



FamiliesFirst

2019

ANNUAL REPORT

STRONGER FAMILIES. STRONGER COMMUNITIES.



MISSION

To create healthier communities by strengthening families and individuals during life challenges and changes.

VISION

A community of healthy, capable and loving families.

PASSION

Families First believes that strong families are the foundation of a healthy, productive society.

FAMILIES FIRST

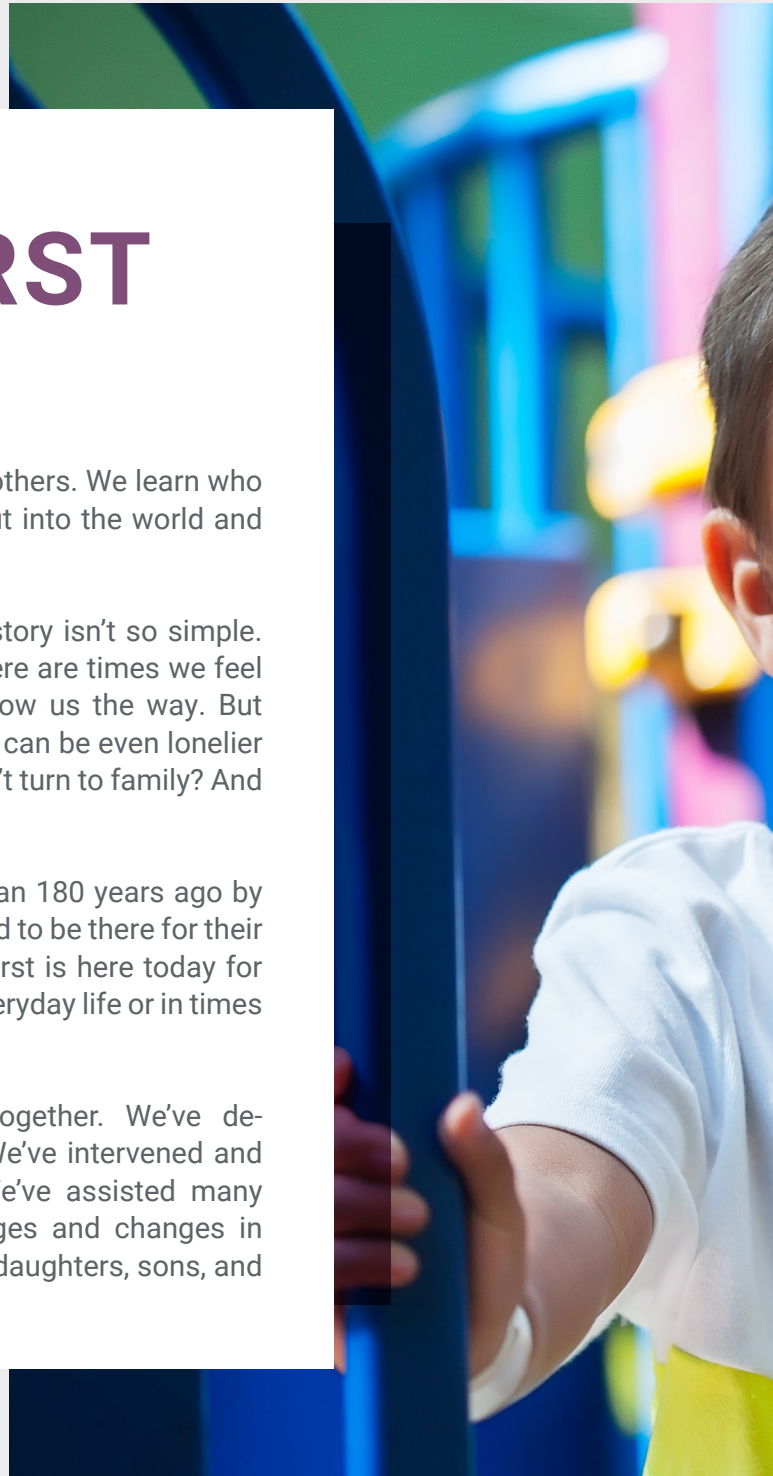
ESTABLISHED 1835

Our families form our earliest experiences with others. We learn who we are and how to live together. Then we go out into the world and start lives and families of our own.

That's the hope. But there are times when the story isn't so simple. Times when we're trapped, afraid, or in pain. There are times we feel lost or alone. Sometimes family is there to show us the way. But sometimes they're part of the problem. And that can be even lonelier than being alone. Where do we turn when we can't turn to family? And who helps a family when it can't help itself?

That's Families First. We were founded more than 180 years ago by caring people in Indianapolis - people who wanted to be there for their neighbors in their time of need. And Families First is here today for those who need care, hope, and guidance - for everyday life or in times of crisis.

We've saved marriages and kept families together. We've de-escalated crises and broken cycles of abuse. We've intervened and prevented hundreds of suicides every year. We've assisted many thousands of people to deal with the challenges and changes in their lives and become better parents, spouses, daughters, sons, and people.





"This is the best experience I've had in a long time. Helpful and challenging and makes me want to be a better parent."

~Parent Education Client

MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT & CEO



As I write this letter in 2020 amid the COVID-19 pandemic, 2019 sure seems a long time ago, and by comparison, a pretty uneventful year. However, it is hardly proper to call uneventful a year in which Families First provided hope to over 28,000 individuals and families and in some cases, provided interventions that literally saved lives.

In thinking about the history of Families First, dating all the way back to Thanksgiving Day in 1835, the agency has been a part of the Central Indiana community through numerous crises, and with your continued support we will make it through this current crisis and those that will follow.

What constitutes a crisis is completely dependent on the impact felt by an individual, a family, a community or an organization. Families First has a long history of meeting people in some of life's great challenges (crises, if you will) – substance abuse, domestic or sexual violence, the breakup of families, mental health challenges, etc. When even the strongest of individuals or families face these threats to their well-being, they may enter a crisis. Families First places an emphasis on serving those in our community who are least equipped to navigate a crisis, because when they encounter these hurdles, their crisis comes more quickly and causes even more destruction.

Thank you for your support in 2019 that allowed us to add to our long history of helping individuals and families through life's challenges and changes. Because of you, many of your neighbors are much closer to realizing their full human potential.

A handwritten signature in dark ink that reads "David J. Liber". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

***"...working with Families First
changed my life and I finally feel
hope, joy and opportunity. "
~Families First Client***



"I have learned to appreciate the little things in life, especially the work I put into my recovery."

~Melissa; Intensive Outpatient Treatment Program





MELISSA

Melissa had a house, a good job, and a healthy daughter ... until everything began to unravel when the Department of Child Services (DCS) required a drug screen. Melissa failed the drug screen, a court case was opened, and her daughter was removed from her care.

Melissa knew that she would have to follow DCS orders to regain custody of her daughter. The judge referred her to Families First to begin her journey towards sobriety and the day that her daughter could move back home.

After nearly 34 weeks of hard work in the IOP Substance Use program at Families First, Melissa tackled her 13-year, daily drug use. She worked with her Families First therapists to heal from old wounds that came from emotional and sexual abuse as a teenager. Throughout the program she gradually gained a new quality of life and self-worth.

Her life is different than it was before she actively used drugs. She is now substance free and is continuing to gain back her independence. She has gone back to work; working towards earning her GED; rebuilding her credit to buy a new car; and just moved into her new apartment.

Melissa is more resilient; her family is stronger; and their future is optimistic. She has found a new path in life and can now be a more capable and present parent for her daughter.

PROGRAMS & SERVICES

24-HOUR CRISIS & SUICIDE INTERVENTION HOTLINE (20,180 *)

The 24-hour hotline is here for people who are in crisis or contemplating suicide. Calls and texts are free of charge and answered by trained volunteers.

ALTERNATIVES TO DOMESTIC VIOLENCE (406 *)

These group programs help people discover the relationship skills they already have, and learn new ways of thinking about how to be a partner or a parent, ultimately changing destructive behavior patterns. Breaking the cycle of abuse is the number one focus.

ANGER MANAGEMENT GROUPS (111 *)

This group assists co-ed adults in understanding triggers, warning signs, and coping skills.

COMMUNITY EDUCATION & TRAINING (1,286 *)

Families First staff go into the community to provide presentations on a variety of topics like parenting, sexual violence, suicide prevention, and family wellness.

DOMESTIC VIOLENCE SURVIVOR COUNSELING & ADVOCACY, EDUCATION & SUPPORT (1,029 *)

Individuals are empowered to break free from abusive relationships and provided resources and education for safety, healing and growth.

FATHER ENGAGEMENT CASE MANAGEMENT (96 *)

Case managers advocate for fathers and help them navigate the Department of Child Services process while they re-engage in their children's lives.

IN-HOME FAMILY PRESERVATION COUNSELING & CASE MANAGEMENT (1,446 *)

Therapists and case managers primarily meet families within the home to educate and empower all family members to prevent family disruption or to achieve reunification.

MENTAL HEALTH COUNSELING FOR INDIVIDUALS, COUPLES, AND FAMILIES (501 *)

Clients are helped to find a path towards solutions and healing. Services are tailored for couples, individuals and children.

"When I started classes, I felt like I didn't need to be here, but after being here I am very happy with my progress. I have become a better person and I treat my partner way better."

~Batterer's Intervention Program Client



PARENTING EDUCATION (224 *)

This program seeks to help adults become better prepared, better-informed parents by learning the developmental needs of their child, as well as ways to effectively manage behaviors.

SEXUAL ASSAULT SURVIVOR COUNSELING & ADVOCACY (367 *)

Advocates provide free and confidential services to assist with safety planning, court advocacy, protective orders, and provide community referrals for survivors of sexual violence.

SUBSTANCE USE EDUCATION & OUTPATIENT TREATMENT (1,215 *)

A full array of services are available to help participants overcome substance use disorders and live substance-free.

SUPPORT GROUPS (1,111 *)

Groups are made up of people with similar experiences who support and encourage each other. Members learn from and share in each other's journey of healing.

*** INDIVIDUALS SERVED**

NICK



SUBSTANCE USE INTENSIVE OUTPATIENT TREATMENT

Nick was on and off drugs and dealing throughout most of his life. The continuous partying and lifestyle eventually led to a substance use disorder. A life-threatening incident led to the day the Department of Child Services removed his two children from his home. The judge referred him to Families First for Father Engagement Case Management and Substance Use Education & Outpatient Treatment with the goal of maintaining sobriety and regaining custody of his children. Nick successfully completed his treatment and his children are back in his care. Nick wants to give others hope, so has chosen to give back to his community by volunteering his time and energy to The Mentor Group at Families First. This opportunity allows him to help his fellow peers who are currently receiving services. "I'm much happier, more humble and life is just easier."

NICOLE



SURVIVOR COUNSELING PROGRAM

Nicole's counselor at Families First helped her understand the power and control that was going on in her abusive relationship. So, she and her counselor worked together to set healthy goals and boundaries. Today Nicole is happy, confident and in a healthy relationship. She is looking forward to earning her high school diploma and attending college for family law so that she can help others who are going through a tough time and need an extra hand.

LYLA



FAMILY COUNSELING

Lyla immigrated to the United States a few years ago. The juxtaposition of the two cultures was creating an enormous emotional burden on her and it began to destroy her mental health. So, she began Family Counseling Services with Families First. "It's been a really good journey. I still have a little depression, but with the tools I learned through counseling, I know how to control my negative and suicidal thoughts now."

OUR NEW HOME

Families First has long sought to own a permanent home, where we can better serve families. After 65 years in the English Foundation Building, Families First relocated in March 2019 to an ideal building with easy access via public transportation and with high visibility on Meridian Street.

The board and leadership recognized that this was a critical time for many families and children, and the capacity of Families First to meet community needs safely and effectively for years to come was essential.

Guided by a feasibility study, we began planning a capital campaign in May 2019. We've been raising money toward ownership and enhancement of this leased space at 2240 N. Meridian Street.

The campaign will run until Thanksgiving, 2020. That date marks our 185th year of service. To learn more, visit www.FamiliesFirstIndiana.org/BetterTogether.

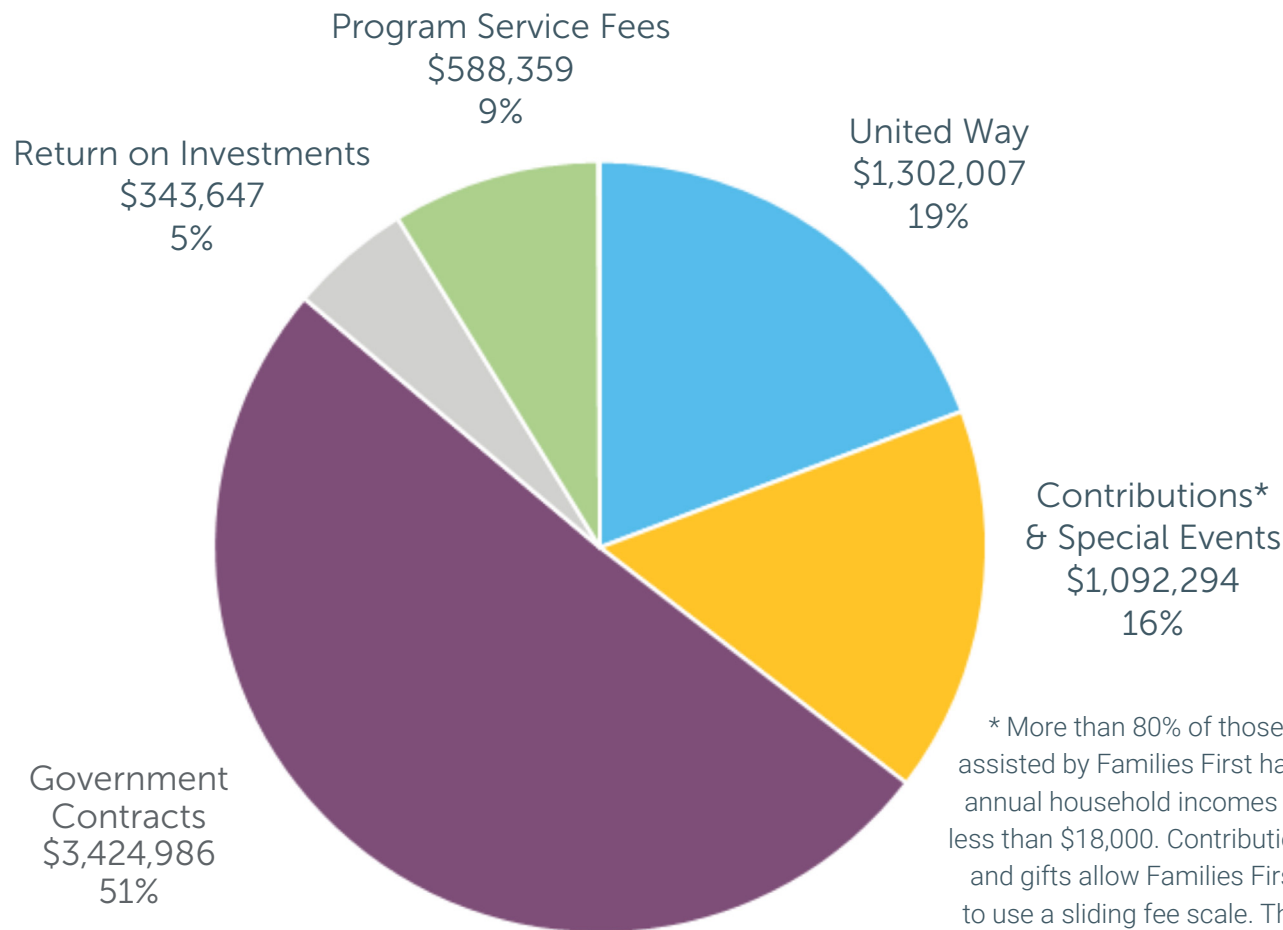




SOME BENEFITS TO THE PURCHASE OF OUR NEW HOME INCLUDE:

- Increased accessibility and convenience for clients with regular IndyGo Redline bus stops
- Improved safety and security through better control over who is inside the building
- Functional workspace design allows increased client confidentiality
- Three additional rooms for programs that support clients' progress
- The addition of dedicated space for play therapy
- Expanded waiting room
- Reduced long-term operating costs by owning space rather than leasing space

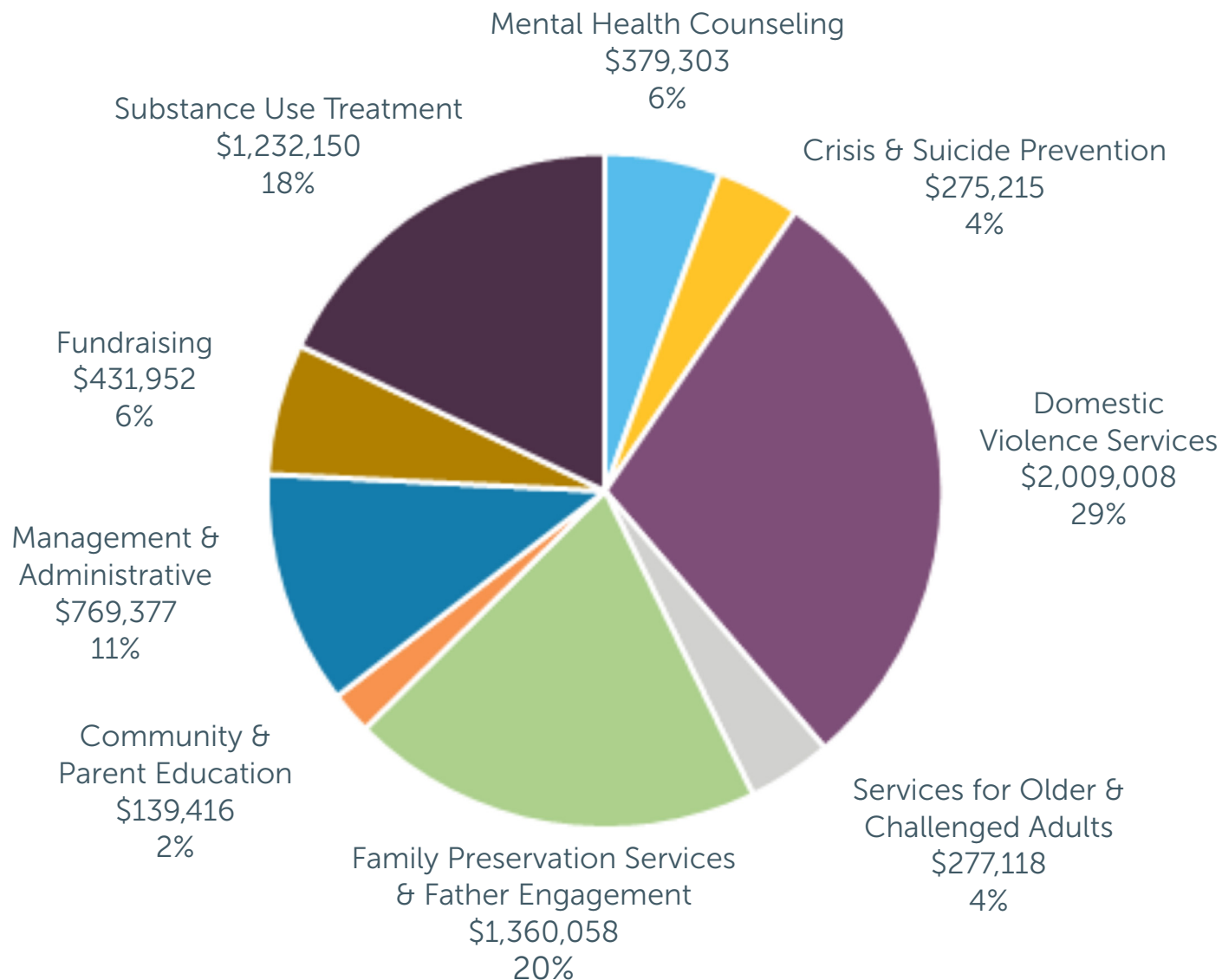
REVENUES BY SOURCE



* More than 80% of those assisted by Families First have annual household incomes of less than \$18,000. Contributions and gifts allow Families First to use a sliding fee scale. This means many of the individuals we work with receive services for as little as \$5 per session.

TOTAL REVENUE: \$6,755,416

EXPENSES BY PROGRAM



TOTAL EXPENSES: \$6,873,597

VOLUNTEERS

Since 1835, volunteers have been an integral part of Families First, helping us grow from a small society of “friendly neighbors,” to an organization that serves children and families across Central Indiana. Building strong, healthy, capable families requires the support of community members. To learn more about how you can help visit familiesfirstindiana.org/volunteer.

2019 VOLUNTEER HOURS

24-hour Crisis & Suicide Prevention Hotline: 22,436 volunteer hours

Support Groups: 312 volunteer hours

Childcare: 38 volunteer hours

Hospital on-call: 2,826 volunteer hours

Time spent at hospital: 124 volunteer hours

Number of hospital calls received: 32 calls responded to by volunteers



Lilly Day of Service



Give a Wrap



*"When you find an opportunity for service that crosses something you are passionate about you have found your purpose."
~JB; Crisis Intervention Specialist Volunteer*

Volunteer Orientation

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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Nancy Dillon: Vice Chair
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Doris Tolliver: Vice Chair
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Roni Ford
Phyllis Garrison
Mike Martin
Kenneth Sullivan
Dierdre Thornton



FamiliesFirst

**STRONGER FAMILIES.
STRONGER COMMUNITIES.**



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