

TLC CHILD AND FAMILY SERVICES

ANNUAL REPORT

2024



LETTER FROM THE CEO



Hello Trusted Community Member,

This coming year, TLC Child and Family Services will celebrate 50 years of serving the most vulnerable in Sonoma County. We approach this anniversary with both hope and humility. Hope because of the impact we've made, and humility as we recognize that our youth need us today more than they ever have.

For those of us in the field, rising mental health challenges, a severe lack of affordable and safe housing, and non-profit closures are at the forefront of our minds each day. At TLC, we are committed to understanding the nuances of these challenges and formulating strategic partnerships to overcome them and best serve our youth in need.

As a staple and stable force in our community for half a century, TLC has a track record of utilizing evidence-based modalities with fiscally sound policies so that we are here for the long term to ensure young people do not fall through the cracks of what often seems to be a broken system.

At TLC, we recognize the individual. We also see the collective. We can say without reservation that the youth we serve have incredible potential. They are bright and capable. With the right support, they will graduate high school, attend college, mentor others, thrive in the workplace, and give back to their communities. We say with equal confidence, they are the leaders of tomorrow. We know we are the organization to get them on the right path and have them stay on it.

We also know that this work – this changing, shaping, and in some cases saving – individual lives only happens with your support. Thank you for what you've given to TLC Child and Family Services. As you read the following pages, I hope you take a moment to celebrate you as you celebrate our 2024 highlighted accomplishments.

With Gratitude,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Susan Fette'.

SUSAN FETTE, MFT

Chief Executive Officer
TLC Child and Family Services

PS Your generous gift today goes directly toward improving a child's life. Thank you for your involvement and life-changing support.

**Donate
Today**



WHO WE ARE

As an agency, we are meeting the needs of our community with passion, hope, and commitment to do everything we can to make Sonoma County the best possible place it can be for each resident. Through our various programs and services, each day we see youth step into their potential. It is a testimony to what someone can accomplish when given the right support, and TLC has become expert at providing that support. When youth first arrive, many don't have a place to live, are weighed down by the gravity of traumatic experiences, feel without community, and are painfully isolated. With us, they begin to see their own strengths and gifts. They start to believe in themselves and their futures again. We also see entire families who felt hopeless once again feel connected and empowered. It's inspiring to witness, and on the following pages, we take great pleasure in sharing some of these stories with you.

Mission

Providing healthy, healing environments and experiences for foster and other youth and their families, in which their differences are leveraged, valued, and celebrated

Values

Excellence, Integrity, Transparency, Collaboration, Equity.

Philosophy

Connection to Self, Other, and Community

TLC Child and Family Services serves Sonoma County's most vulnerable children, youth, and families. Our comprehensive programming serving ages 0-25 includes foster care, adoption and post-adoption services, residential treatment, behavioral health, special education, and transition-age youth housing services for young adults.

TLC is committed to inviting, fostering, supporting, and affirming cultural diversity in all of its clients. We strive to eradicate prejudice and develop greater appreciation of multicultural diversity in our programs and thus in our staff and clients. Within our programs and in our daily practices, we strive to create an environment in which cultural, religious, ethnic, social, gender identity and expression, sexual orientation and physical differences are valued.



THE IMPACT: TRANSITION AGE YOUTH HOUSING PROGRAMS

The reality of having no safe family and nowhere to go is a part of life for many of the youth we serve. Our Transition Age Youth Housing Programs support youth transition from living on the streets or in their cars – where they are scared, anxious, cold, hungry, and feeling lost – to secure and independent living. Youth secure employment, advance their studies by enrolling in higher education, and invest their money to save for a future they are now excited to embrace.

Parent Support Network

Some transition-age youth, while barely adults themselves, are already parents, which is why TLC started a Parent Support Network. The Parent Support Network includes:

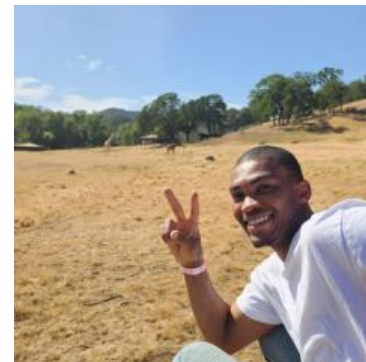
- Resource navigation, referrals to parenting groups and classes, mental health providers, in-home nursing services, and case management
- Events at our Resource Center for parents to build community with other parents
- A stocked Parent Shopping Shed (diapers, clothing, household items, and much more)

Rapid Rehousing Program & Drop-In Resource Center

When a youth comes to us experiencing homelessness, we wrap around them, offering a warm shower, meal, clothing, and personal items from our Resource Center. Young people finally exhale, and once again feel hopeful about their future possibilities. Individuals can be referred into further services including our housing program for unsheltered youth which provides support to quickly locate stable and permanent housing.

Education Access

For the youth we serve, daily routine activities became insurmountable hurdles that prevented them from finishing high school and entering college. In collaboration with 5 Keys and Santa Rosa Junior College, starting in high school and continuing throughout college, we provide transportation, academic counseling, and financial assistance to forward a young person's education, ensure an enriching learning experience, and move them ever closer to graduation.



100% of participants surveyed indicated they were better prepared for independent living due to participating in Transition Age Youth Housing Programs.

THE IMPACT: FOSTER FAMILY AND ADOPTION

In Sonoma County, there are over 200 approved resource (foster) parents. Each day, however, there are significantly more foster children and teenagers in need. Most just need a temporary haven while their parents get help coping with the issues and circumstances that led to instability in the home. There are some, however, who need a new forever family.

TLC's Foster and Adoption programs are designed to help children from infancy through early adulthood who need either temporary or permanent placement. We get to know each child and strive to find that child the most well-suited, loving environment.

At TLC, we also recognize the importance of family preservation and reunification, which is why we co-created the Relative Intensive Services Foster Care (ISFC) Program.

Relative Intensive Services Foster Care (ISFC) Program

TLC has partnered with Sonoma County Family Youth and Children's Services to provide Intensive Services Foster Care (ISFC) for relatives who have taken on the responsibility of fostering one of their family members. Often the relatives fostering these children have taken on the role suddenly, without preparation, and therefore lacking the necessary training to meet the child's needs. This is especially true if the child has experienced trauma. TLC's ISFC Program provides additional support to these children while making sure the caregivers feel supported themselves, and confidently able to meet the child's needs.



100% of placement workers completing surveys cite one or more improvements in a child's emotional state following placement with a TLC resource family. Further, 100% also report they are mostly or always satisfied with the quality of services provided by TLC to foster children.

THE IMPACT: JOURNEY ACADEMY

Imagine being 16 and severely bullied. You feel out of place, you're anxious and depressed. Instead of enjoying high school and leaning into the social and educational experiences that create memories and opportunities to last a lifetime, you eventually stop attending school altogether. Days of absence turn into weeks, weeks into months until returning to class seems like climbing Mount Everest. The mere thought fills you with anxiety. You retreat further. This is the story for too many of our youth.

Enter Journey Academy, a place designed to support teens in deepening self-knowledge, healing trauma, and developing solid relational skills. Journey Academy is a place where youth literally start a new journey. This journey is one of growth – growth in self-confidence, self-discovery, and self-worth. It's a journey of unearthing strengths within that were there all along, and one that leads to high school graduation.

Journey Academy includes a Residential Treatment Center with an onsite Non-Public School (NPS) and therapeutic services for qualifying special education students.

Residential Treatment Center

For youth who need more than what a day program can offer, we give them the opportunity to live on campus in our Residential Treatment Center. Here they are provided 24/7 care and a homelike environment, all while receiving the necessary individualized academic and emotional support to help them thrive.

We have served youth from ten different school districts across the state, including districts as far south as Los Angeles County.



Journey High School

Journey High School serves grades 9-12 of all genders and gender identities who are struggling with anxiety, depression, ADHD, school avoidance, suicidal ideation, and other challenges that can impact academic and social functioning. This highly inclusive and supportive environment was recognized by the Human Rights Campaign for its work with LGBTQ+ students and families.

Before placement at Journey, students earned an average of 17.8 credits per semester. At Journey, they averaged 23 credits per semester, an increase of 29%.



THE IMPACT: BEHAVIORAL HEALTH SERVICES

TLC provides trauma-informed, evidence-based therapeutic services with a team of engaged, highly-skilled clinicians who provide comprehensive family, group, and individual therapy. Clinicians also provide case management and behavioral support when needed. At TLC, we see each client as a whole person. We recognize there are many strengths within each youth and family despite the challenges present in their lives. Our clinicians provide support and proven methodologies that allow for growth and healing.

75% of those receiving psychiatric services experienced an improvement with their depression and report being able to more effectively handle daily life.

Expanding Functional Family Therapy (FFT)

From a highly competitive pool of applicants, TLC was selected to receive a significant grant through the Children and Youth Behavioral Health Initiative to expand our Functional Family Therapy (FFT) program.

FFT is a gold standard in supporting families to relate better and make positive, lasting change. With almost 40 years of research, FFT is a proven, evidence and strength-based, family-focused, intensive family therapy treatment model.

With this funding, TLC has been working to:

- Secure and train additional FFT clinicians
- Increase the number of FFT services provided
- Expand services to meet community needs by accepting referrals through community collaborations and partnering with school districts across the County



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FINANCIAL OVERVIEW

Since its inception, TLC has recognized the need for comprehensive oversight to the complex and often rapidly changing landscape of child welfare.

TLC adheres to the following to ensure its financial picture is both safeguarded and maximized.

Governance

TLC Board of Directors has extensive involvement in the governance and oversight of TLC's financial management.

- The Board of Directors convenes monthly to discuss programmatic updates, management challenges, and financial status.
- The Finance Committee of the Board of Directors meets and reviews the financial statements monthly.

Financial Management

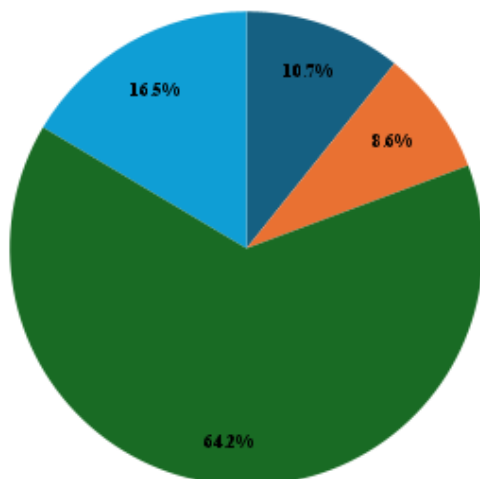
- TLC maximizes cash reserves through prudent investing guided by a highly respected financial planning organization and high-yield bank accounts.
- TLC maintains available cash equivalent to 2-3 months of operating costs without any incoming revenue. This provides organizational stability for the unknown.

Other things to know:

- TLC's compliance is extensive and meets or exceeds statutory regulations.
- TLC is Joint Commission-accredited and its Journey Academy is accredited by the Western Association of Schools and Colleges.
- TLC has an annual agency audit, HIPAA audit, and other related oversight from contractors for services.

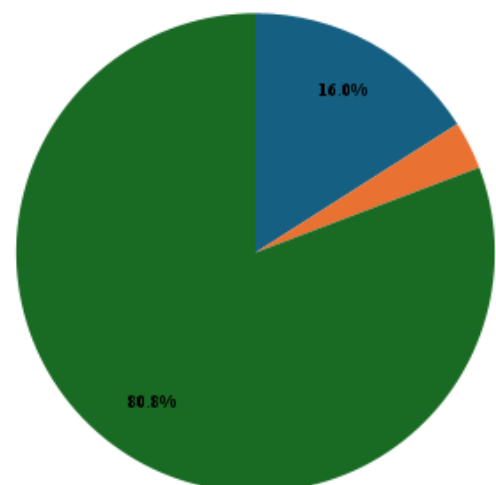
Income Percentage

● Donations & Foundation Grants ● Program Expansion ● State Funding ● Federal



Expense Percentage

● General and Administrative ● Fundraising ● Programs



FARM TO TABLE & LEGACY FUND



Farm to Table

TLC's newest initiative, steps in front of the destructive outcomes we're seeing far too much of—incarceration, homelessness, and death by suicide.

This program:

- Teaches farming, hospitality, and culinary skills
- Provides mentorship with highly-regarded chefs, experts from the hospitality industry, and local farmers
- Builds transferable skills that create career pathways and independent futures



In 2024, we finalized funding to bring Farm to Table to full fruition. We now have an outdoor pavilion, farm and garden, and renovated teaching kitchen to help youth grow the independent living skills to carry into adulthood.

With the construction complete, we are now beginning a partnership with The Boys and Girls Club and VOICES to bring this initiative to the larger community. *This is a Board of Supervisors Approved Project.*

Legacy Program

For many foster youth, desperately needed dental and orthodontic care is not available due to Medi-Cal limitations and a lack of independent financial resources. As a result, all too many foster youth grow up self-conscious about their teeth and hide their smiles. In addition to the emotional discomfort, there is often physical pain. TLC's partnership with the Sonoma County Children's Village Legacy Fund is a game-changer for these youth.

In 2020, the Sonoma County Children's Village closed its doors and made a gift of its assets totaling \$2.5 million to TLC. This gift was restricted to orthodontic and dental care. TLC, working with the oversight of the Sonoma County Children's Village Legacy Advisory Council, has since funded orthodontic and dental treatments for current and former Sonoma County foster youth who wouldn't otherwise have access to these services.

Here's a snapshot:

- Painful TMJ is treated
- Wisdom teeth are finally removed
- Braces are put on just when they are most needed
- Confidence in smiles abound! Foster youth around Sonoma County are smiling!



INNOVATION AND ADVOCACY



Human Rights Campaign

TLC is a respected voice for the LGBTQ+ community within the agency itself and extends to the broader community. TLC has been accredited by the Human Rights Campaign with its highest honor: Innovators in the Field. TLC was also honored to be highlighted in the Human Rights Campaign's Annual Report as an exemplary agency serving the LGBTQ+ community. TLC is the only non-profit in Sonoma County, one of a few in California, and a mere handful in the entire United States to be highlighted.



TLC's Project Flare

Project Flare serves LGBTQ+ youth and their families who have struggled with acceptance, understanding, isolation, loneliness, and depression. Its goal is to provide safe spaces for LGBTQ+ youth to connect, build community, and create leadership opportunities. During Project Flare workshops, youth create videos that depict their experiences of coming out and their struggles to find acceptance. These productions include "flares" of hope to be shared with a wider audience who may not have (yet) experienced support in their lives.



National Distribution

Following the death of Oklahoman Nex Benedict, a non-binary youth who committed suicide after being attacked in his high school bathroom, TLC reached out to the Human Rights Campaign (HRC) All Children All Families to offer our Project Flare videos to the young people in Oklahoma. HRC suggested we distribute the videos, not just to youth in Oklahoma, but to a broader national audience. They also offered to help us do so! We look forward to spreading these videos widely.



Transition Age Youth Advocate at the Capital

As part of Transition Age Youth Advocacy Day, TLC youth attended a two-day event in Sacramento. Here they attended workshops and participated in panels and experiential discussions surrounding a myriad of issues they have come to intimately understand through their lived experience.



SUCCESS STORIES

Journey Academy Parent

I'm sitting in my car after watching my daughter walk to her first college class and I can't drive until these tears clear up. Maybe it was the first month of third grade, the last time she smiled before going to school. Today, she laughed as I took a picture and pointed out her trans flag necklace that she's proudly wearing. I spent so many nights and days obsessing over making sure she'd even be breathing when I woke up. But here she is, a couple months later, almost skipping into the completely unknown, excited and nervous about what she gets to experience now. She talks about the peers, teachers, and potential love interests she might meet. She sharpened her art pencils and lined them up so she's ready to absorb all her professor can teach. I hope you know how much all the staff has meant to her. She says her time with you saved her life and she wants to show you all that she can do. Thank you so much for doing what you do and caring about these kids.



Transition Age Youth Participant

As a child, Brianna's family struggled with mental health challenges. Over a period of years, Brianna was placed in eight different foster homes. As a teen, she started to struggle with her own mental health and since age 16 has been learning to live independently. With the support of TLC's Transition Age Youth Housing Program, Brianna found the support she needed. Brianna graduated high school, and is currently preparing to leave for the US Naval Academy Preparatory School to start her next chapter in college. She is committed to giving back to her community through service, and to being a voice of encouragement to other youth in foster care. "Don't let your life circumstances define who you are going to be. Everything happens for a reason and your life is what you make," Brianna emphatically states.



Journey Academy Student

Due to severe bullying and resulting anxiety, Ian had not attended school for five years. When he found Journey Academy, Ian found solace and purpose in Culinary Arts. Through engaging with farm-fresh ingredients and preparing meals for his community, Ian's confidence and potential blossomed, leading him to advance in culinary and re-engage in all his academic pursuits. He found community and thrived socially. Now a model student, Ian confidently mentors others and contributes regularly to large community meals. His growth extends beyond the kitchen, as he now actively participates in campus life and excels in his coursework. At Journey, Ian renewed belief in himself and his abilities.



THANK YOU



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Today

As we approach our 50th Anniversary, we take pride in having become a pillar in our community, offering youth stability and a path forward to successful, independent living. While we recognize the increased challenges today's young people are facing, we meet each of those hurdles with a steady hand, well of compassion, and a resolute determination to better each individual life.

We're inspired by these youth every day, and hope the stories on these pages inspire you, too. Our commitment to serving youth stands stronger than ever and we thank you for making it possible.

Thank You to Our 2024 Fall Fundraiser Gold Sponsors!

The Summerill Bizzell Family | Liberty Company Insurance Brokers | Blue Skies Aviation & Logistics

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