

CH SEN

Fostering Forever Families

Chosen's Mission

Chosen exists to *Foster Forever Families*, by living the Gospel, so that all children can experience a safe and loving home.



Areas of Focus

- Support Foster/Adoptive Families
- Fostering/Adoption Education
- Community Development

Why Chosen is Needed

- We are called to be the hands and feet of Christ.
- 7,000- 8,000 kids are in WI foster care.
- Trauma experienced by foster children is unique. Chosen journeys with families, lends them support and connects them with resources needed.
- The COVID19 pandemic caused a sharp decrease of; cases are now rising and expected to surge as children return to in-person school.
- There is a shortage of families available to care for vulnerable children.
- Chosen helps where financial needs aren't covered by the foster-care system.



Chosen's Updated Story

Chosen has served **425** Families/Organizations, with **850** children in care from **12** Southeast Wisconsin counties.

The Family Closet has given away **32,000+** items, including more than **350** loaded backpacks and **50+** pieces of equipment, to foster/adoptive families.

In 2020, a **\$55,000** goal for the virtual "Open Hearts, Open Homes" Gala was met with a 50% increase of participants (**300+**).

150+ donors engaged with Chosen during this challenging year; more than any other year since opening.

There is much more work to do to reach more families and children!

2021 Major Donations!



A 600-toy donation, valued at \$10,000 was gifted to us from a national company!



IMS named Chosen their non-profit partner and, with the help of their customers, raised nearly \$25,000 in barter to be used for our infrastructure and Gala-related expenses!



2021 Ministry Opportunity

Vacation Bible School



Introducing the Walter and Lillian Schmidt Memorial Fund

Walter & Lillian Schmidt inspired 4 generations of fostering and adoption starting with their journey of fostering in the 1970's and 1980's, leading to the adoption of their grandchildren and later the fostering/adoption of their great-grandchildren.

Their spirit of generosity and family are joined together in this new fund that will be added to annually by Lillian but also open to others to add to in memorial/honor of a loved one. All fund proceeds go to Chosen's rent or salaries, which are the most challenging expenses to fund, but necessary to carry out Chosen's mission.



THE PANDEMIC IMPACT ON FOSTERING

- Decrease in children leaving foster care means families are lingering longer in a system.
- 16% less US reunifications in 2020.
- US Adoptions dropped by 23% compared to 2019.
- 18% WI decrease in CPS calls in 2020 compared to 2019.
- In WI, the avg number of children removed from their homes in 2019 was 404 children/month and in 2020 328 children/month. Thus far in 2021, the average is 295 per month.
- In 2020, the total WI foster care population dropped 2%.
- Basic services and support for foster families/children were suspended for an extended period.
- Kids who were already dealing with trauma had an added layer with the pandemic.
- The foster care system was overwhelmed by virus-related court closures and delays. Mental health care, critical for young foster children, was confined often to calls or Zoom meetings.
- New foster-care cases are expected to rise as kids return to school this fall and become more involved with mandated reporters, teachers, coaches and therapists, legally obligated to report abuse/maltreatment. It is common that child abuse skyrockets during times of economic stress.
- It is reported that many US foster families decreased the number of children they took in and many families suspended taking in children.

Milwaukee County Family Closet UPDATE

- New location will enable more services to more families and create more social worker connections.
- Pandemic -related rental shortages pushed our projected June move to this fall/winter. Difficulty finding space because of rental market, need for 1st floor space, adequate parking and accessibility.
- New space is now identified in West Allis near bus-lines and accessible to I-94.
- New location is closer to the 70% of our families who reside in Milwaukee County.
- Projected cost of \$1,450/month plus \$200/month utilities. Chosen's Board recently approved moving forward with this space.
- With a foster-care surge predicted, we felt that this move is necessary before the end of the year.

Waukesha Family Closet UPDATE

- Current space lease is up in December. With a current 3-year static lease, a rent increase is expected.
- Current space consists of 2 units on 2 different floors, causing a lack of efficiency and overall space.
- A new space, close by, opened up with at \$400/month more than our current rent plus \$175/month utilities.
 - Small warehouse space provides central storage/sorting center for both offices allowing for large volunteer groups.
 - Warehouse space/garage provides efficient and spacious drop-off area for large donations.
 - Large conference room provides space for training center and other meeting opportunities.
- Ongoing need for Waukesha space is tied into various strategic partnerships including: Norris, Waukesha County Foster-care and Foundations, all located in Waukesha County.
- Chosen's Board has temporarily "paused" this option until September to find donation sources to see if this option is feasible.

Staffing Additions

During the next few months, we need to add a few new positions:

- Donor Retention/Fundraising Coordinator/Grant Writer (Part time)
- Fall Intern: Gala Coordinator/Marketing (Part time unpaid)
- Spring Intern: Walk Coordinator/Marketing (Part time unpaid)
- Milwaukee Closet Coordinator (Part time)



NEW
JOBS

Walk on the Wild Side for Foster Care

- Saturday, September 11
- 9:30 a.m. – 1 p.m.
- Milwaukee County Zoo
- Tickets: choseninlove.org/walk2021

Open Hearts, Open Homes Gala

- Saturday, November 13
- 6 p.m. – 10 p.m.
- Radisson Milwaukee West
- Tickets (Sept 15): choseninlove.org/2021gala



Chosen has cast a vision for a *Foster Care Community*.

The community would:

- Be a unique opportunity to be the hands and feet of Christ to foster families.
- Provide reduced rent, attracting new foster families.
- Provide a community with other foster families that share a like/kind journey.
- Solve transportation, child-care and other support needs.

Chosen will be researching needs, learning about other similar facilities, and casting a timeline for this dream, which we hope to become reality in the next 3-5 years.



We Need Your Help!

- **Pray** for Chosen and for more Foster/Adoptive families.
- **Volunteer** in one of the many opportunities available!
- **Become** a monthly financial partner or increase your monthly pledge!
- **Give** to help us fill the gaps to allow expansion!
- **Attend** *Walk on the Wild Side* and *Open Hearts, Open Homes Gala!*
- **Sponsor** the Walk, Gala or become a year-round sponsor!
- **Donate** Gala auction items/services!
- **Host a** Box of Blessing (collect new items for **The Family Closet**)
- **Refer** Foster/Adoptive families to Chosen so that we can support them.
- **Connect** us with organizations willing to hear a message about fostering/adoption and the need for new families!
- **Consider** fostering and/or adoption!



Thank you for
supporting our
mission!

