

# CULTIVATING NATURAL SUPPORTS

2022 ANNUAL REPORT



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# Letter from the CEO



Dear FamilyWise Community,

At FamilyWise, we approach our work with families and communities by recognizing and building on the strengths that already exist. When I look back at 2022, I am proud of how our agency has grown using that same approach; by focusing on our values and building on our unique strengths, we are advancing how we build understanding and connections across the state to improve the wellbeing of families.

The last few years have shown how important community connections are to our wellbeing. In 2022 FamilyWise created our inaugural Family Wellbeing Index with the goals of understanding how Minnesota families are doing and highlighting stories of how community supports are strengthening family wellbeing. The report shares state-level data on indicators (like housing, childcare, and healthcare) alongside stories from our staff working directly with families and offers a snapshot of the state of Minnesota families. The report demonstrates that families need better access to concrete supports, and that unfortunately, little data is collected about community protective factors that keep families safe and strong.

To better understand how natural (or informal) community supports like friends, family, and neighbors can contribute to family wellbeing, we began development of a [Natural Supports Toolkit](#) – a resource that helps families identify and grow their natural support networks. The toolkit gives families a chance to reflect on their support needs, goals, and strategies to bridge the support gap. Our programs will use this toolkit to assist families in identifying their own natural supports, and we are excited to roll out the toolkit in 2023.

In the fall of 2022, our first Family Fun Fest Scavenger Hunt gave families an opportunity to engage in wellbeing activities at home and out in their community. Teams of families and friends completed “missions,” centered around different types of wellbeing that had them cooking, dancing, visiting parks and businesses in their communities, and more. These missions also gave families strategies to use in their daily lives, like breathing exercises and journaling tips.

FamilyWise continued to partner with communities across the state to create more supportive environments for families. We provided training in Wraparound in St. Louis County, making the holistic mental health case management approach accessible to more Minnesota families. We launched the second season of our Remembering Resilience podcast series, which focuses on individual and collective healing and resilience from Indigenous perspectives. We also deepened our partnership with Prevent Child Abuse America by rechartering FamilyWise as the home of Prevent Child Abuse Minnesota.

I am so grateful to the amazing families, partners, staff, and supporters that have contributed to our work. We are excited to share more new learnings and resources with families and community partners in the year ahead. [Together, we are strengthening the wellbeing of our families and our communities.](#)

With gratitude,

**Ann Gaasch**  
Chief Executive Director



# Our Mission

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**Our mission is to strengthen families by promoting the **safety**, **stability**, and **well-being** of children.**

**Our vision is a world where every child thrives.**



# Who We Serve



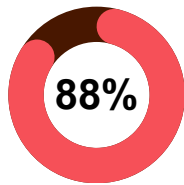
**1,333**  
families  
supported



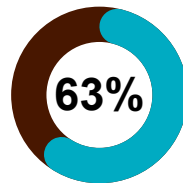
**4,503**  
individuals  
reached



**1,595**  
children  
served



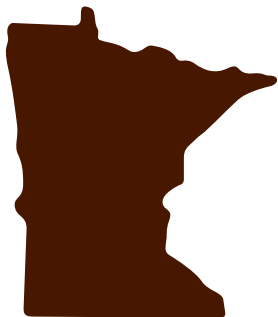
of participants  
lived below the  
poverty level



of participants were  
from communities  
of color

**994**

connections were made to community resources



## **40 Counties & 3 Tribal Communities Served**

- Our direct services reached 748 families, 95% from the 7-county metro
- Our prevention programs\* reached 2,429 individuals statewide

\*Circle of Parents and NEAR Communities

# Program Outcomes



**Bright Beginnings** helps pregnant youth and young parents become the best caregivers they can be through parenting, independent living, health, and social skills workshops. In 2022, Bright Beginnings served 130 unique participants across 62 young parent families, where 64% of young parents were actively engaged in educational programs and 79% of children completed well child checkups.

**Adult Parent Education** helps families who are or could become involved with the child welfare system to strengthen the whole family, by building parenting and life skills. Individual and group classes are available. In 2022, 985 participants across 298 families received services, including 629 children. Of these, 66% of participants increased Strengths & Needs assessment scores and 79% of children received early intervention as appropriate.

**NEAR Communities and Tribal NEAR Communities** provide education, train presenters, and work with communities to share neurobiology, epigenetics, Adverse Childhood Experiences, and resilience research to catalyze individual and community-driven action that fosters understanding, hope, and healing. In 2022, 59 presenters were trained, 52 trainings were offered, and 1,564 individuals were reached. Season 2 of our Remembering Resilience podcast had 4,886 all-time podcast streams.

**Supervised Parenting** operates in cases of family separation or family violence where the well-being of the child is in question. Noncustodial parents and their children visit in a safe environment in the home, out in the community, or at one of our sites. 267 families utilized these services in 2022, and 2,099 visits and 149 safe exchanges were provided.

**First Step Early Childhood Education Center** is a nationally accredited, affordable childcare center open to the public for all children ages 6 weeks to first day of Kindergarten. Children participate in activities that stimulate their physical, social/emotional, cognitive, and language development with a focus on early childhood readiness for school. In 2022, First Step served 40 children.

**Circle of Parents** is a national peer-to-peer parenting support group model that creates safe spaces for parents to share parenting experiences and resources and to build confidence and strengthen family relationships. In 2022, Circle of Parents served 865 participants, held 1,896 meetings, and provided 147 referrals to community resources. There were 44 active groups in 2022.

**High-Fidelity Wraparound** is a nationally recognized model that helps youth with significant behavioral, emotional, and mental health issues to remain in the community by creating an individualized support plan for the family. In 2022, 277 participants utilized High-Fidelity Wraparound across 99 families, with 66% of youth having no new legal charges, 68% of youth living in a community setting upon discharge, and 68% of teams were made up of at least 50% natural supports.



# Our Stories



Before joining FamilyWise's Wraparound program, Danielle felt alone and overwhelmed in her efforts to keep her family afloat through challenging circumstances. As a single mom with a full-time job and no family nearby, she worked tirelessly to meet the expectations of her job while meeting the needs of her family. Danielle's son received a mental health diagnosis as a young child. By the time he was a teenager, his behavior was aggressive, and he could be harmful to himself and others.



"I was at my wits end," shared Danielle. "I never thought anything was going to get better.... It was a very overwhelming feeling of hopelessness. That I was not enough for my child."

Danielle had a few critical community supports that she could turn to, like a teacher at her son's school and a case worker that helped connect her family to resources like a residential care program; however, state resources often weren't available quickly enough to meet the needs of Danielle's family, and the financial burden of medical expenses was overwhelming. Concrete supports like affordable housing, childcare, and mental health services are not always readily available for all Minnesota families. If a young person is on a waiting list for mental health services, having a robust support network – such as mentorship from a family or community member and involvement in community sports or cultural activities – can play a critical role in families' short-term and long-term stability.

When she was referred to FamilyWise to help with her son's transition back home, she was grateful for the immediate support that Wraparound provided. [Danielle and her Wraparound facilitator worked together through whatever day-to-day challenges emerged to find options and resources that opened doors for her family and made their lives more manageable.](#)

Her Wraparound facilitator coordinated meetings, found ideas for summer camps, and helped her keep realistic goals. He also reminded her to take care of herself and to celebrate her successes along the way. These reminders were impactful. Danielle reached out more to friends and built a workbench in her basement to give herself some space. She asked her daughter and her neighbors for help when she needed it. She recently held a celebration recognizing her son's progress over the past year. "We made a big deal out of it," she said, and she was able to recognize in herself, "I did make a difference. I do have him on the right track."

[The assistance she received allowed her to understand how to ask for help and create a community of support around her.](#) Now Danielle has more time to herself, and her son is connected to more resources that allow him to thrive. Danielle's story highlights how there is a way to find help and hope even when things seem hopeless. "It's almost like I was drowning. The easiest way not to drown is to walk up the dock out of the lake onto the shore. And you know that's a hard climb sometimes," shared Danielle. "It's not that [my Wraparound facilitator] was holding my hand the whole way, but he was walking with me.... Having guidance and someone else there with you throughout that process, it was huge."

# Our Supporters



Thank you to all the donors and volunteers who made this year possible.

Hannah Aderinkomi	Adam and Kara Werth	Thomas and Mary Kressin	Sauer Family Foundation
Lynn and Robert Altmann	Bob and Courtney Wilkerson	Jane and Tim Kretzmann	Corey Sauer
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Sherra Buckley	Mike, Betsy & Brynlee Harder	Arlene and Gerald Nystuen	TIAA
Katy Burke	Noelle Hawton	Anna and Tor Oksnevad	UCARE
Patrick and Aimee Butler Family Foundation	Kim and John Heinrich	Matthew Olson	UnitedHealth Group
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Brent Christen	William and Julie Howard	Paula Sell and Tim Sielaff	Karen Wahmanholm
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# Our Leadership



## Board Officers

### **President**

Shannon Schaaf, Executive Director,  
CFA Society of Minnesota

### **Vice President**

Kim Heinrich, Vice President-Global Marketing  
Meritas

### **Treasurer**

Juae Son, Credit Analyst  
FarmOp Capital LLC

### **Secretary**

Nakisha Smith, HR Manager  
Wilson Learning

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Effectiveness and Innovation  
Guidance Consultant, United Health  
Group/Optum Technology

Julia Quanrud, Chief of Staff  
Ampact

Leslie Wilbur, Risk and Control Analyst  
US Bank

Sally Wahman, Vice President-Primary  
Care, Allina Health

## Senior Leadership Team

Ann Gaasch, Chief Executive Officer

Anna VonRueden, Chief Program Officer

Kate Bailey, Chief Development Officer

Colleen Gjerdahl, Operations Director



# Financial Report



## Statement of Financial Position

Cash & Receivables . . . . .	\$2,607,011
Other Assets . . . . .	\$834,003
<b>Total Assets . . . . .</b>	<b>\$3,441,014</b>
Current Liabilities . . . . .	\$207,465
Long-Term Liabilities . . . . .	\$54,603
Net Assets . . . . .	\$3,178,946
<b>Total Liabilities/Net Assets . . . . .</b>	<b>\$3,441,014</b>

## Statement of Activities

### Summary of Support and Revenue

Contributions . . . . .	\$782,927
United Way . . . . .	\$100,662
Government Contributions . . . . .	\$1,185,504
Program Service Fees . . . . .	\$1,252,488
Special Events . . . . .	\$13,950
Earned and Other . . . . .	\$45,143
<b>Total Support/Revenue . . . . .</b>	<b>\$3,380,674</b>

### Summary of Expenses

Supervised Parenting and Safe Exchange . . . . .	\$508,522
First Step Early Childhood Education Center . . . . .	\$485,275
High-Fidelity Wraparound . . . . .	\$579,550
Adult Parent Education . . . . .	\$543,649
Bright Beginnings Young Parenting Services . . . . .	\$44,938
Parent Assessments . . . . .	\$13,013
Prevention Programs . . . . .	\$651,625
<b>Total Program Expenses . . . . .</b>	<b>\$2,826,582</b>
Management/General . . . . .	\$206,870
Fundraising . . . . .	\$266,872
<b>Total Annual Expenses . . . . .</b>	<b>\$3,300,324</b>

**Change in Net Assets . . . . . \$80,350**





# FamilyWise

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**FamilyWiseServices.org**



FamilyWise is the Minnesota Chapter of Prevent Child Abuse  
America and the National Circle of Parents

