WE EXIST TO SUPPORT KIDS AND FAMILIES. TO HELP THOSE WHO HAVE BEEN MADE TO FEEL INVISIBLE BY NEGLECT AND ABUSE. WE ADVOCATE, TEACH, MENTOR, PROTECT AND PROVE EVERY KID HAS INCREDIBLE POTENTIAL, EVEN IF THE WORLD HAS TOLD THEM OTHERWISE.
MADE VISIBLE.

11,436 CHILDREN AND FAMILIES IMPACTED IN 2019

We are proud to provide these families with safety, advocacy and support.
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Dear Friends,

We have a bold vision at D.A. Blodgett - St. John's: A safe, nurturing home for every child and a supportive community for every family.

Admittedly, this vision isn’t easily reached. However, we are emboldened by our six core values. Together, they drive our programs and services, and advance our mission:

**EXCEPTIONAL SERVICE, EQUITY, DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION, EXCELLENCE, INTEGRITY, CREATIVITY, PASSION.**

Every day, we take these values to heart. Just consider the 11,436 children and families we served last year and you’ll see the proof.

Our foster care program provides a temporary safe haven for children removed from their home with strong emphasis on family reunification or finding forever homes through adoption, if reunification is not possible. Our foster care team and community of foster homes provide **exceptional service** at every step of a child’s journey. Deja was 15 and pregnant when she met Jody, her foster care worker at DABSJ. Jody believed that Deja had the courage and wisdom to get through the many challenges in her life and become an excellent mom. Six years later, Deja is excited to enroll in college classes to study Human Services and become a social worker herself.

Because we believe in **equity, diversity and inclusion** for all, this past year we hired Andre Daley as Director of Equity, Diversity, Inclusion and Engagement. He brings with him more than 13 years of experience working in the social justice, diversity, equity and inclusion fields. Developing effective diversity and inclusion strategies will improve outcomes for the children and families we serve here at DABSJ.

Our agency’s drive for **excellence** is helping children do things they couldn’t do just a few short months ago, children like 13-year-old Tyson, who is on the autism spectrum. “I’ve known Tyson and his family since 2013. When I saw him recently, it nearly brought me to tears. He has improved immensely with his overall demeanor, mood, aggression level and communication,” said his therapist. “His personality is shining through and he truly seemed happy.”

The **creativity** and **passion** of our staff is also evident. Recently one of our Kent School Services Network clinicians has helped a young boy combat his challenges with mental health by safely starting a YouTube channel. By being able to openly talk about his struggles with anxiety, depression and self-harm on YouTube, he connects with other students who are struggling with similar issues, and inspires kids to seek help.

One agency. Six values. These values are infused into everything we do. Every action we make. Every word we say. Every program we run. We know that things will change in the coming years. They always do. But D.A. Blodgett - St. John's remains steadfast in its vision for a better community. As you review this report, we hope you know that behind every story and number is a set of values—values that inspire us to do even better and impact even more people next year.

Thank you for your ongoing support. It means the world to us and the children and families we’re proud to serve.
FOSTER CARE & ADOPTION SERVICES

Providing safe nurturing homes for every child and support for all families.

BENTLEY’S BIG HEART

Foster care and adoption become part of people’s lives for many different reasons. For Jason and Carrie McNeil, foster care and adoption was on the table from the start. Carrie grew up in foster care with her five siblings and was later adopted with one of her sisters. Her adoptive family continued to provide foster care well into Carrie’s young adult years.

After getting married and learning that pregnancy was a challenge, they considered foster care. When they mentioned this, a family friend sent them a photo of a boy who was featured on the Michigan Adoption Resource Exchange website and waiting for his forever home. They immediately knew that they wanted him to be their son. It was this little boy, Jaxson, who started their foster care and adoption journey. Jaxson was adopted by the McNeil’s at the age of three, and is now 11.

In September of 2018, Carrie and Jason met a little boy who would need ongoing medical support. Although they fostered and adopted medically fragile infants and children in the past, including their son Jaxson, a diagnosis can look completely different in two children. It was important to the McNeil’s that they met the child and spoke with medical professionals prior to placement to ensure that the needs weren’t greater than they could handle. After their first meeting they said “yes” to placement of Bentley, and in October 2018 he was placed in their home.

Bentley, age two, was diagnosed with a variety of medical conditions, including Hypoplastic Left Heart Syndrome and stage 3 kidney disease, which required medical training through Helen DeVos Children’s Hospital upon placement. Due to his heart and liver conditions, Bentley needs a transplant of both organs. However, because of his heart condition he doesn’t qualify for a kidney transplant, and due to his bad kidneys, he doesn’t qualify for a heart transplant. Despite these challenges, Bentley is “the happiest little boy,” as described by his mom. He has been thriving developmentally since moving in with the McNeil family. Still, his heart function has not improved.

Bentley underwent his second stage of repair for his left heart syndrome just months after his adoption was finalized. He did great and is recovering well! The journey for him and his family is not over. His kidneys suffered an acute injury from surgery, which was expected, so he is currently receiving dialysis to help recover.

We’re thankful for families like the McNeil’s who step up and care for some of our most vulnerable youth, like Bentley, by providing safety and support in challenging times.
FOSTER CARE

DABSJ recognizes that children do better in their family of origin. While caring for kids in foster homes, the goal is ultimately to keep kids safe with their families, not safe from their families.

276 CHILDREN SERVED
32% REUNITED WITH THEIR PARENTS
35% PLACED IN ADOPTIVE HOMES
5 PREVIOUS CLIENTS ARE BENEFITTING FROM AGENCY-SUPPORTED SCHOOL SCHOLARSHIPS

ENHANCED FOSTER CARE

A supportive service for foster care, Enhanced Foster Care’s goals are for each child’s foster home to be their only placement and reduce the number of children in residential treatment facilities.

33 CHILDREN SERVED
84% SUCCESSFULLY MAINTAINED IN A HOME IN THE COMMUNITY

ADOPTION

Unfortunately not all children are able to safely return home. When they can’t be, our adoption team steps in to ensure kids have stable, long term homes.

120 CHILDREN SERVED
57 PLACED WITH AN ADOPTIVE FAMILY

FAMILIES FOREVER

Find more stories and statistics at dabsj.org
RESIDENTIAL SERVICES

When kids face abuse or neglect, we open a new door for hope and healing.

RESIDENTIAL PROGRAM IMPLEMENTS NEW MODEL TO IMPROVE OUTCOMES

The residential division at DABSJ has been successful, as evidenced in the thousands of kids who have been helped over the years, but we are evolving to meet the changing needs of children. We strive to be a program that works together as a team using one model and providing the best care possible while keeping youth and staff safe. We want youth to have every opportunity to be successful, which requires us to provide the most impactful, best services. Because of this, we have chosen a new model that will help us do exactly that.

The Sanctuary Model, proven to result in high staff and youth satisfaction, decreased injuries and improved overall outcomes, is being implemented. We look forward to seeing this new evidence-based, trauma-informed program in action so we can help the kids we serve in the best way possible.

Inspiring Healthy Habits

Staff members at D.A. Blodgett - St. John’s work hard to encourage healthy habits for the youth at the residential campus. Shana Tundevold, one of our residential therapists, provided a six-week healthy living series to two groups of youth. Groups met for an hour a week to play physically active games as well as discuss healthy food options. This six-week program was in preparation for a larger scale initiative focused on nutrition and physical activity that we are hoping to launch later in 2020.
WE'RE OPENING THE DOOR FOR HOPE & HEALING

KIDS FIRST EMERGENCY SHELTER
A safe and loving place for children removed from an unsafe situation at home. Kids First Emergency Shelter is West Michigan’s only emergency shelter for youth who have suffered abuse and neglect.

24/7 WHENEVER CHILDREN NEED US, WE ARE HERE PROVIDING EMERGENCY SHELTER CARE.

3,917 DAYS OF CARE PROVIDED

109 CHILDREN RECEIVED CARE

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

69 CHILDREN SERVED, FROM 10 COUNTIES

5 FORMER STUDENTS ARE BENEFITTING FROM AGENCY-SUPPORTED SCHOOL SCHOLARSHIPS

533 OPPORTUNITIES FOR ADVENTURE & CREATIVE ARTS ACTIVITIES WERE OFFERED TO STUDENTS

Read stories about these activities at dabsj.org.

Find more stories and statistics at dabsj.org.
FAMILY PRESERVATION SERVICES

Every child and family has incredible strength. Sometimes it just takes a caring person to help them find it again.

GET INVOLVED WITH YOUTH IN BUSINESS

Youth in Business is a great way to engage company employees, by providing a mentoring opportunity for staff who can help shape the future of a child’s life. It can also inspire employees by giving them a sense of purpose and a tangible experience to make a social impact through their workplace. To explore having Youth in Business in your workplace, check out our website or contact Jim Visser at jvisser@dabsj.org or Melissa Rosado at mrosado@dabsj.org.

Special thanks to our mentoring program sponsor, Mill Steel Company, for their enduring support and piloting of the Youth in Business program.

READY BY FIVE FUNDING EXPANDS EARLY CHILDHOOD ATTACHMENT SERVICES

D.A. Blodgett - St. John’s was awarded funding from the Ready by Five Early Childhood Millage. This funding will help Early Childhood Attachment (ECA) Services to expand to help more youth, ages 0 to 5, form secure relationships through play, counseling and education.

Early Childhood Attachment helps youth, like Arthur. At 14 months old, Arthur joined ECA. During his first eight months of life he did not learn to rely on adults to care for him, due to difficult circumstances at home. Thanks to ECA, he and his foster parents worked together to learn how to build a relationship of trust and affection. It was a lot of work for the foster family, adoptive family, and Arthur but we are happy to share that Arthur is now thriving in his adoptive home.

“The ECA program helped our son, Arthur, to overcome many of the challenges that came from his early traumatic experiences. Our therapist offered one-on-one therapy with our family that helped us meet our monthly goals to improve our son’s attachment issues through specialized parenting techniques.” – Melanie, pictured with son Arthur, who is now thriving thanks to ECA.

The Ready by Five Early Childhood Millage provides dedicated and sustainable funding for programs that improve the health, school readiness and well-being of children under age five in Kent County. We are proud to be a part of the Ready by Five Provider Network.
Youth in our MST program are typically wards of the court and are at imminent risk of removal from the community due to antisocial behavior. The goal is to keep children in the home and enrolled in school so they do not criminally re-offend.

**MULTI-SYSTEMIC THERAPY (MST)**

Youth in our MST program are typically wards of the court and are at imminent risk of removal from the community due to antisocial behavior. The goal is to keep children in the home and enrolled in school so they do not criminally re-offend.

**57 YOUTH AND FAMILIES SERVED**

**97% OF CHILDREN REMAINED IN THE HOME INSTEAD OF ENTERING RESIDENTIAL OR FOSTER CARE**

**TRAUMA FOCUSED THERAPY (TF-CBT)**

Resolving emotional and behavioral difficulties associated with traumatic experiences for children, adolescents and their parents.

**130 CHILDREN SERVED**

**92% OF KIDS’ POST-TRAUMATIC STRESS DECREASED SIGNIFICANTLY**

**EARLY CHILDHOOD ATTACHMENT**

Creating healthy bonding and positive parenting, and preventing child abuse and neglect.

**112 FAMILIES SERVED (KIDS AGES 0 TO 5)**

**MENTORING SERVICES**

Engaging, empowering, and supporting youth, teens and parents.

**215 SERVED THROUGH MENTORING RELATIONSHIPS**

Our mentoring program has shifted to provide mentoring services in group-based settings. This allows us to help parents in addition to youth and teens.

**FOSTER CARE SUPPORTIVE VISITATION**

Empowering and preserving biological families whose children are in foster care by modeling and teaching a nurturing parenting approach.

**151 PARENTS SERVED**

**93% PARENT SATISFACTION**

Find more stories and statistics at dabsj.org
In May 2019 we publicly announced the Together for Kids campaign and have raised $9,260,000 of our $10 million goal! We thank you for supporting D.A. Blodgett – St. John’s and the critical work we do for children and families in West Michigan.

Investing in our future.
TOGETHER FOR KIDS CAMPAIGN DONORS:

The following donors have generously supported the transformative Together for Kids campaign. With their gifts we will centralize our services to one location to double our capacity, save $2 million over twenty years and provide the best advocacy and care we can to the children and families we serve.

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Robert and Elizabeth Gorkowski
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Grand Rapids North Rotary Club
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Terry and Margie Griffith
Leonard and Roberta Gross
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FOR THE LAWRENCES, IT’S A FAMILY AFFAIR

What comes naturally to some is what makes their story stand out. Bill and Karen Lawrence were raised to give their resources, time and talent, and they instilled that in their daughter, Maggie. As a long-time supporter to D.A. Blodgett - St. John’s (DABSJ), Bill Lawrence is a former board member and current member of DABSJ’s Advisory Council, but his journey didn’t start there. Eighteen years ago he was invited to a viewing of the Harry Potter movie in support of St. John’s Home and was immediately invested in the mission of helping kids and families in their community.

Supporting the agency is a family affair for the Lawrence’s. His wife, Karen, has been an active donor and supporter, and rallied others to support DABSJ. Their daughter, Maggie, is a new member of DABSJ’s Emerging Leaders Council.

“Seeing smiling kids or hearing adults who were served in some way by DABSJ talk about how the agency helped them at a crucial time in their lives is the most rewarding part about supporting DABSJ,” the Lawrence’s share. How does someone stay committed to an agency for so long? When we asked Bill, Karen, and Maggie, they collectively gave this response, “The agency is filled with committed and talented people devoting their lives to helping young people. DABSJ does outstanding work in our community, for a population needing help. DABSJ is easy to stay committed to for us.”

We wish to acknowledge and thank the following people who have remembered DABSJ in their estate plans by naming us as a beneficiary.

Lenair Correll
Mrs. Mary Jo Dailey-Brandstatter
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Duane Elenbaas
William and Carolyn Hineline
Gary and Barbara Leddick
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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

Estate of Lawrence J. Cunningham
Estate of Roberta Sherwood
Estate of Robert and Marion Ziehlke

BEQUESTS

In 2019, D.A. Blodgett - St. John’s received bequests from generous friends who believed in our mission and remembered DABSJ through their estate plans.
OUR DONORS

Below are 2019 leadership donors who supported the Homes & Hope Fund and other program needs.

**Visionaries** ($25,000+)
- FOAM-IT
- Grand Rapids Community Foundation
- Heart of West Michigan United Way
- Mill Steel Company

**Champions** ($10,000-24,999)
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- Scott and Terri Devon
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Wolverine Worldwide

* Indicates three years of continuous giving
REVENUE & EXPENSES

TOTAL REVENUE:
$18,876,875

Public Grants + Contracts 81%
Restricted Funds 11%
Charitable + In-Kind Gifts 7%
Investment Income 1%

TOTAL EXPENSES:
$18,879,944

33% Residential Services
31% Foster Care + Adoption
22% Family Preservation
11% Management + General
3% Fundraising

As an organization whose sole mission is making real, lasting change happen for abused and neglected children, we work diligently to ensure no penny is wasted.
DAB SJ VOLUNTEERS

We can’t do it without you.
We’re grateful for the tremendous volunteer impact of individuals and companies who choose to be part of what we’re doing to help kids and families.

| 440 VOLUNTEERS | 13,701 TOTAL HOURS | $348,416 FINANCIAL IMPACT |

OUR VALUES

EXCEPTIONAL SERVICE
Client-focused and teaming at the center of our work.

EQUITY, DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION
All are welcomed, valued and belong.

EXCELLENCE
Ongoing commitment to learning and improvement.

INTEGRITY
Responsibility and ownership of our actions and results.

CREATIVITY
Imagination, innovation, and intelligent risk taking.

PASSION
Relentless positive energy toward our mission and vision.

Find more stories and statistics at dabsj.org