



WICHITA
Children's Home
2021
Impact Report

*A place where I can be free and me.
Where love and support are **always guaranteed**.
A home meant to be.*

– Past BRIDGES Resident

ASK THE DIRECTOR

Q&A with Debbie Kennedy, CEO of the Wichita Children's Home



How long have you been with WCH?

7 years as the CEO, but I have been involved with WCH for almost 20 years including my time volunteering and later serving on the Board of Trustees for 8 years prior to becoming the CEO.

I first learned about WCH during my time teaching a senior nursing course at Wichita State University. Many of the students chose to do their practicum with WCH. The mission was so compelling to me and I immediately knew that it was a natural fit for my husband, Mike, and I to get involved.

For many years, Mike and I spent our Christmas Eves being "Secret Santa" and helped shop for Christmas gifts for children. It was a cherished tradition we had, and at the time, I had no idea I'd end up where I am today. I'm thankful for all of those special moments that led me to this opportunity.

What is one of the most significant moments from your time as CEO?

The day I watched the children's reactions and excitement as they moved into our new building. I could see it in their eyes. The children packed their items up knowing that their personal belongings were being moved into our new home. A place that they could feel comfortable and safe. When they arrived, I remember one of our residents, a 13-year-old boy, stopped and said the most beautiful prayer. His hope was that every child that ever comes to WCH knows what a special place it is.

It was the beginning of a new chapter for the Children's Home. Our donors and partners built the foundation for us to develop a healing environment for the future. The continual generosity of the community created new opportunities to expand to serve pregnant and parenting teens, shelter homeless youth and victims of human trafficking and exploitation.

What keeps you motivated to continue the work at WCH?

Knowing that we really are making a difference in the lives of abused and neglected children. My office has a window that overlooks the portico where the children are first welcomed to the Home. Some of our children are scared and unsure of

what to expect. There was one boy in particular who had been here before. The officer asked him if he knew where he was and he said "Yup, and I know where the snacks are." He walked right in with a smile on his face, and you knew that he felt safe.

We hear survivor stories from past residents and know that the children walking under that portico and through our doors are walking into a true place of safety.

I believe that WCH offers support and opportunities to heal from both their emotional and physical wounds. That is what keeps me motivated.

What is your long-term vision for WCH and the community?

To honor the mission of the Children's Home. WCH has served abused and neglected children since 1888. Knowing that the work that was done before me is the foundation of where we are today drives me to continue to build upon that foundation.

I want to ensure that WCH has visionary leaders who will drive progress and growth where it is needed. With continued support, WCH will be able to provide necessary services for the next challenge that our community faces.

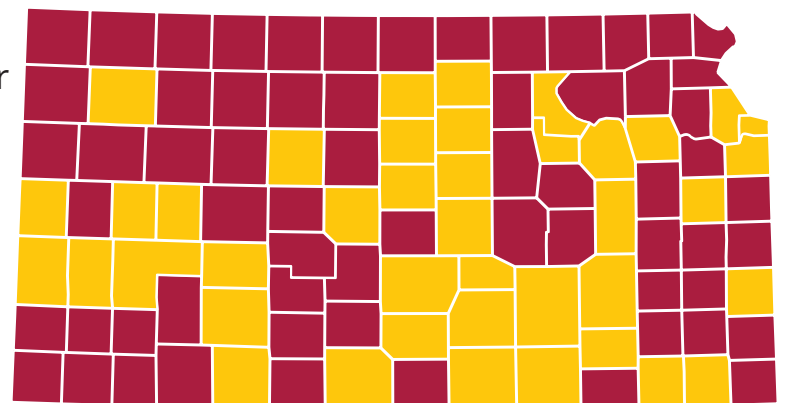
Serving abused, neglected, abandoned, exploited and grieving children across the state!

1,875

Total children and youth received shelter and care in FY2021
Ages Newborn - 24

35 victims of human trafficking

140% increase
over last year



WCH served children across **41** counties in the state of Kansas and other parts of the country across **95** zip codes!

108

Pregnant or parenting teens and their babies received residential care and/or support from...

Gerard House



BRIDGES

Moving On To Motherhood



4,412 DAYS

WCH prevented youth from sleeping on the streets or couch surfing.

185

 Youth Served at CrossRoads Drop-In Center

receiving case management, and support with life skills, education, and help moving into transitional housing.

685

Homeless, at risk and runaway children & youth served at CrossRoads!

168

CrossRoads Crisis Line received 168 total crisis calls from homeless, runaway or at risk youth seeking help.

24%

of the calls to the crisis were Safe Place calls.



178

homeless or at-risk youth received support from Street Outreach Services. These youth received food, clothing, hygiene products, blankets, and more.

154 Children & Youth

received Emergency Shelter or transitional housing services due to homelessness or risk of exploitation.



*For Youth...Someplace To Go.
Someone To Help.*



Emergency Shelter and Foster Care

543

number of abused and neglected youth in our Teen Emergency / Long-Term Residential Care



49% OF TOTAL CHILDREN

served by Emergency Foster Care were newborn to 3 years of age.

533

number of abused and neglected children (0-12) served in our Emergency Foster Care and housed by WCH trained foster families



Keeping Siblings Safe

7 children were brought to the Wichita Children's Home in Police Protective Custody. All of these children were siblings between the ages of 3 and 15. Each child was reported to have multiple scars, scratches, bruises, head lice, and burns on their bodies. One of the young girls was also experiencing sexual abuse in their home.

"My heart hurts and is overwhelmed with sadness as well as happiness," said oldest brother, Zachery.

Zachery shared that he felt like he was always being watched and never felt safe in his home. Now that he is at the Wichita Children's Home, he is starting to feel a sense of safety and some relief and happiness in the midst of this overwhelming trauma and heartache for his siblings.

WCH ensured that all of the children were either kept together or kept in close contact with one another. Three of the children were able to stay together in the Emergency Residential Shelter while the other four were placed together in Emergency Foster Care with a WCH trained foster family. The siblings were able to FaceTime and call each other regularly to stay in contact and see that they were all being kept safe and given the care and support they needed.

Meet the **KRAUS FAMILY**

"My husband and I began fostering for WCH in 1996, shortly after the foster care department was created. Since then, we have cared for more than 400 children in our home. Before the mid 90's, all children ages birth through age 17 were housed in the building at 810 N Holyoke. There were 50-70 children in residence there at all times. It was a bustling place!

There were only a few foster families licensed through the Wichita Children's Home at first. We all had multiple children in our homes, most of them aged 6 and younger.

Some stayed for just a few days; others, much longer. The foster care department has grown tremendously since then. Currently, there are 90 plus homes, compared to fewer than 10 in the beginning. But some things have not changed...

From the beginning, the foster care staff, WCH as a whole, and the Wichita community at large, have provided unfailing support for the children and their foster parents. Whether it be helping with a crisis at midnight, support at a court hearing, pertinent educational trainings, or meeting the physical needs of the children, WCH has our backs. It's a wonderful feeling to be a part of something so special. No other agency provides that, and we do not take it for granted!"



— Kraus Family, WCH Foster Parents



154 Grieving children
served at Kidzcope



Hosted first-ever Grief Camp this summer!



109 children served in
sessions or camps

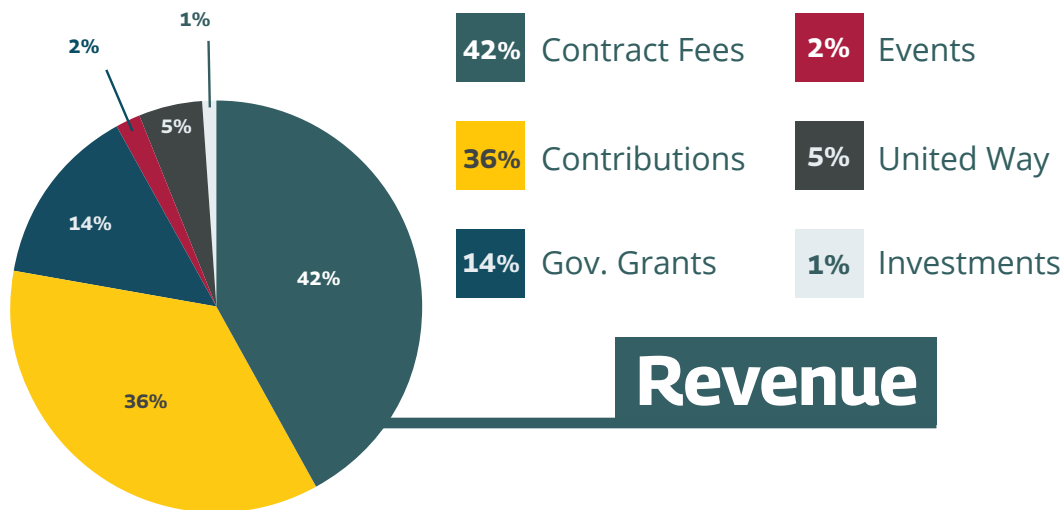
108 total families served
in programming

YOU MADE AN IMPACT

Serving **1,875** total children at WCH takes an entire community! Support from donors, partners, volunteers, foster families and incredible staff make it all possible. Wichita is creating a safe, healing and loving home for those who desperately need it. WCH programs include:

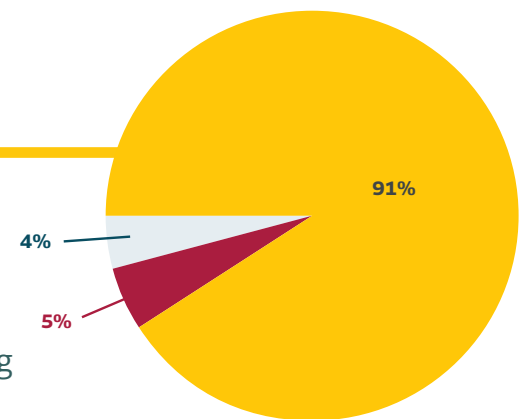
EMERGENCY SHELTER & FOSTER CARE
CROSSROADS YOUTH HOMELESS SHELTER
STREET OUTREACH SERVICES
BRIDGES TRANSITIONAL HOUSING

HUMAN TRAFFICKING SHELTER & SUPPORT
GERARD HOUSE MATERNITY CARE
MOVING ON TO MOTHERHOOD
KIDZCOPE GRIEF SUPPORT



*Source Data: FY20 Audit, Form 990

Expenses



3,360
Volunteer Hours Served

157
Employees

100
Foster Families

Discover more!

Follow us on social media, or check out our website. Still have questions? Contact Kim Pennington at (316) 684-6581.



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WCH.org