

# The Walden Difference

2023 - 2024 IMPACT REPORT



**Walden Family Services**  
Foster. Adopt. Support.



# From our Board Chair and CEO

There are over 60,000 foster children and youth in California, with a sizable portion of them in the regions where Walden operates: San Diego, Los Angeles, Riverside, and San Bernardino. The future isn't always bright for these young people, particularly for those of color or who are LGBTQIA+. Foster children may experience the destabilizing effects of multiple placements. At the same time, those with special needs may not receive sufficient medical and behavioral services, causing them to become homeless or incarcerated upon leaving the system.

Since 1976, Walden has been addressing the plight of foster children, youth, and families, helping them recover and thrive. Walden offers a Transitional Housing Placement Program (THP) for youth 18-26 aging out of the system, a Foster Care and Adoption Program, a Mental Health Program, and Nurturing Families, a parenting training program.

Last year, Walden provided services to 1,751 children, youth, and families. While Walden served a record population, the quality of care remained high. Outcomes for clients were overwhelmingly positive: children experienced the security of remaining in one foster home, and those with special needs were stabilized; youth were employed or pursuing higher learning and exited the THP Program to stable housing. Parents who lost custody of their kids were trained to raise their children responsibly and lovingly, saving taxpayer funds by reuniting from foster care quickly.

Housing for transitional-age youth in our THP Program remains a top priority. With assistance from the public-funded Project Homekey, Walden now owns and manages properties in Riverside, housing 30 youth. Walden seeks funding to purchase additional real estate in Southern California. The need is pressing: 50% of foster youth become homeless within two years of aging out of care without the support of programs like THP. Walden is meeting this tragic situation head-on, offering housing to keep transitional-age youth from living in cars and on sidewalks.

With California facing a multi-billion-dollar deficit, cuts to foster care and programs for foster youth were inevitable. The state has already reduced foster care rates after a devastating cut in 2010, which has not been reinstated. Walden is aggressively fundraising to bridge the gap between revenue and expenses and will continue to do so. Walden has remained financially stable for 48 years, and we will continue to offer our life-changing programs, no matter the financial challenges.

Walden continues to advocate for the neediest children, youth, and families, supporting and co-creating policies that work for foster youth.

Thank you for advocating for Walden and joining us as we strive to bring hope and genuine humanitarian progress to our deserving young people. Together, we can help turn their dreams for promising futures into reality.

Kids Regards,

With Gratitude,



**Leslie Levinson**  
Board Chair



**Teresa Stivers**  
Chief Executive Officer

# Walden Leadership



**Teresa Stivers**  
Chief Executive Officer



**Sue Evans**  
Chief Operations Officer



**David Kvendru**  
Controller



**Dr. Darjené Graham-Perez**  
Director of People & Culture

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**Allison Gelbrich**  
Founder | Realtor  
Dreamscape  
Real Estate



**Ted Gooch**  
Senior Staff  
Software Engineer  
StubHub

# Our Programs



## Transitional Housing Programs & Youth Services

Walden Family Services offers crucial support through its Transitional Housing Placement Program (THP) for foster and former foster youth. The program provides a safety net for transition-age youth, allowing them to receive the support they need to successfully transition to adulthood and avoid the homelessness, poverty, and unemployment so many of them face.

The THP program allows youth to extend their stay in foster care from ages 18-21. The THP Plus Program serves former foster youth up to age 25, providing the same services but with lessened oversight.

The THP Programs offer free housing, weekly visits with a Social Worker, Education Support (help acquiring a GED and pursuing higher learning), Employment Support (help preparing for and securing employment), Life Skills Training (budgeting, household management, healthy lifestyle), a money management program, access to medical and mental healthcare), and more. Youth are prepared to house and support themselves long-term and to thrive.

## Foster Family Agency (FFA)

**Safe and Secure Family Placement Program** - Children in need are placed in the temporary care of foster/resource families who provide a nurturing and supportive environment. In these homes, children experience a sense of safety, respect, and belonging, which is crucial for their well-being. Children receive the stability and support needed to live with confidence and well-being.

**Adoption Services** - As a licensed adoption agency, Walden is devoted to connecting children and youth in foster care with loving families across Southern California. We guide families through the adoption process, ensuring that each child finds a permanent and supportive home. Our focus is on making the journey as smooth as possible, helping to create lasting, loving connections.

**Parent Training** - Walden's Parent Resource & Education Program (PREP) empowers foster and adoptive parents with the knowledge and skills necessary to provide exceptional care. This competency-based training is a corner- stone of our foster family agency and adoption services, ensuring that families are fully equipped to support and nurture the children in their care.





# Our Programs



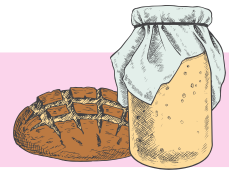
## Family Services

Walden Family Services offers a Nurturing Families Program to parents who have lost or are in danger of losing custody of their children. The curriculum emphasizes empathetic and loving parenting. Parents learn skills that help them meet their children's needs and responsibly raise them. In addition to training, Walden's team connects parents with essential community resources to further assist them on their journey.

Many participants in the Nurturing Families Program were in the foster system themselves and have not have had positive role models for parenting. By teaching parents how to nurture and meet the needs of their children, the program plays a vital role in breaking the cycle of trauma often seen in the child welfare system.

"Through the Nurturing Families Program, I discovered the joy and importance of reading with my child. Growing up, this wasn't something I experienced, but now, reading to Sonyia has become a cherished time for us," shared Maria, a proud graduate of the program.

## YOUTH IN ACTION: AMAYA'S FUNDRAISING JOURNEY



We're consistently moved by the dedication and compassion of our supporters, especially when it comes from the next generation. This year, we were particularly inspired by the efforts of Amaya, a soon-to-be 8th grader at American Martyrs School in Manhattan Beach.

Amaya's journey began with a challenge from her Pastor at the end of her 7th-grade year. Each rising 8th grader at her school receives a small amount of seed money, a symbolic gesture meant to encourage students to grow and multiply their 'talents' for a charitable cause. While many might see this as just another school project, Amaya saw an opportunity to make a meaningful impact.

Choosing Walden Family Services as her cause, Amaya decided to spend her summer break raising funds by selling sourdough starter and sourdough pizza dough. With determination and a lot of hard work, she not only met the challenge but exceeded all expectations, raising over \$500 to support our mission!

Amaya's initiative is more than just a fundraising success—it's a powerful reminder of the impact that even one person, regardless of age, can have on the lives of others. Her dedication to helping youth in foster care reflects the very spirit of community and compassion that we strive to foster at Walden.

# Walden Family Services' Uses Homekey Funds to Open TAY Housing in Riverside

In 2024, Walden Family Services took a significant step forward in their mission to support transitional-aged youth by acquiring two new transitional housing properties in Riverside, California. These acquisitions were made possible through the public-funded Homekey grant, which was awarded to Walden Family Services as part of California's ongoing efforts to combat homelessness and provide stable housing for vulnerable populations.

The first property, a beautifully remodeled home, offers six bedrooms, four baths, and 1,627 square feet of living space, including dedicated housing for mothers and their children. The second, larger property boasts seven bedrooms and four baths, with over 4,000 square feet of living space. Both homes were specifically designed to provide a nurturing environment where foster youth, aged 18-21, could receive the support and guidance they need as they transitioned into adulthood.

These new properties are a vital addition to Walden's THP Program, empowering young adults and guiding them towards permanent housing.

Teresa Stivers, CEO of Walden Family Services, expressed her pride in the expansion, stating, "In 2024, we strengthened our commitment to the Riverside community and the young individuals we serve. We're thrilled that we can help bring a sense of normalcy to the lives of local foster youth."

These new transitional housing properties have enabled us to offer a supportive environment where our clients can develop essential life skills, access education and job opportunities, and ultimately achieve self-sufficiency as they transition into adulthood."

As the sole recipient of the Homekey Project funds in Riverside, Walden Family Services maximized the grant by ensuring that the homes were equipped to meet the needs of their residents. The properties featured Single Room Occupancy (SRO) units, allowing multiple young adults to share housing while still maintaining their own personal space. This setup not only provided affordable housing but also fostered a sense of community among the residents.

With the addition of these new transitional housing properties, Walden continued to expand its reach in the Inland Empire, ensuring that more young individuals in need received the support they deserved.

Looking ahead, Walden Family Services plans to continue acquiring additional housing units throughout Southern California. The goal remains clear: to provide vulnerable youth with the resources and support they need to live as independent and productive members of the community. The expansion in Riverside is a testament to the ongoing dedication to Walden's mission and a promise of the positive impact Walden will continue to make in the lives of transitional-aged youth for years to come.







**Walden Family Services** is a nonprofit organization dedicated to providing comprehensive foster care, adoption, and transitional housing programs for children, youth, and families. For 48 years, Walden has been a cornerstone in the communities of the Inland Empire, Los Angeles, and San Diego, offering life-changing support to those in need. Our mission is to empower individuals to thrive, helping to create stable, loving homes where children and families can flourish.

We specialize in supporting some of the most challenging-to-place children and youth, including those with behavioral and mental health challenges, special healthcare needs, LGBTQIA+ identities, large sibling groups, and older children of color. Our trauma-informed care model ensures that every child and youth in our programs receives the emotional and psychological support they need to heal and grow. Whether through foster care, adoption, or transitional housing, Walden's programs provide a safe haven where children and youth can rebuild their lives with the support of caring professionals and families.



## MEET JEN

*Meet Jen, a shining star from Walden's THP Program.*

We're thrilled to announce that Jen graduated from the Academy for Salon Professionals on March 20, 2024! She's now gearing up for her state cosmetology exam and has already earned certificates in esthetician services and waxing.

Jen's applying to salons and dreams of working at the European Wax Centers. Her goals include passing the state exam, securing employment, and getting her driver's license.

*Fostered Dreams, Boundless Futures!*

“Before Walden, I was living with my grandparents and felt uncertain about my future. The support I received from the THP program at Walden was life-changing. They gave me the resources and guidance I needed to succeed. Graduating from the Academy for Salon Professionals felt like a dream come true, and now I am excited to take on the world. Walden helped me find my path, and now I am ready to shine.”

## Foster Family Agency

**128**

children placed with carefully-matched families



**100%**

experienced fewer than two family placements

**48**

children adopted from foster care

**100**

adults were trained and certified to become foster parents

## Transitional Housing Programs

**393**

youth ages 18-24 in our Transitional Housing Programs



**100%**

of our youth have stable housing and supportive relationships

**72%**

have significant savings upon exiting the program

**94%**

are working on their education

## Financials

**1.115M**

from Events, Grants & Donor Revenue

**REVENUE: \$17,444,081**

**94% Government Contracts**  
**6% Grants & Donations**

**87%**

goes directly to Programs & Services

**REVENUE: \$17,743,213**

**87% Programs & Services**  
**13% Admin & Fundraising**

**Total children, youth, & families served: 1,751**



## Extended/Aftercare Program



**91**

youth participated in our Aftercare/Extended Care program

## Mental Health

**39**

children & youth received mental health services



## Nurturing Families

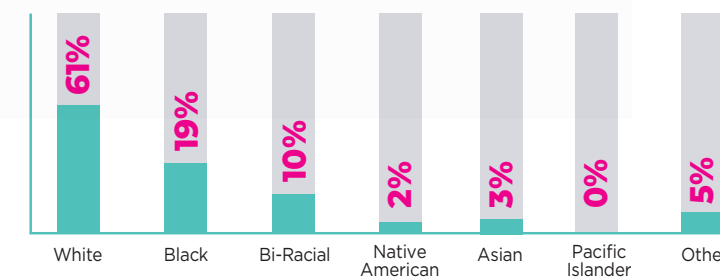


**281**

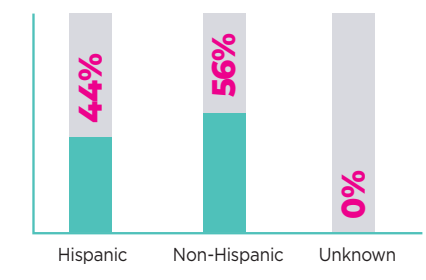
pregnant or parenting youth participated in our Nurturing Families program



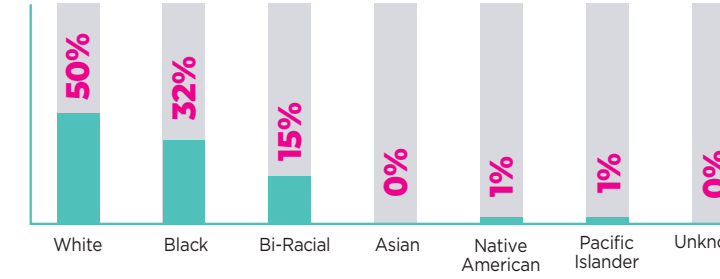
## RACE Chart (FFA)



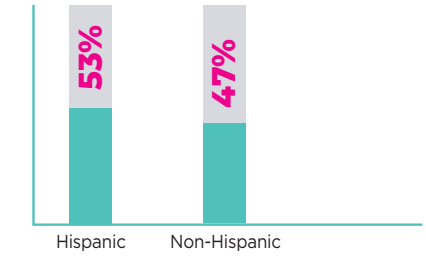
## Ethnicity (FFA)



## RACE Chart (THP)



## Ethnicity (THP)





# Celebrating Our Amazing Donors

**JULY 2023 – JUNE 2024**

**Maryanne & Harley Sefton/The Sefton Hearts that Foster Fund**

## **\$50,000+**

S. Mark Taper Foundation  
United Way of the Inland Valleys

## **\$25,000+**

California Foundation for  
Stronger Communities  
Pricewaterhouse Coopers Foundation  
San Manuel Band of Mission Indians  
The Fred & Eva Stebler Fund  
Walter J. & Betty C. Zable Foundation

## **\$20,000+**

Terri & Craig Gainor/The Linda & Jerry  
Strickland Foundation  
Hervey Family Non-endowment Fund  
Kaiser Permanente  
Andréa da Rosa & Deborah Llewellyn  
Riverside Community Health Foundation  
SDGE - A Sempra Energy Utility  
St. Germaine Children's Charity  
US Bank Foundation

## **\$15,000+**

Susan & Joel Buxbaum  
Chortek Weisman Family Foundation  
Connie & John Desha  
First Citizens Bank Trust

## **\$10,000+**

Anonymous  
The Coeta and Donald Barker Foundation  
The Country Friends  
Day for Change  
Laura & Robert Duggan  
JPMorgan Chase & Co.  
Emily & Ted Shults

## **\$5,000+**

Jennifer & William Beamer  
Sharon Beamer  
Brady Family Foundation  
Michelle & Art Candland  
Carlsbad Auto Center  
Karen & Robert Hoehn  
Carol & Henry Hunte Fund  
Cathy & Chris Carroll  
Marly & Joe da Rosa  
Gossip Grill  
Gr'mere's I'mpossible Journey Fund  
HomeStreet Bank  
Hunter Industries  
Joseph La Croix  
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Caroline & Brian Rousso  
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Julie & Dale Yahnke

## **\$2,500+**

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Chris & Keith Eshelman  
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The San Diego Foundation  
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HomeBank of California  
Arlene Lieberman  
Marsh & McLennan Agency  
Javier Metoyer/HomeBank of California  
Patricia Moises  
Craig Ramseyer  
Raymond Simas & Karl Rowe  
Elenore & Rick Vaughn  
Wendy & Brent Wilson

# Celebrating Our Amazing Donors

## \$1,000+

Estel & Walter Binder  
Michelle & Dan Bissi  
Diane & Howard Boehm  
Maria Torres & Stephen Chin  
CORT Furniture Rental  
Hanna & Ricardo da Rosa  
Jenny & Mark Dowling  
Sue & Edward Earl, Jr.  
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Tiffany O'Neil  
Michelle & Mark Palamar  
Allison & Sean Riley  
Rosemary & Steve Saxon  
Bambi & Steven Schulman  
Kim & Joshua Smith  
Symphorosa Williams

## \$500+

Anonymous  
Karen Adkins  
Jessica & Ken Bratz  
Darin Chum Dew  
Ted Ebel  
David Grannis  
Lynn & Julio Guidi  
Christy & Chad Ihrig  
Bob Kain  
Gina M. Kakos  
Linda & John Maguire  
Kristi & Tom Martindale  
Adelina & Javier Metoyer

## \$500+

Emily Rosenberg  
Kathryn & John Stephens  
Cameron Stewart  
Gamin Thomason  
Amy & Michael Warlick

## \$250+

Activision Blizzard  
Annette & Alex Barber  
Bilge Pakiz & Marc Camras  
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Rene' & Travis Hitt  
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Walden  
Family  
Services

Foster. Adopt. Support.

8525 Gibbs Drive, Suite 100, San Diego CA 92123



Donate  
Now!



*Visit [waldenfamily.org](http://waldenfamily.org) for more information!*



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