

The Walden Difference

2024 - 2025 IMPACT REPORT



**Walden
Family
Services**

Foster. Adopt. Support.

From our Board Chair and Chief Executive Officer

There are more than 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. 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, Nurturing Families, and a parenting training program.

Last year, Walden provided services to 1,498 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. We provided training around how to raise children responsibly and lovingly to parents who had lost custody of their kids. Through the creation of pathways for reunification, Walden's programs generated significant savings for taxpayers.

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 budget 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. And, as insurance rates for foster family agencies skyrocket, many organizations find themselves at risk of shutting their doors, potentially displacing countless children from their homes. Walden is aggressively fundraising to bridge the gap between revenue and expenses. Walden has remained financially stable for 49 years, and we will continue to offer our life-changing programs, despite the financial challenges.

Walden will always 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.**

Kind Regards,



Leslie Levinson
Board Chair

With Gratitude,



Teresa Stivers
Chief Executive Officer

Walden Leadership



Teresa Stivers
Chief Executive Officer



Sue Evans
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Elenore A. Vaughn
Executive Director
Santa Paula
Housing Authority

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 folks 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 to 21. The THP Plus Program serves former foster youth up to age 26, providing the same services but with decreased 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: When children need temporary care, Walden connects them with foster and resource families who provide the love, stability, and support every child deserves. In these homes, children find safety, respect, and a sense of belonging that helps them begin to heal and thrive.

Adoption Services: As a licensed adoption agency, Walden is committed to creating forever families for children and youth in foster care. We walk alongside families throughout the adoption journey, making the process clear and supportive while focusing on what matters most: helping every child find a permanent, loving home.

Parent Training: Through our Parent Resource & Education Program (PREP), Walden equips foster and adoptive parents with the tools, skills, and confidence to provide exceptional care. This hands-on training ensures families are prepared to nurture, guide, and empower the children who enter their homes.



Our Programs

Family Services

Walden Family Services' Nurturing Families Program is designed to support parents who have lost, or are at risk of losing, custody of their children. The program centers on empathetic, compassionate parenting, helping parents learn the skills needed to meet their children's needs and raise them in safe, stable, and loving homes. Alongside hands-on training, Walden connects families with vital community resources, ensuring they have the support needed to succeed long after the program ends.

Many of the parents who join Nurturing Families are former foster youth themselves, often without positive parenting role models. By teaching them how to nurture and guide their own children, the program helps break cycles of trauma and creates opportunities for stronger, healthier family bonds.



"I've learned that showing patience and listening to my child makes all the difference. It's something I didn't grow up with, but now I can give it to my daughter every day." - Daniel, Program Graduate

From Foster Care to Future Stunt Man: Andrew's Inspiring Journey



Andrew entered the foster care system at 16 after facing abuse and neglect, but he never let his challenges define him. While living with his aunt, he took on the responsibility of caring for his younger siblings, setting an example of perseverance and determination. Now, they're following in his footsteps by graduating high school and pursuing college!

Today, Andrew is a certified personal trainer working toward his dream of launching his own fitness and lifestyle coaching business. He recently saved \$2,500 to buy his own car and is on track to graduate from college in 2026 with a degree in Exercise Science. But his ultimate dream? Becoming a stunt man in the entertainment industry!

Andrew's drive to overcome hardship and build a brighter future serves as a reminder of what's possible when young people have resilience, hope, and the right support system. Andrew shows us all that dreams are within reach when you refuse to give up.

We're so proud of Andrew's journey and can't wait to see where his ambition takes him next. Keep reaching for the stars!

Ray's Journey of Resilience, Hope, and The Power of Family

At just two months old, Ray was placed with the Phelan Family through Walden Family Services. Born exposed to multiple substances, testing positive for syphilis and other illnesses, and suffering a stroke while still in the hospital, Ray spent his earliest days filled with uncertainty. His birth mother faced homelessness, health challenges, and had no prenatal care, leaving Ray with an uphill battle from the very beginning.



Walden's adoption team continued to walk alongside them, helping ensure Ray received the best opportunities to thrive.

But everything began to change once he entered a Walden foster home. With the love and stability of the Phelan Family, along with support from Walden social workers, Ray began receiving occupational therapy, speech therapy, and other vital services at just 18 months old. While his developmental milestones came later than most, each one was celebrated with joy and encouragement by those who surrounded him.



Over the years, Ray has blossomed with the encouragement and dedication of his family. The Phelans never let his early challenges define him, instead focusing on his strengths, his laughter, and his bright spirit. Their home has been filled with therapy sessions, school meetings, and countless small victories, all of which they've embraced with patience and love. Ray has grown into a curious, energetic child who loves being outdoors and exploring the world around him.

When it became clear that reunification with Ray's birth family would not be possible, the Phelan Family made it official by adopting him. Their commitment to him has been unwavering—nurturing his growth, advocating for his specialized education, and giving him the security of a forever home.



Today, Ray is in first grade in a special education classroom. After the Phelan Family retired from fostering and relocated to the Midwest, Ray now enjoys chasing fireflies, playing with cousins, and spending time with his grandparents, aunts, and uncles. He also maintains a special connection to his birth great-grandmother, who remains part of his extended family and keeps him connected to his roots.

The Phelan Family has also opened their hearts to two more children adopted through Walden, extending their circle of love and care. Their story is a beautiful reminder that foster care and adoption can transform lives—not just for children like Ray, but for the families who embrace them.

The Walden Difference

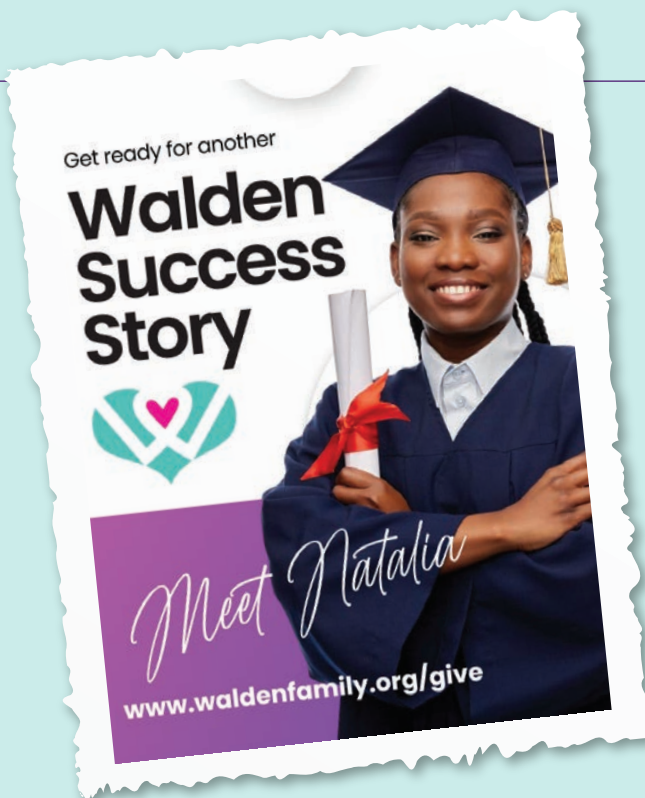


For nearly five decades, Walden Family Services has been a trusted leader in foster care, adoption, and transitional housing, serving children, youth, and families across San Diego, Los Angeles, and the Inland Empire.

Our mission is simple but powerful: to create safe, stable, and loving homes where every child has the chance to heal, grow, and thrive. Walden is especially committed to supporting youth who are often the hardest to place, including those with special healthcare needs, behavioral and mental health challenges and large sibling groups. These young people deserve the same chance at a bright future, and Walden works tirelessly to ensure they receive it.

Through a trauma-informed care model, Walden ensures each child receives the emotional, psychological, and practical support they need to build brighter futures. Our dedicated staff, social workers, and resource families walk alongside children every step of the way, providing guidance, compassion, and stability when it is needed most.

Whether through foster care, adoption, or transitional housing, our programs provide a lifeline — offering not only shelter and safety, but also opportunities for education, career development, and personal growth. Walden's work is about more than meeting immediate needs; it's about empowering children and families to build lasting connections and create the foundation for lifelong success.



Meet Natalia

Another shining star from Walden's THP Plus Program.

After moving from Riverside's Non-Minor-Dependent (NMD) program to San Diego in August 2023, Natalia discovered a wealth of opportunities that inspired her to stay and pursue higher education. Balancing full-time work and school wasn't easy, but Natalia earned her AA degree from Chaffey College and has continued to push forward.

Today she's working as a security guard, and this fall she'll be a full-time criminology student at Cal State San Marcos, aiming to become a criminal justice lawyer.

As part of Walden's THP Plus program, Natalia is known for her drive and focus, she sets goals, uses the resources around her, and sees things through to completion. Her case manager and our THP intern praise her insightfulness and dedication to pursuing her dreams.

We're honored to be part of Natalia's story and can't wait to see where her determination takes her next. You too can be a part of Walden's success stories! Donate today to help a foster child or youth in your community!

2024-2025 By The Numbers

Foster Family Agency

86

children placed with carefully-matched families



99%

experienced fewer than two family placements

14

children adopted from foster care

22

adults were trained and certified to become foster parents

Transitional Housing Programs



128

THP Plus (THP+) young adults in foster care ages 21-24

92%

of our youth have stable housing and supportive relationships

83%

have significant savings upon exiting the program

307

Young adults in our Transitional Housing Placement Program for Non-Minor Dependent Foster Youth ages 18-21 (THPP NMD)

100%

of youth were productive in employment and/or education

42

total youth living in Walden's Youth Housing Demonstration Program (YHDP)

Extended/Aftercare Program



49

youth participated in our Aftercare/Extended Care program

Mental Health

43

children, youth and young adults received mental health services



Nurturing Families



353

pregnant or parenting families participated in our Nurturing Families program



2024-2025 By The Numbers

**DID YOU
KNOW?**



Walden Family Services has supported more than 10,000 children, youth, and families across So Cal since opening its doors in 1976.

Financials (Unaudited)

1.13M

from Events,
Grants & Donor
Revenue

REVENUE: \$19,406,112
91.2% Government Contracts
5.8% Grants & Donations
3% Fees For Service

85.5%

goes directly to
Programs
& Services

EXPENSES: \$18,916,768
85.5% Programs & Services
14.5% Admin & Fundraising

**Total children,
youth, & families
served: 1,498**



Celebrating Our Generous Donors

JULY 2024 - JUNE 2025

Maryanne & Harley Sefton/The Sefton Hearts that Foster Fund

\$50,000+

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\$2,500+

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Celebrating Our Generous Donors

\$1,000+

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Teresa Stivers & Victor Liong
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Elenore & Rick Vaughn

\$500+

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San Diego Municipal Employees Association
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Trombino Pension Administrators, Inc.

\$250+

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Kellye Buchanan
Linette DaRosa
Ingrid deLlamas
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**Walden
Family
Services**
Foster. Adopt. Support.



**Donate
Now!**

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Visit waldenfamily.org for more information!



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