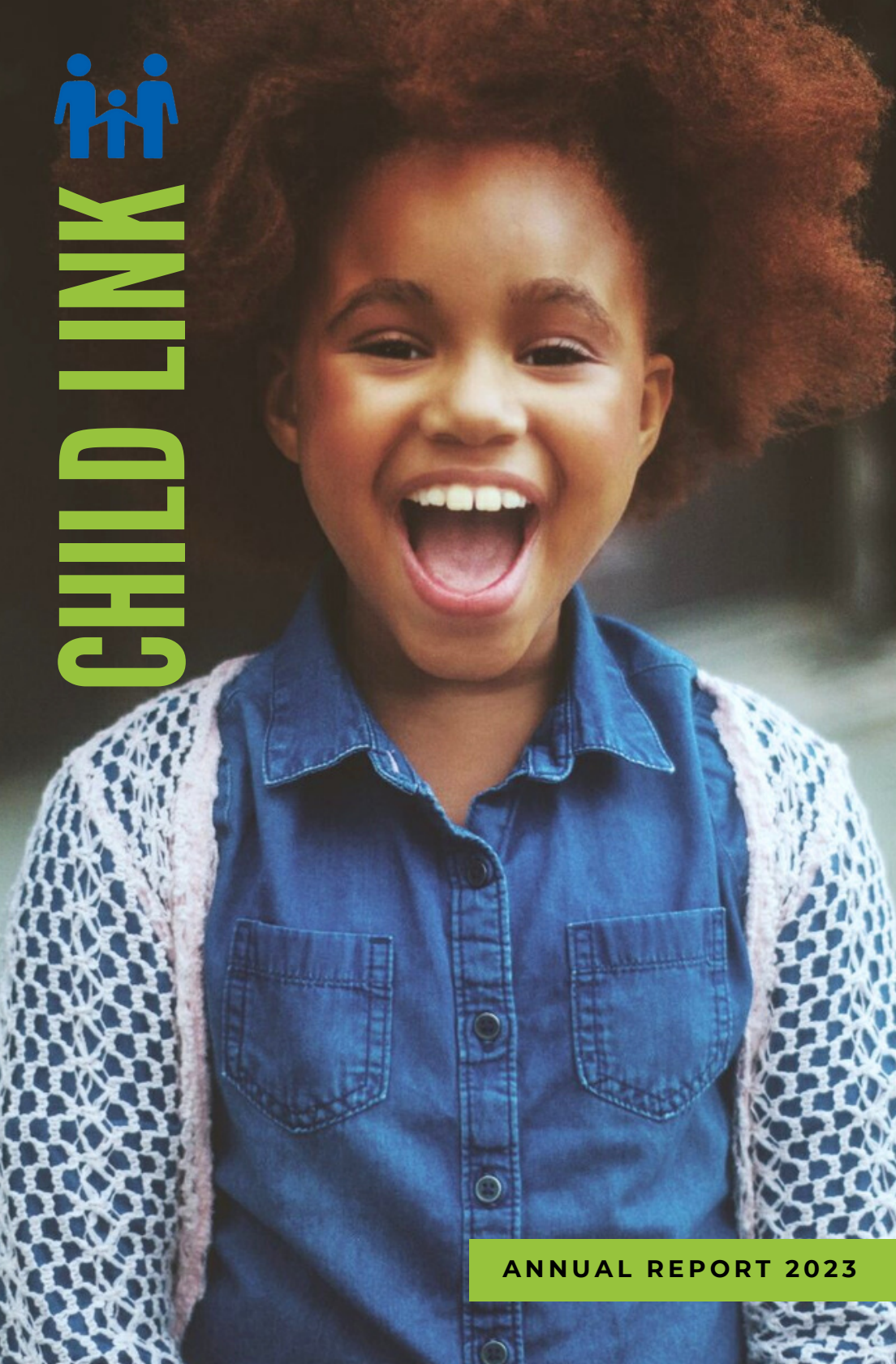




CHILD LINK



ANNUAL REPORT 2023



CHILD LINK

Founded in 2004 through contract with the Illinois Department of Children and Family Services, the administrators of Child Link remain dedicated to our mission of ensuring that every child has the chance to flourish and thrive, regardless of their circumstances.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

President & CEO - Malia Arnett

Chair - Dan Palmer

Treasurer - Mary Maltese - Village of Schiller Park

Timothy Trela - Trela & Associates

Lisa Raatz - LMR Communications

Cathy Domanico - Domanico Global Solutions

THANK YOU

We express our gratitude to the Board of Directors, Staff, Donors, and Foster/Adoptive Parents for their unwavering commitment in making Child Link a secure haven for children and youth in need of care.



OUR SERVICES

Adoption / Infants & Youth

Foster Care / Traditional & Relative

Counseling / Family & Individual

Transitional Living / Old and Adolescent

Child Link offers child and family services tailored to provide essential support to children in need. We recognize that situations involving adolescents are inherently unique. Our commitment lies in crafting the highest-quality care plan for every individual adolescent, whether that entails traditional foster care, youth counseling, or adoption services.

OUR MISSION

Our mission is centered on delivering exceptional care to children and families in need of support. Guided by our core values of stability, education, safety, and fun, we strive to ensure that each child under our care has a safe, loving environment in which to grow and experience all that life has to offer.

EDUCATION

Ensuring academic and professional success with positive reinforcement

Counseling for careers and higher education.



STABILITY

Maintaining family ties through family visits.

Attentiveness to permanency.



CORE VALUES

SAFETY

Providing emergency on-call support 24/7 - monitoring each individual's progress and security



FUN

Preserving childhood traditions.





ADOPTION

Our primary objective is to find a "forever home" for the children in our care. Child Link takes the lead in coordinating no-fee adoption services for prospective parents through our foster-to-adopt program, which involves comprehensive background checks and home studies.

We consistently excel in comparison to similar agencies in Cook County when it comes to offering permanent care solutions through adoption or guardianship. Our commitment is to place our children in the most suitable family environments, thereby providing each child with the opportunity to flourish.

Prior to initiating adoption proceedings, Child Link conducts thorough investigations into each child's placement options, aiming to preempt any unforeseen disruptions in their future.



FOSTER CARE

Child Link extends its foster care services to children across the counties of Cook, Will, and Dupage in Illinois. Our foster care program is dedicated to placing children who lack stable support systems into nurturing homes.

Over the past five years, our foster care program has seen remarkable growth, increasing from **18** to **30** case managers who have partnered with approximately **360** family homes. In the year 2023 alone, we provided our services to **460** children, ensuring that they received the high-quality care they both needed and deserved.



ADOLESCENT FOSTER CARE

We specialize in working with adolescents and young adults ranging from ages 12 to 21, many of whom have experienced traumatic events and lack positive adult influences or role models in their lives.

Our program is dedicated to offering young adults the services they need to cultivate stable relationships, safeguard them from victimization, and aid in the development of healthy life habits and aspirations. We provide comprehensive support to empower them to graduate from high school, pursue higher education, and establish enduring positive relationships.



FOSTER PARENTING

Fostering is an incredibly selfless act, offering a remarkable opportunity to give back to the community and provide children who have faced challenging beginnings with the chance for a brighter future. Once we confirm that you meet all the eligibility criteria, our dedicated staff will guide you through the necessary free training and assist you in obtaining a foster care license. Upon the successful completion of training and licensing, we can begin placing children in your home.

If you are interested in becoming a foster parent, please don't hesitate to reach out to us at info@childlink.org or visit our website to complete an inquiry form. Your decision to foster can make a profound difference in a child's life.



TRANSITIONAL LIVING

We provide support to young women aged 17-21 as they navigate the transition from foster care to self-sufficiency and independence. Our mission is to empower them by imparting essential social, professional, and self-reliance skills, emphasizing the significance of ongoing education to help each of them achieve their personal and professional goals .



COUNSELING

Child Link's counseling program is dedicated to supporting families and young individuals in our community by equipping them with valuable life skills and behaviors that will positively impact their lifelong journey. Our experienced clinicians specialize in addressing a wide range of issues, including anxiety disorders, attention deficit disorders, and attachment concerns.

Many of the children we serve are directly or indirectly affected by violence in their environment, such as domestic violence, separation from parents, gang-related violence, and abuse. Our licensed therapists are well-prepared to assist children dealing with challenges like divorce, bullying, and various social hardships.

Child Link is committed to helping individuals navigate interpersonal conflicts at home, in school, or within the community. Beyond clinical services, our therapists are able to play an active role in the community by offering referrals for crisis intervention.



COUNSELING

Our approach to treatment is highly individualized, with tailored integrative clinical services designed to meet the unique needs of each person we serve. These treatment options encompass Trauma-Informed Treatment, Psychodynamic Therapy, Dialectical Behavior Therapy, and Cognitive Behavioral Therapy.

As a counseling service dedicated to children and families within the community, we are currently accepting new clients with Blue Cross Blue Shield insurance. To arrange a consultation, please contact us at counseling@childInk.org. Every treatment plan we develop is a collaborative effort, customized to address specific individual needs.



IN LOVING MEMORY

Gerda J. Schell, an honored member of Child Link, passed away at 89 years of age this past year. She dedicated her career to Child Welfare. Gerda joined the Child Link team in 2003 and was an active member of the management team, working diligently on accreditation standards and continuous program quality improvement for twenty years. Gerda served as the Senior Clinical Consultant and was the driving force behind the development of our counseling program.

Gerda's passion for social justice was evident from the start. She dedicated her remarkable career to the service of others, working tirelessly to improve the lives of children and families in need.

Her contributions to the field of social work were many, and she was widely recognized for her expertise and commitment to the cause. In 2017, Gerda Schell was awarded the Lifetime Achievement Award by the National Association of Social Workers. This award recognizes exceptional social workers whose work promotes social justice and social change on behalf of the people and clients they serve.

Gerda's unwavering commitment to Child Link's mission has left an undeniable mark on our organization and the children we serve. Her expertise, compassion, and tireless dedication to improving the lives of vulnerable children will be deeply missed.

We are so grateful for the legacy that Gerda leaves behind and the impact she had on the lives of countless children and families.

GERDA J. SCHELL

1933 - 2023

33

children returned home.

75%

of teens in care graduated from high school and went on to college.

16

children were adopted.

360

family homes worked with.

2023

HIGHLIGHTS

18

cases completed guardianship.

460

children were impacted by Child Link's efforts.

67

foster care cases were closed out this year.

10.2 M

went to programs and services that helped improve the lives of children in Chicagoland.

ANNUAL EVENTS

January

Baby Supply Drive

Our Baby Supply Drive kicks off in January and continues throughout the year. We are in constant need of new or gently used baby supplies, such as cribs, diapers, bottles, car seats, etc.

March

Whiskey Tasting

Our annual Whiskey Tasting allows guests to taste a unique selection of bourbon, scotch, and rye while enjoying a delicious assortment of food. Proceeds go towards ensuring our children have the tools and resources they need to succeed.

May

Womens Initiative Luncheon

Our Women's Initiative Luncheon honors the young women of Child Link who graduated high school and are ready to move forward in life. Proceeds go toward college expenses such as tuition, room & board, and school supplies.

August

School Supply Drive

Our School Supply Drive is in full swing each July and August. This event provides new supplies for the upcoming school year for children whose parents or guardians are financially unable to provide them.

November

Beaujolais Nouveau

Our annual Beaujolais Nouveau Wine Tasting is held in downtown La Grange on the third Thursday of November. Guests are encouraged to visit all participating restaurant sponsors.

December

Holiday Toy Drive

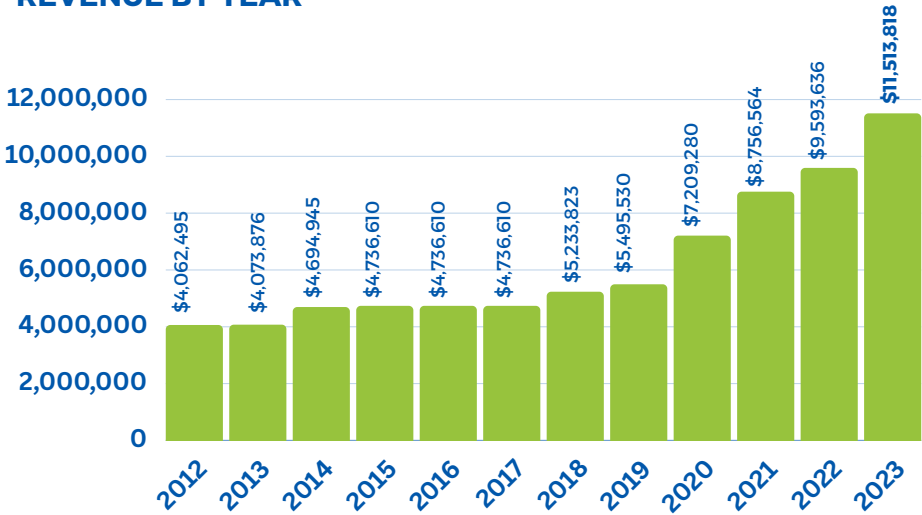
Our toy drive helps us spread the joy of the holiday season to the children and young adults in our care. Gifts are collected from the community and distributed to ensure that everyone has a fit to open during the holiday season.

THE NUMBERS

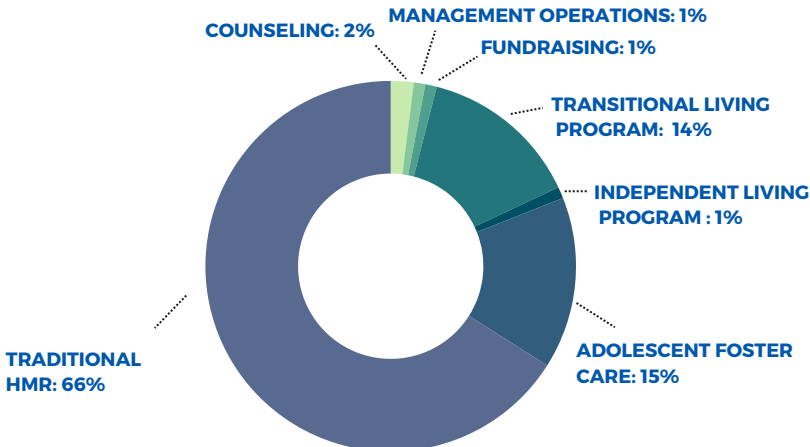
OUR PROGRESS

In the year 2023, Child Link generated revenue totaling \$11.5 million, with \$10.2 million dedicated to funding our programs and services, directly benefiting the lives of 460 children and young adults under our care. Our ability to assist those in need is made possible through the generosity of donations and in-kind contributions from our community.

REVENUE BY YEAR



OPERATING EXPENSES 2023



THE NUMBERS

STATEMENT OF ACTIVITIES	2023	2022
REVENUES		
Fees & Grants from Government Agencies	\$11,422,874	\$9,446,307
Contributions	\$112,849	\$69,160
Other Incomes	\$17,158	\$78,169
Total Revenues	\$11,552,881	\$9,593,636
EXPENSES		
Program Services	\$10,278,702	\$8,600,670
Management & General	\$161,289	\$137,299
Fundraising	\$92,278	\$62,410
Total Expenses	\$10,532,269	\$8,800,379
Net Income	\$1,020,612	\$793,257
STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION OF ASSETS		
Cash	\$2,212,214	\$838,622
Accounts Receivable	\$662,812	\$584,292
FIXED ASSETS		
Building Improvements TLP	\$1,732,541	\$1,732,541
Other Fixed Assets	\$393,529	\$253,888
Less Depreciation	(\$1,096,791)	(\$826,369)
Other Assets	\$51,792	\$76,792
Total Assets	\$3,865,098	\$2,659,766
LIABILITIES \$ NET INCOME		
ACCOUNTS PAYABLE:		
Accrued Expenses	\$775,511	\$951,405
Other Liabilities	\$662,514	\$792,846
Total Liabilities	\$1,428,025	\$1,744,251
Total Net Assets	\$2,427,073	\$1,665,462
Total Liabilities and Net Assets	\$3,865,098	\$3,409,713

DIVERSITY & INCLUSION

INCLUSION POLICY

Child Link adheres to a non-discrimination policy that ensures fairness and equality for all prospective foster or adoptive parents. It is our firm commitment not to pass ethical judgments on LGBTQ+ relationships. We firmly believe that an individual's sexual preference and/or identity should never serve as valid reasons to deny them their civil rights or their ability to provide a loving home to a child in need. Our non-discrimination policy encompasses various classes and categories, including gender, color, creed, race, religion, age, ethnic or national origin, political beliefs, socioeconomic status, disability, gender identity, marital status, and sexual orientation. We are dedicated to creating a welcoming and inclusive environment for all individuals and families who wish to be part of our mission.

WORKFORCE DIVERSITY

Fostering an inclusive and diverse environment stands as a paramount commitment in driving Child Link's ongoing success. Our workforce is a reflection of diverse perspectives, backgrounds, and life experiences, which not only enriches our vision and objectives but also enhances the overall quality of the services we provide..

BILINGUAL SERVICES

Child Link is committed to providing bilingual services to the numerous Spanish-speaking children and families under our care. Our dedicated staff puts forth considerable effort to place Spanish-speaking children in foster homes that align with their communication requirements.

Additionally, Child Link is a member of the Latino Consortium, a partnership with fellow child welfare agencies, aimed at coordinating resources and offering support to Latino families across Chicago and throughout Illinois. Facilitating family participation in bilingual programs is a vital aspect of our mission to ensure that those in our care are well-prepared for success.

FRIENDS OF CHILD LINK

Abhay Gudur	Cathleen Domanico	Gerda Schell
Adrian Trela	Cathy West	Gina Parry
Adrian Trela	Chicago Architecture Center	Grace Diaz
Alexander Domanskis	Chicago Bears	Grace Sikora
Alexandria Cummings	Chicago White Sox	Gregory Vasquez
Alexus Alderman	Christian Heller	Harris Theater for Music and Dance
Anath Ravi	Christine Durkalec	Heather Cavanaugh
Andrea Elliot	Christopher Alexander	Heather Stockley
Ann Marie Gignac	Cliona Besancon	Helen Tan
Ann Zeitner	Club Champion	Hugh O'Donnell
Anne Flynn	Daizy Salgado	Jack DaDan
Anne Polick	Daniel Dolgin	Jack DaDan
Anthony Spears	Daniel Nevis	Jacqueline Gove
Arielle Bingham	Danyell Shin	Jacqueline Cox
Arnold Weinberg	David Groebe	Jalyn Echko
Associated Insurance and Risk Management Advisors	David Latella	Jana Carmack
Barbara Rosenberg	David Zych	Janet Lewandowski
Baron Walden	Dawn Boe	Jessica Cerepa
Bartek Zablocki	Debbie Green	Jim Nevotti
Benevity Giving	Duke Czlonka	Jim Pietrzak
Bert Neuland	Eleanor Hauser	Joan Trentman
Betsy Buckley	Elizabeth Marcucci	John Ferguson
Bonnie Biggerstaff	Elta Hebipasi	John M. Lynch
Brad Petersen	Emilia Stephens	John Potts
Brenda Matcha	Eric Rosser	John Rebello
Brian Stachowiak	Erik Tillman	John Rekas
Brianna Thomas	Field Museum	John Thompson
Bridget Cross	Frank Monreal	Jose Aguilera
Cara Panares	Frederic Boyer	Joyce Greenberg
Carissa Vera	Freya Kendrick	Judy Zimmerman
Carol Paolantino	Gabriela Walls	Julie Johnson
Catherine Lee	Gabriella Manna	Julie McCourt
Catherine West	Gayle Brankin	Kai Lee Yap
	Geoffrey M. Olsen	Kali Koller
	Gerald (Jerry) Sherwood	Karen DeRose

FRIENDS OF CHILD LINK

Karen Gomez	Mary Sue Lamb	Santina Maino
Karen Scaletta	Mary Timmons	Sarah Emas
Kate DaDan	Mary Todd	Sarah Fript
Kelly Koss	Mary Woodman	Sergio Casarez
Khoulood Abad	Maryclare Trela	Sheri Sauer
Kimberly Abbs	Matthew J. Frazier	Sheryl Freeman
KOVAL Distillery	Megan Andrews	Skyla Hall
Laura Swartzmiller	Megan Monahan	Smitha Uthaman
Laura Walsh	Melinda Levato	Stephanie Dillard
Lauren Groebe	Melissa Sheker	Susan Goldsmith
Laurie Hackler	Melissa Silva	Susan Schwartz
Laurie Noriega	Michael Bell	Susan Wagener
Lea Salvatore	Michael Hoff	Suzanne Kosten
Lincoln Hall	Michael Laughran	Suzanne Zywanski
Lincoln Hall	Michael Manrique	Swartzmiller Associates
Lindsay Schwartz	Michael McKay	Szymon Savak
Lisa Freund	Michael & Mimi Meagher	Tanya Haven
Lisa Raatz	Mike Skala	Tara Sautter
Louise Kross-Steppan	Neil Hurley	Ted Lieu
Luciana Taschini	Nick Wilson	Teresa Haugen
Luz Johnson	Nidia Johnson	Teri Maurer
Manuel Arroyo	Nina Lediaeva	The Marriott Theatre
Marcy Darlin	Pat Gilman	Theresa Rojek
Margaret De Lauriea	Patricia Rink	Therese Kutella
Marguerite Aikens	Patricia Trampas	Tim Trela
Marianne Arvanites	Patrick Finn	Todd Carter
Marie Pfau	Paul Jones	Todd Joseph
Marina Shusterman	Paula Taylor	Tom Scaletta
Marion Nalls	Peggy Sloyan	Trisha Payton
Mark Seter	Randi Danforth	Valerie Brown
Marlee Pahos	Rashika Sharma	Victoria Murphy
Marquise Brown	Robert Reinhold	William Carney
Martha Vega	Rochelle Dale	William Kanda
Mary Maltese	Rosemarie Eck	Xiaohao Ji
Mary Shellenberg	Rosemarie Weinstein	
	Saffron Medrano	

CHILD *link*

Illinois Department of
DCFS
Children & Family Services

 BlueCross.
BlueShield.



CHILD LINK

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www.childlink.org

