

A close-up photograph of a Black woman with short, curly hair, smiling warmly. She is wearing a black top with a colorful floral pattern. A young child with dark hair is nestled against her, their face partially visible. The background is bright and out of focus.

casey family programs

INVESTING *in* EQUITY

Sustaining hope *for*
children and families

WHAT'S INSIDE

Listening to voices of
constituent expertise

How data can help make
lasting change

The gold standard for
child and family well-being



“

OUR
HORIZON IS
AS DISTANT
AS OUR
MIND'S EYE
WISHES IT
TO BE.

- JIM CASEY

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DR. WALTER H. SMITH, JR.
CHAIR, BOARD OF TRUSTEES

WE MUST TAP OUR COLLECTIVE
STRENGTH AND INVEST
TOGETHER IN **EQUITABLE AND
SUSTAINABLE APPROACHES**
THAT IMPROVE OUR LIVES.

BUILDING HOPE BY BUILDING UP ONE ANOTHER

We know that for children and families to thrive, they must have equitable and abundant opportunities.

We also know that in this country's history, such opportunities have been withheld or otherwise been out of reach for many. The pressures of a global pandemic have brought this disparity into sharper focus.

Diverse perspectives, equitable engagement and inclusive leadership have been core to the work and mission of Casey Family Programs for more than 50 years. We believe that these values are integral to ensuring the well-being of all children and families in America. Without them, we risk compounding the challenges that families already face. We make their loads heavier.

In this time of ongoing recovery in our nation, each of us has the chance — and the responsibility — to make sure every child, every family and every community is surrounded with the resources and support they need to emerge stronger, healthier and happier. Together, we can co-create these opportunities by listening carefully to what families tell us they need and working with them, and with each other, to build supportive child and family well-being systems. We must tap our collective strength and invest together in equitable and sustainable approaches that improve our lives.

Our founder, Jim Casey, once said, “One measure of your success ... will be the degree to which you build up others who work with you.” I invite you to work with Casey Family Programs and with the families in your own communities to build up each other so that all have the opportunity, and the hope, to reach their full potential.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Walter H. Smith, Jr." in a cursive style.

Walter H. Smith, Jr., Ph.D.



DR. SHARON L. MCDANIEL
TREASURER, BOARD OF TRUSTEES

EQUITY IS ABOUT ALL
FAMILIES HAVING THE
CHANCE TO CHOOSE.

EQUITABLE CHOICES

No child in crisis ever asks to be placed with a stranger.

Given a choice, any one of us would choose to be supported by those we know and love. In the world of child welfare, equity is about all families having the chance to choose.

As CEO of a nationally recognized kinship care service agency, a Black mother and a former child of the foster care system, I know that providing children the best care means putting families at the center. A true child and family well-being system transcends historical barriers and applies a truly inclusive approach.

I'm honored to be the longest-serving Casey Family Programs trustee of color, at 17 years and counting. Our core value of Diversity, Equity, Anti-racism and Anti-discrimination has fundamentally shaped how we do our business. We have intentionally examined and pursued how we can best support the children, families and communities we serve. And these children, families and communities tell us what they need.

We must not only listen to these voices but also make sure that leaders and partners in communities across America hear their stories and strive each day to improve and transform our collective work so that each family has the chance to make equitable choices.

In this report you will learn about communities, including my own, that have chosen to equip families with what they need. They have chosen to invest in equity. We owe it to our children to explicitly name the changes we want, changes on which we will not compromise. Sustaining hope for children and families requires nothing less.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Sharon L. McDaniel".

Sharon L. McDaniel, PhD, EdD, MPA



DR. WILLIAM C. BELL
PRESIDENT AND CEO

WE CANNOT REST UNTIL EVERY CHILD KNOWS THE SAFETY AND THE NURTURING OF A COMMUNITY THAT REMINDS THEM EVERY DAY, “WE SEE YOU; WE HEAR YOU; AND WE WILL ALWAYS STAND UP FOR YOU.”

CASEY'S LONG-TERM INVESTMENT

A FOCUS ON SUSTAINING HOPE FOR CHILDREN AND FAMILIES

Every child deserves a Community of Hope, where they are truly seen, heard and supported in ways that help them and their families thrive.

Casey Family Programs has recognized from our earliest days that to fully serve children and their families, and to help them reach their full potential, we must listen to them closely, so our services match their needs in a way that reflects their culture and community.

Our commitment to diversity, equity and inclusion (DEI) is visible in the many aspects of our work: in the direct services work that we do with families, in the consulting work we do with systems around the country, in our work with tribal nations and states in upholding the Indian Child Welfare Act, in our work with those who have lived experience with the child welfare system, and even in

the investments we make to sustain the work of our foundation.

In discussions around the country much attention is being paid to DEI — conversations in corporate and nonprofit board rooms, within the halls of government, in churches, synagogues and mosques where people of faith are gathering, and in the day-to-day conversation in communities and neighborhoods. As we look at what is happening in the world around us, it is clear that conversations need to continue; we need to enter into deeper discussion and we need to listen to each other.

Casey Family Programs continues to focus on authentic listening and equitable engagement as principles of our work with children, families and other stakeholders. We all must learn how to move beyond defensive listening and anticipatory listening. True listening does not involve the listener anticipating the moment when they can speak to defend their predetermined position.

True and authentic listening involves being intentionally focused on hearing and digesting the words of the other person so that you can gain a better understanding of their perspective. If we are going to heal from and overcome the trauma that is impacting children and families in this nation, we must listen to each other. True and authentic listening is a critical component of Casey Family Programs' efforts to improve the life outcomes of children and families in diverse communities across America.

In this report we will share some reflections from Casey's organizational journey over the past 56 years with the sincere hope that our journey inspires you to envision what is possible when we work together to invest in equity and sustain hope for families, for children and for communities across our great nation. In the following pages, I invite you to explore and consider what is possible as we continue to work together.

Reflections on our own journey

Our organization was founded in 1966, just two years after the passage of the Civil Rights Act. From day one, our commitment to serve youth of all racial backgrounds was explicitly named. At the same time, we recognized that our staff of caseworkers faced challenges effectively serving youth of color. Our work within tribal nations to support American Indian youth in the 1970s underscored the importance of working with diverse populations, and it drew attention to the cultural and identity issues of children of color.

With this knowledge, Casey Family Programs deliberately set out to hire a staff that reflected all of the people we served, to train ourselves in working with diverse populations, and to have challenging conversations with ourselves, all in the name of better service to all youth and families.

Today, that cornerstone of cross-cultural awareness and efforts has grown and evolved to become one of our core values: Diversity, Equity, Anti-racism and Anti-discrimination.

Equity, Equality and Inclusion: We believe in the intrinsic dignity and value of every person. We strive for fairness and justice in the way people — our staff and our communities — are treated and the opportunities they have to succeed by addressing racism, inequitable treatment and other barriers to inclusion.

From those early conversations that began during our first decade, Casey Family Programs' history of valuing a diversity of perspectives and experiences and promoting equitable investments in children and families has continued to evolve. We have worked to develop best practices and to build awareness, to incorporate this into our own direct practice with children and families, and to build our internal capacity so we can share our learning with others in our field.

In addition to building a staff that reflects who we are as a nation, we have intentionally grown the diversity of our leadership teams, knowing that broader conversations require diversity of thought, life experiences, backgrounds and beliefs. Since 2001, representation on our Board of Trustees has grown to include more trustees of color and to add diversity in the areas of gender, geography and lived experiences.

Today our Board holds expertise in financial investments and in the law. They have work and life experience in the fields of public health, education, social services and economic development. Casey's Board includes a member who experienced foster care and who now works to support extended family members in raising children. The Board also includes a member who is a leader in one of the more than 574 sovereign tribal nations across America.

Casey's Board includes members who have spent their careers working directly with children and families in communities across our nation. Our Board includes members who come from all five sectors of the community: the business sector, the philanthropic sector, the government sector, the nonprofit sector, and the sector of the people. I am honored to work alongside each one of them.

Working with families in the communities where they live

At Casey, we often refer to the "standard of our own." This is the notion that each child in America deserves the same chance to fulfill their dreams that each of us would want for our own children. If the conditions in a community or a standard of living that other parents' children are facing is not good enough for our children, then it should not be good enough for any child in this country. We recognize that a safe, stable and permanent family is central to achieving this standard.

To that end, our Child and Family Services (CFS) staff have taken the lead in making the kind of practice changes that demonstrate an approach to achieving better outcomes for children and families across the nation. From the start of Casey Family Programs, we have worked directly with children and families to provide and improve foster care and related services.

Some work has been organic, such as engaging those in communities we serve who could bring a particular cultural lens to working with Black, Latinx or Native American youth. We also developed specialized trainings and increased engagement with birth families. We are always working to find more effective ways to listen to the needs and desires of youth in or at risk of entering foster care.

Listening to families has helped us evolve. Understanding the impact of trauma and what is needed to heal is the lens through which we view our work with families. We recognize that they know their own challenges and needs, and we work with them to discover and develop their own strengths and solutions.

The goal of these efforts has always been to increase permanency for youth in care — to ensure each and every one of them has a parent, family member or other committed caring adult in their lives. And this is accomplished only through broader partnerships in communities — enhanced work with schools, juvenile justice systems and tribal communities. Our direct practice work also focuses on kinship, including helping youth form positive connections with relatives even when reunification with birth family or guardianship is not an option.

Our work with public systems

Casey has brought a focus to our work with child welfare systems on societal and institutional barriers that inhibit the well-being of youth and families, recognizing the disproportionality that exists alongside a shared desire for more equitable and sustainable

THOSE WHO HAVE LIVED EXPERIENCE WITH THE CHILD WELFARE SYSTEM AND OTHER SYSTEMS MUST HAVE SEATS AT THE TABLE SO THEY CAN HELP IMPROVE HOW FUTURE FAMILIES ARE SUPPORTED.

outcomes. This work has included learning collaboratives, convenings and research resources all aimed at strengthening knowledge, understanding and capacity in systems.

We have engaged the diverse voices of those with lived experience with the child welfare system in our consulting and technical assistance efforts. These include working with national and local organizations to create the Birth Parent National Network, the Birth and Foster Parent Partnership, and the Birth Parent Advisory Committee. We also partnered with people with lived expertise in the development and implementation of the Family First Prevention Services Act. The priorities that these lived experience experts highlighted are reflected in the landmark 2018 law and its ongoing implementation.

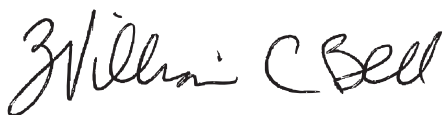
Listening is paramount. Those who have lived experience with the child welfare system and other systems must have seats at the table so they can help improve how future families are supported. They have told us this, and we are eager to help more communities launch a model where this is a reality. This is why Casey Family Programs is supporting the innovative cross-sector partnership, Thriving Families, Safer Children, that encompasses more than 22 sites across the nation, including one sovereign tribal nation.

We all must approach this work with a spirit of humility and equal partnership, sharing what we have learned and learning from those with whom we work. This approach runs throughout Casey Family Programs, from the conversation with a child and parent to whom we provide services all the way through the work of investing our resources to sustainably support the work of the foundation. I am honored that Casey Family Programs was recognized by the John S. and James L. Knight Foundation as among the top four foundations for diverse investment, with more than 34% of Casey's assets placed with diverse-owned investment firms.

Every child deserves a Community of Hope, where they experience this commitment in tangible ways that help them and their families thrive. We cannot rest until every child knows the safety and the nurturing of a community that reminds them every day, "We see you; we hear you; and we will always stand up for you."

Together, we can build Communities of Hope for every child, in every family and in every community in this nation.


Sincerely,



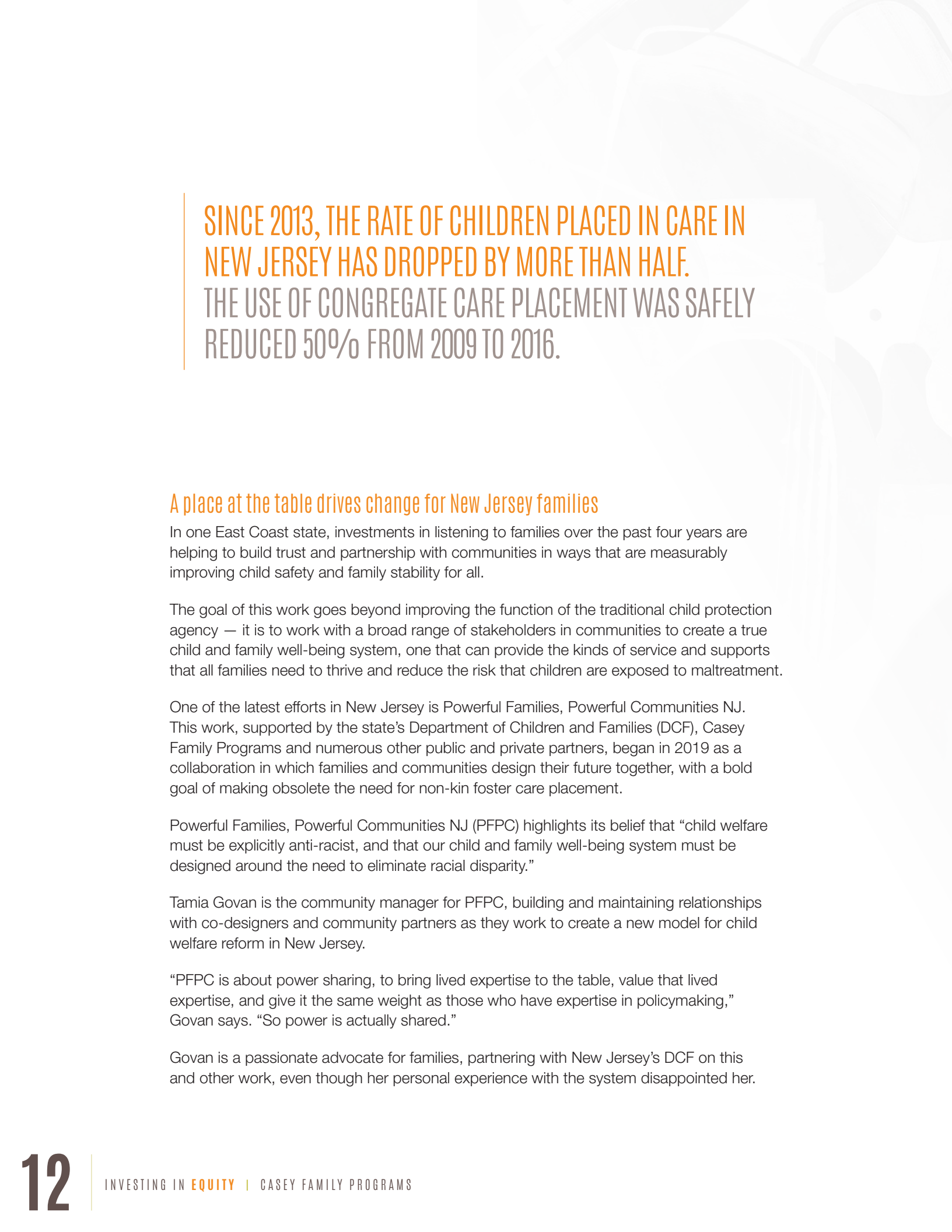
William C. Bell, Ph.D.



**AN INVESTMENT
IN EQUITY PAYS
DIVIDENDS FOR
ALL FAMILIES**



Improving the lives of children and families requires addressing the social conditions that get in the way of families being able to raise their children safely and successfully. Investing in families means strengthening them, not separating them unnecessarily. As a society, and as individuals, we have a profound opportunity to ensure that every family, regardless of where they live or who they are, has access to boundless possibilities to prosper.



SINCE 2013, THE RATE OF CHILDREN PLACED IN CARE IN
NEW JERSEY HAS DROPPED BY MORE THAN HALF.
THE USE OF CONGREGATE CARE PLACEMENT WAS SAFELY
REDUCED 50% FROM 2009 TO 2016.

A place at the table drives change for New Jersey families

In one East Coast state, investments in listening to families over the past four years are helping to build trust and partnership with communities in ways that are measurably improving child safety and family stability for all.

The goal of this work goes beyond improving the function of the traditional child protection agency — it is to work with a broad range of stakeholders in communities to create a true child and family well-being system, one that can provide the kinds of service and supports that all families need to thrive and reduce the risk that children are exposed to maltreatment.

One of the latest efforts in New Jersey is Powerful Families, Powerful Communities NJ. This work, supported by the state's Department of Children and Families (DCF), Casey Family Programs and numerous other public and private partners, began in 2019 as a collaboration in which families and communities design their future together, with a bold goal of making obsolete the need for non-kin foster care placement.

Powerful Families, Powerful Communities NJ (PFPC) highlights its belief that “child welfare must be explicitly anti-racist, and that our child and family well-being system must be designed around the need to eliminate racial disparity.”

Tamia Govan is the community manager for PFPC, building and maintaining relationships with co-designers and community partners as they work to create a new model for child welfare reform in New Jersey.

“PFPC is about power sharing, to bring lived expertise to the table, value that lived expertise, and give it the same weight as those who have expertise in policymaking,” Govan says. “So power is actually shared.”

Govan is a passionate advocate for families, partnering with New Jersey's DCF on this and other work, even though her personal experience with the system disappointed her.

"I touched the child welfare system in every way possible," says Govan, who was adopted out of foster care after her mother struggled with an undiagnosed mental health disorder. Govan has since become the legal guardian of a biological sister and has five other children. During her divorce, she sought mental health help from the system for herself and her children, but it was short-lived. Ultimately, her ex-husband was awarded primary custody, though she sees her children nearly every day.

Her experiences led her not only to PFPC but also to another innovative effort that New Jersey calls the Four Branch Institute.

We have all heard of the three branches of government — executive, legislative and judicial — all of which play critical and distinct roles in creating the policy and practices that undergird child and family safety and well-being. But in New Jersey, DCF leadership recognized that a "fourth branch" needed to be involved if they were going to make the kind of effective and sustainable changes that would position children and families to truly thrive.

That fourth branch? The families themselves.

The New Jersey Four Branch Institute launched earlier this year in partnership with Casey Family Programs, bringing together about 50 participants from the executive, legislative and judicial systems alongside those with lived experience.

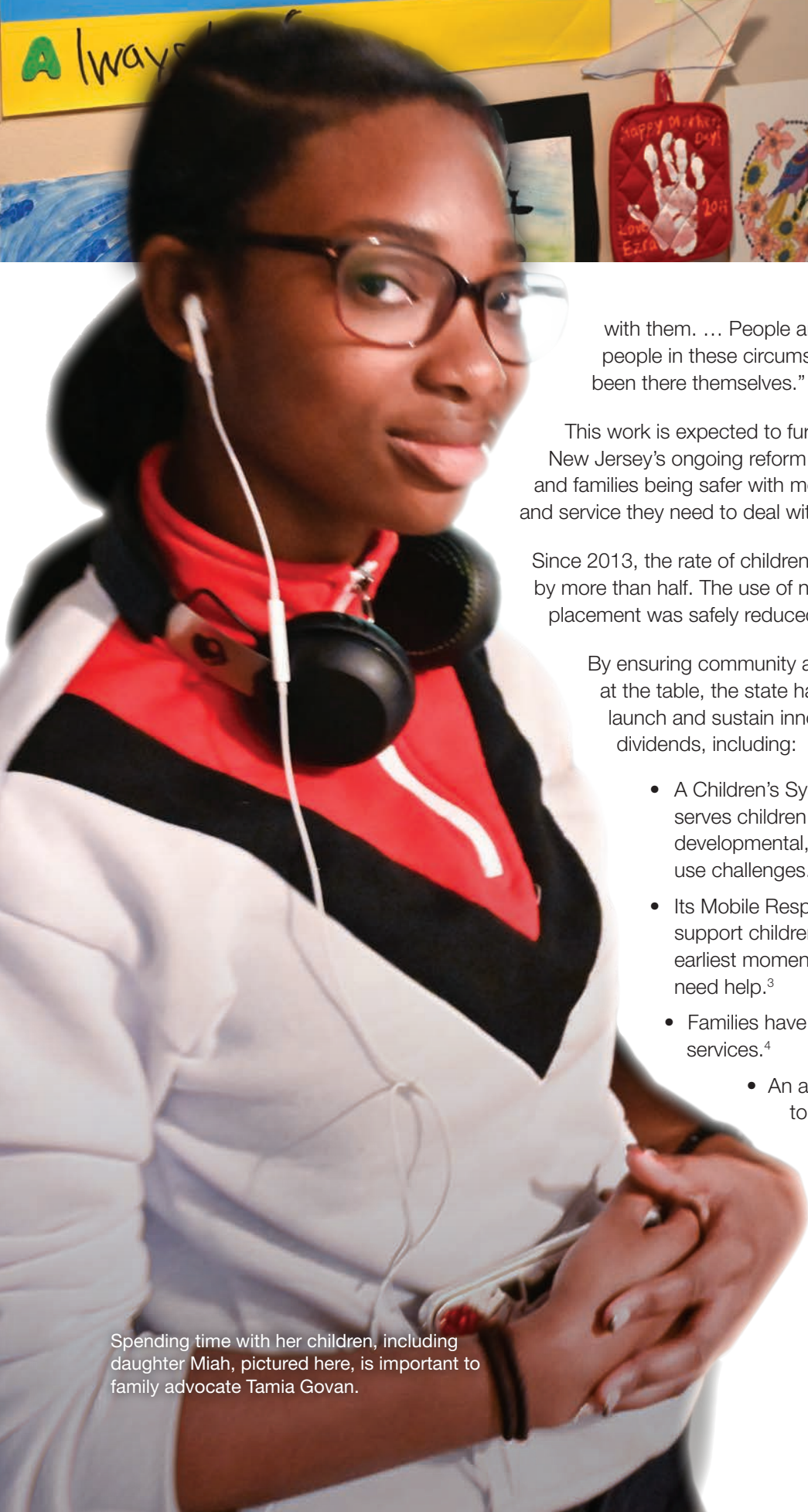
The goal is to "identify a common understanding of the current child welfare system and a shared commitment to a future that best meets the needs of children and their families without unnecessary investigations and placements into foster care."

The approach incorporates a simple but powerful notion — that families and the communities they live in are the best positioned to understand what they and their children need to be and feel safe.

"A lot of times what happens in those groups, that fourth branch is missing, and instead you have advocates speaking on their behalf," says Govan, who serves as a constituent participant with the Four Branch Institute. "A lot of these conversations are had about people but not



"A community of hope to me is like the village model," says Tamia Govan. "It looks like a school that is on the parents' side. It looks like a police department that is on the side of protecting the community. It looks like a social services department that is not reporting you as negligent when you're coming to them for help."



with them. ... People are making decisions about people in these circumstances without ever having been there themselves.”

This work is expected to further transform and sustain New Jersey’s ongoing reform efforts that have led to children and families being safer with more of them finding the support and service they need to deal with life’s challenges.

Since 2013, the rate of children placed in care has dropped by more than half. The use of non-treatment congregate care placement was safely reduced 50% from 2009 to 2016.¹

By ensuring community and family leaders have a place at the table, the state has been better positioned to launch and sustain innovative work that is paying dividends, including:

- A Children’s System of Care, which serves children with emotional, behavioral, developmental, intellectual and substance use challenges.²
- Its Mobile Response and Stabilization Services support children and families in crisis at the earliest moment families identify that they need help.³
- Families have a path to access voluntary services.⁴
- An array of home visiting programs to support new parents.⁵

Much of this transformative work was recognized with the announcement in March 2022 of an exit plan and agreement that would allow New Jersey to exit a decades-old class-action lawsuit.⁶

Spending time with her children, including daughter Miah, pictured here, is important to family advocate Tamia Govan.

WHEN WE LISTEN TO BIRTH PARENTS, THEIR CHILDREN, AND RELATIVES WHO HAVE HELPED CARE FOR THEM, WE BETTER UNDERSTAND HOW DECADES, EVEN CENTURIES, OF A “CHILD RESCUE” PRACTICE HAVE DONE HARM TO FAMILIES BY SEPARATING THEM, NOT SUPPORTING THEM.

The achievement “is the result of more than two decades of reforms and transformation initiated and implemented by a workforce committed to helping New Jersey’s families be safe, healthy and connected,” DCF Commissioner Christine Norbut Beyer said when the agreement was announced. “Now, the Department of Children and Families is a nimble, data-driven, prevention-focused and family-centric agency, as well as a national leader in child welfare and family well-being best practice.”

Another positive outcome: The department has consistently maintained a stable workforce, with a turnover rate between 6% and 10% since 2006, well below turnover rates of 20% and 40% elsewhere in the country.⁷

New Jersey’s work continues, with additional Four Branch Institute gatherings planned, the spread and expansion of PFPC, continued work on race equity, community healing through raising awareness of adverse childhood experiences (ACEs) and advancing positive childhood experiences, alongside and in partnership with people with lived experience. Embedded in that work is a focus on ensuring families have an equitable place at the table.

Why family voices matter

The results in New Jersey underscore the fact that no one understands the intricacies of the child welfare system better than those who have experienced it directly.

When we listen to birth parents, their children, and relatives who have helped care for them, we better understand how decades, even centuries, of a “child rescue” practice have done harm to families by separating them, not supporting them.

“I started in this work because of my experience that I had going through the dependency system,” says Jason Bragg, now a contracted social service worker with the Washington State Office of Public Defense. “I oftentimes didn’t feel supported. ... I didn’t want any other dad to have the kind of experience that I had going through the system.”

Parent engagement is key to transformation. Members of the Birth and Foster Parent Partnership, pictured here, take an innovative approach to increase coordination between birth parents and foster parent caregivers for improved permanency outcomes.



For much of the past century, the voices of parents have been conspicuously absent in the creation and perpetuation of the child welfare system in America. Too often, they have been viewed as the target of the system's actions instead of as critical partners in building stronger, more resilient families.

Casey Family Programs believes those voices must be heard if we are serious about creating a child and family well-being system.

Bragg is one of many parents who have experienced the child welfare system and are sharing their expertise to influence positive, transformative change in how other parents like them are supported. Through the Birth Parent National Network (BPNN) — supported by the Children's Trust Fund Alliance and Casey Family Programs — these parent experts join together with other stakeholders and organizations to promote and support the voices of parents to inform policies and practices that affect children and families.

Bragg successfully reunified with his son and now is actively involved with advocacy and advisory groups in Washington state for those whose lives are affected by child welfare. "I think that the individuals that are involved in the system with lived experience, we're change agents," he says. "We're really fortunate in Washington, we're invited to many tables and we have seats at a lot of tables, if not all of the tables. I think that the transition we need to start making is not just providing a seat at the table, we need to start setting the table. We need to be the ones that are setting the agendas and coming up with the framework in which to

help support families.” Bragg is the 2022 recipient of the Casey Excellence for Children Birth Father Award. **Learn more at casey.org/CECA.**

Similar to the BPNN, a Birth Parent Advisory Committee (BPAC) provides advice and guidance to Casey Family Programs itself. Advice from these parents informs the foundation’s efforts to keep parent engagement at the forefront of our work with child welfare agencies and other partners to support strategic planning, policy and practice change, and implementation.

Sandra Killett serves on both advisory groups. “I believe that bringing all individuals together is what’s going to move the system,” says Killett, whose older son spent time in foster care and successfully returned home. “The voice of those impacted by the system, that voice is not going to be all roses. That voice needs to be heard. It’s families’ voices involved, telling you about a system that has impacted them, and continues to impact us and society.”

Listening to those voices is vital to make lasting change. “Not only in child welfare, but in every oppressive system, you’re told what’s going to happen,” she says. “You’re not listened to about what you need, what would help you, what would support you, what would build up your family. You’re told, ‘This is what you need, this is how you’re going to go about getting it.’ ... If concrete services were there, and families were listened to, we wouldn’t have so many children ripped from their families and put into foster care.”

Killett also shares her expertise as a constituent consultant with the National Research Agenda for a 21st Century Child Welfare System.⁸ Casey, along with The Annie E. Casey Foundation and the William T. Grant Foundation, developed a DEI framework for identifying research gaps in child welfare. This national research agenda, built by a diverse group of stakeholders, includes people with lived child welfare experience and showcases issues of equity and diversity that need to be addressed.

“Simply having a parent voice or a lived experience expert/consultant at a meeting or contributing to dialogue after decisions have already been made does not serve to shift the power dynamics in child welfare, or any other system, for that matter,” Killett says. “We must truly be committed to relinquishing power to hear the voices of those impacted and forget all of the things we think we know about families impacted by poverty, structural racism and inequity. When the truth is told in all spaces without any repercussions, that is the ultimate way of lifting voices.”

Killett is a 2015 Casey Excellence for Children Award recipient and shares her expertise as a consultant. **Learn more about her and watch her video story at casey.org/CECA.**

Learn more about the importance and power of voices with lived experience. Visit “Questions from the Field” and “Lifting Up Voices” at casey.org.

A Look Into Hope

SEATTLE, WASHINGTON



Not 'just a job'

Jason Bragg regularly meets with co-workers in his home, where they talk about cases and also build their own relationships over a meal.

"This isn't just a job for me. I enjoy working with families. I love seeing the light come on. I'm a certified hope dealer."



Supporting families

Bragg and his family collect household items to give to families who need them.

"A Community of Hope looks like an area where you can just be loved right where you're at and then get the support you need."



Passion for parenting

Bragg and his family prioritize time together. His love for family translates into what he does for parents.

“Love isn’t the problem for parents that are going through the system. [It’s] trauma, generational poverty, addiction and affliction, and mental health, and there’s not rapid access to services. All parents love their kids.”



Support comes in many forms

A “Clean and Sober” softball league is part of Bragg’s own support group and helps him stay connected with others.

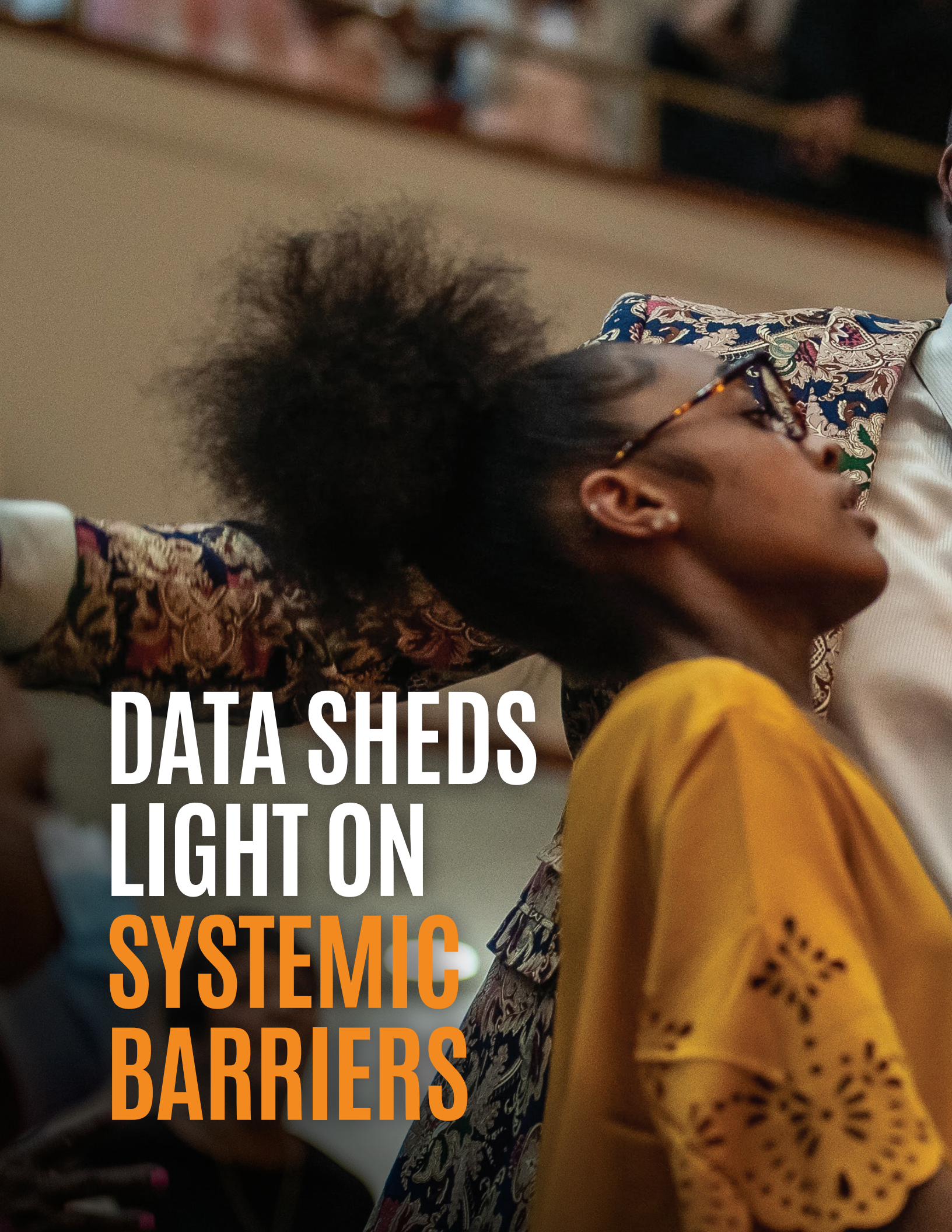
He credits someone he met at Narcotics Anonymous, who had been through the child welfare system, with helping him find his voice and, ultimately, advocating for others.



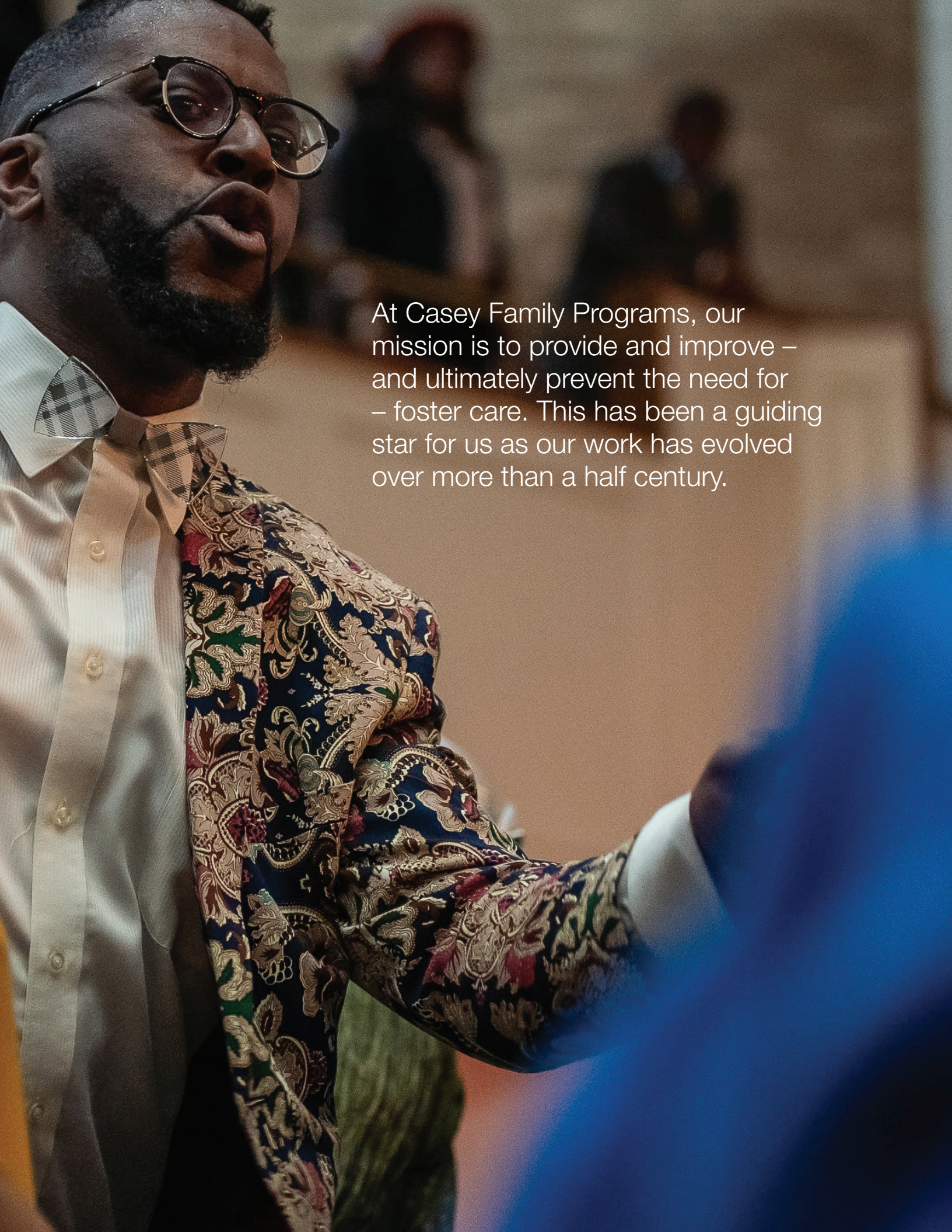
Hope for families

Bragg works with NW Furniture Bank in Tacoma, where families get help moving out of homelessness.

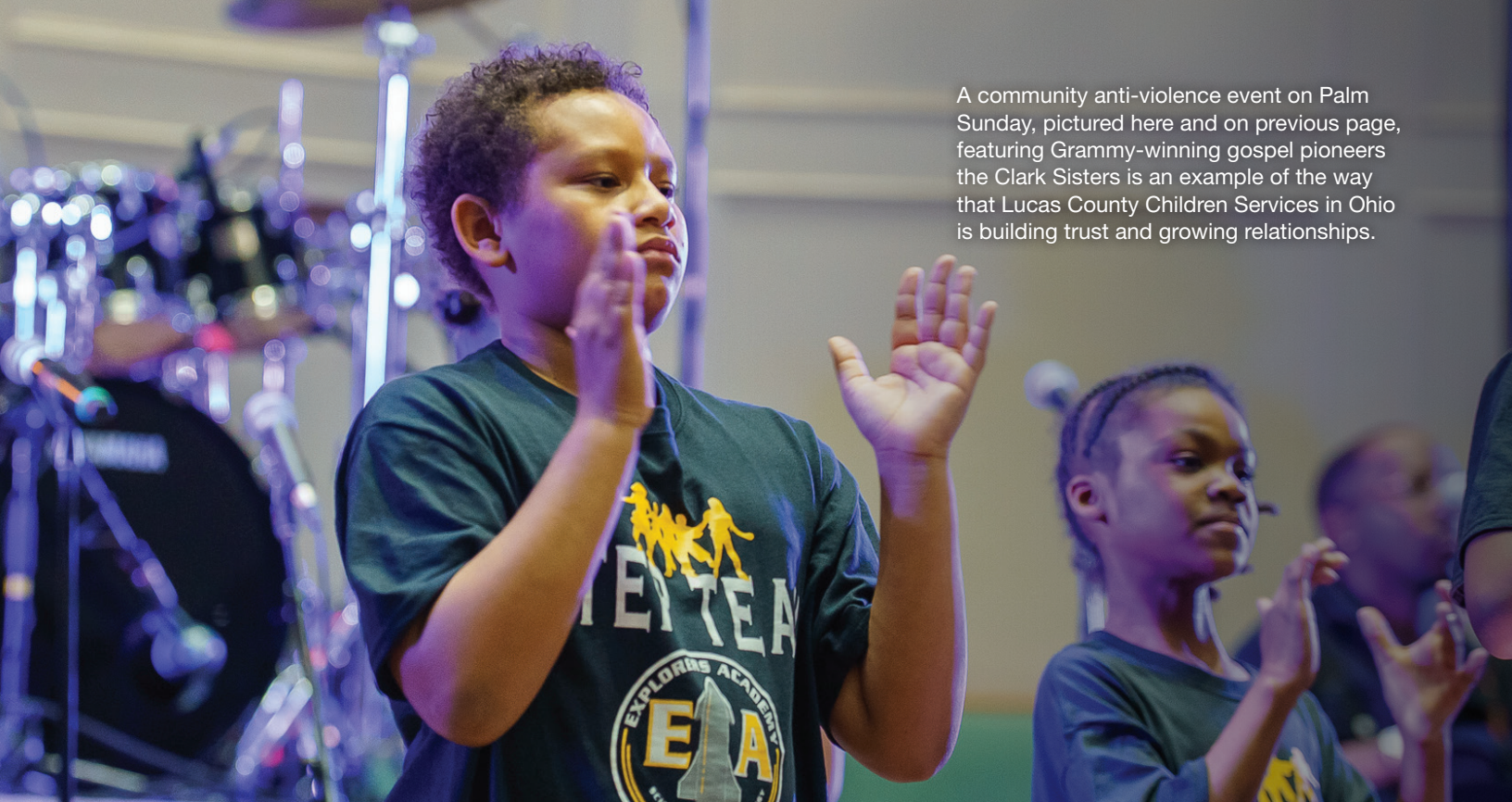
“Hope is our most valuable resource. It’s indispensable, you can hand it out to anyone, and it’s free. It doesn’t cost anything to give someone hope.”



**DATA SHEDS
LIGHT ON
SYSTEMIC
BARRIERS**

A close-up, profile view of a Black man with a beard and glasses, wearing a white shirt and a dark, ornate patterned jacket. He is looking upwards and to the right, with his mouth slightly open as if speaking. The background is blurred, showing other people in a social setting.

At Casey Family Programs, our mission is to provide and improve – and ultimately prevent the need for – foster care. This has been a guiding star for us as our work has evolved over more than a half century.



A community anti-violence event on Palm Sunday, pictured here and on previous page, featuring Grammy-winning gospel pioneers the Clark Sisters is an example of the way that Lucas County Children Services in Ohio is building trust and growing relationships.

Child protection systems were intended to keep all children safe. But as our ability has improved to collect and analyze data and other information about those involved in today's child welfare system, we have come to see troubling disparities impacting who is engaged with the child welfare system and what kinds of outcomes they experience.

To achieve our mission, it is imperative that we not only understand how systemic and institutional barriers impact families and communities, but also find ways to support communities in identifying, addressing and removing those barriers.

Here, both an understanding of history and a clearer view of data can help point the way forward.

Too many children in America grow up in foster care

Foster care is supposed to be a temporary living situation for children who cannot live safely with their families or kin. Although communities across America are making progress to safely reduce the need for foster care, too many children still are being separated from their families, removed from their communities and left to grow up in foster care.

This "child rescue" mentality has existed for centuries in this country, with children removed from the streets, and their families, in the 1800s and placed into orphanages where it was believed that they would receive a proper social and moral education. Orphan trains sent them to "adoptive" families, where many worked as farm laborers. American Indian families especially were broken apart, with children sent to "boarding schools," cut off from their families, tribes, language and culture.

CHILD PROTECTIVE SERVICES THAT EMERGED IN THE 1970s WERE DESIGNED AS A RESPONSE TO DEATHS AND SERIOUS ABUSE. THEY WEREN'T BUILT FOR THE MILLIONS OF REFERRALS THEY RECEIVE TODAY ALLEGING NEGLECT.

Federal child welfare policies emerged to support children, including the Social Security Act of 1935, which designated funding for states to provide public child welfare services.⁹ The act has been amended numerous times to provide for children and their families, as well as for foster care programs. Such support, however, has been applied unevenly throughout our history. The Kerner Commission — tasked by President Lyndon Johnson to understand race riots in the summer of 1967 and prevent them from happening again — famously concluded:

“Our nation is moving toward two societies, one black, one white — separate and unequal. ... Discrimination and segregation have long permeated much of American life; they now threaten the future of every American. This deepening racial division is not inevitable. The movement apart can be reversed. Choice is still possible.”¹⁰

Many of the observations and recommendations from the 1968 report still apply, regrettably, half a century later, such as the need for equitable investments in communities to improve housing, education, employment and childcare opportunities.

Child protective services that emerged in the 1970s were designed as a response to deaths and serious abuse. They weren't built for the millions of referrals they receive today alleging neglect. Indeed, most children enter foster care due to neglect and other reasons — not because of physical or sexual abuse.¹¹

Data drives hard questions

The unfortunate truth for those who experience the foster care system is that they face significant challenges in the areas of mental health, education, and employment and finances.¹² And data show us that children and families of color are adversely impacted the most by foster care. Black children make up 23% of all children in foster care but only 14% of the total U.S. child population. American Indian/Alaska Native children make up 2% of all children in foster care but only 1% of the child population, according to the 2020 AFCARS Report¹¹ and The Annie E. Casey Foundation's Kids Count Data Center.¹³

Disparate outcomes for Black and American Indian/Alaska Native children have been well documented for many years. These inequities occur at every decision

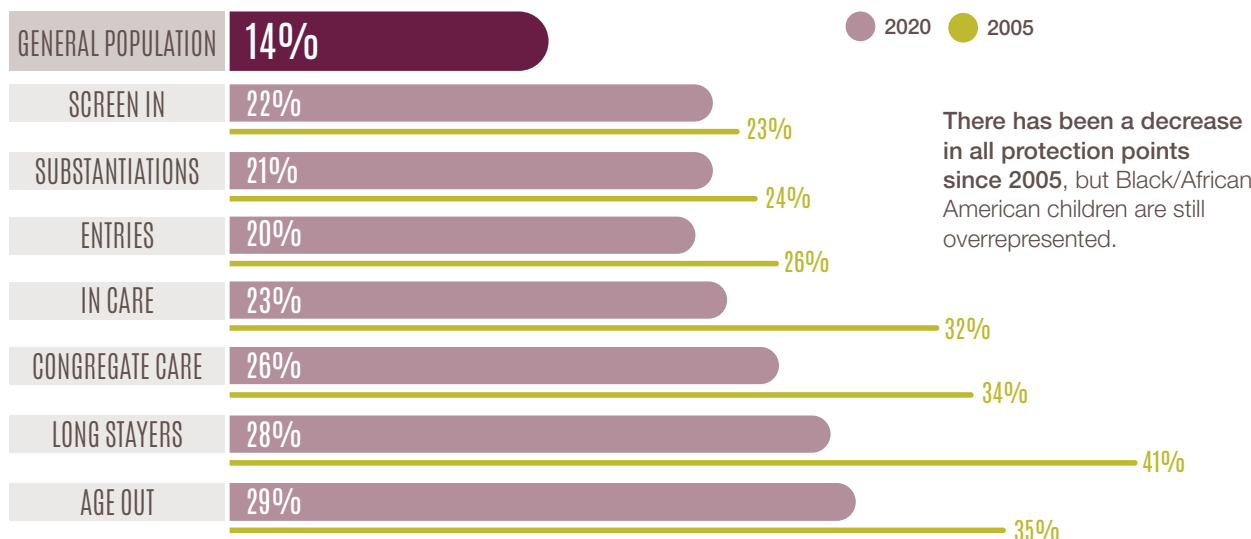
Disproportionality in child welfare

Black/African American population

AS MUCH AS

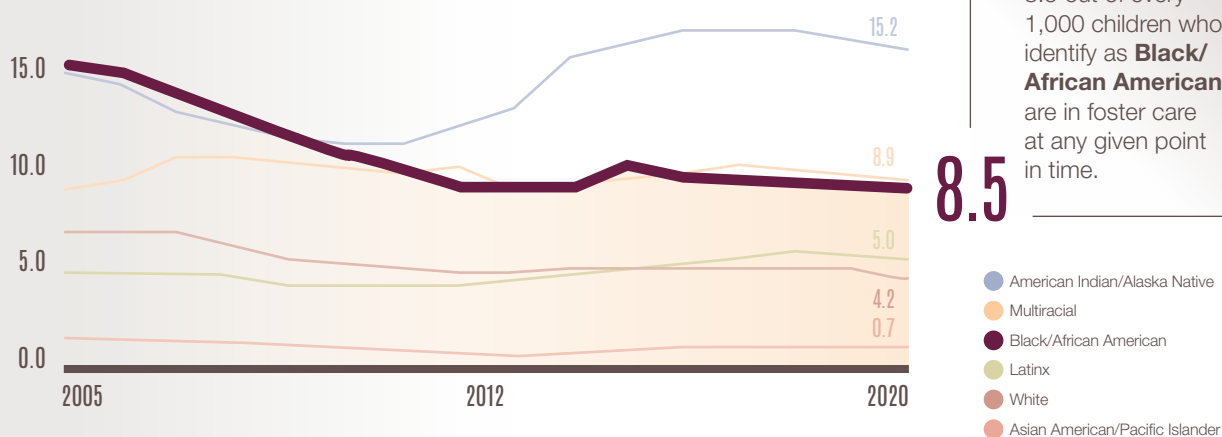
2X MORE

There was an overrepresentation of **Black/African American children** at every protection point in the child welfare system ranging from 1.4 times to 2.1 times their proportion in the general population.



What is the rate of children in care?

(ages < 18; per 1,000 children in population; unknown race/ethnicity excluded)



Data source: U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Administration for Children and Families, Administration on Children, Youth and Families, Children's Bureau (2005-2020). AFCARS and NCANDS 2005-2020 [Dataset]. Available from the National Data Archive on Child Abuse and Neglect website, <https://www.ndacan.acf.hhs.gov/>

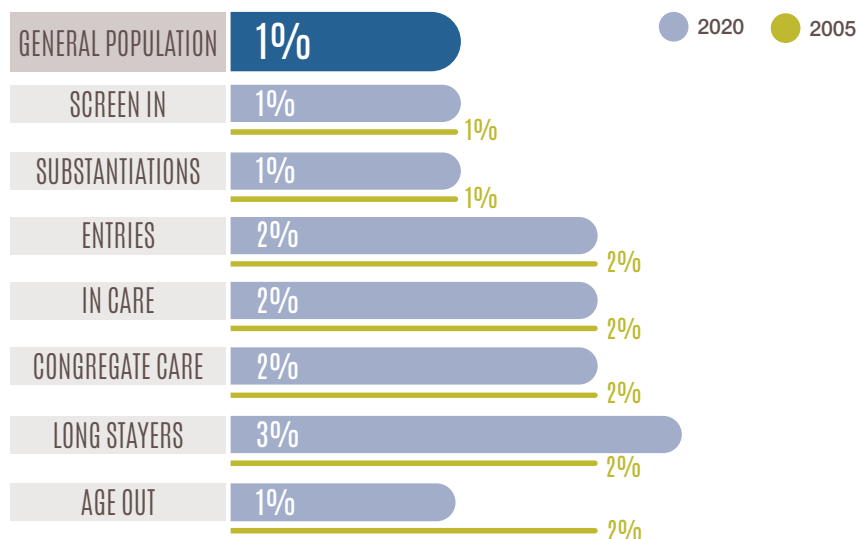
Progress has been made,
but there is more work to be done.

American Indian/Alaska Native population

AS MUCH AS

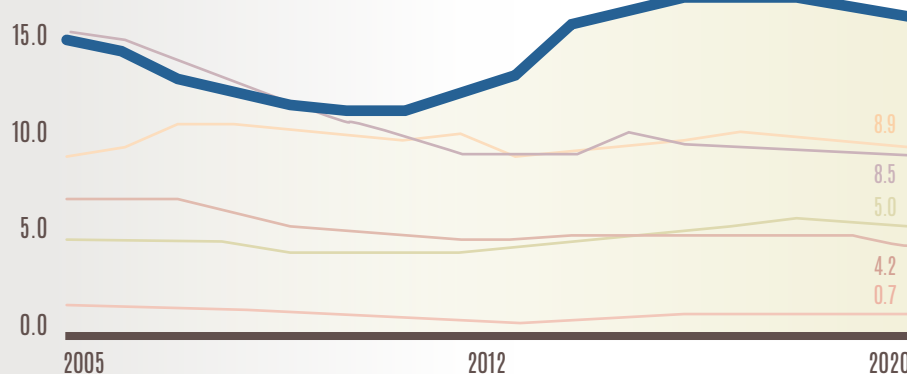
3X MORE

There was an overrepresentation of **American Indian/Alaska Native children** at crucial protection points in the child welfare system ranging from 1.3 times to 3.3 times their proportion in the general population.



What is the rate of **children in care?**

(ages < 18; per 1,000 children in population; unknown race/ethnicity excluded)



15.2

15.2 out of every 1,000 children who identify as **American Indian/Alaska Native** are in foster care at any given point in time.

- American Indian/Alaska Native
- Multiracial
- Black/African American
- Latinx
- White
- Asian American/Pacific Islander

point within the existing child protection system, beginning with who is reported to child protective services and continuing through the initial screening of reports, the substantiation of allegations of abuse or neglect, the removal of children from their homes, longer lengths of time in foster care and permanency outcomes. While disproportionality has decreased, much work remains.

At Casey Family Programs, we believe that data should inform child welfare policies, as well as the practices used to work with communities and families, and the decisions made about individual cases. As a foundation, we have invested deeply in efforts to better collect and understand data, to highlight the stories behind the numbers and illustrate how we can best use data to make informed decisions that produce better outcomes for children and families.

Among these efforts has been an evaluation of our direct services practices. Our *From Data to Practice* series along with additional ad hoc reviews use data to help us understand how our practice affects permanency outcomes for youth.¹⁴ A 2020 review of exits to permanency, for example, found that youth who were placed with family were significantly more likely to exit care with a legally recognized relationship with a parenting adult compared to youth who were never placed with family.

Another such effort is our work with Latinx children and families. Casey is engaged in an ongoing effort with a range of partners to understand the barriers and challenges that exist for Latinx children and families across

the country and to identify opportunities to improve their health and well-being.

This work of developing a Latinx child and family well-being strategic framework arose in 2018 over concerns about family separations happening at the U.S.-Mexico border and was developed through the lens of the social determinants of health.

It provides a gap analysis to help Casey Family Programs and the broader field understand where investments and efforts could be made in the areas of policy, practice, communications, data and research. Part of this gap analysis is a deep dive into data to understand critical areas for potential investment. Casey is supporting the UCLA Latino Policy and Politics Initiative in developing a national data hub focused on providing data at a state level, and eventually a county and congressional district level, using the social determinants of health. While the Latino data hub will look at all states in the U.S., and Puerto Rico, its initial data analysis provides Casey Family Programs with a deep look at 14 states with large Latinx populations in social determinant areas such as education, income, employment, health, housing and child welfare.

Data helps inform critical thinking to ultimately improve the day-to-day decisions we make in partnership with youth and families. Disaggregating that data — the process of understanding the impact on individual groups or communities — helps bring to the surface the areas that must be better understood and addressed if we want to make the kinds of broad, sustainable changes that will ensure all children and families have the support they need to thrive.

Lucas County Children Services regularly provides support to residents at the Greenbelt Place Apartments, which had generated a lot of neglect referrals.

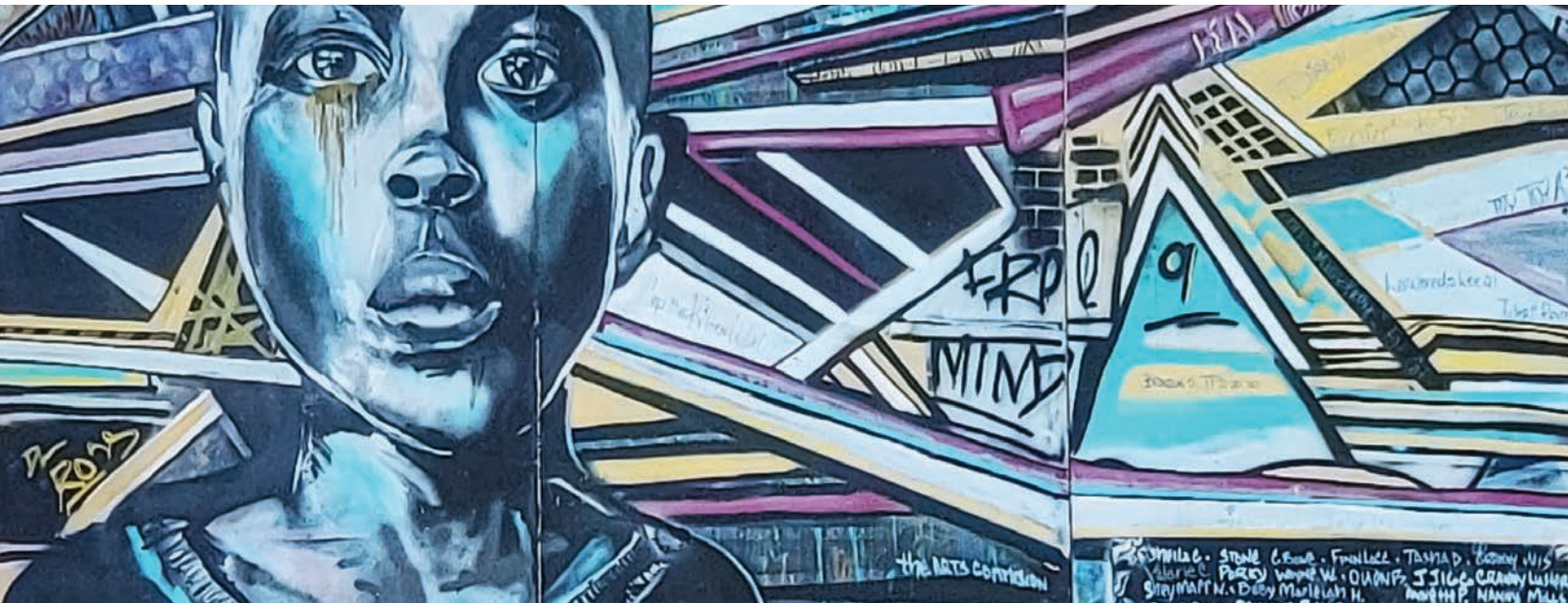
When data drives change

Five years ago, Casey Family Programs started a conversation about racial inequities that were visible in child welfare data from a particular group of states. When looking at the data disaggregated by race, the disparities were clear, as was the call to action. The data was so compelling that 15 jurisdictions joined in the effort to tackle the massive disparities.

The resulting Race Equity Improvement Collaborative, established in 2019, is guided by this vision: “Ultimately, we envision a child and family well-being system that is free of structural racism and that benefits all children, families and communities equitably ... and where outcomes for vulnerable children and families can no longer be predicted by race or place.”

The collaborative’s work started by learning about race equity and inclusion principles and each participating institution’s history, an important process that allowed participants to have open dialogue. Participants created local teams that had to have people with lived experience with the child welfare system, community partners outside of the child welfare agency and, where relevant, representatives from American Indian tribes.

Each participating jurisdiction is in a different stage in its journey. For Lucas County, Ohio, the collaborative provided an opportunity.



“WE WANTED PEOPLE TO SEE US AS A HELPING AGENCY. WE’RE NOT HERE TO DESTROY FAMILIES, WE’RE HERE TO HELP.”

- ROBIN REESE, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF LUCAS COUNTY CHILDREN SERVICES IN TOLEDO, OHIO

‘We’re here to help’

Lucas County Children Services has a bold goal: to reduce the number of children the agency takes into foster care by 75%.

“I started talking about sustainability, and how it wasn’t sustainable to bring the number of kids into care that we were bringing in,” says Robin Reese, the agency’s executive director. “I figured the way to tackle that was through disproportionality, looking at that.”

Disproportionality is the concept that the child protection system treats families of color differently than it treats majority families, leading to an overrepresentation of minority families with child welfare involvement when compared to their proportion of the general population. The concept wasn’t new to Reese, who has been with the agency for 38 years and grew up in the community. But to tackle the challenge, she found help and like-minded system leaders from around the country in the Casey-supported collaboration.

Casey’s support helped Reese engage with other partners in her community. “The message was received in a different kind of way,” she says. “With Casey at the table, they said, ‘OK, let’s talk about that.’”

That dialogue has spurred true collaboration in Toledo, such as a well-attended service

fair offered at an apartment complex. The housing complex — which failed a housing inspection and prompted the city to take legal action against the absentee landlord last year — had generated a lot of neglect referrals to Children Services. So Reese reached out to an engaged and respected community member and asked how she could help. The service fair soon followed, with 20 to 30 community organizations providing everything from diapers and coats to COVID-19 vaccinations.

“The other important thing that has come out of this is that we have changed the perception of Children Services in the community,” Reese says. “We wanted people to see us as a helping agency. We’re not here to destroy families, we’re here to help.”

Central to Lucas County’s efforts is the presence of a new diversity, equity, inclusion and strategy director. Dr. Hope Bland took the new position in 2021.

“We’re looking at the data, and we’re letting the data drive us in what the outcome needs to look like,” says Bland. “When we have processes that have been in place historically, we know it’s going to take some time to dive into issues that have been in place for years and figure out ways to unbuild them.”



Looking at disaggregated child welfare and community data was new to many participants in the Race Equity Improvement Collaborative. It's a big first step in understanding what change needs to happen to build more equitable systems. This is just one of several phases, which include creating time and space to have conversations about race and its impacts on child and family well-being. Ultimately, systems should be responsive to the needs of children and families, with respect for who they are, where they come from and their culture. This understanding of individualized needs helps to build hopeful change.

The next phase of the collaborative's work is for participants to get more specific about the challenges they want to tackle, such as their decision-making for the way that cases are referred, investigated or substantiated. Learning what is leading to disparities will inform an action plan for next steps.

"I want to change attitudes about folks that we want to serve," Lucas County's Reese says. "There is nothing inherently wrong with them. ... The way we deliver services is wrong."

Reese's commitment and deep community connections are bearing fruit, which she hopes will continue to grow for future generations.

A Look Into Hope

LUCAS COUNTY, OHIO



Building trust, building hope

Each week, Lucas County Children Services has an outreach presence at the Greenbelt Place Apartments, providing items such as toys, blankets and diapers. Looking at child welfare referral data from the apartments is helping the county explore ways it can serve families, says Dr. Hope Bland, pictured above, Children Services' director of diversity, equity, inclusion and strategy.



Service and support

Those who attended an anti-violence event browsed resource tables provided by community partners and had a chance to receive COVID-19 vaccinations. Lucas County Children Services Executive Director Robin Reese drew on strong community connections to make the event possible.



Community helping community

Everyone has a role to play in building Communities of Hope. A local sorority holds an annual toy drive and donates the items to Lucas County Children Services.



Stepping up for each other

"COVID showed us a lot," says Lucas County Children Services Executive Director Robin Reese. "In our community, people stepped up. They left food on porches. Why can't we keep doing that?"



A person wearing a green long-sleeved shirt is seen from the side, looking at a wall covered with children's drawings and papers. The scene is dimly lit, with a warm, yellowish light source from the right. The person's arm is extended towards the wall. In the foreground, a wooden table is partially visible, with a colorful drawing on it.

INVESTING IN THE ROLE OF **CHILDREN,** **FAMILIES** AND THE **COMMUNITIES** WHERE THEY LIVE

For much of Casey Family Programs' history, we have invested resources in supporting Native American tribes and communities working to improve the well-being of children and families. But what began as focusing on an area of great need — Native American children and families are significantly overrepresented in child welfare — has led to critical insights and experience that shape what we believe can best help improve outcomes for all children and families regardless of their community or culture.



Carefully listening to diverse perspectives and experience, engaging communities equitably, and recognizing and supporting inclusive leadership leads to sustainable progress for all children and families.

A journey of hope on the Navajo Nation

SiiHasin means “hope” in Navajo. And on the Navajo Nation, a Community of Hope exists.

The Navajo Nation is led by President Jonathan Nez, a recipient of the 2022 Casey Excellence for Children Leadership Award, and a visionary team that includes Vice President Myron Lizer, First Lady Phefelia Nez and Second Lady Dottie Lizer. Together this team of four has brought forth initiatives for the Navajo people — in early childhood education, language immersion, healthy eating, exercise that keeps families active and moving, suicide prevention, and missing and murdered indigenous people — to make sure that children are safe, families are supported, all are connected to community and culture, and the best outcomes possible are ensured for the Navajo people. Navajo Nation leadership articulates that “positive outcomes for our children and families are the main goal. Prevention of ACEs and early intervention in the early ages of life do prevent negative outcomes in a child’s life.”

They recognize that accomplishment at this scale is not done without enormous contributions from all five sectors, including other leaders within the community and deep partnership between agencies, businesses, philanthropy, nonprofit organizations and the community members themselves. First Lady Nez articulates clearly and regularly, “It’s all about prevention,” and this team of four continues to lift up leaders in the community, enabling opportunities to drive positive change in the lives of Navajo people.

One such leader is Navajo tribal member and bike-riding enthusiast Claudia Jackson.

Nearly a decade ago, Jackson wanted to organize children and community members to ride bikes through the community and bring awareness of suicide prevention. Casey contributed to the fledgling SiiHasin Bike Program, and what began as a bike-riding



club for youth and their families has grown into a program that engages all five sectors and includes the annual Tour de SiiHasin traversing 400 miles over 12 days across the Hopi and Navajo nations.

In 2021, 87 riders completed the Tour de SiiHasin. Riders talk of the healing and resilience that the ride brings, as they come together every night of the ride to gather for talking circles. July 2022 marks the 10th Annual Tour de SiiHasin, and Jackson expects it to be the largest and most impactful tour to date. Partners from all five sectors — business, nonprofit, government, philanthropy and the community — have come together to support the tour and the program, including Giant Bicycles USA, Twin Arrows Casino Resort, NavajoYES, the governments of Navajo and Apache counties and the Navajo Nation, the 11th Hour Project/Schmidt Family Foundation and Diné WE CAN, among others. In addition to the tour, the program encompasses and supports local bike rides; build-a-bike events; bike repair, maintenance and skills training; trail design and building; and affinity group rides.

The bike program is just one of the many examples of five-sector collaboration, inclusive leadership and sustainable progress for children and families in this Community of SiiHasin.

Adopting the gold standard: What we can learn from the Indian Child Welfare Act

Congress enacted the landmark Indian Child Welfare Act (ICWA) in 1978 in response to a long history of unwarranted removal of American Indian children from their families and tribal communities in alarming numbers over many decades.

A powerful tool to support the gold standard — the Family First Prevention Services Act

The 2018 Family First Prevention Services Act (known as Family First) invests in strengthening families through upstream supports. The landmark law changed how the federal government traditionally has funded child welfare services.

While federal Title IV-E funding still reimburses states for foster care services, Family First allows Title IV-E funding also to provide reimbursement for critical, culturally responsive prevention-based supports for families — before a child maltreatment crisis and foster care placement occur. The goal of Family First is to allow children to remain safely at home with their parents by enabling and incentivizing child welfare agencies to provide children and families the services they need to promote their well-being. These services must meet an evidence-based standard, and they address social conditions and family challenges we often see precipitating a crisis that leads to involvement of the child protection system, including poverty, a lack of parenting skills, behavioral and mental health issues and parental substance use.

Family First also prioritizes that children grow up in safe, nurturing, family-based settings. The law includes provisions to limit unnecessary placement in institutional foster care settings, and it requires that any such placements demonstrate clinical need, be trauma-informed, and include participation from the family in case planning and after-care supports.

RESEARCH DEMONSTRATES THAT CHILDREN PLACED IN KINSHIP CARE FARE BETTER THAN THOSE PLACED IN FOSTER CARE TO LIVE WITH STRANGERS.

As a foundation, we are committed to working with communities to ensure that provisions of ICWA are being regularly and properly implemented. As our work supporting Native American tribes and partners in this area has deepened, we have come to see ICWA as not just a law that applies to children and families of sovereign tribal nations, but as an embodiment of an approach to keeping children safe and families strong that would produce better outcomes for all communities.

At Casey Family Programs, we call these the “gold standard principles” of child welfare. The approaches, policies and actions shown to be most effective in protecting children — children of any race, ethnicity, culture or background — are those that keep children safely in their own homes and connected to their own families, communities and culture whenever possible.

At its core, ICWA honors tribal sovereignty, but the law was truly ahead of its time in identifying child welfare best practice.

The overriding goal of these gold standards is child safety, with an emphasis on strengthening families within their own communities instead of separating families and sending children to live with strangers. An abundance of research shows that children fare best when they can remain safely with their own families and access supports that respond to the needs of their families.¹⁵ The gold standards of child welfare help define the best interests of a child as making “active efforts” to keep them connected to their own

people, communities and culture — the very foundations that all of us need to thrive.

Despite the overwhelming evidence that these gold standard principles work best for all children, much of the child welfare system in America is still too often rooted in approaches that remove children from the stability of extended family, familiar culture and communities that have provided care and support their entire lives. Even in cases where ICWA should be employed, it is too often ignored or not implemented, blunting the improvement in outcomes that would occur if the law were followed closely.

The gold standard principles of child welfare keep more children in a place best suited to help them thrive — with their own families, communities and cultures. In cases where a child must be removed from a home, active efforts are made to place the child with relatives or, short of that, other known caring adults from the community.

Keeping children with kin

Where do communities that want to adopt the gold standard principles of child welfare start? One place is to focus on extended family members.

Research demonstrates that children placed in kinship care fare better than those placed in foster care to live with strangers.¹⁶ Understanding the benefits to child well-being, several communities across America have adopted a “kin-first” approach in



Autumn Adams, right, and her two siblings draw on the support of family and connection to their culture when they're away from home.

placements to ensure children can grow up in a family setting most familiar to them. Kin-first means communities have committed to making every child's first — and hopefully only — out-of-home placement with kin.

Placing children with kin can become the norm, and placing children with strangers the exception. Leaders in Allegheny County, Pennsylvania (in and around Pittsburgh), partnered with a community nonprofit specializing in kinship care services and adopted policy that provides relative caregivers the same benefits for raising their kin as nonrelative foster caregivers. The result of this shift has been a 70% kin placement rate. In Pennsylvania, the rate is 44%, while nationally, 34% of children in foster care were in relative placements in 2020.¹¹

"It's a moral imperative that young people have the opportunity to be reared by those they know best and that love them," says Dr. Sharon L. McDaniel, CEO of A Second Chance Inc., which started partnering with Allegheny County in 1994 to provide kinship services. "No child in crisis ever asks to be placed with a stranger."

A Second Chance Inc., which has served 38,000 young people in the Pittsburgh and Philadelphia areas, works with what it calls the triad: young people, their birth family and caregivers. Everyone has to play a role to achieve reunification. Tailored supports and services that are available when families need them are also key.

"Equity is about starting where families are and getting the chance to choose. With kinship care, families are able to choose where their children are placed. That is equity," says McDaniel, herself an alumni of foster care and also a Casey Family Programs trustee.

Data shows us that youth try to go back to find their families, regardless of whether they have help. Kinship care makes that part of the journey unnecessary and produces better outcomes for youth and families.

‘Connection is so needed’

Autumn Adams deeply believes in the importance of connecting with family, community and culture.

Adams, an alumni of foster care, has guardianship of her younger brother and sister. A member of the Yakama Tribe in Washington state, she relied on her connection to family and culture as a first-year law student more than a thousand miles from home at Sandra Day O’Connor College of Law at Arizona State University.

“My siblings and I wouldn’t be as successful as we are right now if it wasn’t for our culture,” she says. With one sibling starting high school and the other graduating, “it helps us to have what we have been taught by our elders, it helps us keep our hearts pure and to want to make the world better for others.”

Adams was recognized with a 2021 Casey Excellence for Children Kinship Caregiver Award for her advocacy efforts on behalf of youth and the implementation of the Indian Child Welfare Act. She continues to serve on the youth advisory board of the Center for Native American Youth.

Her family in Washington understands the yearning for connection and has sent salmon and other dried traditional foods so the siblings can have a touch of home while they are in Arizona.

“My aunts keep reminding me of our oral histories, and our creation stories and our teachings about perseverance, about strength, and that it’s OK for me to be away right now,” she says. “That connection is so needed for everyone. If I didn’t have that right now, we wouldn’t be here. ... Really, everyone needs to have that in their lives.”



Support from family and connection to her tribe help Autumn as she cares for her sister, pictured here, and her brother.



Whatever it takes

When Casey Family Programs' Child and Family Services staff work with young people in care, every case plan addresses culture and connection with family. Among the important tools is family finding — working diligently to turn up family connections for a youth.

Oftentimes, youth come into Casey's care with no apparent links to family. Staff do everything they can to find them. In one case, a social worker was driving a youth around town when he recognized the neighborhood as the place where he used to live. They continued to drive and managed to find his aunt, who said she had been searching for her nephew. They ended up finding a permanent home together.

Family finding can sometimes create a support network for a youth. Rather than looking for one person as a permanent connection, staff try to locate as many family members as possible so if one relative can't provide a living space, perhaps they can provide transportation to school.

If it's not possible to place youth back with their family, staff do whatever it takes to reconnect them to their culture, whether it's taking them to a tribal celebration or community festival or connecting them with a book club or other activities.

This same persistence applies when Casey works with child welfare systems to demonstrate best practices and support systems in improving theirs. When staff work with child welfare systems on permanency reviews and staff coaching, each workplan calls out equity and inclusion, disproportionality and disparities. Youth and parents are brought to the table. Respecting the dignity and possibility of every child and every family is key.

In one project specifically focused on diversity, equity and inclusion, a child welfare system in Oregon is working with American Indian tribes to understand tribal definitions of permanency and remove barriers for youth. Working together to address barriers to permanence removes system bias and ultimately addresses disparities and disproportionality.

A Look Into Hope

SAN ANTONIO, TEXAS



Speaking up for grandparents

Mercedes Bristol started Texas Grandparents Raising Grandchildren when she found herself adopting five grandchildren and struggled to get support. Now she networks regularly to share resources with others.





Shaping system change

Bristol shares the experiences of kinship caregivers like herself with judges and lawmakers to build support for changes that help them provide for their extended families.

Staying connected to culture

Playing mariachi helps the children keep their family culture, Bristol says.

“How do we pass on our culture to our family if they’re not raised by family?”

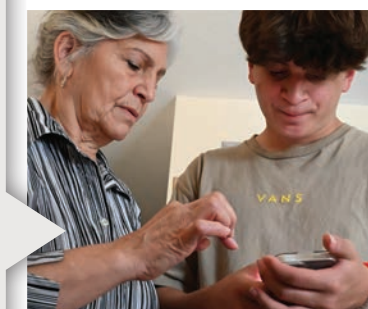


Supporting families, building hope

Even with her busy schedule, Bristol makes sure her grandchildren have the tools and supports they need, including in-home counseling sessions.

Her strong advocacy work is recognized with the 2022 Casey Excellence for Children Kinship Caregiver Award.

Learn more about her at casey.org/CECA.





**EVERYONE HAS
A ROLE TO PLAY
IN BUILDING
COMMUNITIES
OF HOPE**

ONLY BY THINKING ABOUT AND INVESTING IN ALL
THREE — CHILD, FAMILY, COMMUNITY — CAN WE MAKE
PROGRESS TOWARD OUR **SHARED GOALS OF ENSURING EVERY
CHILD HAS THE LOVE AND SUPPORT THEY NEED TO THRIVE.**

Over the years, we at Casey Family Programs have come to recognize that a child's sense of hope and purpose does not come from a limited set of government services but from living in a healthy family and a supportive, vibrant community. In turn, we believe that communities across America must invest in equitable social response systems through a true five-sector collaboration to ensure the safety and success of every child in our nation. When all of us — the public sector, businesses, philanthropy, nonprofit and faith-based organizations, and communities themselves — invest in equity, we sustain hope for families.

One of the great insights from our work is that the safety and well-being of children must be seen in the context of their families, and that the stability and resilience of those families must be seen in the context of the conditions in the communities where they live. Only by thinking about and investing in all three — child, family, community — can we make progress toward our shared goals of ensuring every child has the love and support they need to thrive.

For us, these lessons apply not just in the field of child welfare; they are a framework for how we can and must support improvements to a host of challenges our country and our globe face as we strive to leave a better, more prosperous and more peaceful world for future generations.

OUR INVESTMENT STRATEGY SUPPORTS EQUITY

Casey's commitment to our values is evident in our investments approach. We believe that advancing diversity, equity and inclusion with our investment partners and portfolio companies can lead to better decision-making and better business outcomes. In essence, doing good is good business. Addressing inequities within asset management is essential to run our investment portfolio successfully.

Our commitment is underpinned by the return on investment resulting from greater inclusion, in how we work to improve the well-being of America's children and families, and with our investment partners. As Casey relies solely on investment income to support our mission and hundreds of employees, we focus on generating returns with an emphasis on capital preservation. Integrating diversity has added tangible value to Casey in enhancing investment returns and reducing risks; its benefits are irrefutable. Advancing diversity is not about checking boxes or sound bites. It is a matter of investment governance.

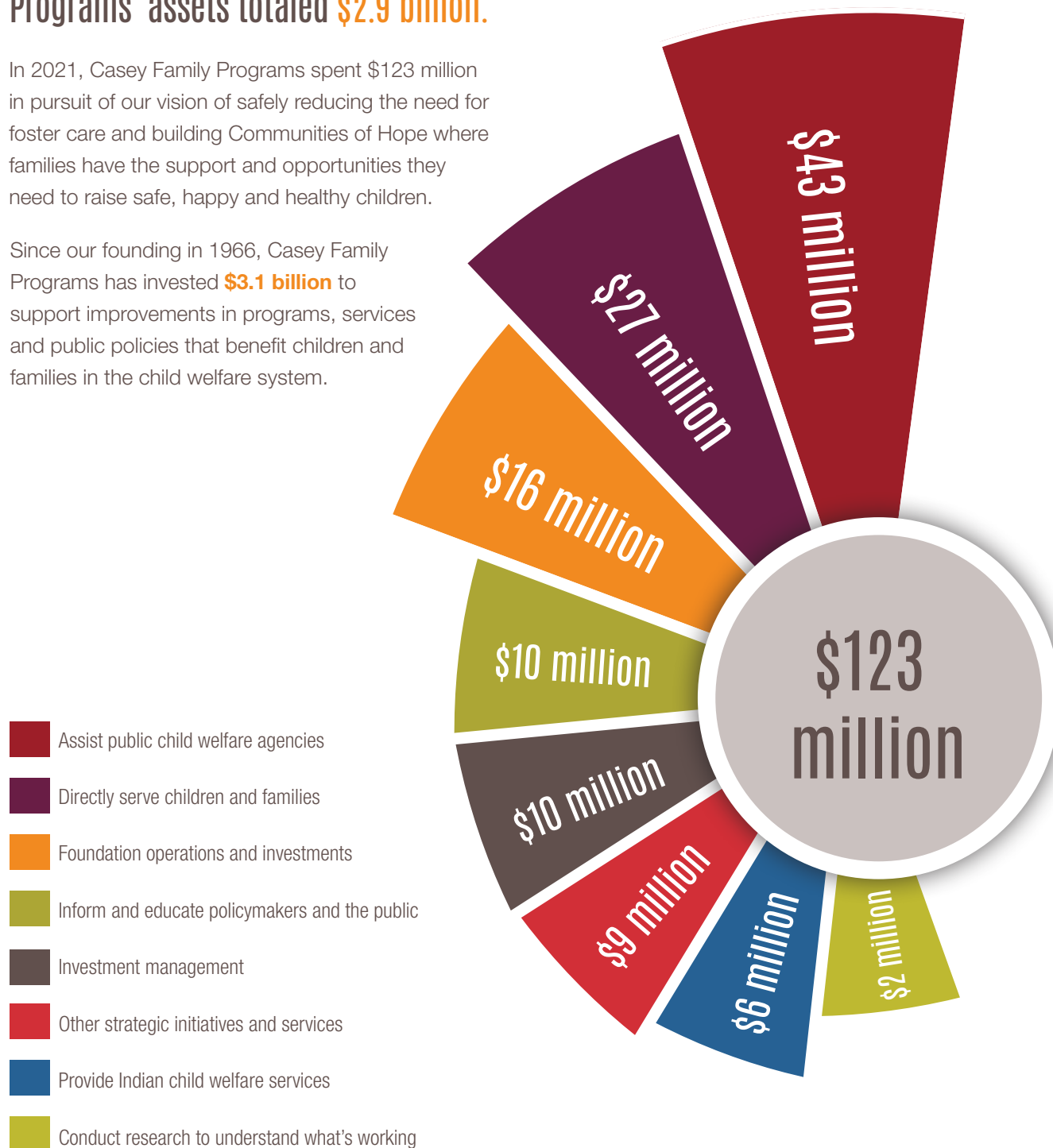
A 2021 study by the John S. and James L. Knight Foundation listed Casey Family Programs as among the top four foundations for diverse investment, with each of the four investing more than 34% of assets with diverse-owned firms.¹⁷

We highlight our investments approach as another way to show that what businesses do and say absolutely affects children and families. The private sector is a critical partner in what we call Building Communities of Hope, where children and families have the support they need to thrive. Every child has the potential to be a business owner, an employee, a community leader, a doer, an influencer and a customer. The challenge of harnessing this powerful, hopeful potential lies with each one of us. An investment in the future of America's children is an investment in hope.

At the end of 2021, Casey Family Programs' assets totaled **\$2.9 billion**.

In 2021, Casey Family Programs spent \$123 million in pursuit of our vision of safely reducing the need for foster care and building Communities of Hope where families have the support and opportunities they need to raise safe, happy and healthy children.

Since our founding in 1966, Casey Family Programs has invested **\$3.1 billion** to support improvements in programs, services and public policies that benefit children and families in the child welfare system.



ABOUT CASEY FAMILY PROGRAMS

Casey Family Programs works in all 50 states, Washington D.C., Puerto Rico, the U.S. Virgin Islands and with tribal nations to influence long-lasting improvements to the safety and success of children, families and the communities where they live. We learn from and collaborate with communities at local, state, tribal and national levels to nurture the safety and success of every child.

Consulting

We offer ongoing strategic consultation, technical assistance, data analysis and independent research and evaluation at no cost to child welfare systems, policymakers, courts and tribes across America to support long-lasting improvements that safely reduce the need for foster care. We partner with communities across our nation to enhance partnerships, improve practice and policy, and ensure that these improvements will endure over time.

Direct services

Casey Family Programs' Child and Family Services team provides services — including prevention, foster care, family reunification, young adult transition, kinship and permanency work — to more than 1,000 children and families each year. We operate nine field offices in five states — Arizona, California, Idaho, Texas and Washington — and work in urban, suburban and rural communities.

We draw on evidence gained from research-informed and promising practices, as well as our five decades of front-line child welfare experience, to provide a range of multidisciplinary services to children, youth, young adults and families.

Casey Family Programs partners with tribes and American Indian/Alaska Native communities to support their development of effective and culturally responsive child welfare services. Strong sovereign tribal

nations keep children healthy, safe and connected with their families, relatives, tribal communities and cultures. We currently have agreements with 16 tribes that honor tribal sovereignty and support nation-building efforts, help build partnerships with the broader child welfare profession and assist in compliance with the Indian Child Welfare Act. We share what we have learned with state, tribal and county child welfare systems, private providers and community partners — working with them to achieve similar results.

Public policy

We also support federal, state, tribal and local governments by providing comprehensive, nonpartisan child welfare information and education driven by data and based on evidence of what works best to improve the lives of children and families. We draw on our direct services and consulting work to help align and improve state and federal child welfare policies, allowing communities to focus on preventing abuse and neglect and improving outcomes for children in foster care.

We share what we have learned with public child welfare and tribal child welfare systems, private providers and other community partners to inform policy. We are committed to supporting federal child welfare policy changes that will provide every state with the ability to invest existing resources in the most effective strategies to safely reduce the need for foster care, strengthen families and improve the safety and success of all children.

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Office Locations

Headquarters
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Suite 2700
Seattle, Washington 98121
206.282.7300

Arizona
Arizona Field Office
378 East Palm Lane
Phoenix, Arizona 85004
602.252.9449

220 East Speedway Boulevard
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520.382.5584

California
Bay Area Field Office
491 Ninth Street
Oakland, California 94607
510.444.4025

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1255 Corporate Center Drive
Suite 100
Monterey Park, California 91754
323.354.3900

San Diego Field Office
3878 Old Town Avenue
Suite 100
San Diego, California 92110
619.543.0774

Colorado
Indian Child Welfare Programs Office
1755 Blake Street
Suite 275
Denver, Colorado 80202
303.871.8201

District of Columbia
Washington, D.C., Public Policy
and Systems Improvement Office
1200 17th Street NW
Suite 410
Washington, DC 20036
202.467.4441

Georgia
Atlanta Systems Improvement Office
101 Jackson Street NE
Third Floor
Atlanta, Georgia 30312
404.228.1821

Idaho
Idaho Field Office
6441 West Emerald Street
Boise, Idaho 83704
208.377.1771

New York
New York Investments and
Systems Improvement Office
7 World Trade Center
250 Greenwich Street
Suite 46B
New York, New York 10007
212.863.4860

Texas
Austin Field Office
5201 East Riverside Drive
Austin, Texas 78741
512.892.5890

San Antonio Field Office
2840 Babcock Road
San Antonio, Texas 78229
210.616.0813

Washington
Joan B. Poliak Seattle Field Office
1123 23rd Avenue
Seattle, Washington 98122
206.322.6711

Yakima Field Office
404 North Third Street
Yakima, Washington 98901
509.457.8197

A photograph of a forest with large, gnarled trees and a path leading into the distance. The image is overlaid with a quote in white text.

**“
WE MUST BE
READY TO MOVE
QUICKLY IN
ANY DIRECTION
TO MEET NEW
CONDITIONS OF
A PROGRESSIVE
WORLD.**

- JIM CASEY

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Cover image: Tamia Govan, pictured with son Ezra, is a strong parent voice in New Jersey, where she advocates for change to support families.



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