



ANNUAL REPORT 2023



TRAUMA AND HARDSHIP CHANGES FAMILIES

From the beginning of our organization, the mission was and continues to be - helping families **stay and heal together**. Our execution has grown and evolved, but the goal has always been to bring wrap-around services to every member of the family, allowing hope, healing, and family support.

**Hope really can change
our outcomes.**





WHO WE ARE

We are a faith-based, family-centered support and advocacy organization that provides rest, support, connection, healing and hope to families navigating foster care, adoption, and children with disabilities. Reclaimed Hope Initiative is a place for ALL families walking through trauma, crisis, and hardship offering a safe haven to be seen, heard, and cared for through the darkest moments.

While our organization was built on faith-based principles, the services we offer to families are intentionally inclusive and do not directly point to our faith perspective. We invite and welcome families from all backgrounds to join our programming.

When crisis strikes, when heartbreak overcomes, when the questions far outweigh the answers, we need to learn to say “I’m not scared of your story.”



Why We Do What We Do



1. Lack of Support

Families and caregivers of children in foster care, adopted, or with disabilities experience significant emotional, mental, and physical stress when they do not have proper support.



2. Burnout

In a recent survey of over 1,400 parents of children with complex needs, 91% said caregiving has affected their mental health, and 87% said caregiving has affected their physical health.



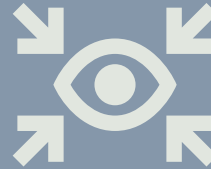
3. Loss of Family Relationships

70% of marriages end in divorce for those parenting children with complex care needs.



MISSION

To strengthen and empower families navigating foster care, adoption, and children with disabilities.



VISION

Providing healing environments to promote family preservation.



VALUES

Resilience, Empathy, Inclusion, Growth, Advocacy





2023 YEAR IN REVIEW

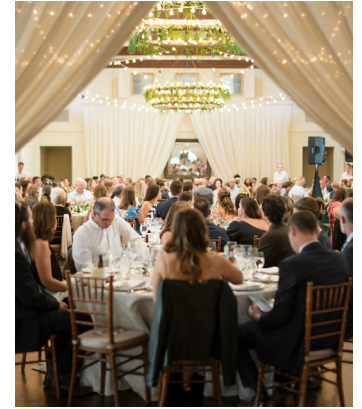


\$150,000

raised at our Makers
for Hope Fundraiser

\$200,000

in grants received for
our programming



49 caregivers
utilized

30 volunteers
utilized

6 New Local
Partnerships

Welcomed **four new board members:** Cicely Shelton-Barnes, Jennifer Slaughter, Dr. Lucia Tejada, and Ashley Wood

Grew our staff team by four: welcome Emily Baxter, Danning St. Martin, Hannah York, and Lindsay Zach!



100%
of our
donations
went to
programming
costs





PROGRAM HIGHLIGHT

THRIVE

57 families parenting children with disabilities supported

35 foster/adoptive families supported

55 support groups held

12 IEP consultations

9 Parent's Night Out respite nights

5 foster care prevention families served

3 family support partners utilized

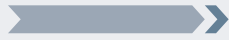
3 Thrive mom's retreats



“ Thrive has been invaluable to us as parents. At the beginning of our foster care journey, we quickly realized how uniquely difficult it was to parent a child who'd experienced trauma. I felt that I wasn't parenting well enough. I certainly wasn't dealing with my own emotions and needs well enough. This led to increasing guilt and isolation, especially from other family and friends who did not understand our experience. Thrive was life changing for us and continues to be a crucial part of our self-care and well-being. We found a community who understands our journey and who empathizes with the unique parenting challenges we face. We found a group of people who could laugh at their own parenting fails and who could cry together over their grief and struggles. We also found several other LGBT families in attendance who have become close family friends and who we continue to hang out with outside of Thrive. Thrive has given us a community, and as both evidence and experience suggests, having a community has made us more emotionally resilient, connected, supported, and healthy.

Anna Long





PROGRAM HIGHLIGHT CAMP HOPE

72 children served

1:2 Staff to Camper Ratio

6 weeks of camp

6 Local Partnerships with
Therapeutic Providers

\$135,000 received in grants

Partnered with **Charlottesville
Waldorf School**



Watch the recap from
Camp Hope 2023 here!



“ My daughter attended a different camp the summer prior which ended in tears for both of us. Many camps say they are open to individuals who have unique challenges, but they are often uneducated or lack the amount of support needed to be truly inclusive. That experience led to feeling uncertain and fearful of what future summers would be like for our family. Camp Hope restored my sense of trust that there are people out there willing to

understand and go the extra mile to know and love my daughter. It was apparent each day when I dropped her off that she was accepted for who she is and that each and every person she interacted with had her best interest at heart. She is more confident and happy than I have ever seen her. We look forward to many more summers attending Camp Hope!

Afton Cordoba





“ I want to thank you from the bottom of my heart for being the amazing humans you are. Our son bounced around 7 foster homes before he came to live with us at 4 years old. Once safe with us, he was kicked out of every school and camp he attended. Every summer for 4 years he watched all 4 of his siblings go to summer camps and spend the days with friends. I tried my best to fill his summer days with fun activities, but nothing can really replace that summer camp experience. Being rejected and not fitting in became the status quo for him and it was heartbreaking. Then I found out about Camp Hope and it literally changed our lives.

Each of you are changing lives. Each of you have allowed kids who couldn't have a

typical summer experience to just “be a kid”. You make each kid feel loved, seen, and accepted, and for a few hours a day feel as “normal” as possible.

So as a board member and a mom, THANK YOU. Thank you for the blood, sweat and tears. Thank you for loving our kids so hard. Thank you for your huge hearts and thank you for changing kids' lives every single day. You are heroes in our eyes and we are forever grateful for each and every one of you.

Allison Spillman

”





PROGRAM HIGHLIGHT

RACIAL ADVOCACY AND MENTORSHIP PROGRAM (RAMP)

- **8** mentees continue to benefit from local partnerships with Love No Ego Foundation and Integrity Mentoring.
- Brought a broader scope of **mentoring** to Camp Hope!
- **Educational series** for parents to come soon!





HOPE IN ACTION

“ Thinking back to the first couple years of my son’s life is still difficult for me. I was two weeks postpartum when Jack was first admitted to the hospital and my notions and dreams about motherhood went out the window. I avoided friends and social media because it hurt to see other moms having typical motherhood experiences. I left my job to care for Jack after his surgery and the world was cast into a pandemic. I felt so isolated and scared, and the anxiety was overwhelming. I hit some pretty low moments and realized that I needed support. I wasn’t sure where to start but knew that finding other moms to talk to would be helpful. I started looking for support groups and found Bettina Stevens, who through the Reclaimed Hope Initiative, would be leading one soon. What a blessing. Through the Thrive support group, I am not alone anymore. I have gotten to meet other amazing moms who can relate to me and my struggles, and I finally feel seen and heard on so many levels. RHI also

provides me with positive coping tactics, community support, friendship, and reprieve opportunities. I still struggle with being a mom to a special needs child and all the challenges that brings, but being part of the RHI community has enabled me to face these challenges better while also starting to heal and feel a little more whole. This has been invaluable to me and to the many families that RHI is helping.

Christina Fitzgerald





Hold on to Hope

I always tell people I never set out to start a nonprofit, I only set out to offer support to families like mine. In September 2018, we launched Thrive. A support and advocacy group for foster and adoptive parents. This group was born from my tears, and I desired to help hold the tears of everyone who walked through my door. I hired and trained caregivers to watch our kids. I made a home cooked meal. And we sat first around my table and then around my living room as we bared our fears, struggles, little victories and vulnerabilities, in a way I had never quite witnessed before. Each meeting truly became a safe haven for not only us as adults, but also for our children. They got to see other kids and families that looked like them, and show up just as they are without repercussion. In the early days we started with 6 families, and more than quadrupled in size in 9 months. Since that time, our organization has steadily grown, and RHI has now served 150 families in 5 counties throughout our 3 main programs - a growth of 2400% in 5 years. This year our growth has continued through both our staff and board of directors, and it has been such an honor to work alongside so many partners creating a safe haven for families in our community.

My goal has never been to reinvent the wheel, but to see the gaps in this community and meet people where they are. To show up vulnerably and authentically myself, while also allowing families to be seen, heard, and cared for in their darkest moments. To remind them that their emotions don't scare me, and that they are validated in all the beauty and brokenness this journey brings.

And with this, the mission and vision of RHI continues to come to fruition.

The vision to create healing environments.
The vision of family preservation before the crisis.
The vision of not only being seen, but known.
A light in the darkness.
A glimmer of hope in the grief.

When we show up for others we remind them that hope is not lost.

Thank you for your partnership and support as we continue to turn hopeless into hope. I invite you to join our endeavor both this year and in the years to come.

With Gratitude,

Bettina Stevens

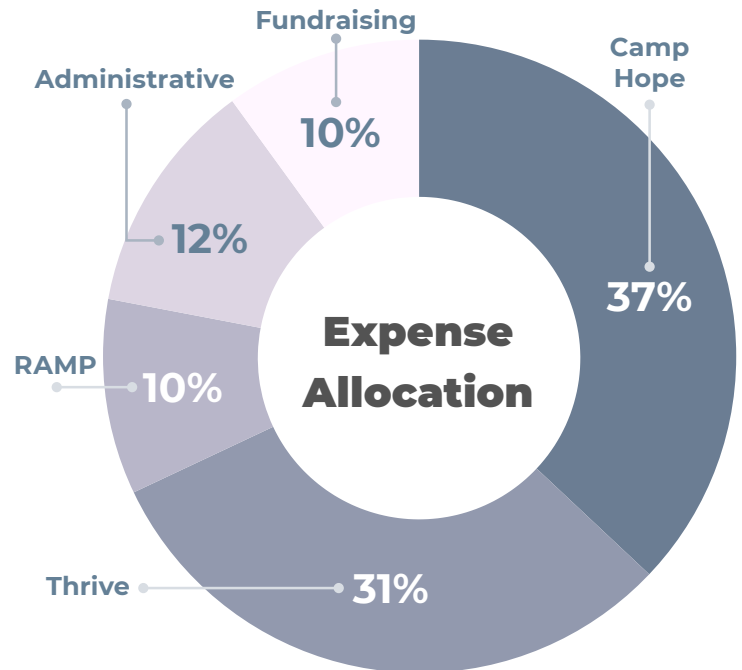
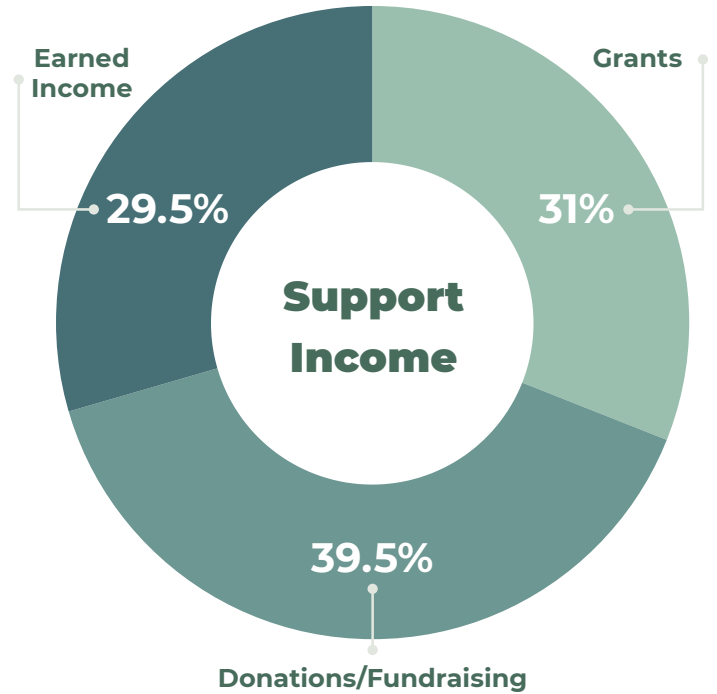
Founder & Executive Director





WHERE DOES THE MONEY GO?

2023 General Operating Budget:
\$515,000





HOPE FOR THE FUTURE

Reclaimed Hope Initiative began with a bold promise: 100% of public donations would bring rest and support to families navigating foster care, adoption, and children with disabilities. It hasn't been easy, but it's an approach we believe in deeply.

We hope our commitment to keeping that original promise inspires support from passionate donors, enthusiastic fundraisers, long-standing partners, and loyal volunteers—a community that believes, as we do, that hope changes everything.

With that said, we need your help! Families walking through trauma and hardship desperately need others to link arms with them and offer support - both financially and through tangible support.

First and foremost, we are always looking for volunteers to join our ranks! Ways to jump in include: assisting with support group needs, food preparation, family

support services, event assistance and much more! For more information, please email us at info@reclaimedhopeinitiative.org or check out [our website](#) to learn more!

Second, your contributions can go a long way toward family preservation! **Please join us through becoming a 2024 Mission Partner** to support more healing opportunities for the families we serve.



**Ways
to Give:**

Online: <https://www.reclaimedhopeinitiative.org/donate>

Check: mail to P.O. Box 2432, Charlottesville, VA 22902



THE BOARD



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Norwood**
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Marnie Allen
Vice-Chair



Kerri Heilman
Secretary



Ben Allen



**Stephanie
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