CHILDREN AND FAMILIES SERVED IN 2018.

It’s our privilege to come alongside these children and families, and help them overcome the struggles they have faced in life.
Where kids overcome.
WE HAVE ONE MISSION AND ONE ONLY: SUPPORTING EVERY SINGLE CHILD AND FAMILY WE CAN, WITHOUT HESITATION, KNOWING THE POWER OF COMPASSION AND POTENTIAL FOR HEALING. WE HAVE BIG HEARTS AND A BIGGER VISION. A COMMUNITY WHERE CHILDREN ARE SAFE AND NURTURED AND FAMILIES ARE STRONG.
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Dear Friends,

**Everyone loves a good story.**

Stories pull us in, make us feel something, and inspire us in unimaginable ways. When you think about it, the world's most memorable stories all have something in common. They have a hero. And they have an obstacle that hero must overcome.

At D.A. Blodgett-St. Johns, we see heroes every day: the kids we serve and families we partner with. Each of them has a story that’s different and unique, but all of them summon the strength to overcome whatever’s in front of them.

That’s why, when we think about heroes, we don’t think about comic books and Marvel characters. We think about people right here in the West Michigan community. We think about heroes you may never have heard of—like the 7-year-old boy who worked hard to overcome illiteracy, until he graduated from our on-site school. Or a kid named John, who had severe mental health and behavioral needs, but overcame them with help from our staff and his aunt and uncle, now his adoptive parents. Or Stephanie and Richard, a married couple that opened their home and fostered three vulnerable children until they could safely return to their biological family.

And just think... these are only a few.

Stories like these are why we exist and why we appreciate your support so much. Because when kids can overcome their crises or problems or the cards they’ve been dealt, their stories take a remarkable turn. In time, hope replaces neglect. Community replaces loneliness. Support replaces abuse. And our community becomes a better place.

Overcoming happens every day. Thank you for helping us make these stories possible.

With gratitude,

Jim Paparella
President/CEO

Kate Sischo Zell
Chairperson
FOSTER CARE

Every year, we compassionately provide support for those on their foster care journeys. Our goal is to create permanency for every child, with a loving family and a place to call home.

- 325 CHILDREN SERVED
- 66,200 days of care provided
- 47% of children were placed in adoptive homes
- 35% of children were reunited with their parent(s)

Worth Knowing In 2018, D.A. Blodgett – St. John’s was the only private foster care agency in Kent County to exceed the state-established goal for new licensed foster homes, by 18%.

ADOPTION

Sadly, not all parents are able to make the changes they need to. When that happens, our adoption team steps in.

- 119 CHILDREN SERVED
- 50 children were placed with adoptive families
- 69 children are still waiting to be placed

Worth Knowing 95 families were prepared and supported to adopt.

ADOPTIVE FAMILY SUPPORT NETWORK

Post-adoption support for the lifelong well-being of adoptive families.
“As foster parents, we have helped many children overcome the idea that “everyone” is against the biological parents, or that we believe the parents are bad people. We work with the kids to assure them that collectively (including the courts), we all want to see them reunited with their parents. We carefully help them realize that, although mistakes were made, there is a plan in place to correct the issues and get them back to a situation at home that will be even better than before. It can take weeks or even months for the kids to overcome these ideas, and it is achieved only through mutual trust and respect. Also, developing a positive relationship between foster and biological parents can greatly help in this area.” - Rich and Stephanie Haadsma

Read their foster care story at dabsj.org.
When kids experience abuse or neglect, we open a new door for hope and healing.

**KIDS FIRST EMERGENCY SHELTER**
Emergency care for children removed from their homes due to abuse or neglect.

- **113** KIDS RECEIVED CARE
- 24/7 emergency care
- **4,114** days of care provided
- **17** counties served

**Worth Knowing** DABSJ offers the only emergency shelter for abused and neglected youth in West Michigan.

**SHORT TERM EVALUATION PROGRAM**
Provides 90-day assessment for youth who need additional evaluation and care.

- **23** CHILDREN SERVED from 10 counties

**RESIDENTIAL TREATMENT**
Intensive care, support, and counseling in a homelike environment for children and youth who have experienced multiple traumas, including abuse and neglect.

- **49** YOUTH SERVED

**Worth Knowing** Through a new approach to Summer Reading Retention, students on our Knapp Campus actually gained almost a full grade level in word recognition, and close to half a grade level in vocabulary and reading comprehension.
One 7-year-old in our Summer Reading Retention program is a shining example of the progress that can be made. “This boy was new to us and not able to read at the start of the program. By the end of the 5 weeks, he was assisting with read-alouds with the class, and he continues to gain reading skills in our on-site school. His classmates, who could have easily laughed at his inability to read, were his biggest cheerleaders!” - Amanda Rhines, Campus Life Manager
Every child and every family has incredible strength. Sometimes, it just takes a caring person to help them find it again.

242 YOUTH SERVED Helping young moms, and youth ages 10–21 who are considered at-risk.

187 kids mentored one-on-one
21,600 mentor hours
10 young moms mentored
45 youth served in group setting

Worth Knowing During 2018, a partnership with Mel Trotter Ministries was formed, allowing group sessions to be held at Mel Trotter for young men in the shelter. These mentoring groups met bi-weekly to discuss life skills and relationships.

Students from Kelloggsville High School have come together to mentor third-graders at East Kelloggsville Elementary, in our Peer To Peer mentoring program. “It’s a lot of work, but it’s really fun interacting with them,” said senior Symone Britt, who works with a third-grader with special needs. “I’ve been trying to teach her to sit down and focus on what we’re learning, because she has a hard time focusing. I’ve learned a lot about patience and cooperation.”

Read more of the story at dabsj.org.

Worth Knowing Through the Kids in Business initiative at the Mill Steel Company, youth gain real-world workplace experience through business partners who not only welcome them but provide employees to act as mentors for them.
Helping kids be the **BEST** they can be.

In our residential program, students participated in a wide range of experiential, hands-on activities and events to help them meet their therapeutic goals, and to grow and heal. Community partners engaged kids on and off campus in creative and performing arts, employment training and athletics, and program staff designed and implemented activities and experiences to help kids build on their strengths and face their challenges while achieving successes large and small.

For some of our kids in foster care and residential care, these opportunities include college and vocational training, because of generous donors who support scholarships for not only tuition and books, but also for living expenses.

**EDUCATION**

Youth experienced increased reading comprehension of half a grade level over the course of the 5-week summer reading program.

![15 previous clients are benefiting from agency-supported college scholarships](image)

![100% of eligible youth in foster care graduated from high school](image)

**ENRICHMENT**

783 opportunities were provided for youth in residential care to participate in activities

**ACTIVITIES**

- Attending Live Performances
- Hip Hop
- Life Skills
- Student Council
- Horseback Riding
- Sports
- Art
- Yoga/Mindfulness
- Camping
- Gardening
- Raising Chickens

**LIFE & JOB SKILLS**

To help teens learn to navigate life, they are taught real-world life skills. Students learn how to ride the bus, how to arrange a dental appointment, how to complete job trainings, learn how to fill a prescription and how to pump gas. We are proud to offer these learning moments to our youth and are appreciative of our donors who support these initiatives.
COUNSELING SERVICES

Strengthening kids and families, one session at a time.

1196 CLIENTS SERVED

Worth Knowing Almost 80% of kids and families improved their functioning, according to the Child and Adolescent Functional Assessment Scale (CAFAS).

18 CHILDREN & FAMILIES SERVED

YOUNG DELINQUENT INTERVENTION PROGRAM
Provides mentoring and counseling for kids under the age of 12 who have broken the law, with the goal of reducing the chance the child will commit another crime.

Worth Knowing 95% of kids served did not re-offend within 12 months.

583 CHILDREN SERVED

FAMILY SUPPORT SERVICES
Support for children with developmental disabilities including autism.

Worth Knowing Between 2017 and 2018, the Family Support Services program grew 36% in response to community need.

132 FAMILIES SERVED

EARLY CHILDHOOD ATTACHMENT SERVICES
Creating healthy bonding and positive parenting, helping kids ages 0-5.
As an organization whose sole mission is making real, lasting change happen for struggling families, we work diligently to ensure no penny is wasted. Here’s how the numbers broke down in 2018.

2018 TOTAL EXPENSES
$19,623,334

- 23% family preservation services
- 36% residential services
- 28% foster care & adoption
- 10% management & general
- 3% fundraising
87% public grants and contracts

8% charitable & in-kind gifts
3% restricted funds
2% investments & fees

2018 TOTAL REVENUE
$19,623,334
We Can’t Do It Without You.
We’re grateful for individuals and organizations who are part of what we’re doing to help kids and families.

2018 Totals
- 25,445 volunteer hours
- Financial impact of $628,237
- 1261 in-kind gifts totaling $377,325
- 12 companies sent volunteers
WE ACKNOWLEDGE AND THANK the following people who support D.A. Blodgett – St. John’s in their estate plans by naming DABSJ as a beneficiary.

Robert Clark
Lenair Correll
Mary Jo Dailey-Brandstatter
Gilbert and Patricia Davis
Kenneth D. Elenbaas
William and Carolyn Hineline
Gary and Barbara Leddick
Donald and Marie McWatters
Jon and Patricia Merchant
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Steve and Molly Parker
Robert and Andrea Rander
Victor and Dianne Szczesny
Mary D.B. Taylor
John C. Thompson
William and Patricia Waanders
Joan Zwak

BEQUESTS

In 2018, D.A. Blodgett – St. John’s received bequests from generous friends who believed in our mission and remembered DABSJ through their estate plans.

Estate of Willard F. and Wanda F. Lyons
Estate of Robert and Marion Ziehlke
The following leadership donors gave generously in 2018 in support of our Homes and Hope Fund and program needs, to meet the complex and urgent needs of the vulnerable children and families we serve.

**Visionaries ($25,000+)**
- Anonymous (3)
- Amway
- FOAM-IT
- Grand Rapids Community Foundation
- Heart of West Michigan United Way
- John and Mary Hendrickson
- Mill Steel Company
- Sebastian Foundation

**Champions ($10,000-24,999)**
- Baker Holtz CPA's and Advisors
- Baudville
- Tracy L. Breihof
- Bill and Margie Darooge
- William and Nancy Ellis
- Tim and Beth Flory
- Gillett Family Foundation
- Howard Miller Company
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- Jack H. Miller
- MoJo Foundation
- David and Angela Muilenberg
- Tod Pepin
- The Richard & Helen DeVos Foundation
- John and Anita Winters

**Heroes ($5,000-9,999)**
- Anonymous
- ARGI
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- Joseph M. Bichler
- John and Michele Dykema
- Claire M. Eady
- Mark and Susan Gazan
- Gill
- Lois Ginebaugh
- John and Nancy Gordon
- Grand Rapids Foam Technologies
- IEQ Industries LTD
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- JP Morgan Chase
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Richard and Samantha Gauthier
Pat and Patty Geary
Grand Rapids North Rotary Club
Great Lakes Calibration, Inc.
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Paul and Margaret Haviland
Haworth, Inc.
James and Linda Helsel
Michelle Higginson
HNI Risk Advisors
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Thomas and Geraldine Hogan
Ted and Barbara Hohman
Keith and Mary Kay Hopkins
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Denotes 3 years of consecutive giving

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Whether a child is living at home, in foster care, with an adoptive family, or in residential treatment, we exist to restore that child’s happiness, dignity, and belief that dreams aren’t out of reach.

WE GIVE THEM THE TOOLS TO BEGIN WRITING THEIR STORIES.
LOVE
STABILITY
STRENGTH
COMPASSION
FEAR

TRAUMA

ABUSE

LONELY

FEAR

ABANDONMENT

FEAR

FEAR

FEAR