

MN ADOPT

ANNUAL REPORT 2021



FISCAL YEAR 2021
(JULY 1, 2020 - JUNE 30, 2021)

mnADOPT



Dear Friends,

The communities we support are at the heart of everything we do at MN ADOPT. This is what has helped guide us through this unprecedented time as we navigate a global pandemic, as well as the calls for social justice within our community.

While there are many unknowns ahead, and much work yet to be done, we remain clear in our mission of finding and strengthening the Minnesota adoptive, foster care and kinship communities.

I am incredibly proud of our team for finding new and innovative ways of providing crucial support and services to the communities we serve during this time when the pandemic has magnified the needs of so many. It has not been easy, but as demonstrated through the stories and highlights in this report, the successes are numerous and meaningful.

I am also thankful to our supporters and partners, who have helped us reach new milestones in our work, and who will continue to support us in the future, as we continue to work toward our vision of Zero Kids Waiting for permanent, loving families. Without you, our work would not be possible.

I invite you to learn more about our work and impact through the features and stories in this report, and encourage you to reach out to explore ways that you can further support our mission.

Thank you for joining us in strengthening the Minnesota adoption, foster, and kinship communities!

Sincerely,

Rachel Walstad, Executive Director

MN ADOPT STAFF



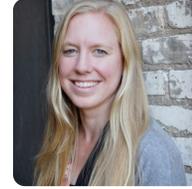
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A FAMILY'S EXPERIENCE



"**The HELP Program** has been a tremendous boost as we navigate life transitions as a family. Our HELP Specialist listened warmly to us and connected us with adoption-competent therapists and other community resources which we had no idea existed! I feel less alone as an adoptive parent knowing the HELP Program staff are always ready with encouragement and connections."

~Uthmann Family



"**We are so grateful** for the resources, counsel and care available to families like ours through the HELP Program.

It is comforting and strengthening to know that we're not journeying alone."

~Rydlund Family



A FAMILY'S EXPERIENCE



"I was asked why I am always willing to share our story surrounding foster care and adoption. The simple response is because it is a direct way to help vulnerable children right here in our community. Creating dialogue around adoption and foster care encourages growth, promotes healing, and allows children to gain more informed advocates.

MN ADOPT offers a starting point for people taking the first steps towards a waiting child, second steps finding help in the midst of adoption questions, and ongoing steps of training and support. As a family, we have adopted internationally and needed to understand what supports were available in our home community for navigating trauma and attachment concerns. We have had 31 children and counting in foster care through our county and been part of the celebrations of both reunification and adoptions. Our family has biological children, internationally adopted children, and have adopted through foster care. We have walked alongside other parents with foster care and adoption joys and sorrows over the last twenty years. We continue to see strength and resilience in the children we serve, and the families we meet.

Our story, and so many others, creates a page in a collective book of adoption and foster care in Minnesota. Stories that have a place in trainings, panels, and support groups. MN ADOPT creates a platform that is essential to telling, processing, and learning from these stories."

Deirdre Otis, mother of 9, 4 adopted and 5 biological children, aged 5 to 21. As of January 2022, she and her husband, Sheff Otis, have been parents to 31 foster children. They are currently licensed providers with Ramsey County.



"Incredibly helpful and informative; professionally facilitated; fantastic pacing; engaging; helpful metaphors and images; reflection topics...everything."

-Attendee, The Couple Check-Up: Keeping Relationships Strong in the Adoption and Fostering Journey with Torrey E. Carroll, MA, LPC & Nikki M. Carroll, MA, LPC

A FAMILY'S EXPERIENCE



"Our family has been blessed by the HELP Program.

We were encouraged by resources sent for us to read or listen to.

They met the exact needs of some specific questions we had in regards to how adoption had transformed our family.

We are thankful to know that in the future, as situations may arise, we have a support system in the HELP Program."

~Lempola Family





ORGANIZATIONAL HIGHLIGHTS

- **2,155 families** were referred to home study or licensing agencies for next steps in the adoption or foster care process.
- People engaged with the State Adoption Exchange nearly **1 million times** to **learn more** about Minnesota children in need of an adoptive family.
- Minnesota children needing families were featured in newspapers throughout the state **420** times during the fiscal year.
- In response of COVID-19, all trainings were in webinar format, which resulted in a nearly **100% increase in training attendees**, for a total of **12,272** for the year.
- Over **\$100,000** in funding assistance was provided to families utilizing the **HELP program**, which included nearly \$27,000 in assistance needed due to the impact of COVID-19 on families.
- Our Post Search Specialist assisted **435 individuals** who were interested in either searching or receiving adoption related information.
- **Circus of the Heart** was virtual for the first time in the 23 years of the event, with over 1,700 people signing up to participate in family activities taking place over the course of three weeks in November 2020.

DOUBLE THE IMPACT



"I support [MN ADOPT's Back-to-School fundraiser](#) because I can see the meaningful and specific impact it has on Minnesota's foster children. The first day of school is a big moment for kids, and the feedback from foster families who've participated is incredible.

Each dollar I contribute is going directly to a foster child to help them start the school year with confidence and excitement. By leveraging my employer's generous matching program, ***I was able to double my impact and fund twice as many children to participate in this program.***

Laura Kruizenga

A SHOPPING TRIP TO REMEMBER

Through individual and corporate donations, like Laura's, we were able to raise \$43,672 to provide 218 youth in foster care a back-to-school shopping trip to remember. This was our 3rd year raising money for Minnesota kids in foster care and we were able to spread even more awareness about the event through our first ever 5k Run/Walk.

We hosted our First Annual 5k Run/Walk in June 2021. While this event was virtual, we were able to have 167 people participate and had 14 generous sponsors. \$12,400 was raised to support the Back-to-School Shopping Event.



FINANCIAL STATEMENT

TOTAL REVENUE
\$2,401,601

TOTAL EXPENSES
\$2,316,976

GRANTS
\$2,129,120

CONTRIBUTIONS
\$250,887

PROGRAMS
\$21,345

INVESTMENTS & OTHER INCOME
\$258

PROGRAM SERVICES
\$2,262,919

SUPPORT SERVICES:
Management & General
\$45,405
Fundraising
\$8,652

TOTAL SUPPORT SERVICES:
\$54,057





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