



ChildStrive CHRONICLE

Spring 2022

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Visit us at [ChildStrive.org](https://www.ChildStrive.org)

2022: A Year Filled with Strength AND Heart

Here we are in 2022 – a year filled with new beginnings and hope. We look to the possibilities of this year, and reflect and build on all the lessons learned in the last one... And what can we say about 2021 other than it was a journey!



Mary Cline-Stively,
ChildStrive Chief Executive Officer

For me, 2022 is the year of AND. Throughout the pandemic we have been faced with so many either/or decisions. While there can be benefits to such binary choices, I have been reminded recently of the power that comes from a more expansive mindset. When we pair the use of “and” with our courage to step into our decisions we begin a new journey with strength AND heart.

For ChildStrive, that means we are committed to living fully into our mission by continuing to provide high-quality services. We remain dedicated to walking with our families through all aspects of life, building positive relationships and deepening resiliency in our community.

That will include offering a more hybrid approach in our work. In-person support while utilizing the best protection we can (masks, distancing, etc.), AND some virtual services when appropriate. We are committed to fully engaging with families AND our community by discovering ways to strengthen relationships and connections.

2022 will also continue to be a year of discovery. We are working with children who have only known pandemic life and we do not yet know what impacts that has had on children and families. We will be reflecting on what we can do to keep kids and families safe AND provide supports to help strengthen their development and relationships.

Our staff are dedicated and passionate individuals, committed to providing high quality supports AND continuing to create the space for growth through professional development.

At the end of 2022 my hope is that we can look back and see shining examples of our commitment to resiliency, strength AND heart. I know that the only way we can really have a strong impact in our community is if we engage in the hard work of choosing AND together. I am profoundly grateful for each and every member of our community and am looking forward to the work we will do to ensure that all families can flourish.



Navigating 2022 with
strength AND heart

Together for Families

A Virtual Conversation & ChildStrive Benefit

featuring conversations on community, growth, development, leadership, equity, and more.

Thursday, April 28

Mary Nhin, best-selling children's book author of the Ninja Life Hack and Mini-Movers & Shakers series.

Our Keynote



Join Us Thursday, April 28 - Register Online Today!

www.childstrive.org

Bringing Support and Growth through Community Services

Have you met our Community Services Educator, Kendall Appell?

Kendall builds relationships with community childcare providers and supports them in providing children with the best start in life. She helps caregivers gain confidence in their developmental assessments so that they can serve as a first line of defense in identifying children that might need ESIT services early, while making sure they have access to all the community resources necessary to thrive.

The pandemic kept Kendall at a distance from the childcare centers, so she had to rely on phone and video calls to stay connected to caregivers. At a time of great stress and worry for everyone, but especially those caring for children, her strong relationships with our community partners allowed her to continue support virtually, focusing on training and coaching. Amidst the changing guidelines and stress, she provided a supportive and listening ear as the centers focused on providing high quality care through it all.



Kendall Appell, Community Services

"Our relationships grew. I've noticed my work with the centers is less about me connecting families and more about me coaching the providers on how they can support families," said Kendall.

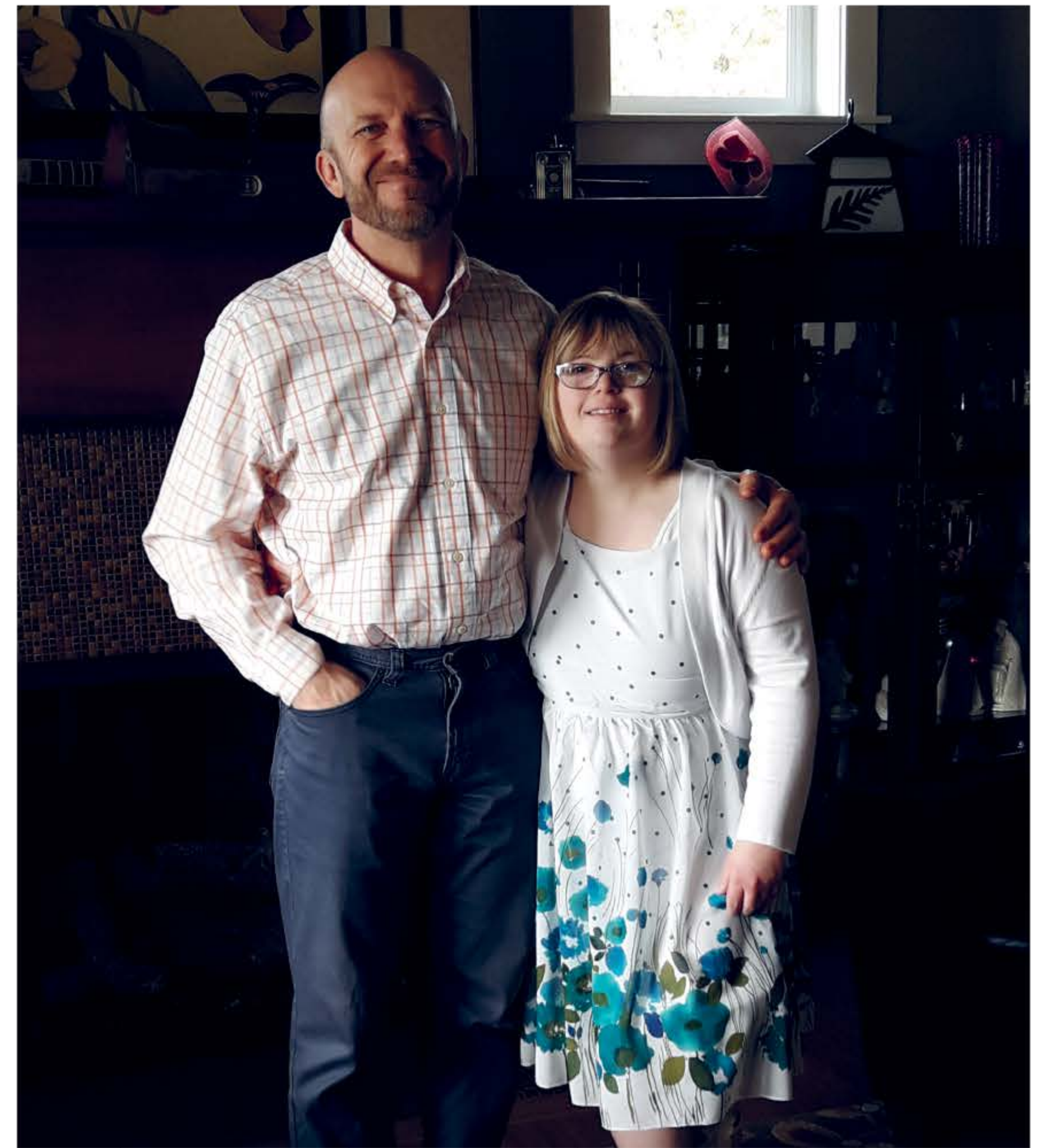
Community Services allows ChildStrive to share our expertise in early childhood development with a wide network of partners. Supporting healthy development and strong relationships in our community helps ensure all children have the best start in life.

A Lifetime of Service

In 1994, when Keith Harrell was invited to join the board of directors for ChildStrive (then named Little Red School House), he did not expect it to become a nearly three decade commitment that would prove to be among his proudest accomplishments, second only to the loving family he and his wife, Katie, raised.

Now, after a lifetime of service and community building by him and his family, Keith is taking a step back from his role as board member, though his dedication to children and families remains as strong as ever. He has long been an advocate for expanding ChildStrive's reach to make sure every child is getting the services that they need to reach their potential and that their family has the support it needs to build that bond as their child's first teacher and best advocate. He knows the value of that work firsthand.

In 1993, Keith and Katie Harrell were eagerly awaiting the arrival of their second child, a daughter to be named Megan. They knew prior to her birth that Megan had Down Syndrome and wanted to do all they could as a family to support Megan's development. Having moved to the area from California just a few years earlier, the Harrell's didn't have the close family connections that they had prior to their move. Fortunately they heard of an organization that was there to support young children with diverse abilities and their families.



Keith Harrell and his daughter, Megan Harrell



A delighted and smiling Megan Harrell

Megan began receiving services from ChildStrive not long after she was born. For the next three years Megan and her family worked with a team, including a speech pathologist, occupational therapist, and physical therapist, who helped support Megan's development.

As an early adopter of providing therapeutic services for children in their natural learning environment, ChildStrive's specialists helped the family learn how to fully support Megan's growth and development during weekly in-home visits, as well as additional developmental support services offered at one of the clinic locations.

After a year of receiving services for Megan, Keith was invited to join the Board of Directors as a parent advocate. Over the next several decades Keith would continue his service as a member of the board, holding each position within the board leadership and providing guidance in the organization's growth.

A Lifetime of Service, Cont.

“It’s just been a tremendous joy for me” said Keith. “I think if you put your heart into it then you get more out of it than you give.”

Keith continued, “I have a tremendous amount of respect and admiration for the people that do the work. I know how valuable what they do is for the families that they are serving. To be able to be a part of that and support them in their work, has been extremely rewarding to me. I think anyone that has an opportunity to gain a deeper understanding of what these services mean to families, can’t help but experience a lot of personal growth and joy from supporting that work – it is just really meaningful.”



The Harrell Family enjoying time together on the water on Lummi Island, WA

Knowing he’s a part of helping children during the earliest years when the impact is the greatest has been the most motivating for Keith during his service as a board member. “I don’t have the skill set to [have that impact] directly. If I can do that indirectly through my support as a board member, that to me is the reason I say it is the thing I’m most proud of - I see the impact, [my family] has benefited from it personally. I hear about it in the stories that we hear from the therapists and the children and families that have come through over the years. I know what a difference those folks make.”

A lot has changed since Keith and his family first walked through the doors at ChildStrive. With the loving support of Keith and Katie, Megan has flourished. Now, at 29, she is an avid volunteer and community builder who shares her message of strength, positivity, and inclusion through multiple organizations across Snohomish County. And ChildStrive has flourished, too. Then the organization served less than 100 families each year. Today, more than 4,000 children from 2,000 families across Snohomish and King Counties receive the same kind of high-quality care that has proven to have had such a significant impact in Megan and her family’s lives. Though Keith is stepping down from the board, he remains committed to helping children and looks forward to the continued growth of the organization he and his family have been a part of for nearly 30 years.



Megan recording a radio ad spot at KRKO’s studio in Everett, WA

Counselors Corner: Mental Health Resolutions

Every year, many people make New Year Resolutions. They set out to make changes, often big ones. But not all changes have to be big and difficult to be successful. Here are some Mental Health Resolutions you can make any time of year that are doable. And, they will help you establish or regain balance and calm in your everyday life throughout this year, and for years to come:

- I will commit to some kind of physical activity for the sole purpose of clearing my mind and calming my body (strength and health are just a bonus that come with it!).
- I will learn to relax and look for the things in my life to be grateful for. Gratitude can improve your mood and lower stress levels.
- I will care for my Mental Wellness by seeking professional support when my body and emotions are showing me I need it.
- I will speak gently and respectfully to myself daily. A positive outlook attracts positivity into our lives.
- I will stay mindful in the moment each day and won't get fixated on worrying about the future. Carpe Diem! (Seize the Day!)



Taking a moment to stretch and feel your body is a simple way to incorporate movement.

Have you seen our new website?

Our online home has been given an update and we're so excited to share it!

It highlights all the work our team is doing in the community and it is easier than ever for you to get involved in supporting families and children!

www.childstrive.org

GET INVOLVED



Did you know!?

- Babies will use about 6000 diapers during their first two years of life.
- 1 in 3 mothers cut back on basic essentials to afford diapers for their children.

You can help host a Diaper Drive for ChildStrive!

By hosting a donation drive you help families that are struggling financially get the basic items they need to keep their children healthy. We provide you with the materials and support you need for your donation drive, you provide your community a way to help.

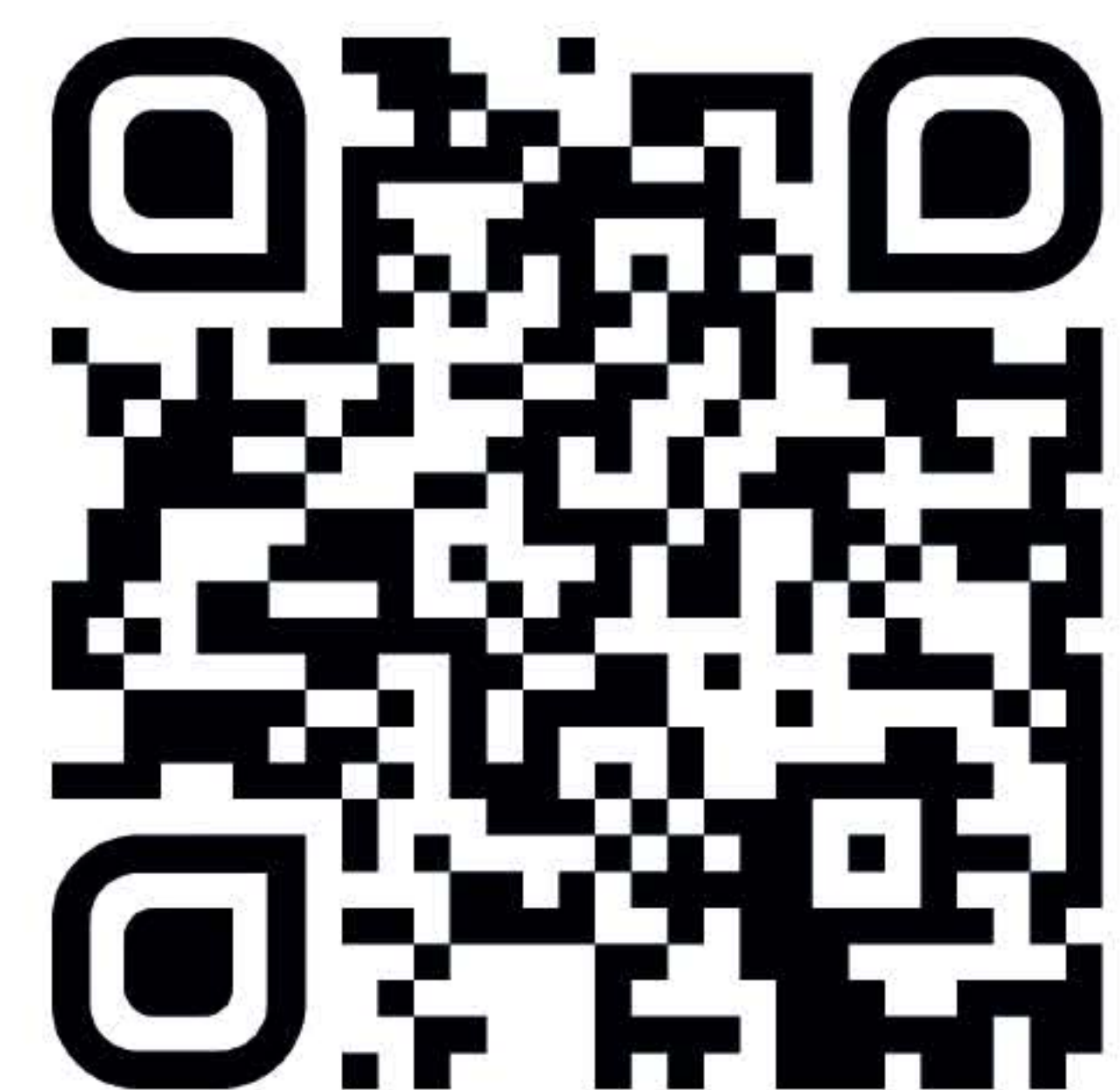
Questions?

Contact us at drives@childstrive.org

Want to help but can't host a drive right now? Visit our Amazon wish list to make an in kind gift of basic need items or donate on our website, childstrive.org, to help children and families.

Scan the QR code to see our Amazon Wish List!
or find it at:

<https://bit.ly/ChildStriveBasicNeeds>



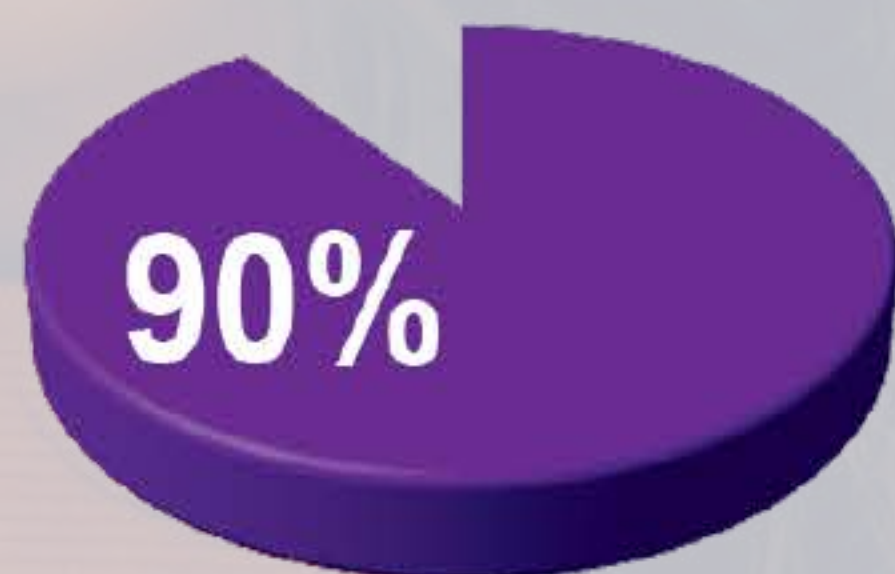
The Impact Your Help Makes Possible!

In the Fall of 2021, all families enrolled with ChildStrive's programs were asked to complete our twice yearly survey on the impact their participation in our programs had on their families, 132 families responded.

Because of your generosity and their hard work...



of ChildStrive parents spend time with their child everyday playing, reading, or singing



of ChildStrive parents have people in their life to help them when they are struggling



of ChildStrive parents feel their cultural identities & beliefs are valued & considered



of ChildStrive parents are most often the parent they want to be



of ChildStrive parents are confident enough to ask for what they and their children need



of ChildStrive parents encourage their child's curiosity and exploration

Your support makes it possible for families to continue receiving ChildStrive's high-quality services throughout these challenging times. THANK YOU!

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