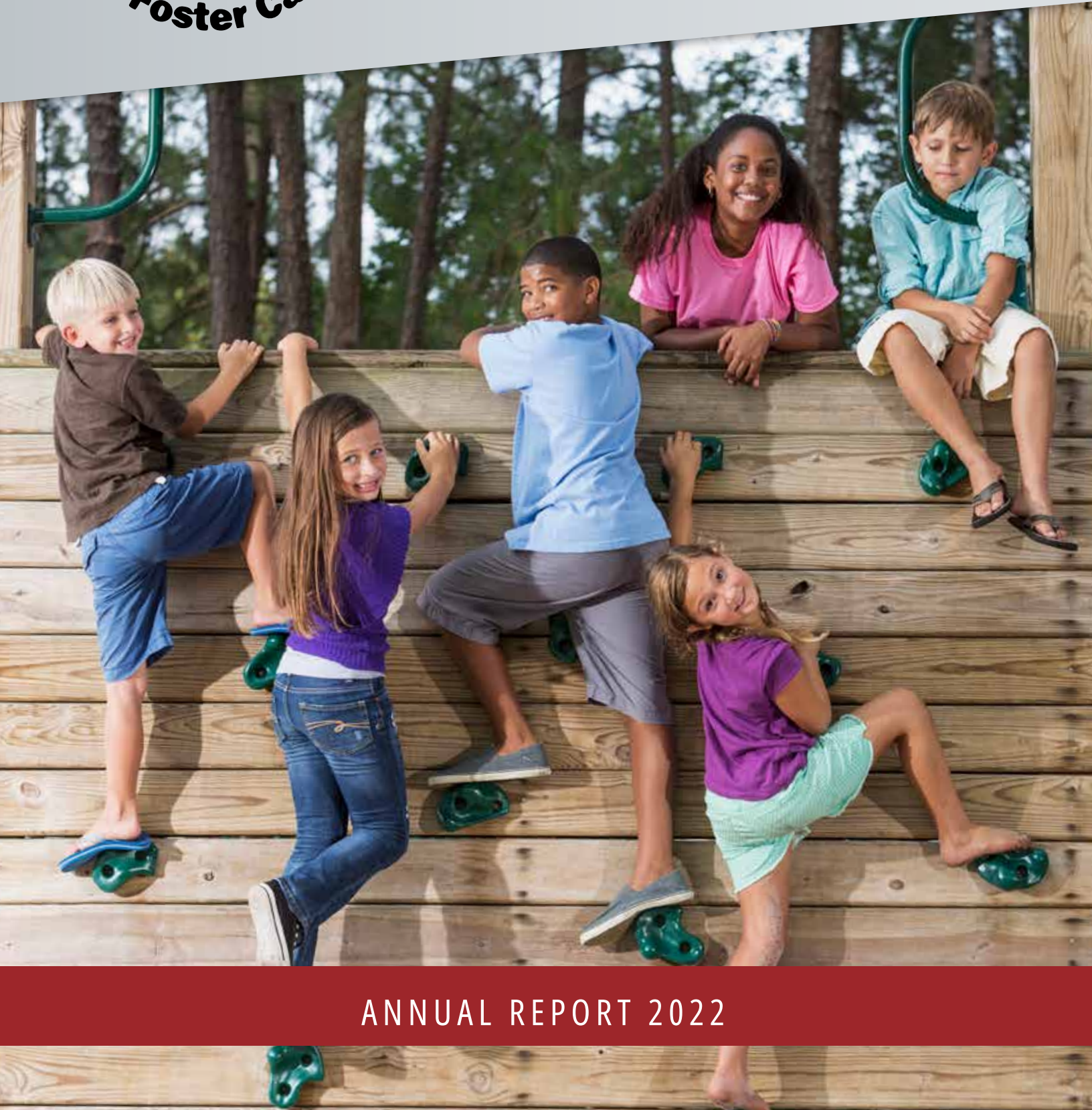




# Tidewater Friends of Foster Care



ANNUAL REPORT 2022

# Tidewater Friends of Foster Care

# Organization Overview

## Our Mission

To create opportunities and environments for foster youth and their families to thrive.

## Our Vision

To be the most innovative, valuable and inclusive partner in creating community-based support for youth and families in the foster care system.

## Our Values

We find a way to say “Yes” to those in need and build on the strengths of those we serve.

We are solution oriented with a commitment to integrity, excellence, inclusiveness, diversity, and accountability.

We take holistic approaches with measurable and lasting impacts.

We deliver on our commitments with compassion, respect and humility.

## Our Goals

To ensure every child has a loving family placement capable of meeting their emotional, physical and psychological needs—through targeted outreach and training initiatives for foster parents.

To eliminate placement disruption and systemic recidivism within the foster care system—through comprehensive, on-going support of youth and families across all realms of the child welfare system.

To improve long-term outcomes of youth involved in the foster care system—through steadfast and strategic investment in enrichment programs that bridge gaps between publicly available resources and those elements essential to a healthy, happy and rewarding childhood.

# Welcome to Our 2022 Annual Report

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# LETTER *from the* PRESIDENT



**Audra Bullock**  
President

As I reflect on 2022 and all the undertakings, successes, challenges, changes, and personal journeys of those involved in the child welfare system, I find one thing that remained steadfast this year—the unwavering support from our community for children and families involved in the foster care system. From the individual donor, to the large foundations and from the social workers on the front lines to broader state initiatives, all have been united in working to better the outcomes of children and families in foster care. For me, a former foster parent, an adoptive parent of two children from foster care, and a child advocate, this is particularly heartwarming and hope inspiring.

I often find myself feeling rather gloomy after watching the evening news these days, with the overwhelming amount of discord in the world, but when I think about all these unpublicized acts of benevolence, I know we are collectively united in our efforts to make a difference. We have more in common than what the nightly news tells us. We want our friends, neighbors and communities to be healthy and happy and we are willing to do what it takes to make that a reality. Take for example Giving Tuesday for 2022, which was the largest collective Giving Tuesday on record, with \$3.1 Billion raised in a single day in the US. That is an amazing statement of concern for our fellow citizens—and animal, and environment, and important causes—and moreover, a cooperative effort to make a difference. What I see in reflecting on 2022 is that benevolence is what unites us, and that is something to celebrate, certainly so, for the children and families involved in the foster care system that were the recipients of the generous support of our donors this year.

In this year's annual report, you will find updates on TFFC programs and their outcomes in 2022, along with stories of inspiration that exemplify that incredible support our community offers youth in foster care. We served 832 foster youth, 646 at-risk or underserved youth, and touched more than 700 families with our programming in 2022. We invested over \$900,000 in creating opportunities and environments for children and families to thrive, helping students excel in school, youth improve their health and wellness, teens transition to productive adulthood, and families become more stable.

To all our donors, partners, volunteers and staff who have joined us throughout the years in making a difference in the lives of foster children, I express my deepest gratitude. To all the professionals who have dedicated their careers to serving the vulnerable within our community, you have my sincere appreciation for all you do. To all the foster youth, foster parents, and families involved in the foster care system, I commend your strength, resiliency and dedication to family and you have my promise that TFFC, along with all our supporters, will be there when you need us.

Sincerely,

**Audra Bullock**

*President, Tidewater Friends of Foster Care*

# OUR BOARD & OFFICERS

## BOARD OF DIRECTORS

### **Audra Bullock**

*Board Chair, TFFC President, and foster/adoptive parent, Virginia Beach*

### **Angelina Hopkins**

*Educator and Community Leader, Chesapeake*

### **Ken Shewbridge**

*Community Leader and foster/adoptive parent, Virginia Beach*

### **Joy Rios**

*Founder and President, Connect With A Wish and foster/adoptive parent, Virginia Beach*

### **TaShara Bailey**

*Director, First Star Old Dominion University Academy, Norfolk*

### **Mary Bonsby-Brock**

*Community Leader and adoptive parent, Chesapeake*

### **T. Richard Litton, Jr.**

*President, Harbor Group International and foster/adoptive parent, Virginia Beach*

### **Tracy Keller**

*CEO, Girl Scouts of the Colonial Coast and foster/adoptive parent, Chesapeake*

### **Chuck Gray**

*Founder & President of Youth Solutions Inc, Newport News*

### **Marcella Davis**

*Community Leader and foster parent, Chesapeake*

### **Robert E. McCartney**

*CEO, The James Barry Robinson Institute, Norfolk*

### **Lakysa Laing**

*Director, Cox Communications and foster care alum, Chesapeake*

### **Kate Powell**

*Director of Development for Tidewater Arts Outreach, and foster parent, Norfolk*

## OFFICERS

### **Audra Bullock**

*President*

### **Autumn Young**

*Vice President*

### **T. Richard Litton, Jr.**

*Secretary, Treasurer*

### **Thomas R. Litton, Sr.**

*Assistant Treasurer*

## ADVISORY BOARD

### **Denise Gallop**

*Director of Human Services Norfolk Department of Human Services*

### **Kimberly Lewis**

*Programs Manager Foster Care & Adoption Unit, Norfolk Department of Human Services*

### **Camille Campos-Wilson**

*Office Manager Foster Care & Adoption Unit, Norfolk Department of Human Services*

### **Karen Opie**

*Resource Manager Foster Care & Adoption Unit, Norfolk Department of Human Services*

### **Christina Lenhart**

*Adoptions Supervisor Foster Care & Adoption Unit, Norfolk Department of Human Services*

### **LaCora Harris**

*Family Services Worker III Foster Care & Adoption Resource Development, Spotsylvania County Department of Human Services*

### **Stefanie Fabrizio**

*Foster Care Manager Portsmouth Department of Social Services*

### **Jennifer Bond**

*Foster Care Manager Virginia Beach Department of Human Services*

### **Felicia Legarde**

*Family Services Specialist, Foster Care & Adoption, Chesapeake Department of Human Services*

### **Sarah Rexrode**

*Director, Franklin City Department of Social Services*

### **Rhonda Williams**

*Senior Family Services Supervisor, Newport News Department of Human Services*

### **Selena Marrow-Smith**

*Family Services Supervisor, Newport News Department of Human Services*

### **Saniyyah**

**Manigault-Westbrook**  
*Assistant Director of Family Services, Suffolk Department of Social Services*

### **BéBé Tran**

*Foster Parent Specialist II, Commonwealth Catholic Charities*

### **Melvin Roy**

*Foster Care Alum and Founder of Foster U*



# The State *of* Foster Care

At the end of 2021 we reported that the numbers of youth entering foster care in Virginia was in a decline due to shifts in child protective services reporting that resulted from the COVID-19 pandemic. In 2022 we saw the numbers of youth being placed in care begin to rise again. At the end of 2022 there were 5111 children in care, a 4% increase over 2021, bringing the population of youth in care back to the pre-COVID levels of 2019. In total, more than 7200 youth were involved in the Virginia foster care system throughout the year. Despite increases in the number of youth entering foster care, Families First legislation remains an impactful priority at the state and federal level, allowing for greater preventative services and favoring placement with kinship families.

Here is some insight into the reporting that leads to the overall number of children in foster care. In any given year around 50,000 youth in Virginia will be reported on and involved in an investigation of maltreatment or other issues. About 3,300 of these children will receive services in their homes as a result of that investigation, while 2,600 will enter the foster care system. In addition, 80% of all youth entering care do so for reasons of neglect or parent drug use—situations where pointed resources can make a huge impact—as opposed to physical or sexual abuse, which would require immediate separation for the safety of the child. As such, there are many more youth who are living in environments that simply need improvement than those who need to enter foster care because of imminent and life-threatening danger. Families First legislation allows for more in-home services for these youth, with the aim of preventing the trauma of a separation from

their primary caregiver—an Adverse Childhood Experience that can have myriad negative health impacts as they age.

Of the children involved in the foster care system in 2022, nearly 60% lived with non-relative foster parents—this is what one traditionally thinks of as a foster parent. With the Families First initiative, placement with relatives while in foster care are on the rise and approximately 10% of foster children this year lived with a relative while in foster care. Just over 14% of youth were placed in independent living arrangements—these are older teens who are able to live on their own with supervision and support—while almost 500 children were placed in congregate care (group homes and residential facilities) at some point during their stay in foster care, spending an average of 22 months there, without day-to-day connection with a family.

Over 2100 children exited the foster care system in 2022, spending an average of 24.3 months in care. Approximately 340 children were placed permanently with a relative other than their parents, after an average stay of 7 months in foster care. Nearly 600 children were reunified with their parents, with an average stay in foster care of 12.6 months, while over 700 children were adopted, with this group spending on average 26 months in foster care before the adoption was finalized. Sadly, 420 foster youth emancipated from or aged out of foster care, at 18 years old, having spent an average of over 32 months in foster care.

Teens still remain over-represented in care, with 47% of all youth in care being 13 or older. Teens tend to stay in care longer than their younger peers. Teenagers are also less likely to find permanency, either by returning home or being adopted, and are more likely than their younger peers to be in congregate care. These youth often face disconnection, making wrap-a-round and community-based services, like the TFFC tutoring program, particularly important. This is one of the reasons that in 2022 TFFC extended the duration of our services indefinitely to youth who exit care, so that we can be a constant pillar of support for youth who may not have anyone else to rely on.

Over representation of Black children in foster care continues to be an issue of focus. At the time of this report, over 39% of the children in Virginia foster care were Black, Indigenous and People of Color (BIPOC), with 27% being Black. This compares to a general population that is 33% BIPOC and 19% Black. This directs us to focus more of our resources on recruiting foster parents of color and providing resources to historically underserved communities to help prevent entry into care. In this regard, we have expanded our partnership with Communities in Schools to serve more youth in Title I schools, and have looked westward towards Richmond, the largest foster care population in the state.

As we turn our sights to the Central Virginia region, Richmond and surrounding localities, we see that trends there were different during COVID-19, where the foster care population increased by 13% at the end of 2020, before falling back to their pre-COVID numbers at the end of 2021. TFFC has begun serving youth in Central Virginia through our partnership with Commonwealth Catholic Charities, an organization that serves international and refugee youth whose custody is held by the federal government. This population faces unique challenges, and for us that has meant increasing our supply of English as a Second Language (ESL) tutors to help transition these youth to the United States' educational system. As this is a new population that we are encountering—these children are not counted in the VDSS foster care numbers—we are unable to speak to trends, but we look forward to serving them moving forward.

Permanency remains the forefront goal of foster care. The number of youth who remain over 5 years in care has dropped since 2010, and now only 15% of youth remain in care for longer than 3 years. While that is a good decrease, we hope to see those numbers drop even further as new foster and adoptive families open their homes so we can prevent youth from languishing in care. Currently, 1700 youth are awaiting loving adoptive homes in Virginia.





# Our Program Updates

## TUTORING

Tidewater Friends of Foster Care provides one-on-one, in-home academic support to help foster youth overcome learning gaps caused by family disruption. We hire the very best private tutors that go into the home (or instruct one-on-one via live virtual instructional platforms), so that parents are not required to provide transportation and so that children can establish a healthy studying environment at home. Our tutors are highly-qualified, professional educators, contracted competitively to guarantee that our kids are getting the best tutoring services with accountability and retention—our goal is to ensure that our tutors lend not only to academic progress, but the overall stability of the lives of the children we serve.

Through this program we provide free professional tutoring from Pre-K to College, including vocational studies and GED certification. We offer this service to foster care students while in care and, new this year, throughout the rest of their academic journeys. Yes, we now tutor until our students have completed their academic goals, whether that be a high-school diploma, post-secondary certificate or degree, or graduate studies—TFFC is staying the academic course with them.

We reached two truly significant milestones this year with our tutoring program: we provided our 30,000th hour of individualized instruction in October and enrolled our 500th student in December! These numbers represent an incredible effort from tutors and their students and a lasting investment in long-term outcomes for young adults with lived experience in the foster care system.

Nationally, youth in foster care have significantly poorer educational outcomes than their non-foster care peers. According to the Annie E. Casey Foundation, they are over 30% less likely to complete high school and as much as 90% less likely to obtain a college degree. A significant driver for this shortfall is instability: Foster youth are twice as likely to have excessive absences and 3 times more likely to be expelled than their peers. By 18 years old, over 1/3 of foster youth have experienced more than 5 school changes. This instability coupled with the physical, emotional and behavioral challenges that exist for foster youth resulting from a history of maltreatment impede them from prospering.

The TFFC Tutoring Program is aimed at assisting these students to break through these barriers and excel in school. Our model works, because our tutors developed meaningful and supportive relationships with their students, acting as positive role models and unwavering educational advocates. More than 90% of the active seniors in our program have graduated from high school, with 93% of our students have promoted grade levels and this past academic year, 79% of our students passed every class\*—with our support to overcome the academic barriers, our students are thriving! (\*Students with 4 or more tutoring sessions).



# How did our students do in the 2021-22 Academic Year?

Names of the students have been changed to protect their identity

## 187 Students

Received 1 or more hours of tutoring

## 168 Students

Received 4 or more hours of tutoring

## 41 Students

Received tutoring services after exiting foster care

## 6730 hours

of instruction with students

## Outcomes 2021-22 AY for Students

with 4 or more tutoring hours

## 93%

Promoted

## 89%

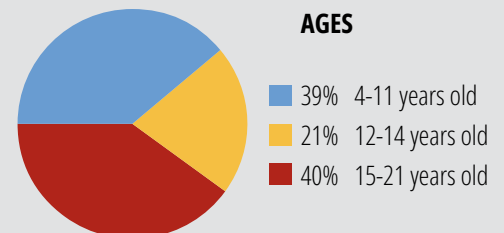
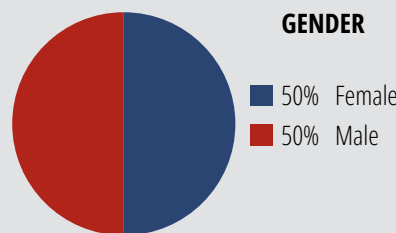
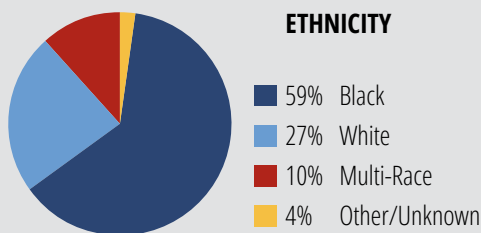
Passed all tutored subjects

## 79%

Passed all classes

## 100%

Seniors graduated on time!



### Emma—19 years old, enrolled in college

Emma was enrolled in the TFFC tutoring program shortly after she entered foster care at the end of her junior year with failing grades. Like so many foster youth, she was not attending school on a regular basis and was unmotivated, disorganized and lacked self-confidence. She began working one-on-one with a TFFC tutor and was able to promote to 12th grade. As Emma and her tutor worked together, rapport was built and magic happened! Emma started to enjoy reading, complete school assignments on time, keep a schedule, and develop a positive attitude about school. She even started thinking about her future. Her grades dramatically improved and she received straight A's her senior year and graduated high school on time! Emma is currently enrolled in her second year of college and is working a part time job.

#### From Emma's tutor, Ms. Xochilt Bermudez

Emma and I first started working together in April 2020. When we first got started, she was failing most of her classes. We had to work really hard, even spending some late nights trying to catch her up. I tutored her in English, history, forensics, and her personal finance class. There was so much to do in every class! I remember the TFFC Tutoring Administrator, C.B., asking me if we really worked until midnight a few nights, and we really had! I reached out to her guidance counselor and some of her teachers to see what the major assignments were; we all worked together so Emma could pass 11th grade and graduate high school the following year. Graduating on time was very important to her, so I did everything I could to help her. The following year, I tutored her in English and history and we just kept working hard. She surprised herself with the A's she earned her senior year and she made me proud. I knew she had that in her all along and it was my pleasure to help her see that for herself.

Emma and I have continued to work very hard to make sure she is successful in college. She is a very determined young lady, so that makes my job easier. Her current goals are to graduate with an associate's degree, and then continue for her bachelor's degree in photography. She is also considering a minor in performing arts and/or business; she has an interest in both. We have discussed a possible dual major so that she can accomplish everything she wants to do.

What impresses me the most about Emma, is that she never gives up. She continues to press through the challenges she faces. I felt very honored that she wanted me to continue to tutor her

in college, and I will gladly do so for as long as I can be helpful. Emma is a success story, and I believe she will continue to be one.

### James—17 years old in high school

James came into foster care just before Thanksgiving of 2021, 2 days after his 16th birthday. He had not attended school since 7th grade. After spending one month at a local high school, he was considered to be a sophomore and placed in 10th grade classes. He was enrolled in the TFFC tutoring program in late December and paired up with a tutor to help with math and English. His tutor quickly realized there were major issues with his math skills... there were fundamental gaps and he did not know his times tables. With assistance from TFFC's tutoring program, James successfully completed his classes and was promoted to the next grade.

#### From James' tutor, Dhiann Geier

James was not a natural math student. He was, however, a natural writer. He answered essay and short answer questions thoughtfully. I learned something new every time I read his writing—a new way to think about a reading assignment from his teacher. He read every book I lent to him. He understood Shakespeare and wrote wonderful stories for his own pleasure.

While we concentrated mostly on math when we worked together, we also talked about how to raise your hand to ask a question in class. When he had a question or concern about an assignment or a grade, we emailed the teacher together. James had to learn that he needed to check his assignments each night and that he needed to get them submitted on time. Through our time together, he learned how to be a good student and how to advocate for himself.

He now knows his times tables, and he is now solving equations and inequalities. He knows square roots, factoring, exponents, and the basics of geometry. I gave him math homework at every tutoring session, and I gave a lot of it, and he completed it every single time. In fact, he would give himself extra homework, on top of the work I gave him.

This young man finished his sophomore year with all A's and is now taking Honors English. With the support and guidance of an incredible foster mom, this young man has taken full advantage of what TFFC has provided to him. And I'm confident he is on his way to a happy, successful life.

## OUTREACH

Outreach is one of the most important avenues of long-term advocacy we undertake for youth in foster care. Our goal is to recruit a surplus of loving foster parents that will be ready and willing to take in children entering foster care, so that no child goes without a family placement. We then aim to support these parents so they stay the course with a child for the duration of the foster care custody case, however long it takes and wherever it may lead. Our outreach work doesn't stop there, though. We work to engage supporters, volunteers, donors and community members in a level of awareness that can meet all the needs of the local foster care community. We educate, inspire and engage people from all walks of life to make a difference for children and families in their time of greatest need. From finding foster parents for a child entering care to providing a birthday gift for a child already in care, TFFC is there to ensure the needs of all foster children are met responsively and reliably!

Foster parent recruiting is a long game. It requires a process of training, engaging, supporting and cultivating individuals and couples, emotionally and intellectually, on a journey that lasts from months to years. It is not a simple process and for many people, it is a very involved journey of deep introspection, even for those who feel called to help these children. That's why TFFC has taken a Village approach. We enable our community to show up and help in whatever capacity they can; we invite them to learn about these children, their families, and their needs in ways that are comfortable; and we guide those who are interested in exploring the possibility of becoming a foster parent on a supportive journey, with others considering the same, to a decision that works for them.

Foster parenting is not the only way to make a lasting impact, though. There is room for everyone to make a difference in a child's life and this is the focus of our Foster Care Aware Events each May for National Foster Care month. New in 2022 was the publication of four new digital resource guides on how to make the most of advocating: 1) for those thinking of fostering, 2) for existing foster parents 3) for social workers and 4) for community volunteers and supporters. With our Foster Care Aware events, our outreach campaign, and digital resource guides we reached nearly 4000 people.

We also held two in-person events this year to celebrate families in all their forms. The goal of these events was to educate, develop community, and celebrate those making an impact for the children involved in the foster care system. The first event in May—National Foster Care month—at Smartmouth Brewing Company was great fun for all. There was a festival type atmosphere for the whole family, with live music by the Love Monsters, bounce houses, learning and activity stations, and much more. The second event was held in November at the Cedar Point Country Club in honor of National Adoption Month to celebrate the Chosen Family—those who have intentionally chosen to embrace, nurture, love and support children regardless of birth or relation. Here we had guest speaker Lakysa Laing who shared her experience as a foster youth and a member of a chosen family through her adoption. Both of these events highlighted the fact that families come in all forms and Love is what truly makes a family.

Our Prospective Parent Program (PPP), which helps guide people through the decision process of becoming a foster parent, grew even stronger this year, providing the emotional support and accountability needed to thrive throughout the process. Through the PPP, prospective parents join a community where they learn skills and tools to help them navigate the system, choose a licensing agency, and connect with other people on similar journeys. Prospective Parents have their questions answered by professionals and other parents, and are paired with a personal coach so they can talk through the ups and downs and get the support they need throughout the whole process.

Our goal is to bring more people into the sphere that cares for these children and their families and support them throughout this incredibly important journey.

Tidewater Friends of Foster Care presents

# FOSTER CARE AWARE

AT-A-GLANCE 2022

EVERGREEN RESOURCES, HELPFUL GUIDES and  
**BUILDING A STRONGER COMMUNITY**

FosterCareAware.org RESOURCE WEBSITE LAUNCH



**478**

TOTAL SITE VISITORS



**932**

UNIQUE PAGE VIEWS



**10+**

DIFFERENT COUNTRIES

TOP 5 COUNTRIES

- United States
- Canada
- United Kingdom
- Mexico
- Brazil



**108 TOTAL  
DOWNLOADS**

- 50 Social Worker Guide Downloads
- 24 Foster Parent Guide Downloads
- 21 Community Member Guide Downloads
- 13 Prospective Parent Guide Downloads

**394**

UNIQUE SITE VISITORS

**57%**

BOUNCE RATE

Celebration of Families in All of Their Forms IN-PERSON COMMUNITY EVENT

**3 HOURS** of

- Live Music
- Delicious Brews
- Face Painting
- Bounce House
- Family Fun
- Impactful Speeches

The announcement  
of Social Worker  
**YMCA Memberships!**



**3790**

PEOPLE  
REACHED  
ON SOCIAL  
MEDIA

**107**

FAMILIES  
RESPONDED

**104**

APPLICATIONS  
SUBMITTED

All results are accurate as of 12/31/2022 • Visit FosterCareAware.org to learn more, and get information about how you can help.



## EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

Extracurricular activities are so important to the whole health of a child. They inspire kids to get out and be active, develop and refine social and interpersonal skills, and generally make for better spirits for everyone involved. This is particularly so for kids in foster care, many of whom need this kind of stress release. That's why TFFC supports extracurricular activities for youth in foster care and since 2016 we have supported over 677 separate activities for 336 kids in foster care of all ages. From swimming to singing lessons, and from dance to drum lessons, we've helped foster kids engage in healthy and enriching activities that will benefit them over the long run. In 2022 we supported 277 activities for 134 youth—a record year for us!



We've also continued our partnerships with the YMCA of South Hampton Roads and the Virginia Peninsulas to offer Y memberships to our foster youth and their families. This year, TFFC sponsored 183 YMCA family memberships for 296 foster youth and 763 family members across Hampton Roads. These incredible partnerships make it possible to leverage the most benefit for the youth and families we serve, helping to keep them healthy, happy, and engaged throughout the year!

A tremendous Thank You to our YMCA partners. They have gone above and beyond to give our foster youth and their families a place for respite, healthy activities and embraced belonging.

## GIFTING PROGRAM

Birthdays and holidays can be hard for kids in foster care, who are away from their families on these special occasions. State and Federal funds are prohibited from being used to purchase gifts for children in foster care. That's why local departments of social services look to community partners to provide resources for gifting programs for the youth in their care. TFFC is proud to be the largest community provider of birthday and holiday gifts to foster care agencies in Hampton Roads and it's all thanks to our big-hearted supporters who make sure every foster youth—from infants to young adults—are acknowledged with gifts!

In 2022 we had 548 sponsors who helped us celebrate birthdays and holidays for 714 foster youth and 646 at-risk youth, fulfilling 2041 wish lists for a grand total of nearly \$170,000 in gifts provided. This was a year that truly filled our hearts with joy to have touched so many children in such a meaningful and personal way.

We send a BIG THANKS to our Friends at Suburban Capital, who donated space at the Pembroke Office Complex in Virginia Beach for our Holiday Project this year, where a literal sea of presents was collected for all the youth we serve. It was a sight to behold!

We also send BIG THANKS to all of the sponsors, volunteers, donors and social workers who took part





in the 2022 Gifting Program and made the holidays merry and birthdays special for over 700 families through their benevolence! From purchasing and wrapping to organizing and delivering, our supporters made a tremendous impact in the community. The children and families served through this project are incredibly appreciative of this warm generosity.

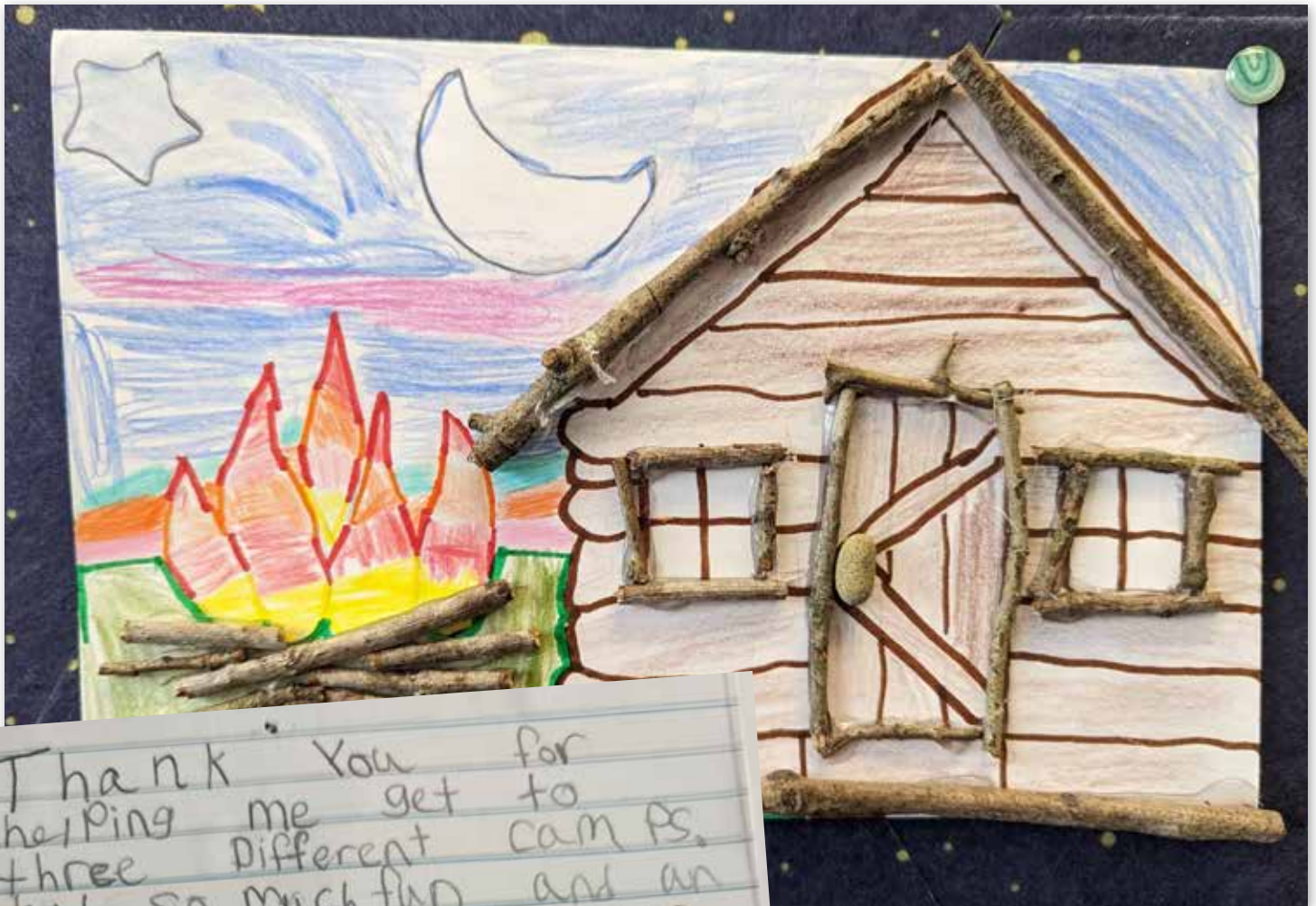
## CAMPS

Camp is a normalizing activity for kids in foster care—an opportunity to be peers, to have fun, to build friendships and social skills, all the while taking their minds off the hard situation they face in foster care—and an opportunity for respite for parents. Camps of all kinds were in extraordinary demand this year. Through the incredible support of our generous donors, TFFC sponsored 297 camp sessions for 125 campers in 2022. That’s a record-breaking camp season for TFFC and a 20% growth from the previous year. We not only sent children to camps during the summer, but new to the program this year, we also added school’s out camp and winter break camps to the mix. Campers got to experience overnight and day camps including Camp Silver Beach, Camp Red Feather, D’Art Camp, Paddleboard Camp, Volleyball Camp, and many, many more. This year presented a truly amazing experience for the kids and families we serve.

We send a special thanks to the Philbin Family and the E. C. Warehiem Foundation for sponsoring so many of our kids to attend the best camps in Hampton Roads—the joy these camps have created is remarkable!







Thank You for helping me get to three different camps. I had so much fun and an amazing time. Two were overnight camps and one a music camp. Now I have so much experience. You made my summer fun.

“Thank you for helping me get to three different camps. I had so much fun and an amazing time. Two were overnight camps and one a music camp. Now I have so much experience. You made my summer fun.”

Anna, age 10

## Foster Parents Love Our Camps Too!

A huge THANK YOU!!! for this opportunity. I'm seeing a lot of growth with peer interaction, learning new songs, arts and crafts and even picking up bugs. So grateful for the opportunity!!!

**Patricia**

Thank you so much! You have made R's summer possible! She loves the YMCA camp, but we couldn't afford the entire summer. Thank you for everything that you have done for R. and the other children in foster care in our area! With deep appreciation,

**Katherine**



# Special Events

## FIRST ANNUAL COLLEGE TOUR

TFFC sent 13 middle and high school students on our first annual college tour in the DC and Baltimore area. When we began the tutoring program, getting our kids into college was a dream. Six years later we are tutoring college students and exposing our younger students to the possibility that higher education is for them too. Our first annual college tour was a rousing success with the partnership of the Joe Lee Hansley Foundation and we plan to continue college tours for years to come.

## 2022 GALA

It was a night to remember! After scheduling and rescheduling the Gala in response to the COVID-19 pandemic, TFFC was thrilled to host the 2022 Gala and Art Auction. The event featured original paintings from foster youth, heart warming and impactful speeches from our special honorees and an incredible show of support from our community. Thank you to our 2022 Gala attendees and sponsors—it takes a village, and we are so glad to have you as part of ours.

## PAINT THE ROCK

In 2022 TFFC partnered with Alpha Xi Delta , Delta Mu Sorority of ODU to raise awareness about the needs of foster youth. Alpha Xi Delta painted the Old Dominion University PRIDE rock—a rock on the ODU campus that is accessible to all student organizations to paint messages that are important to them. TFFC was happy to be featured on PRIDE rock along with foster care statistics, raising awareness among students that even if they are still in the midst of young adulthood, there are still actions they can take to help this vulnerable population.

## ANGELS IN ADOPTION

Audra Bullock, TFFC President and Founder, was a 2022 Angels in Adoption Honoree. This award is given by the Congressional Coalition on Adoption Institute and features a 2-day trip to DC to speak with congressional leaders about the state of adoption and foster care in the US. CCAI's Angels in Adoption Leadership Program honors a wide spectrum of individuals and organizations making extraordinary contributions in adoption, permanency, and child welfare. Dr. Bullock was honored to be nominated by Senator Warner.







# New Partnerships & Initiatives

This year was the year of expanded partnerships. On the service front, we added Commonwealth Catholic Charities of Virginia (CCC) as our newest foster care agency partner. This was an exciting and unique addition to our client base, as CCC provides foster care to refugee children. These are children who have fled their homes because of war, persecution, or other dangerous living situations. These children, who are settled through the United Nations, typically arrive in the United States without their parents. Commonwealth Catholic Charities of Virginia places these children—approximately 60 at the time of this report—in foster homes locally and across the state, where they are supported and cared for as they adjust to their new lives in the US. Tidewater Friends of Foster Care now serves these children with our full complement of programs, which requires some additional accommodations, for example, hiring new tutors with experience teaching English as a Second Language (ESL) and adding new holidays to the list of celebrations in our gifting program. We are proud to partner with CCC to make a difference for these special foster children.

We also expanded the duration of program access for our existing clients this year, so that we now serve foster youth throughout their educational journeys regardless of when or how they exit care. This was a big stride for our Educational Services program, whereby we have agreed to provide access to individualized tutoring for as long as a student needs it after they have exited foster care. We are underwriting this additional expense through our new TFFC Tutoring For All initiative—a for-profit business line where we offer tutoring services to the general public and use the profits to support tutoring for foster youth. It's a win-win... buy one, give one, like the Tom's shoe model. If you know of a student needing top-notch tutoring, please recommend TFFC Tutoring For All ([TFFCtutoringforall.org](http://TFFCtutoringforall.org))—it is a wonderful way to share our expert tutoring benefits for all children.

Finally, we expanded our YMCA partnership this year in several remarkably impactful ways. First, we expanded the age eligibility to include children 3 years and older. Previously our minimum age requirement was 6 years old. The impact of this change was to expand access to the benefits of the YMCA for our foster parents, to promote whole-family wellness. When we look at the factors that lead to placement stability, parent wellness and self-care top the list. Furthermore, in a bold move to help ensure the very best case management for children and families in the foster care system, we opened our YMCA program to our foster care social workers as well. Social workers are the front line responders and principal advocates for vulnerable families and we feel it is important to support and care for them so they can show up with their very best for families in the foster care system. The YMCA has been an incredible partner in helping to underwrite these memberships—showing that they are the “Care” in Foster Care!

We send our deepest gratitude to our YMCA Friends and Family for making such an impactful partnership in our community's well being.





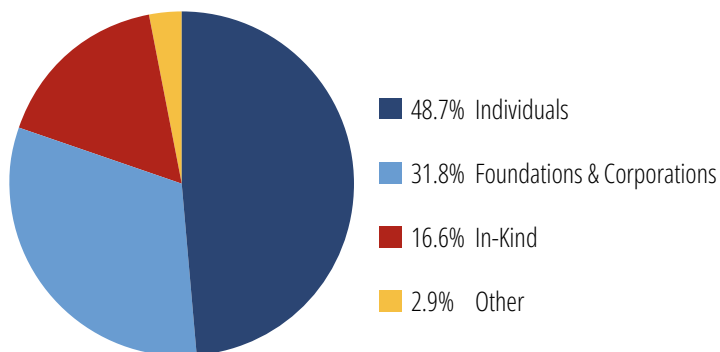
# Development & Investment

Through the generous contribution of donors, sponsors and supporters, TFFC has invested nearly \$3.2M in improving outcomes for the foster youth of Hampton Roads since our founding in 2016. Aligned with our mission, we made investments that will have meaningful and lasting impacts in the lives of foster children. We work hard to ensure that every child served receives the very best services, with the most efficient use of resources possible.

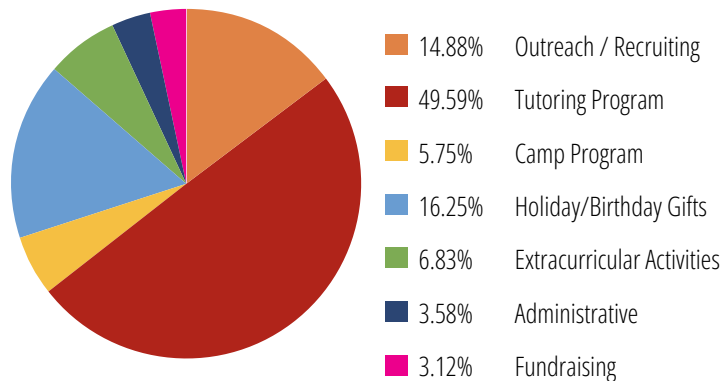
Our on-going commitment is that for every dollar given to TFFC, we invest at least 90% in programs that directly benefit foster youth, and to date, we have lived up to that promise! More than 93% of every dollar spent has been on our service programs. We have maintained this high investment efficiency by relying heavily on volunteers and community partnerships to keep our administrative costs as low as possible; for example, the TFFC President and Director, Audra Bullock, continues to donate 100% of her time to leading the organization. We have also built a core support staff, made up of both extraordinary full-time and part-time employees, to ensure our program integrity and quality of service remain top-notch. As we continue to grow and expand our geographic service regions, we are committed to keeping our pledge of efficacy and efficiency in making a difference for foster youth and their families.

The support to fund this programming is an amalgam of Institutional, Individual and In-kind donations. We rely on the generosity of our donors for the majority of our program support; however, we are growing our Tutoring For All business line as a revenue source for supporting the Educational Services for foster youth. The goal is to generate enough revenue through our tutoring services from Tutoring For All (tutoring for the general public) to eventually fully support the tutoring program for foster youth. We have affectionately dubbed it the Tom's of Tutoring model, where you buy one hour of tutoring for your child/student and give one hour of tutoring to a foster child/student. This business line is in its infancy, but something to keep an eye on as we grow it over the next several years.

## DEVELOPMENT



## INVESTMENT



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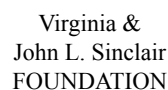
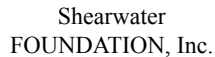
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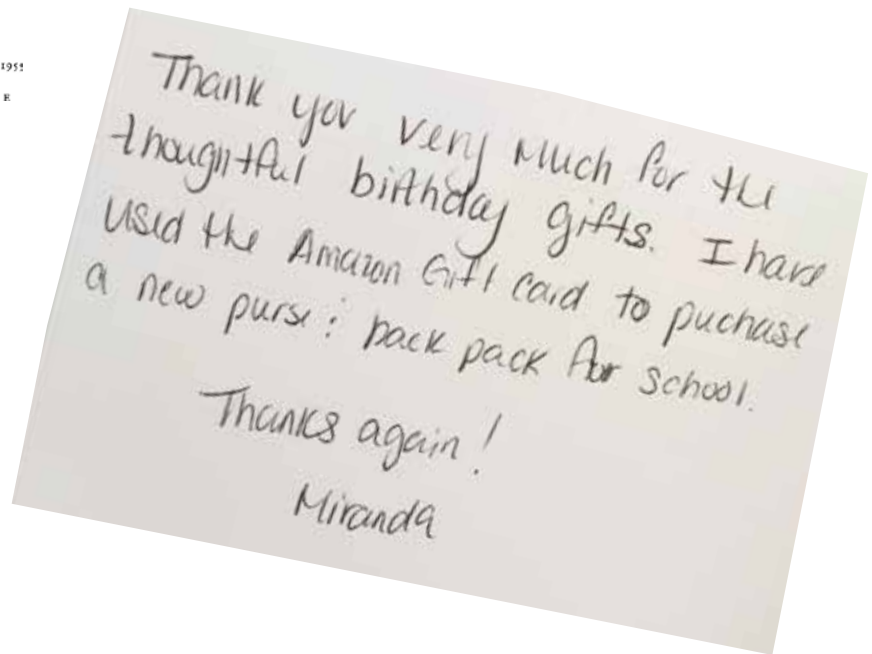
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# Thank You *to* Our Sponsors



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# Outlook *for the* Future

As we move forward into 2023 and beyond, TFFC has three core areas of focus: expanding geographic access, whole family wellness, and preventing entry into foster care. With as many as 7000 children interacting with the foster care system in Virginia each year, we are continually working to expand our programming into new geographic regions to make sure that all children in the guardianship of the Commonwealth have access to the resources they need and an environment in which they can thrive. Creating this environment requires federal, state, and local resources, as well as community-based partners, like TFFC and our supporters, all working together with foster parents and families of origin in ways that are conducive to developing healthy families. As we say often, it takes a village, and for those in foster care, it takes a broadly reaching, emotionally intelligent, strategic village.

At the same time that we expand our geographic reach, we are focused on deepening our impact for the foster youth and families we currently serve. Through maintaining our robust programming and extending access to our programming after children have exited foster care, we are working to reduce re-entry into foster care and help ensure long-term success. The needs of youth in care do not stop when they exit care. Indeed, most often the need for ongoing community-based resources is greatest once children have exited care, certainly so, when exit is to family of origin. This is why TFFC has opened access to our programming for foster youth indefinitely after exiting foster care. Now a student can continue in our tutoring program until they finish school, regardless of whether that is high school, trade school, or college. The more successful these youth are in day-to-day life, the less likely they will be to need to interface with the child welfare, human services, or justice systems as young adults. Further, we have embraced the initiative of whole-family wellness, because caregivers—and we include social workers in this caregiving group—can only show up and give their best when they themselves are at their best. To this end, we have expanded access to wellness activities for all caregivers—foster parents, bio parents, and social workers—so that the village that cares for these children is at its best.

Finally, in acknowledging that the best way to prevent poor outcomes from a system is to avoid the system altogether, we are focusing our efforts on prevention of entry into foster care. We do this by partnering with underserved children and families within the community to provide resources that will help alleviate some of the typical stressors that can lead to family disruption. This is a new arena for TFFC, but one that we feel we are able to assist in, particularly with our tutoring program. The pandemic has wreaked havoc on students' academic performance, among many other areas of school life. Many schools throughout the area are resourced sufficiently to provide additional academic tutoring for their students, but not all are and these are disproportionately immersed in communities that have been historically underserved. Poverty, unfortunately, but not unexpectedly, is highly correlated to foster care. Our goal in providing access to our services for underserved children is to help alleviate some of the stressors that end up driving children into foster care. This will require front loading resources, but ultimately, we feel this investment will yield net positive returns and more importantly healthier, happier families. As always, we are so grateful to our supporters for their partnership in making this work possible.









## WHO WE ARE...




Tidewater Friends of Foster Care (TFFC) is a charitable organization making a positive impact in the lives of foster children in Hampton Roads. Founded by foster parents Richard Litton and Audra Bullock in June of 2016, TFFC is a 501(c)(3) non-profit, funded exclusively by private donations and foundation grants, serving over 750 foster children annually. Our services span foster homes throughout Virginia and even across state lines, with the goal of enriching the lives of as many foster children as possible. We partner with local social service agencies, businesses and non-profits to facilitate access to resources that will improve outcomes for all of the foster youth that we serve.

### Enriching *the* Lives of Foster Children *in* Need

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