the POWER to DOMORE

children's home society

2020-2021 Annual Report

THE POWER to DO MORE



This year we celebrate the power to do more. At CHS we are constantly asking ourselves, how can we get more children adopted? How can we counsel more families who have adopted children and youth from the foster care system? How can we serve more aged out foster youth in the My Path Forward Program? How can we reach and inform more legislators so that Virginia will truly embrace the changes our system so desperately needs? We know the answers to these questions lie in hard work, innovation, and procuring the resources that will allow us to grow. This year in particular we have embraced the Power To Do More through innovating the way we provide services and growing our team. Thanks to the support of our donors, we will continue that innovation and growth to serve more and more of Virginia's children, families and youth.





CONTENTS

- 1 Introduction
- 2 Letter from the Chairman & President
- 3 CHS Boards
- 4 Foster Care Adoption Program
- 5 Post Adoption Program

- 6 CHS Advocacy
- 7 My Path Forward
- 8 Search & Reunion Program
- 9 2020-2021 Highlights

Appendix Donor Lists 2020-2021

LETTER FROM THE CHAIR AND CEO

CHS is proud of our expanded services and the extraordinary efforts of our staff in 2021



What an extraordinary year this has been. In the face of a pandemic, CHS has continued to move forward and serve more children families and youth than ever before. We learned how to deliver services in new and creative ways because even in the face of a pandemic, indeed especially in the face of a pandemic, the children we serve need homes, the families we serve need support, and the youth

we serve need our help to find their path toward independence. As we begin to emerge from the darkest days we see light, just as children who have been in the foster care system see light when placed with a new family in a permanent, loving home; or how youth who have aged out see light when provided with the stability and supports they need to help them succeed.

Because of the support of our generous donors, we have been able to continue to meet the needs of our children, families and youth and are poised to serve even more. We have grown each of our main programs over this past year—Foster Care Adoption, Post Adoption Services, My Path Forward and Adult Adoptee. We invite you to learn more about that growth and about the clients we serve as you read about this amazing year in the pages to follow. None of this would have been possible without the support of donors like you, who believe in our vision that every child deserves a home. Thank you for helping to make that vision a reality.

With much gratitude,

Ladine

Nadine Marsh-Carter CHS President, CEO, & Adoptive Parent

Carlon Zanders Chair of CHS Board of Directors

DOING MORE THAN LEADERSHIP: TRANFORMING LIVES AND THE COMMUNIITY

CHILDREN'S HOME SOCIETY BOARD OF DIRECTORS 2020-2021

Carlon R. Zanders, Chair John Owen Gwathmey, Chair Elect Melvin E. Tull, Immediate Past Chair Edward Solarz, Treasurer Victoria J. Roberson, Secretary Amanda B. Barden Sean M. Beard Molly Cheek Leesa Christian Michael A. Evans Cornelius H. Fedderman **Geoffrey F. Gasperini** Pamela D. Hervey Christy E. Kiely Willie E. Lanier Tracy Poling Amanda R. Simons P. Michael Weber **Richard C. Wetzel** Verneeta Williams

Zan's Refuse Service, Inc. Troutman Pepper Banker's Insurance Genesis Properties, Inc Victoria J. Roberson, PLC Community Volunteer Altria Group, Inc Dominion Youth Services Markel Ventures Retired from Richmond DSS Carmax Dominion Energy, Inc. Fuel Creative, Inc. Hunton Andrews Kurth Community Volunteer Family Vision Care of Richmond Community Volunteer Community Volunteer Dominion Energy, Inc. Riverside Medical Group

MEMORIAL FUND BOARD OF DIRECTORS 2020-2021

Thomas K. Johnstone, IV, Chair Christopher Konstantinos, Vice Chair Dana Rust, Treasurer Nadine Marsh-Carter, Secretary John S. Barr Xavier R. Richardson Melvin Tull III Janet H. Wills Carlon Zanders Community Volunteer RiverFront Investment Group, LLC McGuireWoods LLP Children's Home Society of Virginia McGuireWoods LLP Mary Washington Hospital Foundation Bankers Insurance The Wills Financial Group Zan's Refuse Service, Inc.

JUNIOR BOARD MEMBERS 2020-2021

Kate Slayton, Chair Alexandra Gecker, Vice Chair Patrick Callahan Megan Capito Michelle Caruso Samantha Duckett Elisa Hayden Adam Mehrer Nora Pavlik Abbey Reynolds Clay Rollins Lindsay Rollins Samantha Sedivy Wendy Smith Abigail Thompson Ashley Walker Paul Watson Francesca Wvatt

FOSTER CARE ADOPTION PROGRAM

FINDING MORE WAYS TO HELP FOSTER CHILDREN AND YOUTH THROUGH ADOPTION



Though our Foster Care Adoption Program, CHS recruits and trains families to adopt children waiting in foster care.

This year we added additional social workers to ensure more children and teens are placed with adoptive families where they can thrive.

Teens like James who lived in a group home for most of his teenage years need our help. This year we were able to place James with Arnold, a single dad who had adopted through CHS before. Now that Arnold's adopted son was off to college, Arnold felt he still had more to give and wanted to adopt again. Arnold was a perfect match for James, who needed the stability and love that only a family can provide.

As soon as James was placed with Arnold he felt that he had a chance to be a "normal" teen. He has a part time job, is learning to drive, and has plans to attend college. Most importantly, he has found the happiness and stability that comes from home and family.

FOSTER CARE ADOPTION STAFF SPOTLIGHT

Krista Watson, CHS's Wendy's Wonderful Kids Recruiter, began working with Marcus while he was residing in a group home. His birth family had been explored but could not provide a safe home. Marcus was very hesitant about the idea of adoption which he felt would be a betrayal to his birth family. Krista worked with him and his therapist to assure him that adoption is about adding to his family, not taking away from it. While Krista worked with Marcus, she noticed a teacher at his school who frequently checked on him. That teacher happened to be the mother of Marcus's best friend. She and her partner began regular visits with Marcus and ultimately decided to adopt him.

After completing CHS training, the family became licensed as a foster-to-adopt home specifically for Marcus. This all took place during the COVID-19 pandemic, which was challenging, but the family never gave up and ultimately Marcus was placed in his new forever home! His new family had a celebration to include balloons, signs and matching t-shirts. CHS's Post Adoption Team will be available to provide life-long support.

FOSTER CARE ADOPTION PARTNERS

CHS proudly partners with Local Departments of Social Services throughout the Commonwealth of Virginia.



placed with a family

POST ADOPTION PROGRAM

SUPPORTING ADOPTIVE FAMILIES BY EXPANDING OUR REACH



CHS's Post Adoption Program provides a variety of supports that strengthen adoptive families to ensure they last a lifetime.

Our services helps children who have suffered trauma transition and adjust to feeling safe and bonded with their adoptive families. We also support and coach the children's adoptive parents by teaching them successful techniques to support family attachments and help their adopted children thrive.

Whether helping adopted children feel connected to their peers by hosting a fun respite activity or providing adoptive parents trauma training, CHS's Post Adoption Program continued to serve clients virtually though our participation in both the Central Virginia and Northern Post Adoption Consortiums. This year, in addition to serving families after their adoption has been finalized, we expanded our social work team by adding staff to provide post adoption supports as soon as a child is placed in their home and during the waiting period for the finalization. This critical need is fully funded through the generosity of our donors, who recognize that for families to thrive they need uninterrupted support.

Because of our donors, CHS provides ongoing post adoption support so that every child remains with the adoptive family they deserve.

PARTNERS FOR VIRGINIA'S **ADOPTIVE FAMILIES**

Children's Home Society is proud and grateful to work in alliance with these organizations:

- **United Methodist Family Services**
- C2Adopt
- CASE
- enCircle
- Virginia Repertory Theater
- Humble Haven Yoga
- North American Council on Adoptable Children

POST ADOPTION PROGRAM 2021 OUTCOMES



259 served by Post Adoption Program

100% of case management families reported improved family dynamics

CHS ADVOCACY

VIRTUALLY IMPROVING THE OUTCOMES OF VIRGINIA'S FOSTER CHILDREN AND YOUTH



CHS's Advocacy work includes providing information and education to state and local leaders on foster

care and adoption best practices. Even through a pandemic, our advocacy team was able to engage more families statewide through virtual advocacy opportunities at the General Assembly.

By leading a virtual advocacy day, CHS provided more opportunities for families throughout the state to participate and meet with legislators. The virtual format removed many barriers for families, including those with disabilities, which allowed us to have the more family and youth engagement in advocacy than ever before. Even as we transition back to in person meetings, we will continue to provide virtual opportunities and explore other ways to increase families and youth participation in advocacy.

We, along with our families and partners, enjoyed many advocacy accomplishments and victories this year including:

- Establishing and funding a statewide kinship care program that will support extended family members who care for children who would otherwise be placed in foster care
- Stabilizing the workforce through a muchneeded salary increase for social service caseworkers

 Beginning work with the Commission on Youth on their workforce development study

Your support allows us to continue making Virginia a more equitable place for families and youth touched by the foster care system. Most importantly, it creates a place where children, youth and families can thrive despite their experience with foster care.

AVOCACY PARTNERS FOR VIRGINIA'S YOUTH IN FOSTER CARE

Children's Home Society is grateful for our partnerships with these respected organizations:

- Voices for Virginia's Children
- Virginia Poverty Law Center
- Virginia Department of Social Services
- Virginia League of Social Services Executives

ADVOCACY 2021 OUTCOMES

26 youth and families participated in our advocacy efforts



53 State legislators engaged and educated

MY PATH FORWARD

EXPANDING OUR ABILITY TO EMPOWER YOUTH TO OVERCOME AND SUCCEED



My Path Forward is our award winning program serving youth who have aged out of foster care. We provide

participants housing and a variety of holistic supports that equip them to succeed as independent adults. This year expanded both our staff and additional housing capacity. We can serve more youth.

Youth like Sarah, who came to My Path Forward after years in foster care and several attempts to reunite with her biological family. Sarah had never been given the opportunity to focus on herself and her future. My Path Forward gave her stability and empowered her for the first time to focus on her goals and future. With the help of our staff, this amazing young woman completed her education, participated in a corporate training program, and graduated from My Path Forward with an excellent job at one of Richmond's largest employers.

Because of our generous supporters, Sarah has a bright future and has been giving back by helping to mentor youth in the program. We are so proud of Sarah and all her accomplishments. And we are grateful for the support of our donors which will allow us to serve even more youth like Sarah in the years to come. *Because of you, we really do have the power to do more.*

PARTNERS FOR AGED OUT YOUTH:

My Path Forward could not do its work without the help of numerous community partners. By leveraging their support and expertise we can serve more youth. Programming partners include:

- Better Housing Coalition– our key partner since the program began, BHC provides quality housing
- Great Expectations- coordinates youth educational supports
- Truist Bank– conducts financial literacy training so youth acquire the skills to manage their finances
- The Success Foundation– helps get youth ready for success in the workplace and find jobs
- Inner Self Counseling and Consulting– meets with participants regularly to help them overcome their trauma and reach their mental health goals

MY PATH FORWARD 2021 OUTCOMES





ADULT ADOPTEE SERVICES

FINDING KIN AND EXTENDING FAMILIES



Our Search and Reunion, or Adult Adoptee team has been busier than ever this past year. Search

and Reunion helps adult clients who were adopted, usually as infants, learn information about and sometimes connect with their biological families. When appropriate we contact the biological family and then, if the family is interested, arrange an introduction.

One such adoptee is Katrina who is 28. Katrina contacted us to help find her biological family and we were able to help. Although her biological mother had passed away, she has four siblings. When we contacted the oldest brother he said he knew exactly why we were calling and he had known about his little sister but had not known how to go about finding her. Katrina has enjoyed getting to know her biological family and was particularly happy to learn that she has a sister, as she grew up with two adoptive brothers. Katrina, who works in the Creative Arts was also interested to find out that her oldest brother is actor, and she has learned more about her biological mother through some of her aunts and her mother's art work.

Our Search and Reunion social workers are sensitive to the issues that may arise through a reunion search and are highly skilled at helping all parties work through their emotions. We are delighted when someone like Katrina has such a joyous reunion.

OUR ADULT ADOPTEE SERVICES PARTNERS:

Children's Home Society of Virginia's Adult Adoptee Program staff are proud to work closely with the Adoption Disclosure Unit at the Virginia Department of Social Services.



171 inquiries for Adult Adoptees

2020-2021 HIGHLIGHTS

GO THE DISTANCE CHALLENGE | MAY 2021



This May, over 100 supporters joined us to Go The Distance for Virginia's children, families, and youth. Participants chose their distance or unique challenge, demonstrating their commitment to our mission. Others showed their support by donating in recognition of those challenges, helping to

THANK YOU FOR MAKING A DIFFERENCE IN THE LIFE OF A CHILD

NTON-Richmond

WILLS FINANCIAL GROUP

Victoria J. Roberson, Mr.

TRUIST

troutman

Family Vision Care

make the event a huge

success. Our generous sponsors and participants combined to raise more than \$45,000 to support CHS's mission, improving the lives of Virginia's most vulnerable children and youth.

LEGACY EVENT MAY 12, 2022 SAVE THE DATE!



While we were disappointed that COVID-19 prevented us from celebrating our 120th Anniversary with all of you all last year, we are delighted to announce that we will be celebrating in person this coming May 12. Please plan to join us at the Jefferson Hotel in Richmond as we welcome Leigh Anne Touhy of *The Blind Side* who will share her inspiring story of love and adoption. Sponsorships are still available and tickets will be available this spring. Join us for food, drinks and fellowship as we celebrate our families, children,

youth and supporters who have made all we do possible.

CHS IN THE COMMUNITY

CHS staff also supports our community by serving on numerous commissions and boards. These include:

Que Sue

♥aetna

Anthem.

the of Virginia

- Secretary of the VALCPA Board (Virginia Association of Licensed Child Placing Agencies)
- Commission on Youth Workforce Development Advisory Committee
- YNPN (Young Nonprofit Professional Network) Leadership Team
- Trauma Informed Care Workgroup of the Children's Cabinet
- Child Welfare Advisory Committee to VDSS
- Three Branch Committee for Families First
- Unified Foster Care Network
- Workplace Inclusion Network
- One Home Initiative



CHS financial information for FY2021 will be posted to ConnectVA as soon as audited financials are available. You can view the information by searching for CHSVA at connectva.org.

THE POWER to DO MORE

As our programs and services continue to expand and do more, we ask our supporters to consider increasing their contributions too. Make your gift today at www.chsva.org **OUR MISSION** is to build strong permanent families and lifelong relationships for Virginia's at-risk children and youth. **OUR VISION** is a thriving family for every child.



PO Box 6266, Richmond, VA 23230 | Phone: 804.353.0191 Fax: 804.353.7451 | www.chsva.org | f ▷ ⓒ







