state average of **36%***.

*Data from Kids Count Data Center

FOSTER CARE

Kids who come into foster care have often experienced prolonged stress and trauma. Quality foster care programs like ours help kids heal. Walden's foster care program ensures that children and youth of all ages – especially kids who need specialized care – have the opportunity to grow up knowing the stability, love and sense of community that family life provides.

Foster Parent Spotlight:

Blanca and Raul

"We've been foster parents through Walden for over 10 years, and we even adopted our daughter through Walden several years ago. During this time we've been fortunate enough to have many children in our care. These kids need us, and we need them too. We are so happy in their company. We play together, have fun together, and keep each other busy. We get attached to these children, but we are so happy when they are reunified with their parents. And their parents are so appreciative of what we've done. We keep in touch, and they'll send pictures and messages."



Social Worker Spotlight:

Marla

Foster Care Social Worker

"The children we serve are often victims of neglect, abuse and abandonment. When they reach us, our ultimate goal is to help them recover from the stress and trauma that that brings. I've witnessed firsthand the difference that the Walden foster care program offers these children – security, happiness and a specialized program tailored to their individual needs. They deserve only the best, and that is what we give them."



In 2016, **80** children found their forever home and family thanks to Walden.

ADOPTION

Walden was licensed as a full-service adoption agency in 2008. While the circumstances of each adoption are unique, the process typically takes 6 to 18 months during which time a Walden social worker works closely with the prospective adoptive family on a thorough match process. Each family goes through training to ensure they can offer a healthy, happy home to children that are often recovering from childhood trauma.



Adoptive Parent Spotlight:

Oraisa and Shindana

Oraisa and Shindana were certified for foster care and adoption with Walden in 2011. Since then, they have cared for a total of 16 children, many of whom were eventually placed with relatives or reunified with their parents. They met their daughter in June 2015, and this past January, it became permanent when her adoption was finalized. “Ineana ‘came home’ in 2015. It hasn’t always been easy, but we are so happy. We’re a family now.”



Social Worker Spotlight:

Cynthia

Adoptions Social Worker

“Being an Adoptions Social Worker with Walden Family Services is an honor and a joy. I take great pride in helping families through the process of adoption and helping children get settled and comfortable in their forever home. The journey of adoption is not an easy one for our families, but the love and commitment they have for their children supersedes all barriers. I’ve had the honor of witnessing several adoptions finalizations in court, and I can tell you, nothing touches your heart more than being a part of this major life event.”

PREVENTION

Walden operates several prevention programs including:

- **NURTURING PARENTING**

Nurturing Parenting is a 16-week program that offers young parents an opportunity to develop critical skills needed to nurture their children, build self-awareness and self-esteem, and communication skills. It also offers them a comfortable place to build meaningful relationships with peers also experiencing the same challenges.

- **CAL-LEARN**

Cal-Learn helps teen parents break the cycle of foster care by providing them with support to graduate high school, become responsible parents and ultimately move toward self-sufficiency.

- **EXTENDED CARE/AFTERCARE**

As foster youth transition from a structured foster care system to living as an independent adult, many realize they need help to succeed. Extended care provides one-on-one coaching on education, employment, health and safety, and establishing lifelong relationships.



In 2016, your donations helped **502** young people get the support they desperately need through our prevention programs.

The high-school graduation rate of youth in the Walden Cal-Learn program is **88%** compared to **30%** statewide*.

**Data from the Legislative Analyst Office*

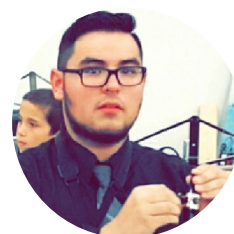
Nurturing Parenting Youth Spotlight:

Ray

“One of the things that has resonated with me from the program is taking care of myself. You can only offer your children as much as you are. If I am only operating at 60%, that means my daughter is only getting 60%. I want to give her 100%. She deserves me at my very best.”

“One of the facilitators really stressed reading with your child. The very next day I read my daughter a book, and she started mimicking the sounds I was making. I was in awe! I couldn’t believe it. I couldn’t wait to come back and tell the facilitator what had happened.”

Ray completed the curriculum last year and is currently in the process of becoming a peer parent volunteer for the program. Next up for him is going to college. “Before taking these classes, I never even dreamed of going to college. People from my city don’t do that. I’ve learned so much about success, motivation and making progress towards goals.”



Social Worker Spotlight:

Tobi

Supervisor, Nurturing Parenting Program

“Nothing is more rewarding than seeing these youth that face so many obstacles dedicate themselves to our rigorous parenting program to better their lives and the lives of their children. So many of the teens and young adults in our program don’t have the family support one needs to raise a child. Our program teaches them vital skills and offers them a safe place to meet peers facing the same challenges as them.”





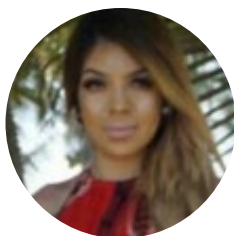
In 2016, **236** youth transformed their lives by participating in our THP+FC program.

58% of Walden THP+FC youth held employment, compared to **48%** of youth in statewide THP programs*. The remaining **42%** of Walden THP+FC youth attended school or gained workplace skills.

**Data from John Burton Advocates for Youth*

TRANSITIONAL HOUSING PLUS FOSTER CARE (THP+FC)

Most young people still have their parents to turn to for help even after they turn 18. But 65% of foster youth in California leave foster care at 18 with no place to call home. This incredibly innovative housing and foster care program provides youth with the essentials needed to begin taking care of oneself on their own. Youth in our transitional housing plus foster care program learn how to live on their own in the community, build relationships with mentors and earn a college degree or learn a vocation.



THP+FC Youth Spotlight:

Diana

Diana was placed in foster care when she was 14-years old. When she was 18, she entered Walden's THP+FC program and has since gone on to earn a full-time job at a beauty store while she studies to become a make-up artist, her true passion. Of her time with Walden she says, "Thank you for turning a horrible experience when I was young into a positive one now. I wouldn't be the success I am becoming today if it weren't for Walden and this program."



Social Worker Spotlight:

Cheryl

THP+FC Social Worker

"The sense of accomplishment a Walden youth feels when they graduate from our THP+FC program is unmatched. You can see the utter pride and happiness on their faces, which makes doing my job all the more rewarding. So many of these youth have no one rooting for them besides Walden. We support them. We embolden them. We help instill a sense of confidence that they can face the world and chase their dreams."

THANK YOU TO OUR DONORS

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Jane & Doug Wheeler



SPRING SOIRÉE

In celebration of Foster Care Month, Walden hosted its Spring Soirée on May 19 at Pamplemousse Grille.

Thirty guests attended the intimate dinner held in the restaurant's Cow Palace private room. Guests were treated to a four-course dinner with wine pairings by award-winning executive chef Jeffrey Strauss.

Rajah Gainey, a member of our Governance Board and former Walden foster youth, shared his story about entering foster care at two weeks old, then re-entering foster care at age 7 after his adoptive mother had a stroke.

The event raised more than \$25,000 to fund our programs that prevent child neglect and abuse, match kids with loving foster and adoptive families, and prepare young people to become productive members of their communities.

Thank you to presenting sponsors Jeffrey Strauss of Pamplemousse Grille and Karen and Jo Hannah Hoehn of Hoehn Jaguar Land Rover of Carlsbad.



WINE D'VINE

Walden's signature fundraising gala, Wine D'Vine, was held on October 28 at the beautiful Estancia La Jolla. Over 350 guests joined us as we celebrated Walden's 40th anniversary with a three-course dinner, live auction featuring fine dining and travel experiences, and an incredible performance by rock legend John Fogerty, generously underwritten by Harley and Maryanne Sefton.

We were delighted to honor the Seftons, long-time Walden supporters, with the inaugural Fostering Hearts Legacy Award. An award created to recognize champions of Walden who are dedicated to improving the lives of foster children and youth.

Guests were moved by Lacey, who bravely shared her story of growing up in the foster care system and being treated as a number until she came to Walden. She inspired the audience with her words and with her own donation to support the children and families that Walden serves each day.

Chaired by Marty and David Pendarvis, the sold-out event proved to be a record-breaking success, and raised over \$675,000 for our foster care, adoption and parent training programs.





WALDENFAMILY.ORG

SUPPORT FOSTER CHILDREN AND YOUTH BY MAKING A DONATION TODAY!



Saves the Dates

Wine D'Vine
October 13, 2017

HYATT REGENCY LA JOLLA AT AVENTINE

Dinner – Live Auction – Concert

Sponsorship opportunities begin at \$2,500

To sponsor or reserve a table,
please contact *Kathryn Stephens* at
(619) 727-5897 or kstephens@waldenfamily.org

waldenfamily.org/wine-dvine-2017



Enjoy mingling with some of San Diego's most influential business and community leaders all while raising vital funds to support southern California's most vulnerable children and youth. Entertainment to be announced soon.