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When children walk through the doors of The Children's Center, they often have a harrowing story to tell.

Their young lives have faced unimaginable twists and turns.

Rape at the hands of people they trust. Violence in their own homes. Fear, neglect, abandonment. The stories are unending and devastating.

But, our children are inspiring examples of how, with love, trust, and professional support, new beginnings are possible.

Your support plays an unequivocal role in helping our children become the authors of their success.

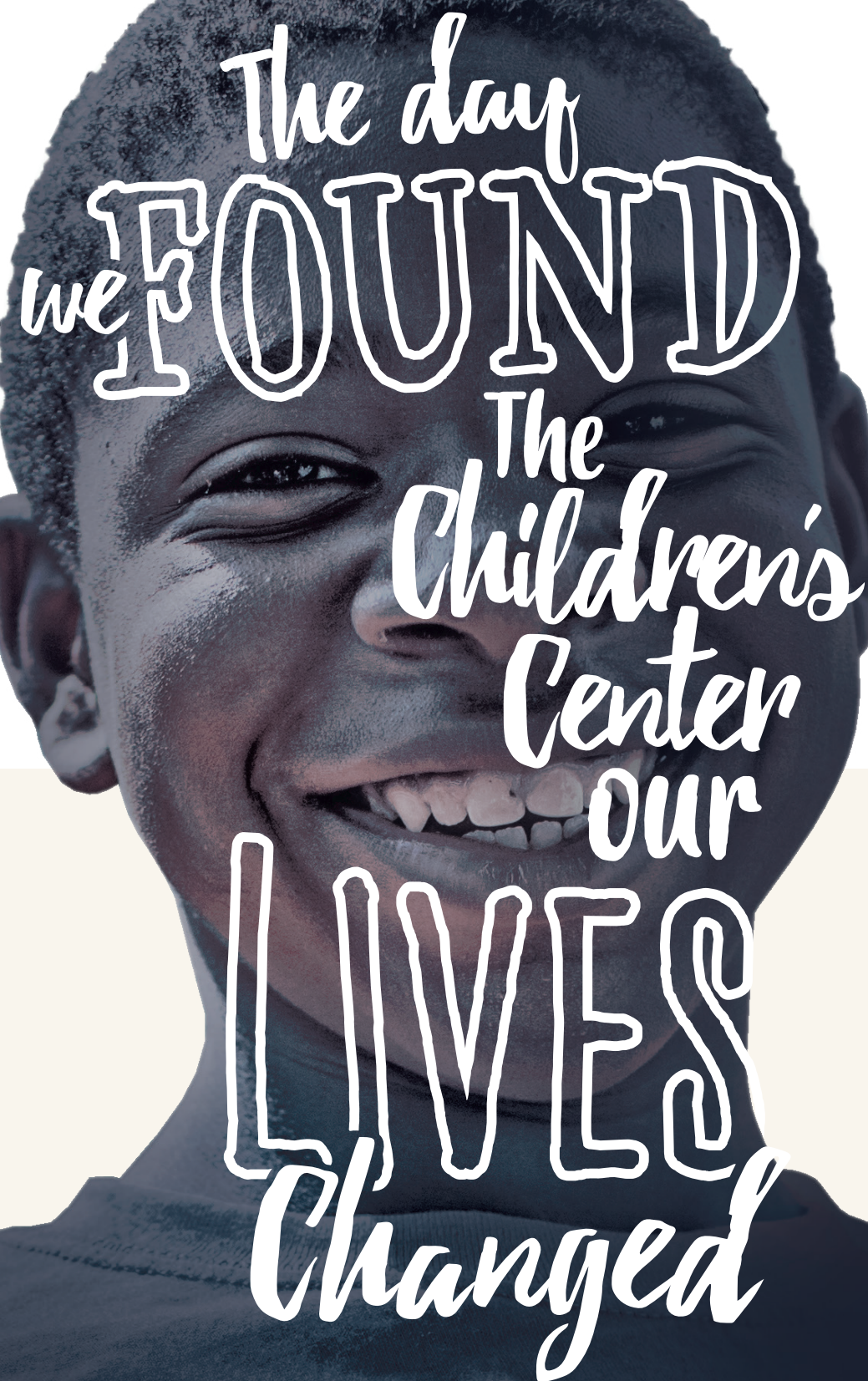
We serve nearly 7,500 children and families annually. This year alone 350 children and young adults benefited from our foster care program, 286 from a Head Start education, and 54 kids received 5,404 hours of Applied Behavioral Analysis Therapy.

Thanks to you, our kids are turning the page on their pain, and finding the courage to begin again.

WITH GRATITUDE,

Debora Matthews
President & CEO

Renee Prewitt
Board Chair



The day
we FOUND
The Children's
Center
our
LIVES
Changed

AYLIN'S STORY

Every child is so different. In the first few years of their lives, you think that no matter what they're doing, everything is adorable.

So, early on, when I noticed some unusual behaviors in my son Mohammed, I'd often make excuses, thinking, "Oh, he's just like that."

Noises bothered him. He didn't like water touching him. He wasn't waving. Kids are supposed to wave around his age, but he hadn't waved at anyone yet.

At the back of my mind, it concerned me. I thought maybe there was something bigger going on with him. And then I'd think, "Am I being a bad mother?" It was really tough.

I first found out that Mohammed was on the Autism Spectrum when he was almost three years old. That was a big struggle for me. I didn't know where to take him to get an evaluation. I wanted to find a good place for him. I went to a psychologist and she referred me to The Children's Center.

Since the day we found The Children's Center, our lives changed. Mohammed goes every day for three hours a day and works with the behavior techs and analysts. They have truly helped make a significant change in our lives.

They have circle time and therapy. They have snack time where all the kids eat together. They also have a sensory room which is basically like a little gym for kids like him.

Now Mohammed is a completely different child. He's improved so much in every single aspect. I used to be scared for his future thinking, "Will my son be able to do this? Will he be able to do that?" All these things cross your mind.

Just seeing the progress he's made this year makes me incredibly hopeful. Thanks to The Children's Center, now I see that Mohammed does have a good future ahead of him.

VONNA'S STORY

They found them in an abandoned house.

Their mom was nowhere to be found. They told me they were there for two days. Alone. They were just kids. Jacario, Jaleel and Trevel.

When I walked in, I saw a hole in the floor. The house was a wreck. Trevel, the oldest, had a ketchup packet he was letting the other kids share because they were so hungry.

At first I thought, "I can't do this. I just can't." But, I laid down and asked God if it was meant for me to get these kids. "Help me and show me what I need to do to get them," I said. This was the beginning of our journey.

I kept wondering how they survived it. Living in an abandoned house. Not having food or clothes. They had gone through so much.

I could see the effects even in the little things we would do. I would fix them dinner and they would eat some of their food, but the rest they would put in their napkin and take to bed with them. I would find food under the pillows, the bed, in the drawers.

I kept wondering, desperately, "What can I do to help my boys?"

That's when I found The Children's Center. It changed everything. We got them a therapist and a psychiatrist. I went to classes on ADHD, trauma, a class for kids who have been sexually abused. Any and every question I asked them, they always had an answer. It's been an enormous blessing.

It's been awhile since they found my boys in that home. We're still on our journey, but each day we get a little better. Last year, Jacario and Jaleel won a national spelling bee against three other schools. Jaleel and Trevel just won a science fair. I'm so proud of them.

When you go into foster care, nobody tells you it's going to be easy. All you can do for your kids is just love them, respect them, listen to them.

And love them more.





NIJERIA'S STORY

When my sister was raped by my mother's boyfriend, I knew I had to do something. She was only 16, and she was terrified. She didn't want to go back home. I knew how she felt, you see, because I went through it too.

My mother's boyfriend molested me when I was 12. Sometimes I would cry and cry and pray to God about the things I was going through.

Even after I told the authorities, nothing happened. My mom continued to have her boyfriend in the house. She told my sisters and brother to lie and tell authorities he wasn't there. It was their word against mine.

My sister saw that nothing happened with my case, and that my mom didn't believe me. She didn't want to tell anyone about what happened. But I told my mentors, and one of them called CPS.

CPS came and removed all of us from our home and we ended up going to a shelter. My mentor, Mr. Williams, didn't want to see me in the system, and asked me if I wanted to live with his family. His family became my foster family. Mr. and Mrs. Williams have taken on so much. They've given me advice, encouraged me and loved me like I'm part of the family.

The Children's Center has too. They've taken a lot of burden off my shoulders. We do a bi-weekly class to talk about things like life skills and financial aid. They help me prepare for college and provide me with a stipend for things I might need, like clothes. Sometimes, they're just there to listen to me and my heart.

I've come a long way since all of this happened. Next fall, I will attend Howard University. My hope is to flourish and be successful there. I want to stay connected with my sisters and my foster family, and try to build a relationship with my mom and my dad.

It's nothing but by the grace of God that I've gotten through this situation. My foster family, my church family and my family at The Children's Center refuse to let me feel like I've been abandoned.

Because of that, I have hope for my sisters and our family.

Statement of Activities

Year ended September 30, 2016

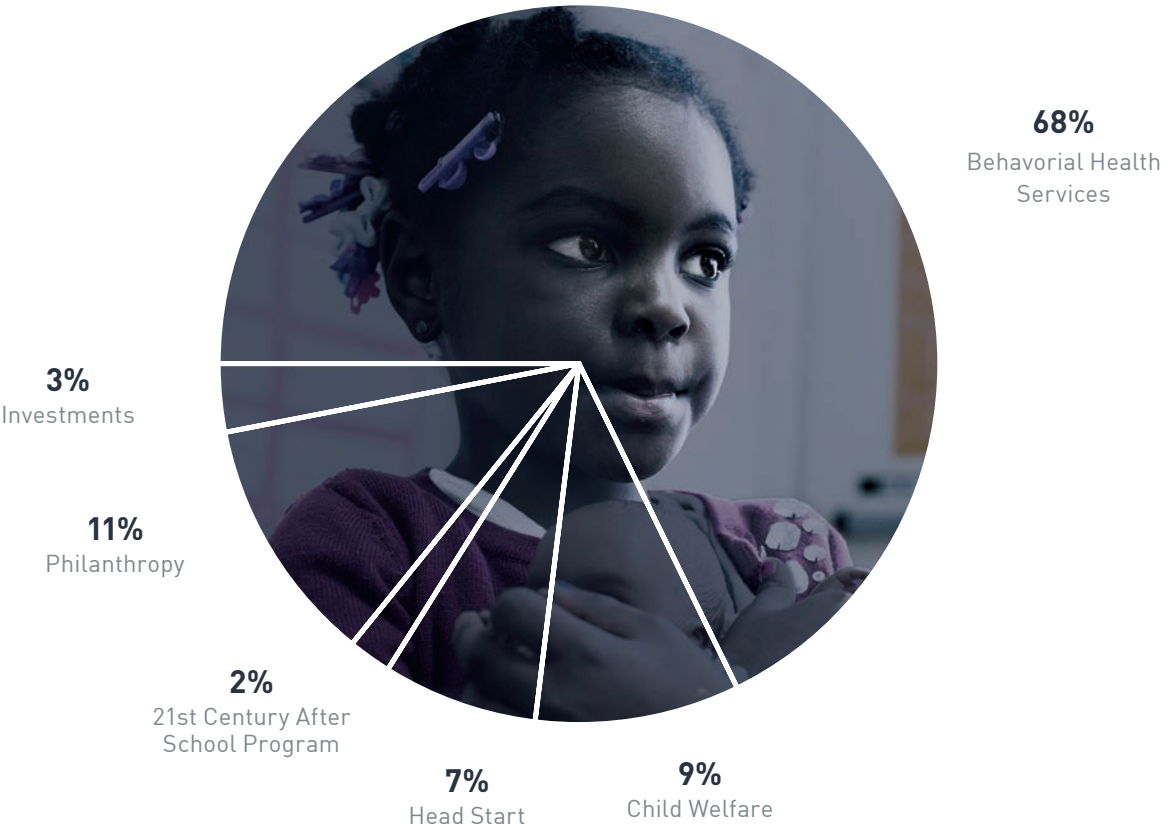
PUBLIC SUPPORT & REVENUE

| | |
|---|----------------------|
| Behavioral Health Services | \$ 19,387,843 |
| Child Welfare | 2,503,350 |
| Head Start (Education) | 2,058,410 |
| 21st Century After School Program (Education) | 609,616 |
| Philanthropy | 3,061,147 |
| Investments | 761,449 |
| Total Public Support & Other Revenue | \$ 28,381,815 |

EXPENSES

| | |
|---|----------------------|
| Program Services | \$ 23,119,004 |
| Administration, Management, and General | 3,853,132 |
| Fundraising | 1,707,040 |
| Total Expenses | \$ 28,679,176 |

OPERATING REVENUE



OPERATING EXPENSES





Our new Mi-Team program provides extensive training to staff on how to engage with families who have experienced trauma.

We remain one of the few agencies that ensures all staff are trauma-informed.

During the 2015-16 school year, the Head Start Academy served 286 low-income children and families from Northwest Detroit.

The Children's Center Head Start Academy serves at-risk children ages 3-5 years old and their families.



Our devotion to autism shines in everything we do. We served 54 kids and provided 5,404 hours of Applied Behavioral Analysis Therapy.

Eight children graduated from our program, and parents greatly benefited from our 822 autism care training classes.



This year we provided services to 350 foster children and young adults. Our young adults continue to graduate at rates high above the state average (98%).

We also continue to achieve high reunification rates (54%), bringing children back together with their birth parents.



We surveyed our Head Start parents and 100% of them wholeheartedly agreed that their children are receiving a great education.

100% of parents expressed satisfaction, with 93% stating they "strongly agree" that: "I am satisfied with my child's education."



This year, we expanded our school-based services, partnering with six new schools to bring new mental health education and resources.

This expansion will help our administrators, teachers, students and parents heal more effectively.



2,888 children and families shopped our boutique. We provided 760 brand new winter coats and 1,360 fully stuffed backpacks.

We strive to enrich our families. During the holidays, 1,467 children from 516 families shopped for free in our Holiday Shop.



In Fiscal Year 2015-2016, our hospital diversion rate was 63%. This means more than half of children who saw us received crisis care without unnecessary psychiatric hospitalizations.

We also combined our intake and crisis care units, improving our capacity to serve families by 26.5%.



We had a great year for volunteering with 1,548 unique volunteers and over 14,567 volunteer hours, for an overall growth rate of 25%.

According to the IRS volunteer time value, that equals about \$343,198.

Year after year, loyal supporters change the lives of the children and families we serve. These caring individuals, corporations and community organizations make healing possible for thousands of children.

The Village of Giving

Helping vulnerable children and families dream again takes an entire village. Village of Giving members make a five-year pledge of \$1,000 a year or more to help heal the city’s most vulnerable children — helping them hope and thrive again. It doesn’t happen overnight, and that’s why a five-year pledge is so critical.

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(50,000 +)

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James Couzens Legacy Society

Just as our founder James Couzens left a legacy of making a difference for generations of Detroit children and families in need, the individuals recognized below have included The Children’s Center in their legacy plans through a bequest or life insurance policy. Some things do last forever.

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Believers are a community of life-changers who commit to a recurring monthly gift of any amount to help children overcome unimaginable challenges and grow into strong, healthy, productive adults.

| | | |
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