

changing lives

SINCE 1899



CHILDREN'S AID
AND FAMILY SERVICES

OUR MISSION

Our mission is to preserve, protect, and when needed, provide families. Motivated by compassion for vulnerable children, young adults, frail elderly and their families, we provide high-quality and innovative services that meet their social, educational and emotional needs.



WHO WE ARE

Children's Aid and Family Services is one of northern New Jersey's leading nonprofit providers of human services and child welfare programs. Whether we're working with a child seeking an adoptive family, supplying formula and diapers to families that are struggling financially, providing a low-income family with affordable child care, helping a teenager resist the pressure to take drugs, providing a mentor for a child in foster care, or offering support to those caring for elderly loved ones, we're helping to build futures for children and families in the communities we serve.

OUR HISTORY

Children's Aid and Family Services was founded in 1899 as a child protection and adoption agency, and for much of our history, we focused solely on placing children in adoptive homes. In fact, we've placed more than 10,000 infants with loving adoptive parents. The agency is a recognized leader in New Jersey in all aspects of pre-adoption and post-adoption services. These services support children in need of adoptive families, and also serve adult adoptees searching for members of their birth families, as well as those seeking to adopt a child, and anyone else whose life has been touched by adoption.

OUR EVOLUTION

While placing children for adoption is still one of our core commitments, we've evolved to keep pace with a changing world. The needs of the children we treat have changed dramatically during the last several years. Today, they come to us having suffered from more severe physical and emotional abuse and neglect, and having had less basic care from their families. Many of the children have serious behavioral and mental health issues, as well as social and learning challenges. As a result, they need more specialized treatment while living in the agency's therapeutic or family foster homes to help them start to heal. The agency's goal is to help them move on to a loving adoptive family, or live independently, with a job and a home to call their own.

OUR SERVICES

Our work includes adoption and adoption support services, therapeutic foster care for vulnerable children, child care and early education, elder-care, and strengthening the community through educational programs and workshops. Each of these services makes a profound and lasting difference in people's lives.



ADOPTION AND FOSTER CARE SERVICES

Adoptive and Foster Family Recruitment

We seek loving, compatible adoptive or foster families for children in our care. Using a variety of innovative community outreach efforts, families are identified for difficult-to-place children, including older, special needs, and minority children.

Therapeutic Foster Care

We run foster care group homes in Bergen, Essex, and Passaic counties for children and adolescents who are healing from the emotional wounds caused by abuse, and are not ready to live with a family. The homes are staffed by caring professionals, 24 hours a day, seven days a week. The homes also offer a highly structured and safe place to live, helping each child begin the difficult task of trusting again, and living in a family-like environment. We also offer a range of support services for young adults who have aged out of our foster care programs and are transitioning into independent living.

We provide individual foster families to medically needy infants and toddlers, as well as older children with special needs. Extensive training — including therapy, psychiatric services, case management, and educational monitoring — are offered to foster families to help them learn how to care for these children in their homes.

Pre- and Post-Adoption Counseling (PACS)

This program is in collaboration with the New Jersey Division of Youth and Family Services (DYFS), and was established to prevent adoption disruption, increase adoption finalizations, and improve adoptive family functioning.

New Jersey Adoption Resources Clearing House (NJ*ARCH)

The statewide one-stop resource for those touched by adoption, families interested in adoption, and professionals and community members interested in adoption issues. Visit www.njarch.org for further information.





Kinship Legal Guardianship

The KLG Counseling program offers families that reside in Bergen, Passaic and Essex Counties (excluding Newark) in-home counseling, utilizing child and family therapy, as well as case management that includes an assessment of the child's and family's needs.

KinKconnect

The New Jersey Kinship Legal Guardianship Resource Clearing House (KinKconnect) is a web-based information center for families. KinKconnect provides information, advocacy, support, education, and referral services to those involved with Kinship Care. Services are provided via the KinKconnect website, www.kinkconnect.org and a toll-free Warm Line.

Search and Reunion

A background and search service for agency clients who are interested in obtaining information about their medical and birth family histories, and/or interested in establishing contact with their birth families, and for birth parents who would like to meet the adult children placed for adoption through the agency.



COMMUNITY SERVICES

Turrell Child Care & Early Learning Center

Located in Paramus, the Turrell Center serves children from 8 weeks to kindergarten and offers an age-appropriate, comprehensive curriculum. The Turrell Center provides scholarships to approximately 43 percent of the families whose children attend, giving these families access to a high-quality early educational experience.

Baby Basics

This program provides nutritional formula, diapers, and other infant supplies to low-income families with children ages 2 years and younger living and working in Bergen County. Families are also offered education and a safety net system of emotional support, counseling, and referrals.

Family & Adoption Services Center

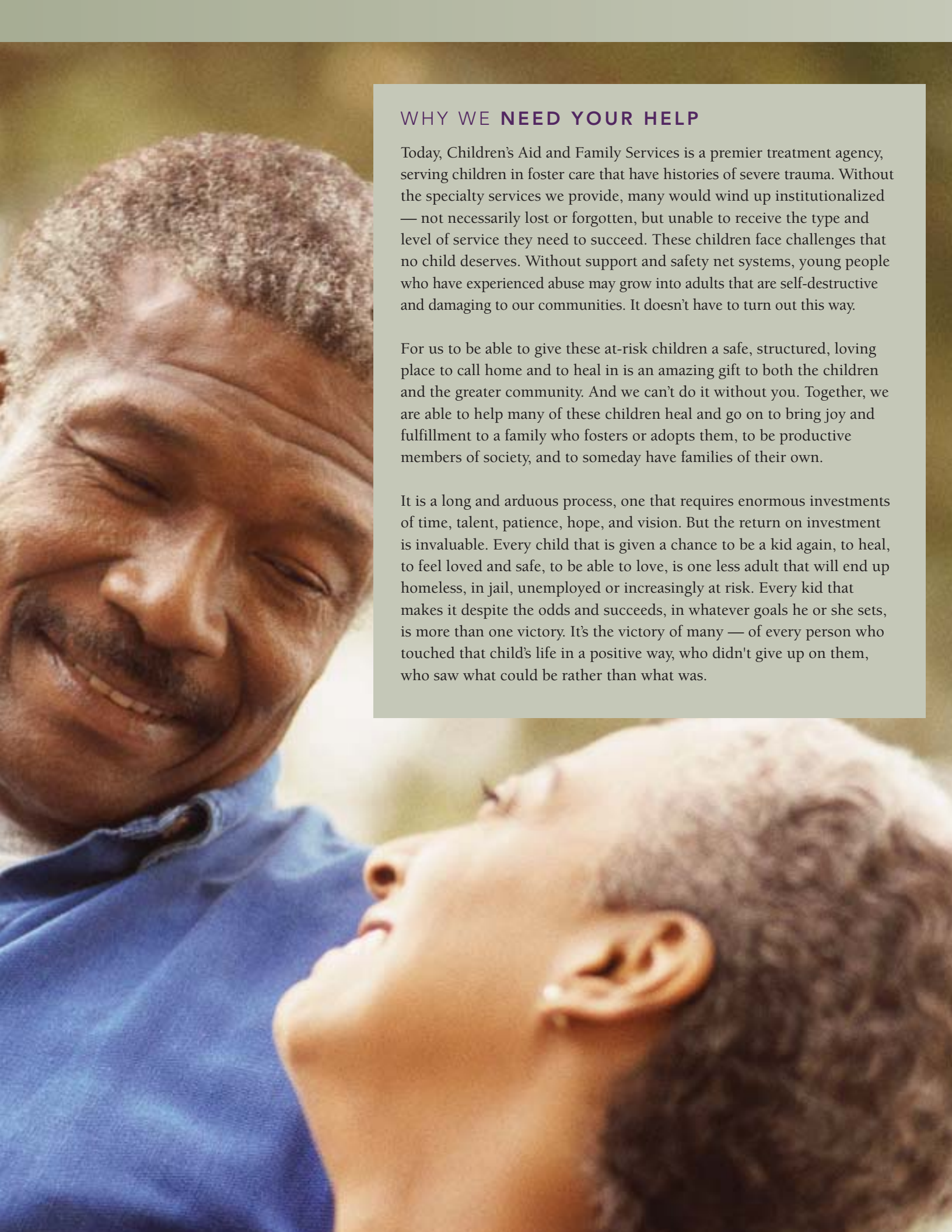
Based in our Ridgewood office, the Family & Adoption Services Center offers the community support, counseling and workshops on issues surrounding adoption. Family services include a Social Skills program designed to help children build and manage friendships, boost self-esteem, increase confidence, and improve communication skills, and the Every Person Influences Children (EPIC) parent education program. Other services include counseling and workshops to help strengthen families.

Eldercare

This program provides social work services at several senior centers in Bergen County. Services include educational programs, specialized counseling, assistance in completing applications for benefit and entitlement programs, community outreach referral services, and the Caregiver Support Group.

The Center for Alcohol and Drug Resources

Located in Hackensack and serving those living and working in Bergen County, The Center is a one-stop source of information, expertise and support in understanding and preventing alcohol and drug abuse. It provides community and school-based education programs about substance abuse and advocates for responsive prevention and treatment services.



WHY WE NEED YOUR HELP

Today, Children's Aid and Family Services is a premier treatment agency, serving children in foster care that have histories of severe trauma. Without the specialty services we provide, many would wind up institutionalized — not necessarily lost or forgotten, but unable to receive the type and level of service they need to succeed. These children face challenges that no child deserves. Without support and safety net systems, young people who have experienced abuse may grow into adults that are self-destructive and damaging to our communities. It doesn't have to turn out this way.

For us to be able to give these at-risk children a safe, structured, loving place to call home and to heal in is an amazing gift to both the children and the greater community. And we can't do it without you. Together, we are able to help many of these children heal and go on to bring joy and fulfillment to a family who fosters or adopts them, to be productive members of society, and to someday have families of their own.

It is a long and arduous process, one that requires enormous investments of time, talent, patience, hope, and vision. But the return on investment is invaluable. Every child that is given a chance to be a kid again, to heal, to feel loved and safe, to be able to love, is one less adult that will end up homeless, in jail, unemployed or increasingly at risk. Every kid that makes it despite the odds and succeeds, in whatever goals he or she sets, is more than one victory. It's the victory of many — of every person who touched that child's life in a positive way, who didn't give up on them, who saw what could be rather than what was.



HOW YOU CAN HELP

ADOPT. FOSTER. VOLUNTEER. DONATE.

With facilities located throughout northern New Jersey, Children's Aid and Family Services is one of northern New Jersey's oldest and largest child welfare and family services agencies. Through our array of programs — which include adoption and foster care, child care and early education, community counseling, eldercare, substance abuse education and prevention, and help for low-income families with young children struggling to provide the basics — we can and do make a difference every day for the people in our communities. But we can't do it without you — our volunteers, our mentors, our foster parents, our loyal supporters, and our friends. To learn more about our services, call 201.261.2800 or visit www.cafsnj.org.

