



Testimony of Kara Wood
Senior Director Public Policy, Casey Family Programs
Kansas Legislature's Special Committee on Foster Care Adequacy
November 17, 2015

Good Afternoon. My name is Kara Wood and I am a Senior Director of Public Policy with Casey Family Programs, the nation's largest operating foundation dedicated to safely reducing the need for foster care and building communities of hope across America.

Casey Family Programs was founded in 1966 and has been analyzing, studying and informing best practices in child welfare for nearly 50 years. We work with child welfare agencies in all 50 states, the District of Columbia and Puerto Rico, and with the federal government on child welfare policies and practices. We partner with child welfare systems, policymakers, families, community organizations, American Indian tribes and courts to support practices and policies that increase the safety and success of children and strengthen the resilience of families.

I want to thank you for extending an invitation to Casey Family Programs to participate in this hearing to share our national expertise and experience regarding foster care and strengthening child welfare systems.

As a starting point for this discussion, it is important to remember that most children enter foster care due to neglect— not because of physical or sexual abuse. National data tells us that 83% of children enter foster care due to neglect. Neglect may include parental substance abuse, inadequate housing, and child behavior problems, among other things. In Kansas the number of children entering foster care due to neglect is 76%. This is important to keep in mind as you consider the array of services and approaches used to respond to children who are at risk and children who have experienced abuse and neglect. We also know that the majority of children return to their parents after foster care. In Kansas, 56% of children who are placed in foster care are reunified. States and communities across the country have demonstrated that children can be successfully reunited - and grow up in safe and stable families - by providing appropriate and timely services before and after they return home. It is important to keep this in mind when considering strategies to improve outcomes for children in foster care and provide children with appropriate services and placements.

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Today I would like to outline five components that we think are critical when considering the appropriate role that foster care can play in the protection of children and support of vulnerable families. I will also discuss foster care licensing and strategies to support and improve the quality of foster homes. First, we know from research and from providing direct service for over four decades that in most cases children do best with their own families. Children and families should be assessed to see what safety risks exist and if they can be addressed without removing the child from the home. However, when removal of a child from the home is necessary, it is critical to recognize that the placement of a child in foster care should be temporary, and should only be utilized to ensure the safety of a child. It is important to establish a timely plan for a child to receive appropriate services and achieve permanency – whether that is reunification or adoption or guardianship - as quickly as possible.

Second, in those cases where foster care is necessary, placements should be in as family-like a setting as possible, ideally with relatives, close family friends or other adults known to have a supportive relationship with the child, and ideally in the child's same community, where school and other connections can be maintained.

Research demonstrates that children placed in a family setting experience better outcomes than children who are placed in group homes or other similar non-family like settings. Children in these placement types experience increased negative outcomes, including higher rates of school dropout, higher likelihood of being arrested, and higher likelihood of aging out of foster care without achieving legal permanency. In addition, placing children who have already experienced trauma in group settings can put them at greater risk of further physical abuse when compared with children placed in family settings.

The third critical component is to ensure a stable placement for children while they are in foster care. Research and our national experience indicates that having a child stay in a stable placement, meaning no moves or limited changes in placement, leads to improved outcomes. Research has shown that minimizing placement changes reduces trauma, lessens child attachment disorders and child emotional and behavior disorders, increases academic achievement, decreases foster parent stress and lowers program costs. Many child welfare agencies use an approach of "first placement, best placement", which is critical to promoting better outcomes for children in foster care.

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Some basic practice principles specific to placement stability include:

- Effective training and supports for foster parents
- Matching the placement of children to the most appropriate home within their school district as opposed to placing simply based on availability.
- Targeted, need-specific training for foster parents (i.e. infant and toddler, adolescents, disability-specific, special needs)
- Frequency of face-to-face visits with foster parents and children by the caseworker

The fourth critical component is to keep a child's time in foster care as short as possible. Research shows that the longer a child stays in foster care and the more moves a child has while in foster care – the poorer the outcomes for that child. Extended periods in care can harm the sense of belonging that comes from a permanent, lifelong connection and can reduce the ability of youth to develop relationships, connect with their community, and acquire life skills.

Compared to their peers in the general population, foster care alumni (most of who in research samples have emancipated from care) experienced higher rates of incarceration and criminal justice involvement; unintended pregnancy; food, housing, and income insecurity; unemployment; educational deficits; receipt of public assistance; and mental health problems. This is particularly pronounced for older youth who have a more difficult time achieving permanency than younger youth; the odds of achieving permanency decrease by 12% for every additional year of a youth's age at the time of their first placement. Adolescents who feel connected to a parent are better protected against a range of risks, including emotional distress and suicidal thoughts, alcohol use, smoking, violent behavior, early sexual activity, and early pregnancy.

A fifth critical component is to have in place a robust and transparent process for continuous quality improvement (CQI) that allows the agency to self-monitor, based on data, to make adjustments and improvements in real time. CQI is the complete process of identifying, describing, and analyzing strengths and problems and then testing, implementing, learning from, and revising solutions. It relies on an organizational culture that is proactive and supports continuous learning. CQI is firmly grounded in the overall mission, vision, and values of the agency. Perhaps most importantly, it is dependent upon the active inclusion and participation of staff at all levels of the agency, children, youth, families, and stakeholders throughout the process. It appears that Kansas is well positioned to have a robust CQI system.

A sixth factor that is critical to this conversation is the creation of a trauma informed system to best serve children who do enter foster care. As research has highlighted the development needs and challenges in serving children known to child welfare, states have moved to build trauma-informed systems, identify how to assess and treat trauma, work to address secondary trauma in caseworkers, and provide trauma training to all who interact with families and their children. Elements of a trauma-informed system include maximizing the physical and psychological safety of the child and family, identifying the trauma-related needs of children and families, and partnering with youth and families and other system agencies. Children involved in the child welfare system have been, by definition, exposed to traumatic situations. Then, during the course of their child welfare involvement, system-imposed stressors, such as removal from the home, can compound pre-existing stressors and re-traumatize children who already carry significant burdens from their experience of abuse and/or neglect. These two sources of stress can interact and amplify each other. Untreated stress reactions can lead to placement disruptions, which only intensify the problematic reactions and behaviors.

I also want to take a few minutes to talk about the quality of foster homes as I understand the agency has recently incorporated the previously independent Licensing Department and is considering what changes may be necessary. Focusing on the quality of foster homes and engagement with foster parents is critical for improved child outcomes as research has shown that when foster families are partners with the child welfare system and are seen as members of the professional child welfare team, they are more satisfied and more likely to provide longer care for children, and to better support birth families. Casey Family Programs participated in extensive work in this area along with the Michigan Department of Human Services Foster Care and Adoption Program and the Children's Research Center. This work suggests that child welfare agencies achieve greater success when they:

- Adopt one or more of the foster parent applicant assessment exercises that can be used by foster parent screening staff of all ability levels;
- Add one or more of the Resource Family Assessment questions currently being used by Casey Family Programs;
- Pay special attention to identified risk factors for maltreatment in foster care; and
- Consider adding one or more specific assessment tools. These can include tools such as the short form of the Parenting Stress Index; the caregiver section of the Child and Adolescent Needs and Strengths (CANS); the Casey foster parent applicant assessment tool; and other assessment tools.

Another strong tool is the Structured Analysis Family Evaluation - or "SAFE" Home approach to assessing foster parent applicants. SAFE is a structured evaluation process that assists practitioners in identifying and addressing both strengths and areas of concern, as well as safe and effective parenting during the home study process.

Key policy changes go hand in hand with these assessment tools and techniques. It's important for jurisdictions to pay special attention to identified risk factors for maltreatment in foster care, and consider if any policy changes in licensing requirements and/or targeting of resources and training is warranted. Risk factors for maltreatment in foster care can include:

- Caseworker reservations about the home (even if they meet all requirements)
- A foster child sharing a bedroom with another family member
- Young, female foster caregivers due to lack of supports and/or the presence of unrelated paramours in the home
- Foster caregivers who placed restrictions on whom they would care for, such as excluding infants or teens
- Prior complaints about the foster parent and criminal history
- Placement instability and exposure to multiple care providers

Finally, but certainly not least, I want to talk briefly about promoting child well-being. A large body of research indicates how maltreatment harms the cognitive, physical, behavioral, and social dimensions of children's development and overall well-being. We know that it can be traumatic when a child is removed from his or her family. While safety is always going to be our primary concern, it is important to recognize that there is a difference between risk of harm and immediate or eminent danger. As such, this should be assessed and considered when making a decision about removal. It is important to critically consider "is this child better off" by being removed. This question requires a larger perspective that includes community and other systems in order to move to a paradigm of safe and thriving with in healthy families and strong communities.

Child welfare systems have a unique opportunity to assess and promote child well-being across each of these domains but they should not be alone in promoting child wellbeing. Flexible funding and cross-system coordination and information and data sharing would allow resources to be used more efficiently to promote healthy child development while keeping children safe and helping them achieve permanent family relationships in nurturing environments.

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In order to best serve those children who have suffered abuse or neglect as well as those families who are vulnerable and at risk, we cannot just look to the Child Protection Agency for solutions. As I stated earlier, most children involved with child welfare came to the attention of the agency due to neglect, and many of these children and families have previously been and are presenting known to others beyond the Child Welfare agency. Other agencies involved through health, mental health, domestic violence, substance abuse, law enforcement and education are critical in this work. Child safety is a community responsibility and as you're looking at current policy and considering changes, we strongly recommend that you encourage agencies to work together, and set policy based on what the research tells us works, not based on anecdotes or individual cases.

Thank you very much for your attention and leadership in improving outcomes for children and families. I would be happy to answer any questions you may have.

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state fact sheet

KANSAS

From 2008 to 2011, Casey Family Programs will have invested **\$1.4 million** in Kansas to support the work of the 250 welfare system workers, judges, policymakers and other professionals to build communities of hope that safely reduce the need for foster care and support strong, lasting families for all children.

Congress has a critical role to play in establishing how our nation responds to child abuse and neglect, and builds hope for young lives. There is no time to lose.

Each year, approximately 3 million children across the country are involved in investigations of maltreatment or other issues. About 270,000 under-18 are currently living in foster care.

Today, almost all of the federal government's dedicated child welfare funding can be spent by states only on foster care-related services. Casey Family Programs believes that we can be able to make smarter investments in services and interventions that are shown to better protect children, improve outcomes and strengthen families.



We talk about a “foster care system,” but in fact the vast majority of children who come to the attention of child welfare officials are not placed in foster care. In Kansas – and around the nation the goal is to help vulnerable children grow up in safe, stable and loving families.

Each year in **Kansas** approximately:



Foster care is a response to abuse and neglect, not a solution. Yet the bulk of the \$7.6 billion in dedicated federal child welfare spending can only be used by states for foster care-related services. To truly transform the child welfare system in America, we should be able to make smarter investments of federal dollars in programs that ultimately reduce the need for foster care and produce better outcomes for children.

How federal funding is aligned with need in **Kansas**:

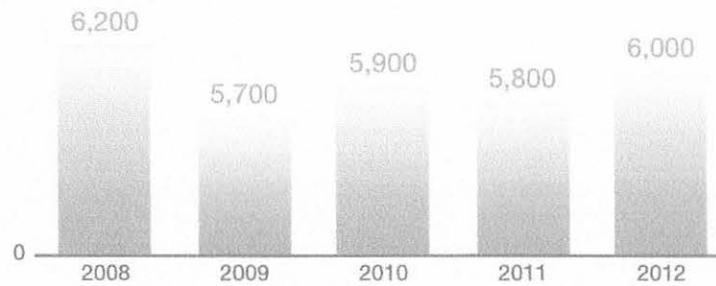


Safety and effective response go hand-in-hand. Most children enter foster care due to neglect and other reasons – not because of physical or sexual abuse. In Kansas, providing targeted and effective interventions as soon as possible can safely prevent the need for foster care and better ensure that children who suffer any kind of maltreatment are not harmed again.

Reasons children enter foster care



Children under the age of 18 living in foster care (As of September 30, 2012)

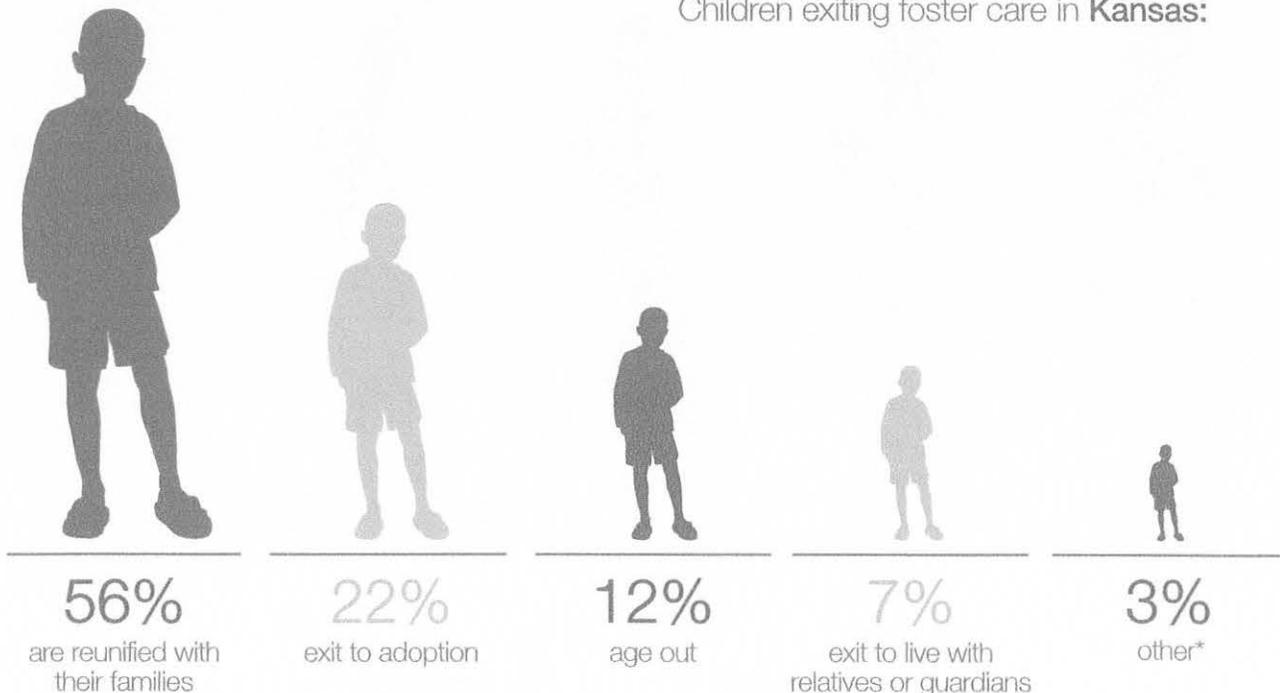


*Other includes: Parental substance abuse, child substance abuse, child disability, child behavior problems, parent death, parent incarceration, caretaker inability to cope, relinquishment, inadequate housing

97% of children do not experience a repeat occurrence of maltreatment within six months

What happens to children who end up in foster care? Most are safely reunited with their own parent or extended family. A significant number are adopted. Communities across America have shown they can help more children to grow up in safe, stable families by providing appropriate and timely services after they return home.

Children exiting foster care in Kansas:



*Other includes: transferred to another agency, ran away or passed away

Progress in Kansas

Casey Family Programs will invest \$1 billion nationally by the end of the decade to support the work of states such as Kansas to keep children safe, make families strong and build communities of hope.

We partner with public child welfare systems, courts, policymakers, families, businesses, faith-based organizations and others to help better prevent abuse and neglect and support stable, lifelong families for all children.

We believe this work is making a meaningful improvement to the lives of the state's children and families. Congress and the federal government have a role to play in making sure the state can make smarter investments that effectively address the needs of the community's vulnerable children and their families.

Updated: April 2014

This report is based on 2012 data made available by the National Data Archive on Child Abuse and Neglect Data (NDACAN):

- Adoption and Foster Care Analysis and Reporting System (AFCARS)
- National Child Abuse and Neglect Data System (NCANDS)

Check with state officials for the most up-to-date data.



P 800.228.3559
P 206.282.7300
F 206.282.3553

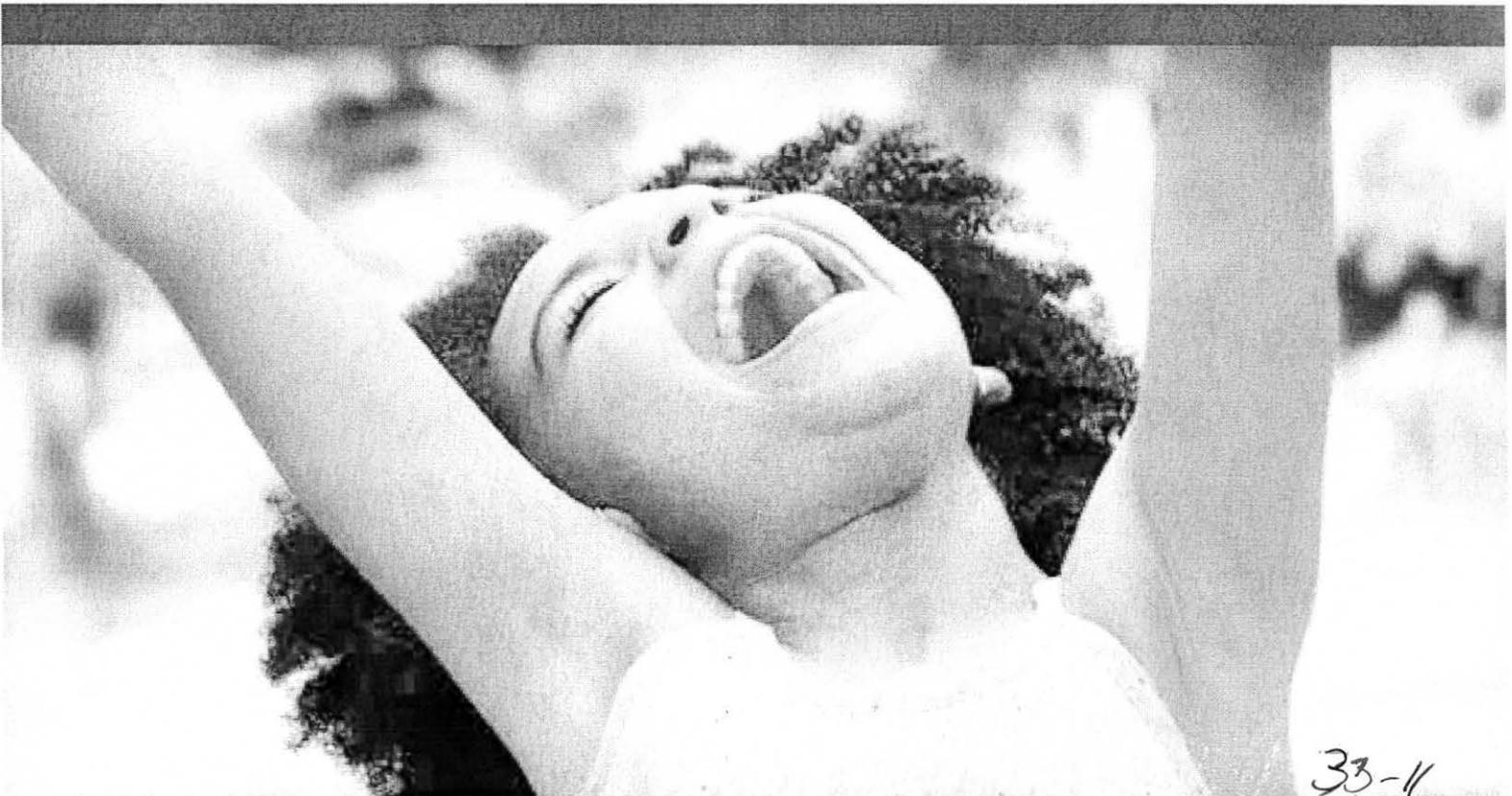
casey.org | contactus@casey.org

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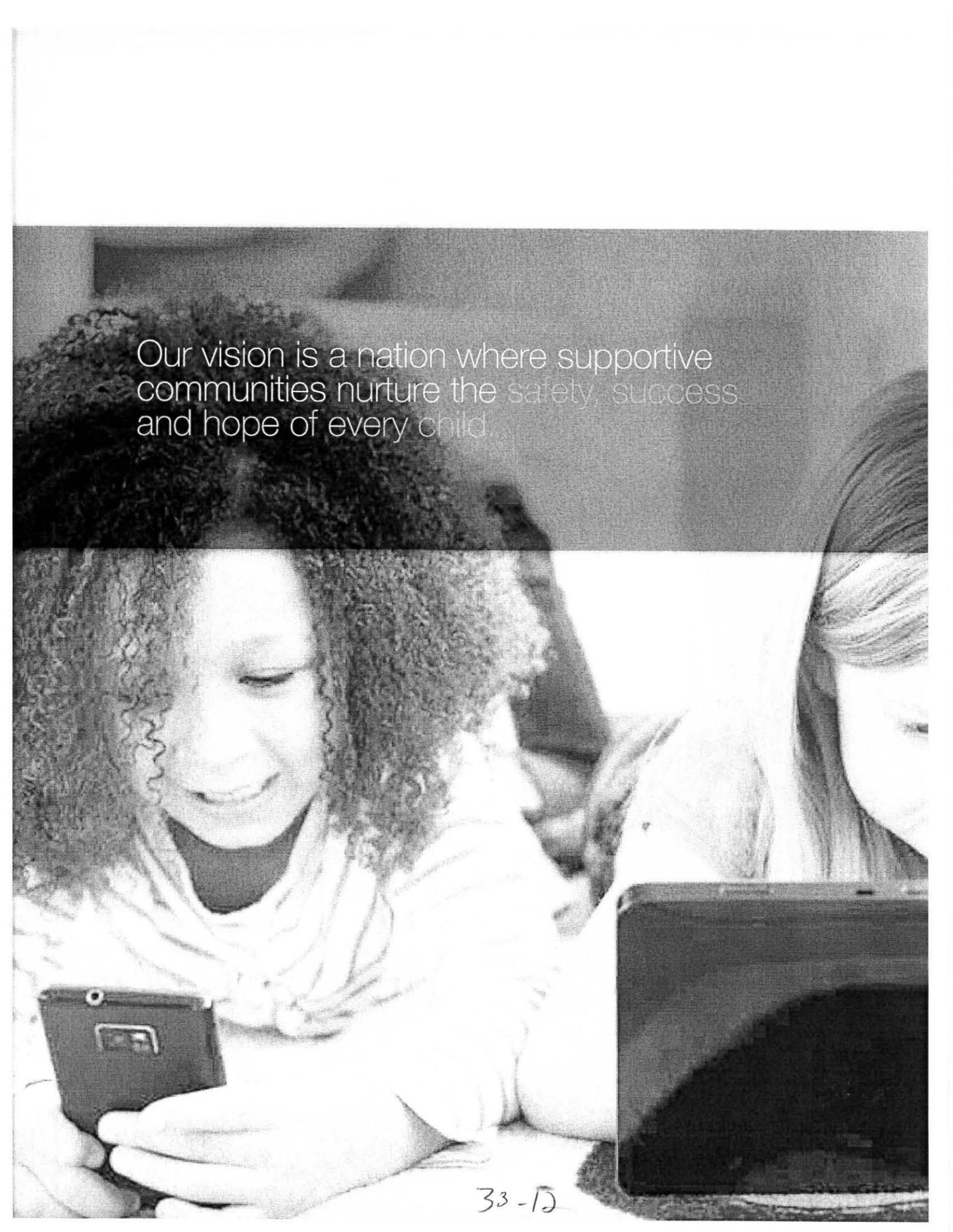
safe children | strong families | supportive communities

A DECLARATION *of*

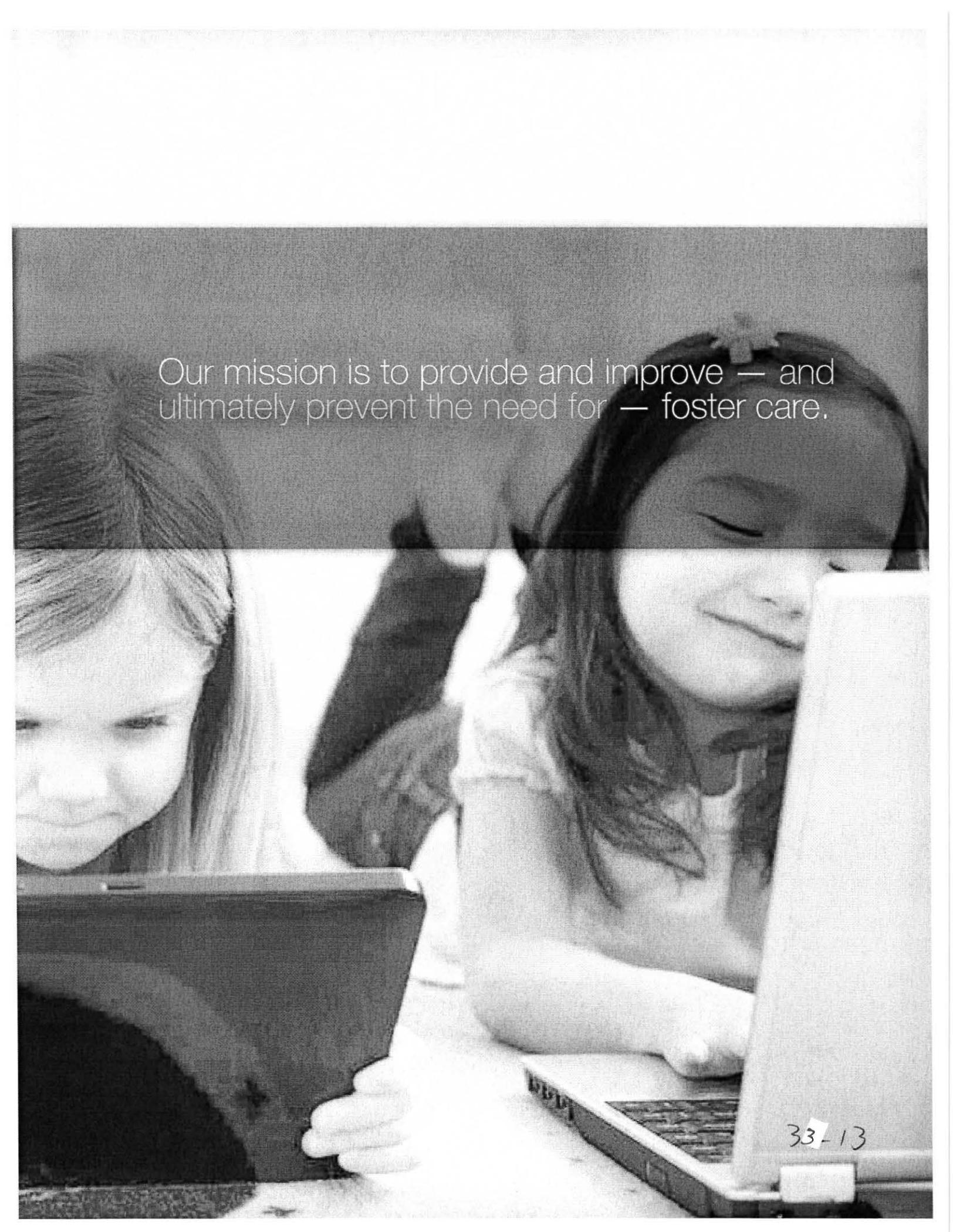
HOPE



casey family programs



Our vision is a nation where supportive communities nurture the safety, success and hope of every child.



Our mission is to provide and improve — and ultimately prevent the need for — foster care.

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CHAIR, BOARD OF TRUSTEES

Letter from Dr. William C. Bell
PRESIDENT AND CEO

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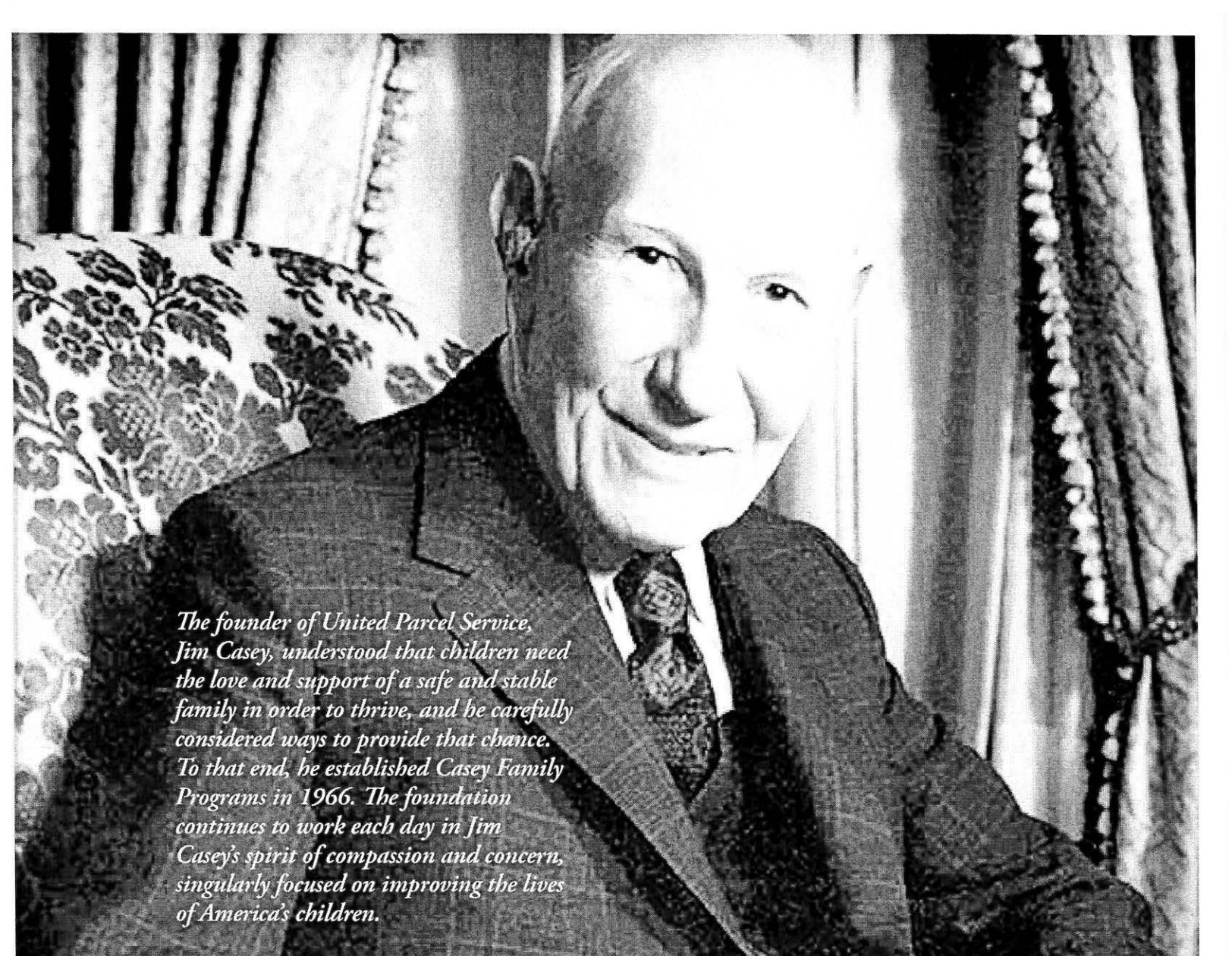
SECTION THREE
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The founder of United Parcel Service, Jim Casey, understood that children need the love and support of a safe and stable family in order to thrive, and he carefully considered ways to provide that chance. To that end, he established Casey Family Programs in 1966. The foundation continues to work each day in Jim Casey's spirit of compassion and concern, singularly focused on improving the lives of America's children.

“If we are to accomplish anything worthwhile, we will do it largely through the help and cooperation of the people who work with us.”

- JIM CASEY, 1947

How do we inspire change?

When it comes to ensuring the safety and success of every child in America, the answer is **we must do it together.**

Change requires children and families in the hardest hit ZIP codes to believe a better future is possible beyond what they see around them.

Change requires local leaders to stand up and declare “enough” and to marshal all the forces of progress under a shared banner of hope – from the neighborhood school and community hospital to the cop on the beat and the church on the corner.

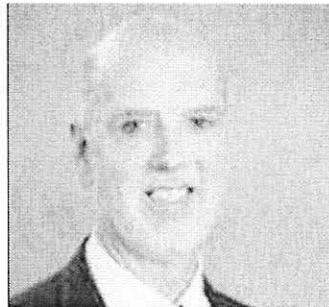
Change requires policymakers at all levels to tear down the silos that have created a fractured response to domestic violence, substance abuse, failing schools, lack of mental health services and economic isolation that rob too many children and families of the opportunities to achieve their dreams.

Change requires corporate America and philanthropy to create new and innovative partnerships with communities and invest together in broad-based efforts that can be measured and sustained.

At Casey Family Programs, we are committed to playing our part in creating that better future for all children and families. We call it 2020: Building Communities of Hope.

2020: Building Communities of Hope reflects a deep truth that we have come to understand through the nearly 50 years of serving children and families, both directly and through our partnerships with our nation’s child welfare system: You cannot ensure the safety of children without strengthening their family, and you cannot support the strength of a family without improving the conditions in their community.

We recognize that change is not easy, but it is necessary. As an organization, we have taken on the challenge of developing new and innovative approaches to our work while remaining true to the same mission that has guided us from the start – giving all children the opportunity to grow up safe, strong and loved.



BOB WATT
CHAIR | BOARD OF TRUSTEES

We have done this difficult task so that each of us – from the boardroom in Seattle to the living rooms of the families we partner with in communities across America – can remain laser-focused on the part we play in creating long-lasting and positive change.

Casey Family Programs has come to see Building Communities of Hope as a powerful theory of change, not just in the child welfare system, but in all of our nation’s efforts to create opportunities for children and families to thrive.

In the following pages, you will read about how communities across this nation are thinking, planning and acting differently to create real and lasting progress. You will read about specific examples that point the way toward success.

This is how a bold vision for change will produce results, even when conventional wisdom says it isn’t possible.

The expectation that we can and will do better for our children and our communities is the essence of hope. We think Jim Casey would agree.

Sincerely,

BOB WATT



DR. WILLIAM C. BELL
PRESIDENT AND CEO



Dear friends:

We are living in a time of profound transformation in America, a time that can yield dramatic, sustainable improvements in our capacity to ensure the safety and success of all of our children.

For this transformation to occur, hope is essential.

We know that hope is possible, because we see evidence of hope in communities across this nation. From the unprecedented coalition known as Cities United, where mayors have joined together to reduce the violence-related deaths of young, African-American men on the streets of their cities to a rural community in the mountains of Eastern Kentucky that is drawing on the strength of neighbors to help drug-addicted mothers pull their lives – and families – back together, we are restoring hope across America.

We can see the evidence of an emerging hopefulness through the amazing efforts of our colleagues in philanthropy and the dynamic partnerships between government, philanthropy, business, and communities such as the My Brother's Keeper initiative recently announced by President Obama.

We know that hope is possible as we are seeing the lives of vulnerable children and their families changed through the work of child welfare and other public systems across the United States. Their success in safely reducing the need for foster care and building a sense of hope in their communities has led to a deeper understanding of what it takes not only to achieve and sustain progress, but to go beyond it to create a remarkable transformation of human capacity. There are approximately 120,000 fewer children living in foster care today than there were in 2005.

And along with the reduced use of foster care the key measures of child safety have either improved or remained the same, indicating that child welfare's increased focus on prevention, in-home support, and building stronger community partnerships has helped more children have the opportunity to grow up in safe, stable families.

Child welfare systems across the nation are succeeding in safely reducing the need for foster care. These changes are taking place

In a nation founded on the principle that all people are created equal, how do we account for the lottery of birthplace that too often determines the opportunities for children to reach their full potential?

in communities that represent the broad spectrum of America:

- In Baltimore, children requiring placement in foster care dropped from 5,906 in 2005 to 2,139 in 2012 – a remarkable reduction of 64 percent. Maryland, as a whole, showed significant improvements too. The reason, in part, is a statewide initiative called “Place Matters” that promotes safety, family strengthening, permanency and community-based services to keep families intact and safely reduce the need for out-of-home care.
- In Lorain County, Ohio, local leaders were able to change their entire approach to serving children and families, thanks to a collective vision for change and the participation of a broad group of community stakeholders. Over the past decade, the county has seen a rise in adoptions, a steep drop in foster care numbers and greatly improved child safety.
- In Minnesota, improvements made by the Mille Lacs Band of Ojibwe Indians led to

an increase in the percentage of children served in their parents' homes; an increase in the percent of out-of-home care in relatives' homes; and a decrease in the percentage of children in non-native, out-of-home care.

While there are many more examples of success that have helped communities across America begin to create a path toward hope for their most vulnerable citizens, the reality is that we are not yet where we need to be as a nation.

We must do more to build hope so that every child, in every home, in every ZIP code in America has the same access and opportunity to thrive. And that will require that we look beyond what the child welfare system can do alone, and consider how we can collectively across systems and across sectors improve the broader conditions in communities that affect the health, safety, and opportunities for children and their families.

In a nation founded on the principle that all people are created equal, how do we account for the birthplace lottery that too often determines

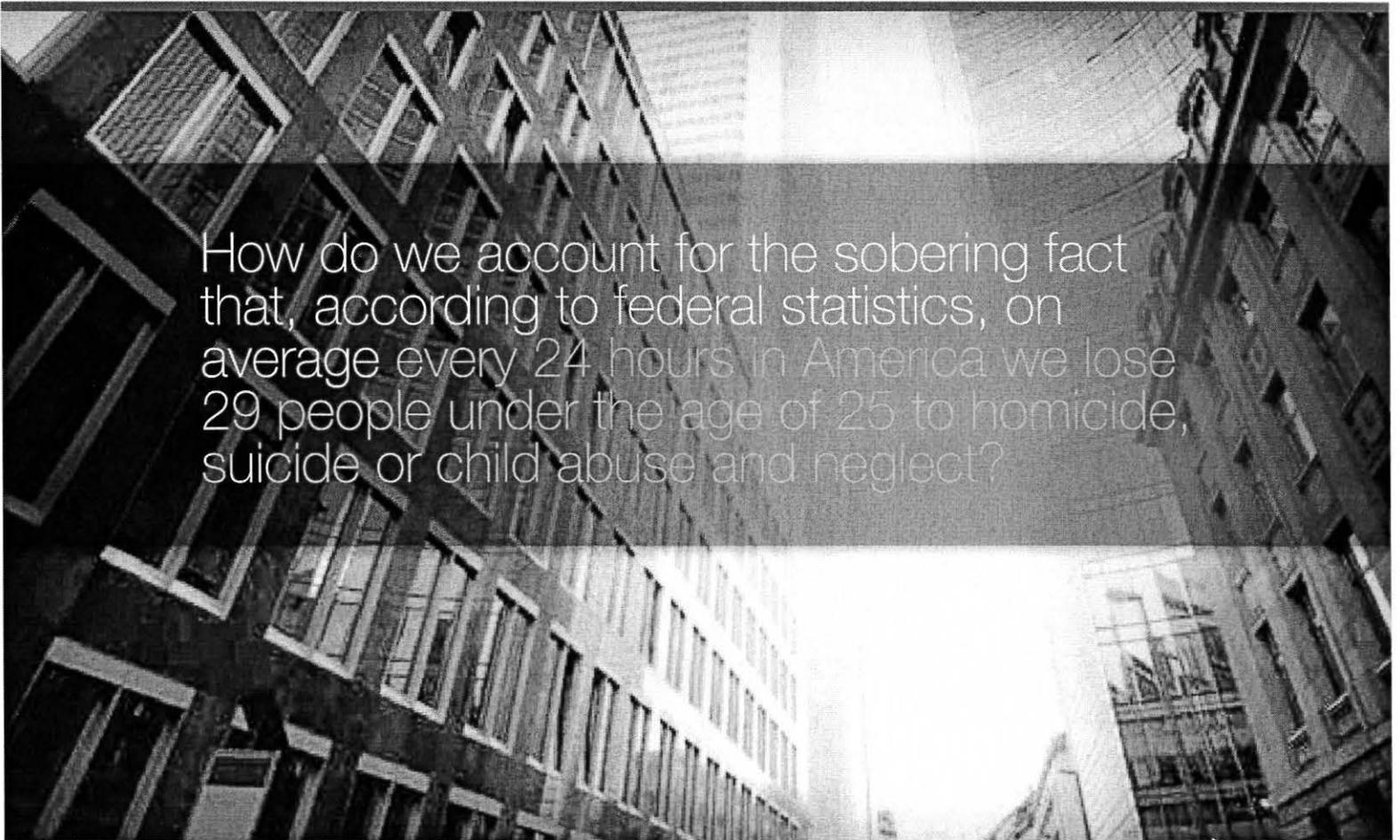
the opportunities for children to reach their full potential?

How do we account for the sobering fact that, according to federal statistics, on average every 24 hours in America we lose 29 people under the age of 25 to homicide, suicide or child abuse and neglect? How do we account for the unprecedented loss of human capital and potential that occurs every 15 days in America when 435 young lives are cut short for reasons that we can prevent if we only committed ourselves to the task?

Four hundred and thirty five is also the number of members in the U.S. House of Representatives. Think about that for a moment. We believe the knowledge and experience of 435 people is vast enough to help govern the most powerful nation on earth – and yet we allow the same human potential to be lost every 15 days without applying the urgency and relentlessness required to stop it.

If a new virus emerged tomorrow that killed young people this quickly, how would we respond? We would respond in the same way any caring group of individuals would do to a threat of this magnitude: Leaders at all levels would take immediate action to focus our efforts to stop this virus from spreading and to find ways to heal those who have been infected. We would use data to pinpoint the virus' hotspots and to create meaningful ways to measure progress toward halting its transmission and ensuring its eradication.

We would ensure coordination across all governmental entities, private organizations, and other stakeholders that had a role in preventing and treating this virus. We would invest in research and education to ensure that the necessary modifications to life behavior changed to ensure the sustainability of our efforts. And we would create partnerships with business and philanthropy



How do we account for the sobering fact that, according to federal statistics, on average every 24 hours in America we lose 29 people under the age of 25 to homicide, suicide or child abuse and neglect?

to leverage their resources and expertise to work collectively in support of a cure.

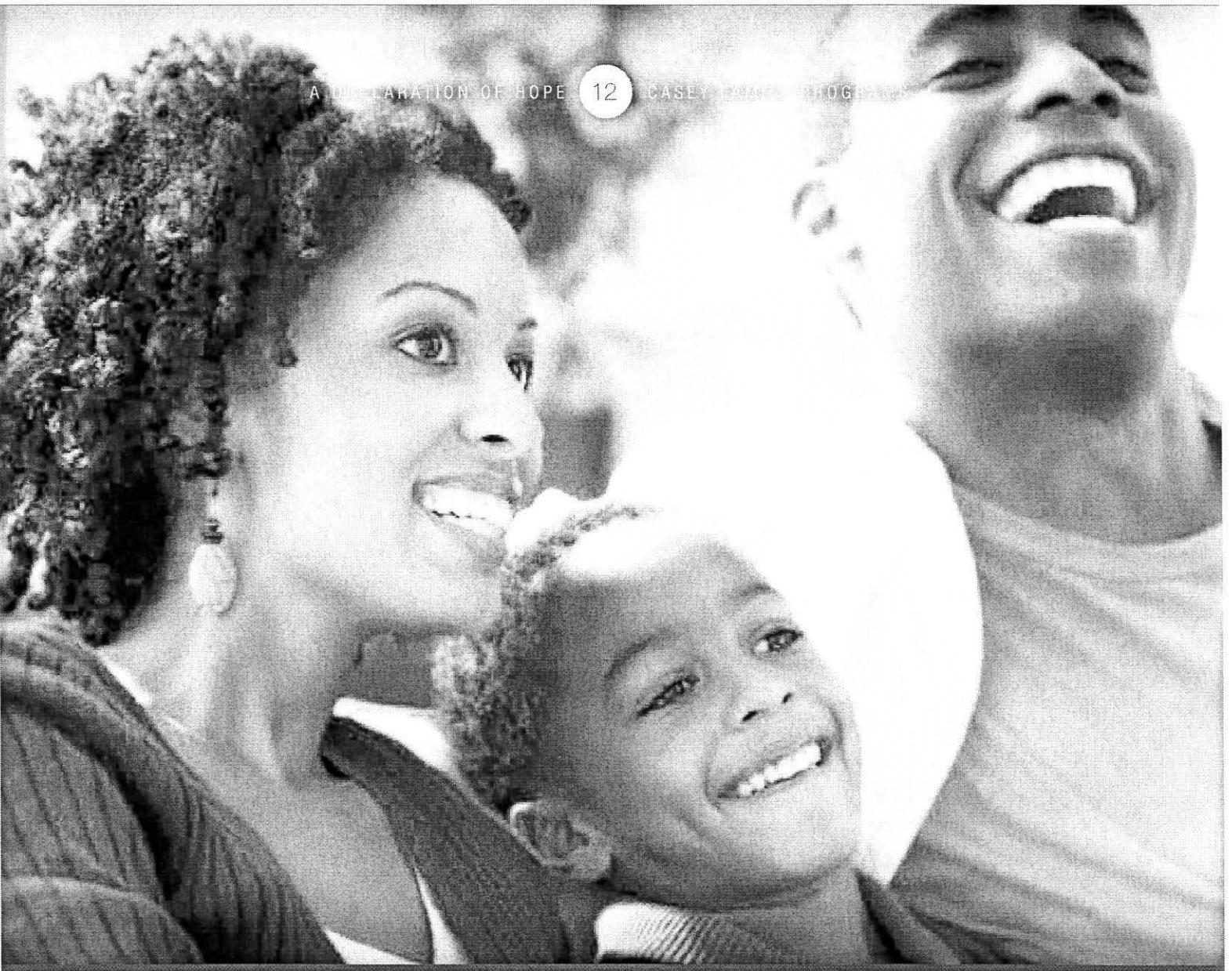
But it is not a virus that takes the lives of those 435 young people every 15 days. It is violence; it is despair; it is untreated mental illness and substance abuse; it is the poverty of opportunity; it is the low expectations and blindness to see possibility that have been allowed to become so pervasive in far too many of our communities in America. It is a lack of hope.

But I believe that our history as a people says we can change this condition if we choose to. I believe that our history as a people is filled with the evidence of our capacity to approach any challenge we face with the urgency and relentlessness needed to overcome. I believe that our strength as America is found in our pledge that we are one nation, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

2020: Building Communities of Hope is a collective vision for change. It is a collective vision of hope that is built upon four core principles and beliefs about achieving measurable and sustainable change:

- **Local leaders must lead our efforts to work with and empower families and communities to make decisions to improve their life outcomes.** Mayors, schools, courts, tribal leaders, child welfare leaders, and others must collaborate effectively with community members in developing a shared vision of success and act to achieve it.
- **We must improve our utilization of data to drive our decision making and improve the capacity of communities to support their most vulnerable citizens.** We must draw on the tools of the Information Age to better understand



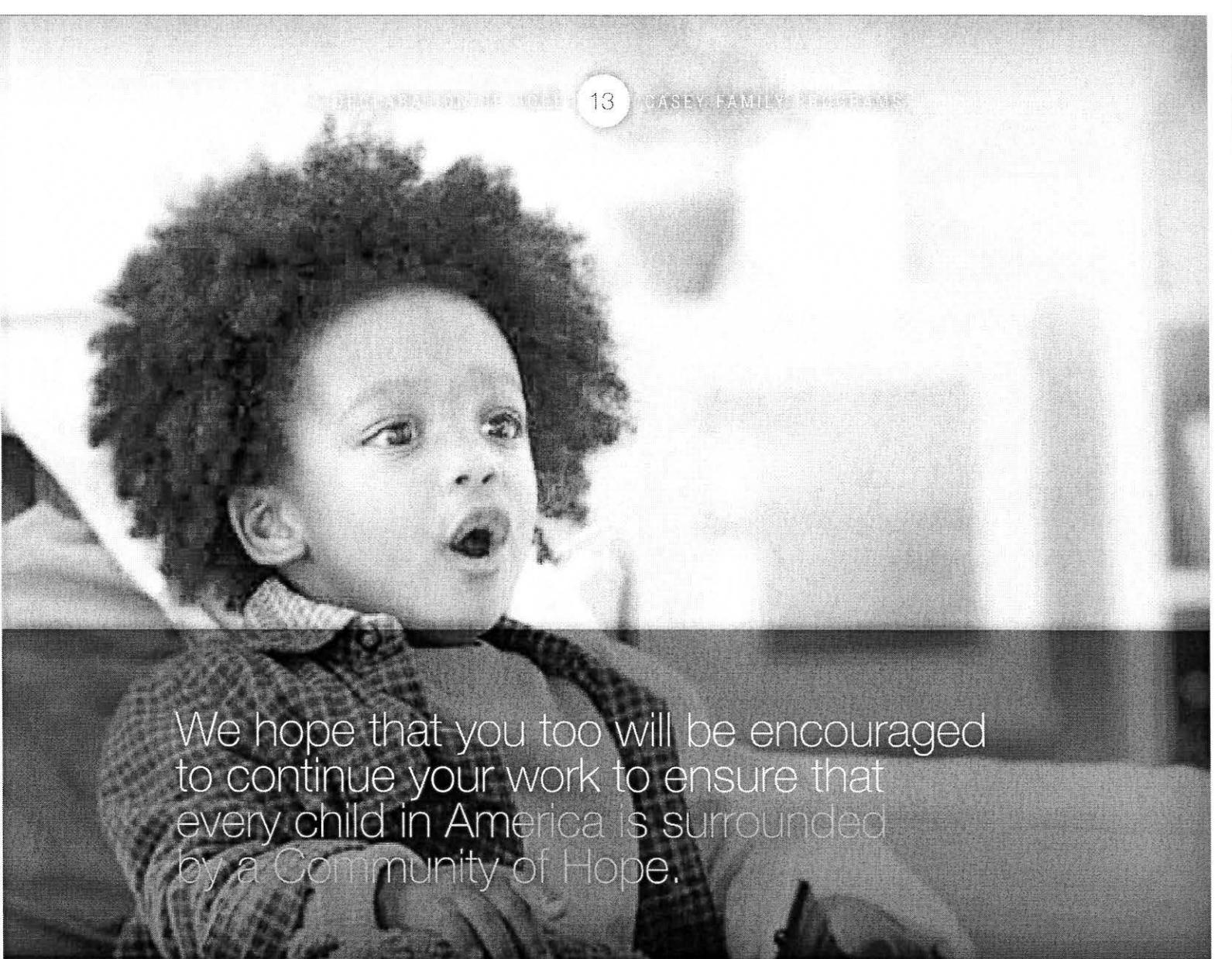


the conditions that contribute to poor outcomes and pinpoint those ZIP codes where change is needed most. Further, we must create clear and measurable goals for improving outcomes and use data to ensure we stay on track.

- We must change our federal, state, tribal and local funding structures to better support more effective investments in sustainable change, life-outcome improvement and restoring hope. Too often, we invest resources to support programs that do not result in improved lives. We must integrate government and community response systems around a shared vision of success and ensure that funds are directed toward programs and strategies that truly address the fundamental challenges facing children, families and communities.

- The philanthropic and business communities must rethink our approach to giving so that they are more aligned with supporting and leveraging the enormous annual investments being made by federal, state, tribal and local governments to improve life outcomes for our most vulnerable citizens.

Many people and organizations are creating and expanding hope in communities across America by operationalizing these core principles and beliefs to develop strategies for change that will be documented in the pages that follow. Their efforts are beginning to demonstrate that the power and potential of these principles lie in understanding how each works together with the others to help overcome the deep-seated challenges that can undermine community. As you read about the efforts of these individuals and communities, we



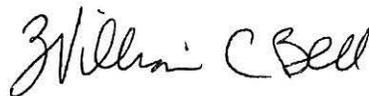
We hope that you too will be encouraged to continue your work to ensure that every child in America is surrounded by a Community of Hope.

hope that you too will be encouraged to continue your work to ensure that every child in America is surrounded by a Community of Hope.

This is our declaration of hope:

- Every child in America will grow up surrounded by a Community of Hope – a place where every child has the support and resources they need from the adults in their lives to reach their full potential.
- The ZIP code of a child's birth will no longer be one of the most determinant factors for his or her success or failure in life.
- Our urgent and relentless pursuit of success for every child in America will no longer be determined, deterred, or delayed by political cycles, grant cycles, or silos.
- America will live up to its promise to all of its children that they will have a right to a real life and not just an existence; that they will truly have the liberty that comes from freedom, justice and equality; and that they will be empowered with the tools, education and opportunity to pursue their happiness.

Sincerely,



DR. WILLIAM C. BELL

DISCOVERING A PATH TO HOPE

safe children | strong families | supportive communities



We often talk about child abuse and neglect as a national problem. This is true insomuch as it is found in communities across America.



But viewing child maltreatment – and mental illness, drug abuse, failing schools, violence-related deaths and a host of other challenges that worsen the lives of children and their families every day – at a national level obscures a critical factor apparent to anyone who has helped a child or family in need: Meeting these challenges is different within each community.

That is not to say common elements and common challenges don't exist. They do. It simply means that effective solutions must match the specific needs and tools within every community.

What works in Portland might be different than what works in Baltimore or what works within a specific tribal community. Cultural norms, customs, resources, languages, infrastructure, attitudes, politics, economies and a host of other factors mean that each community is unique.

This fundamental reality is at the heart of 2020: Building Communities of Hope. Cities across America share the common goals of protecting children from harm and helping them succeed. Yet the reality is that each city deals with a different set of issues affecting the health and well-being of children and families in its communities.

The challenges that families face are complex and they require complex responses.

Four of the core principles and beliefs underlying 2020: Building Communities of Hope are:

1. Local leaders must lead our efforts to work with and empower families and communities to make the decisions to improve their life outcomes.
2. We must improve our utilization of data to drive our decision-making and improve the capacity of communities to support their most vulnerable members.
3. We must change our federal, state and local funding structures to support more effective investments in sustainable change, improvement and hope.
4. The philanthropic and business communities must rethink their approaches to giving so that they are more aligned with supporting and leveraging the enormous annual investments made by federal, state and local governments to improve life outcomes for our most vulnerable citizens.

Our social welfare response system still operates with many of the vestiges of the child rescue approach on which it was founded.

Unless this reality is changed, any gains on behalf of vulnerable children are likely to be short-lived in the face of the deep-set challenges that still exist in far too many families and communities.

It doesn't have to be this way. Research shows that child abuse and neglect can be reduced by working with families to strengthen parental resilience, social connections, knowledge of parenting and child development.

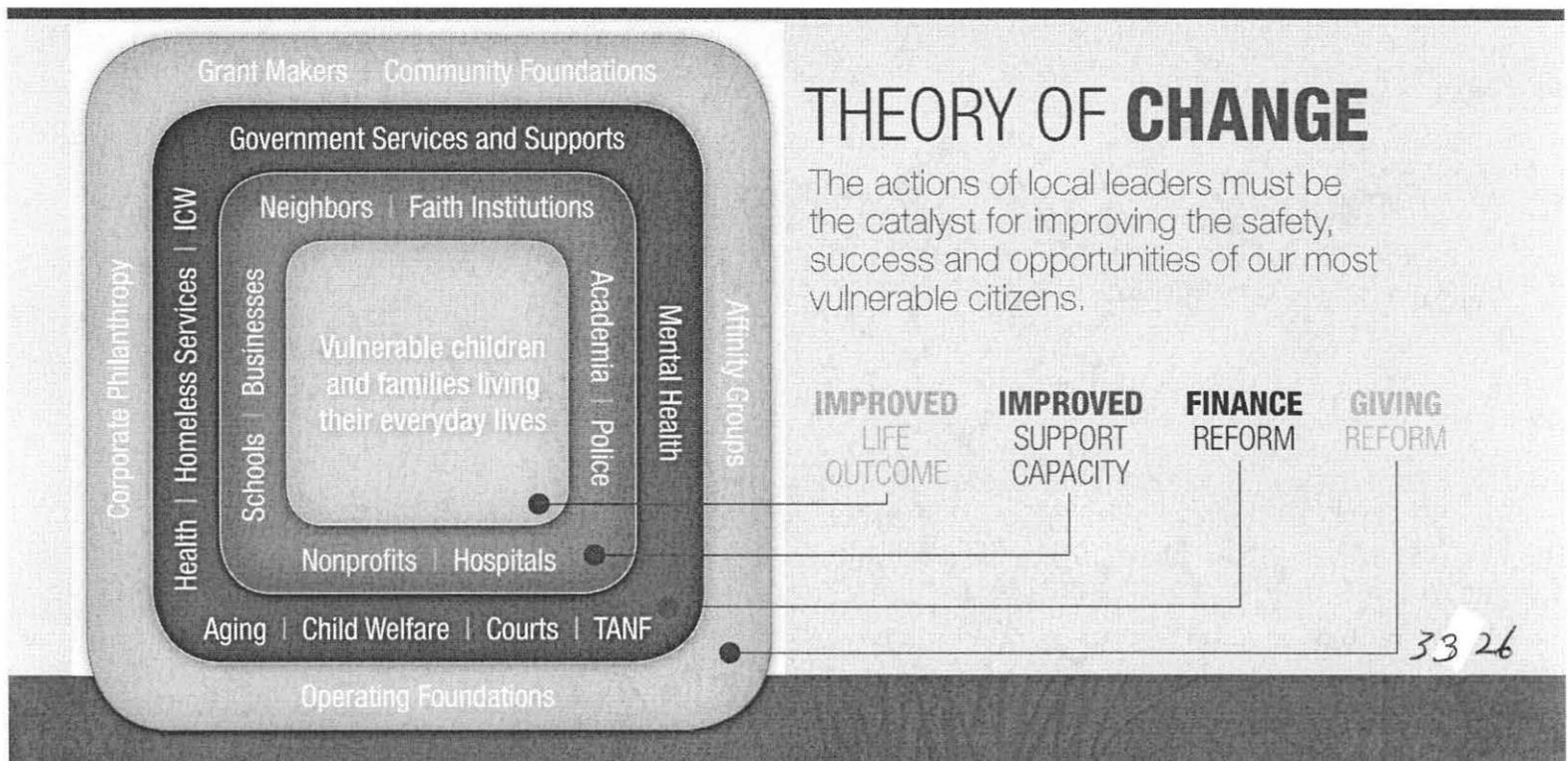
The same is true for communities as a whole. New research in the journal *Pediatrics* suggests that the degree of income inequality in a county has a significant association with maltreatment rates, even above and beyond the degree of child poverty in that area. Similarly, children who experience maltreatment in their home are also more likely to be exposed to violence in their communities.

When you see the safety of children as directly related to the strength of their families and the

THEORY OF CHANGE

The actions of local leaders must be the catalyst for improving the safety, success and opportunities of our most vulnerable citizens.

IMPROVED LIFE OUTCOME **IMPROVED SUPPORT CAPACITY** **FINANCE REFORM** **GIVING REFORM**



support of their communities, the dialogue around child welfare begins to change. New questions about our collective responsibility begin to arise: *How can we keep more children safe from abuse and neglect? How can we ensure children grow up in safe, permanent and stable families rather than in foster care? How can we strengthen families – and extended families – so they are better able to raise their own children successfully? How can communities provide the resources and support that families need to raise their children in safe environments – both in and outside their homes? And how can we ensure that no child ever ages out of the foster care system?*

The answers to these questions are evolving along with the dialogue. They are being informed by the power of data to reveal new insights into the specific needs of children in foster care. They are being enhanced by advances in brain science and new approaches, such as trauma-informed care, that are helping to heal the often hidden and painful wounds of adverse childhood experiences. And they are being shaped by a richer understanding of how policies and practices need to keep pace with advances in our understanding of child development, so we can invest resources more effectively at a national, state and local level to better prevent abuse and neglect in the first place.

Answering these and other challenging questions will bring us closer to our goal of ensuring the safety and success of every child in America. But it is also clear that the child welfare system cannot be the sole entity tasked with building hope. No single system can possibly address every challenge facing children and families.

The power to build hope rests in the collective will of a community and its families. Because of this, we need to understand the interdependencies among families, neighborhoods, schools, local businesses, law enforcement, churches and nonprofits. We also need to acknowledge the importance of coordination among governmental sectors such as the judiciary, education, health and human services, as well as the role that philanthropy and business

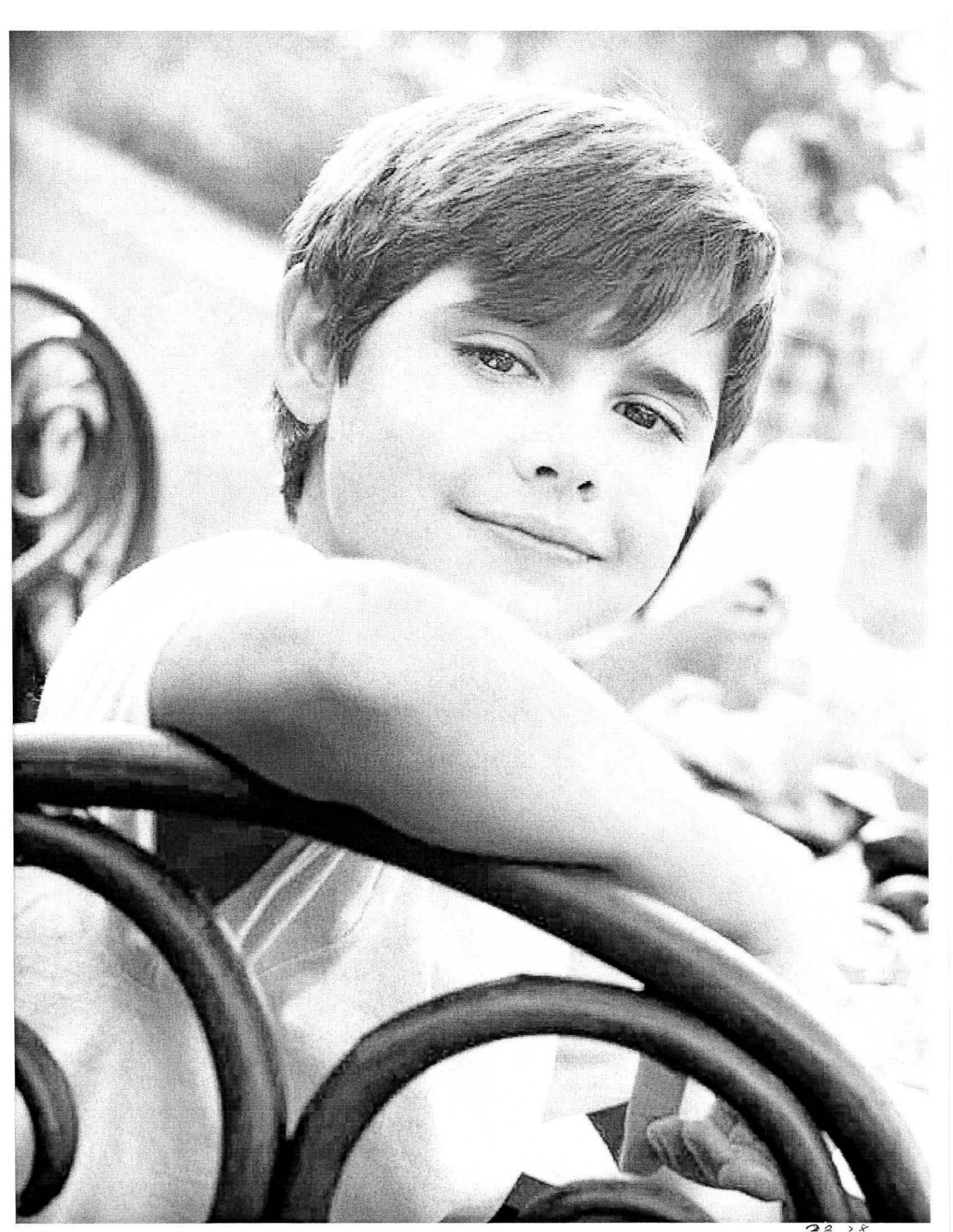
The power to build hope rests in the collective will of a community and its families. Because of this, we need to understand the interdependencies among families, neighborhoods, schools, local businesses, law enforcement, churches and nonprofits.

play in supporting strategies that improve the lives of children and families.

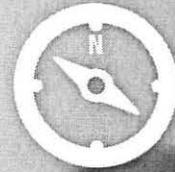
Across the nation, we've seen people and programs that are taking action in new ways, with new allies, and creating a shared sense of purpose to build hope for children and families. This approach isn't relegated solely to issues involving child welfare. This approach can also be effective in the related web of challenges that have ensnared too many communities for too long.

These community collaborations point the way toward the ultimate goal of ensuring the safety and success of every child in America.

What follows is a closer look at four principles that help build Communities of Hope for children and families. Each one of the principles is important, but when they work in conjunction, the power to transform lives is tremendous.



SECTION ONE LOCAL LEADERS MUST LEAD



Creating a Community of Hope that will ensure the safety and success of children begins with local leadership – leaders who challenge others to think differently about seemingly intractable problems.

These leaders come from a variety of backgrounds. They include parents, mayors, government officials, tribal leaders, pastors, business leaders, judges, community advocates, local residents and many others.

Regardless of their job titles, these individuals have the courage, energy and commitment to overcome the inertia of the status quo. They also share another key quality: They understand that success requires a broad cross section of the community working together to develop a clear and measurable plan for change.

In Paintsville, Ky., Family Court Judge Janie McKenzie Wells saw firsthand the problems faced in this small Appalachian community: poverty, drugs, fractured families. She knew that the only way to achieve lasting change in her community was through collaboration with others.

Fortunately, she already had a great working relationship with Susan Howard, the regional manager for Kentucky's child welfare system. They understood that the challenges confronting children and families in Paintsville and surrounding



Community leaders should think, plan and act collectively to improve the long-term safety and success of children and their families.

Johnson County required a commitment from every sector of the community. On a fall day in 2012, they invited just about everyone they could think of to a conference room at the downtown Ramada Inn.

In a city of just over 3,000 people, more than 120 people gave up their lunch hour to attend. They included mothers and fathers, local business leaders, retired educators, mental health experts and even representatives from the local library. Howard and Wells tapped into that enthusiasm and created committees to focus on specific problems, educating the members about the nature of child welfare in Johnson County, about how there could be more effective solutions than just removal of children from their home and family.

Howard and Wells received something in return: An education of their own.

"They taught us, too," Wells said. "There were resources in the county we didn't know about."

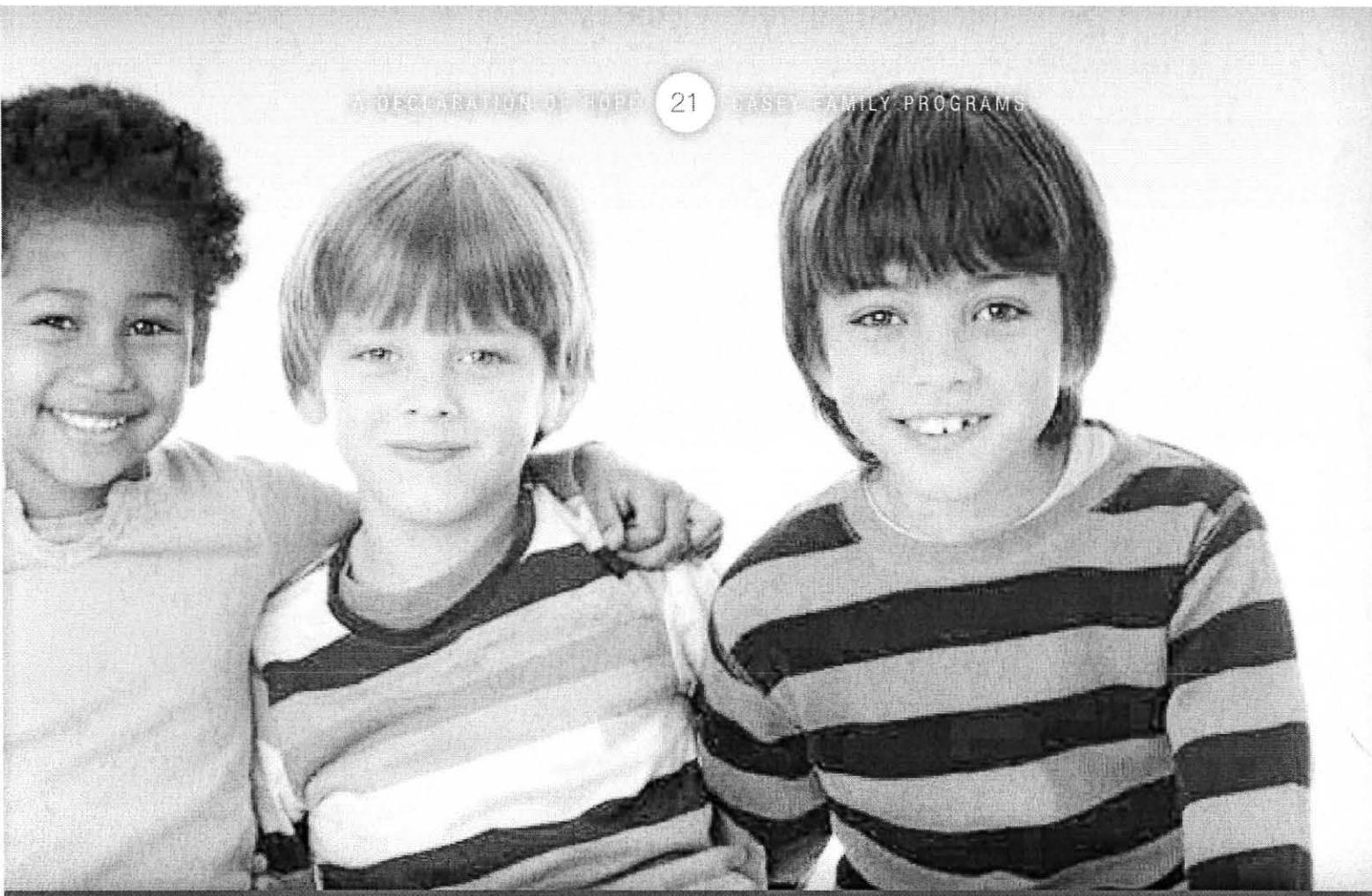
Through Johnson County Community of Hope, Wells and Howard have watched new resources come to the region, volunteerism increase, collaboration improve among branches of government, and local residents renew their commitment to the health and well-being of children and families.

Creating a shared vision for progress

But leadership goes beyond the initial call to action. Success in Johnson County and other Communities of Hope shows the importance of creating a shared vision for what a successful effort looks like. And it demonstrates a clear-eyed assessment of what it will take to turn the vision into results.

Efforts like the one in Paintsville have begun and are making progress across the nation. FSG, a





social-change consulting group, has been a critical leader in the spread of an approach to successful, community-based improvements, known as "collective impact."

According to FSG, the five elements of collective impact are:

1. **Common agenda:** All participants have a shared vision for change, including a common understanding of the problem and a joint approach to solving it through agreed-upon actions.
2. **Shared measurement:** Collecting data and measuring results consistently across all participants ensure that efforts remain aligned and participants hold each other accountable.
3. **Mutually reinforcing activities:** Participant activities must be differentiated while still being coordinated through a mutually reinforcing plan of action.

4. **Continuous communication:** Consistent and open communication is needed among the many players to build trust, assure mutual objectives and appreciate common motivation.

5. **Backbone organization:** Creating and managing collective impact requires a separate organization with staff and a specific set of skills to serve as the backbone for the entire initiative and to coordinate participating organizations and agencies.

We've learned this approach is not easy, but it is effective. Strong local leadership is key.

While it is obvious that each one of those elements would go nowhere without strong local leadership, another issue remains: *How do you develop a common agenda?*

Developing a common agenda begins with engaging those who best know the problems



in a community – the people who live their everyday lives confronting the challenges in their neighborhoods. They are the mothers and fathers, the business owners, the pastors, school teachers, nurses and anyone else who lives, works and struggles to get by in places where opportunities to succeed are fewer.

It's the difference between asking what we can do "for" communities and asking what we can do "with" communities. At the end of the day, it is the community members themselves who have the most at stake.

This kind of philosophy has helped to drive change in long-struggling neighborhoods in New Orleans and Philadelphia.

Each day in America, approximately 13 young people under the age of 25 are victims of

homicide. The majority of them are young men of color who die at the hands of other young men of color. The vast majority of these homicides take place in a handful of urban ZIP codes.

What happens on the streets can influence safety at home. Risk factors tend to cluster and compound in poor communities.

These challenges have been with us for decades – violence flaring up in the neighborhoods of not only Philadelphia and New Orleans, but in Los Angeles, Chicago, Baltimore and many other places.

Both New Orleans Mayor Mitch Landrieu and Philadelphia Mayor Michael A. Nutter decided that to save lives, they needed real sustainable change in their cities and at the national level. And they both realized it would take a different, community-based approach to make the change happen.



In both cases, the mayors chose strategies that closely mirror those of “collective impact.” Philadelphia’s *Youth Violence Prevention Collaborative* and New Orleans’ *NOLA for Life* program have led to:

- The creation of a shared agenda to reduce violence.
- Nonprofits, churches, civic organizations and others being engaged in block-by-block efforts to prevent homicides and create better opportunities for youth.
- Measurements of what is working.

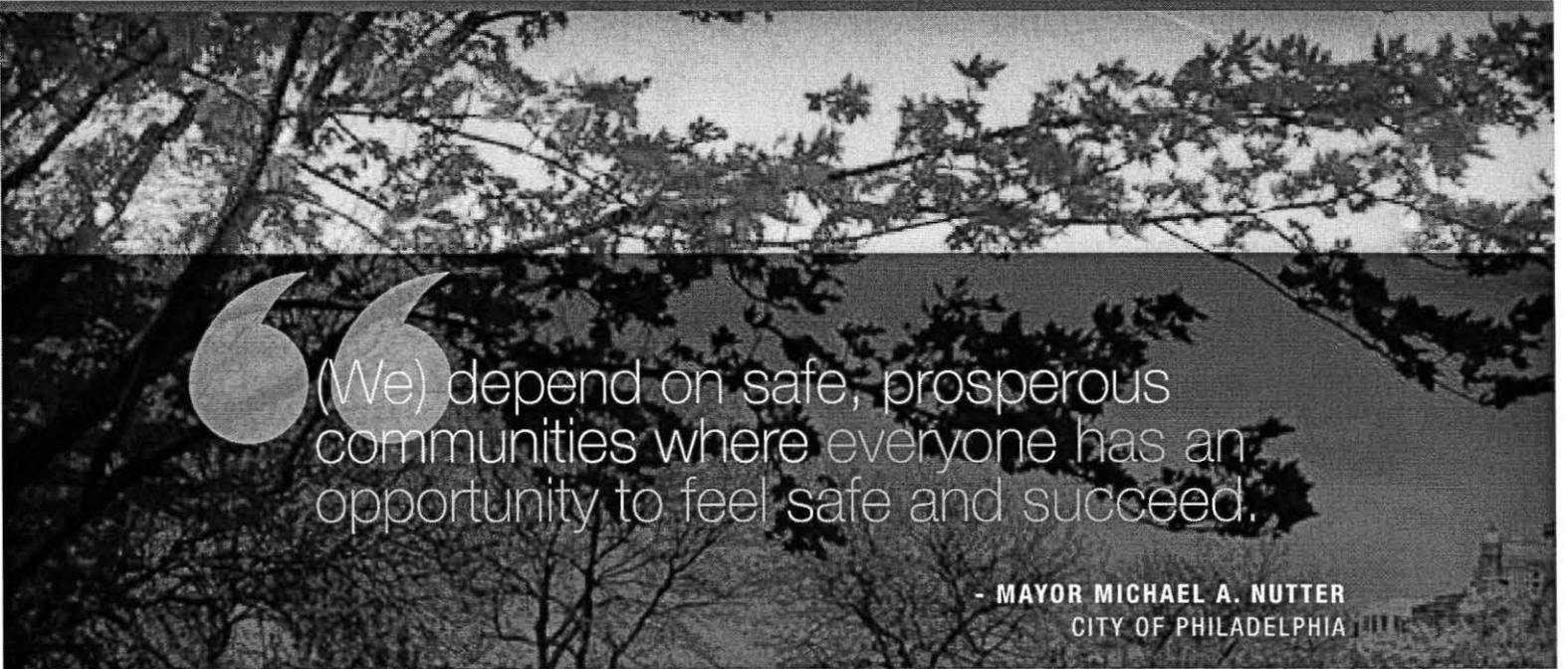
In short, these two city efforts are promoting an unprecedented level of cross-system collaboration.

In 2011, Mayor Nutter invited Mayor Landrieu to join Cities United, a growing network of 58 cities working to equip local elected officials with the tools, practices, skills and resources needed to eliminate

the violence-related deaths of African American men and boys and other young men of color.

“(We) depend on safe, prosperous communities where everyone has an opportunity to feel safe and succeed,” Nutter said in explaining his decision to help create Cities United. “Cities United helps mayors and city leaders focus on prevention rather than prosecution, intervention rather than incarceration, and it provides data and tools to topple systemic barriers to opportunity facing African American men and boys.”

But Cities United means more than help for one threatened segment of the population. It is an acknowledgment that we are connected members of larger communities where the success of one is linked to the success of all. It is the realization that any child whose life is impacted by violence is *my* child, too.

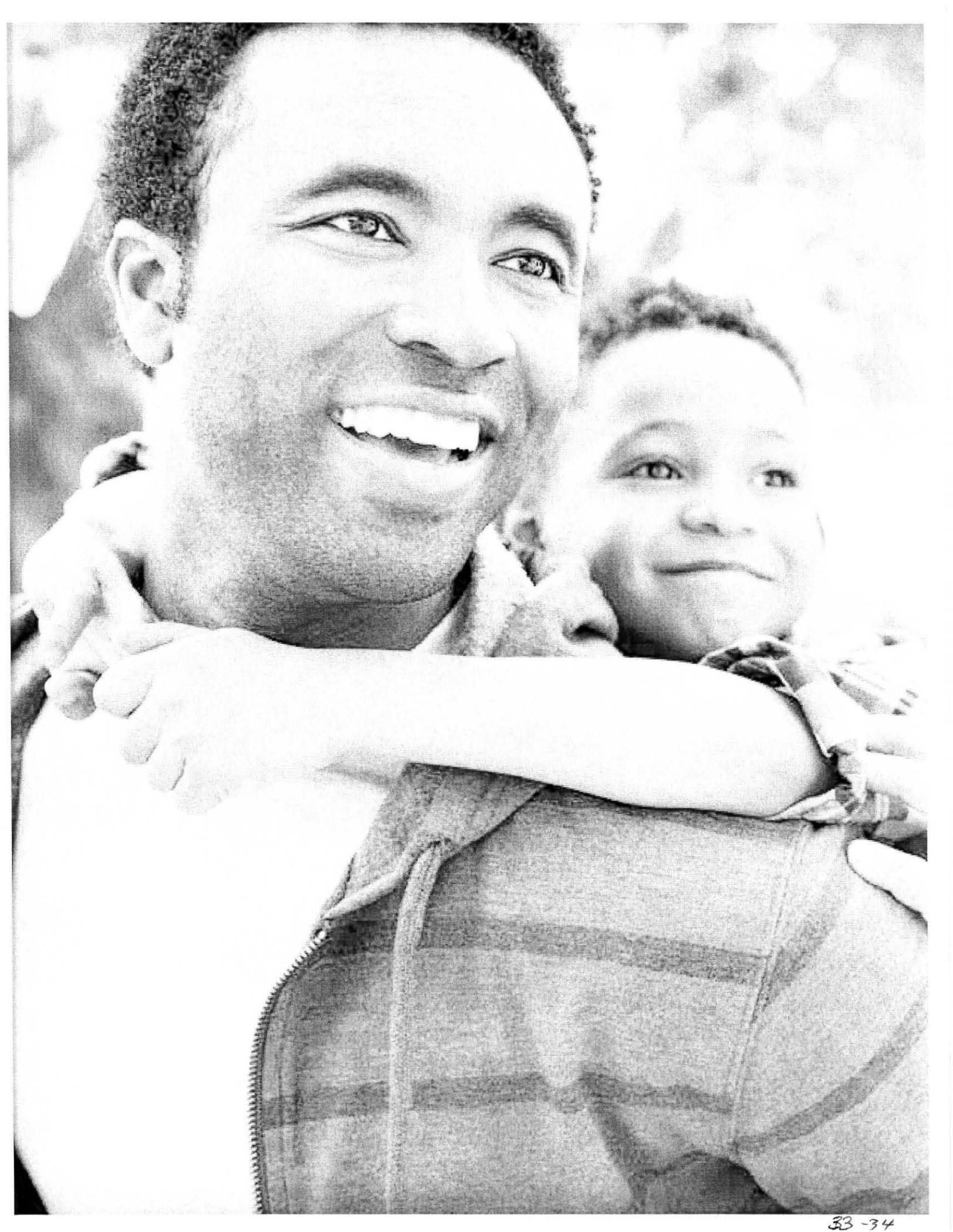


(We) depend on safe, prosperous communities where everyone has an opportunity to feel safe and succeed.

- MAYOR MICHAEL A. NUTTER
CITY OF PHILADELPHIA



LOCAL LEADERS MUST LEAD



SECTION TWO USING DATA TO DRIVE CHANGE



Communities of Hope start with bold local leaders who share a common sense of purpose and direction, such as the efforts in Cities United and Paintsville. But when it comes to tackling deep-seated challenges, good intentions aren't enough. We need a new set of tools to get the work done, and this is where data comes in.

Most Americans would agree that a child's ZIP code shouldn't determine her chance to succeed. Yet we know that living in certain ZIP codes can impact the likelihood of future success. Growing up in specific ZIP codes can significantly increase the risk of abuse and neglect, of dropping out of school, of becoming homeless, of going to jail or of struggling to make ends meet as an adult.

There are approximately 42,000 ZIP codes in America, and we have volumes of data on every one of them – information that can help identify some of the most pressing challenges faced by children and families.

Think of data as a telescope. The more you zoom in, the more detailed images become. Something that looked smooth and featureless to the naked eye might, under magnification, reveal

String together enough neighborhoods
and you move a county. Solve a few counties
and you change a state.

tall ridges and deep valleys. With each tighter focus, the resolution increases our knowledge of the landscape.

But too often, data is presented at a resolution that obscures as much as it enlightens. For example, reports of spiking child abuse and neglect cases in a particular state might indicate a problem, but the numbers don't tell us enough unless we focus more closely.

Put the same data at a higher resolution and you might find that only a handful of counties account for 75 percent of the spike. Turn the knob further and you might then see that a handful of ZIP codes within those counties contain the bulk of the abuse reports. Move closer and you see that specific blocks within these ZIP codes face the most challenges.

When the resolution becomes clearest you have the ability to more effectively target your efforts.

ZIP code and other geographic-based data help break down larger areas to the community level. It is at that level where we can better define

and start to solve our problems. String together enough neighborhoods and you move a county. Solve a few counties and you change a state.

More and more, efforts to build Communities of Hope are relying on ZIP code and other targeted geographic data to help define and direct their work. They are producing some promising results.

Take Tennessee. The state Department of Children's Service created an initiative called *In Home Tennessee* to better prevent child abuse and neglect. The initiative adopted many elements of collective impact. It helped develop community-based partnerships around a common agenda to improve the safety and success of children who were at the greatest risk. As part of *In Home Tennessee*, local, cross-functional teams brought together nonprofits, schools, faith communities and others to develop measurable strategies to make progress toward their goals.

Initially, the Nashville team struggled to develop an effective strategy to prevent abuse and neglect. Then one of the advocates had an idea: Let's look at the child welfare data at a ZIP code level.



FOCUSING THE VIEW TO ZIP CODE LEVEL

ZIP codes help to break down larger geographic areas to a more neighborhood level. And it is at that level we can more effectively define – and address – challenges.

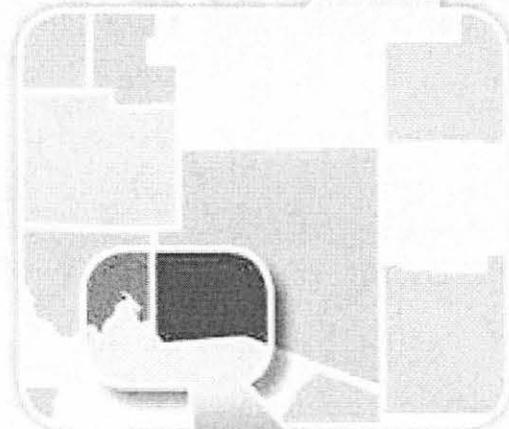
GENERAL STATE VIEW

Low resolution view of the entire state. Child abuse and neglect cases are obscured. We need to look closer to get a better picture.



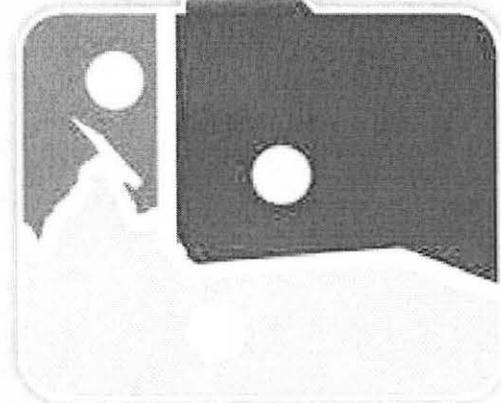
CLOSER COUNTY VIEW

Medium resolution view of a handful of counties that account for a larger percentage of the cases. This gives a better picture of the problem, but it still needs to be clearer.



ZIP CODE VIEW

Higher resolution view of the specific ZIP codes where the bulk of the cases come from. The view is clearer and facilitates more effective targeting of resources.



With this data in hand, the team was able to ask a key question: *Are the neighborhoods where the biggest challenges exist the same neighborhoods where appropriate services are available?*

The data held the answer. First, it showed that the neighborhoods with the highest reported rates of child abuse and neglect were the same neighborhoods that showed high rates of truancy and parental incarceration.

The numbers also revealed that the types of parenting classes, counseling and other support services that can help strengthen families often weren't located in the neighborhoods where they were most needed.

Georgianna Hooker, a former Nashville child welfare worker who leads the nonprofit, G Paradigms, said it was vital to start geographic coordination between the communities in need and the services that can help.

So that is what the local leaders did. After a series of meetings in the city's hardest-hit neighborhoods, several family organizations collaborated to bring more appropriate parenting classes and other support services to the areas of critical need.

Measurable outcomes

The role of data in building a Community of Hope goes beyond bringing greater resolution to the problem: it is also the underpinning of improving conditions in a community.

In addition to broad-based coalitions working together and strong leadership, success also depends on another vital component: measurable goals.

Communities of Hope share this important trait. They have clearly defined goals and can measure progress.



Why is this so important? Because a clear set of measurable goals allows a community to confirm and sustain progress.

Think of a football game. The goal is obvious: Score touchdowns. But the game only works with yard markers, boundaries, a goal line, scoreboard, timeouts and coaches.

In a Community of Hope, data gives a community its playing field, markers and score. It shows whether a particular strategy is working or not. It is a map that validates an existing direction or one that indicates a necessary change in course.

Consider Jacksonville, Fla. where child welfare leaders examined ZIP code based data – primarily focused on foster care – and found a disconnect between the areas with the greatest need and the areas with available services.

“Early on, we identified the ZIP codes that were driving (child) removal rates,” said Lee Kaywork, chief executive officer of Family Support Services of North Florida. “We were able to prioritize the top ZIP codes.”

From this analysis, the Schell-Sweet Center was born, right in the heart of ZIP code 33209.

Located on the Edward Waters College campus, the center offers health and wellness screenings, social services, community service workshops and seminars, parenting classes, educational programs (including GED preparation and computer training), employment and social service agency referrals.

Child welfare leaders working with the Duval County Health Department developed a report

The role of data in building a Community of Hope goes beyond bringing greater resolution to the problem: it is also the underpinning of improving conditions in a community.

card to display an individual ZIP code’s success as a Community of Hope. The two broad categories they measured were health and education. Initially, analysts compared one ZIP code, 33209, to Duval County as a whole. The results were startling.

The 33209 ZIP code had:

- Twice the number of deaths from chronic disease.
- Four times the rate of diabetes per 100,000 people.
- Four times the rate of bronchitis.
- Far lower third-grade reading test scores.
- Twice the rate of teen pregnancy.
- 53 percent of the high school age youths graduating, compared with 63 percent for the county as a whole.

This report card is an important first step in building hope. With clear, easy to understand benchmarks, the community over time can measure progress on the key indicators of child health and well-being in the neighborhood.





SECTION THREE MAKING EFFECTIVE INVESTMENTS



Government at the local, state and federal levels has established a broad array of services designed to respond to a variety of health, safety and human services needs in communities. These include child welfare, education, health care, veterans affairs, criminal justice and homelessness, among others.

At all levels, government is a complex system. It produces a web of programs, agencies and departments that report up a chain of command to executive leadership. They work in an environment where legislative bodies set public policies, hold systems accountable and, of course, approve budgets where departments compete with other worthy programs for a share of limited funding. This categorical approach to funding often results in siloed service delivery systems that are difficult to coordinate – even when agencies are working on issues that are intricately connected.

Understanding that dynamic and breaking down those silos are crucial parts of building a Community of Hope.

“There must be a fundamental cultural and structural shift to a multi-disciplinary system of county departments with common priorities, shared responsibilities, and collaborative problem solving.”

— LOS ANGELES COUNTY'S BLUE RIBBON COMMISSION REPORT 2013

A powerful example of that kind of understanding is reflected in a report released in late 2013 by Los Angeles County's Blue Ribbon Commission on Child Protection. The Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors created the commission after the death of an 8-year-old boy within the foster care system. It was tasked with making recommendations for improving the community's ability to keep children safe from harm.

The commission recognized that “the failure to protect children cannot be attributed to one agency or department.” Its recommendations included the following:

“There must be a fundamental cultural and structural shift to a multi-disciplinary system of county departments with common priorities, shared responsibilities, and collaborative problem solving. Child safety must become a priority across these departments, coupled with mechanisms to work collaboratively.”

This call to action reflects the importance of coordinating governments' many opportunities

to affect the lives of children and families. When this kind of thinking is combined with local leadership, strong community coalitions, a shared vision and effective use of data, a Community of Hope can become a reality for all of our children.

But what does an integrated government response look like?

One example can be found in Boulder County, Colo.

In 2008, the county faced a severe financial crisis. As a result, county administrators decided to merge the housing and human services departments.

Implementation of the merger was led by Frank Alexander, the head of the county's housing department. Even though the merged budget had been reduced by \$5.7 million, Alexander approached the implementation as an opportunity for change and improvement.

Alexander knew the two agencies – which eventually would merge to become the Housing and Human Services Department – served





many of the same people in many of the same neighborhoods and families. Not content to leave it as a simple consolidation, Alexander worked with staff to change the very nature of the new agency's connection with the public and the nonprofit community in Boulder County.

Alexander knew that the newly merged agency, with a focus on prevention and incentive, could help people through critical stabilizing services such as food, housing and health care.

The result was an effort called *Any Door is the Right Door*. This new approach meant that families could go to any person in the new agency and get the help they need – or at least quickly get directed to that help.

Versions of *Any Door is the Right Door* now are being created in San Diego County, Calif.; Duluth, Minn.; and Allegheny County, Pa.

In Ohio's Lorain County, a similar restructuring brought remarkable change.

The suburban-rural community on the shores of Lake Erie transformed its approach to keeping

children safe by asking a simple question: *What if we could invest more of our federal child welfare funding in preventing child abuse and neglect rather than placing children in foster care?*

What if we could invest more of our federal child welfare funding in preventing child abuse and neglect rather than placing children in foster care?

Fifteen years later, the results provide a compelling example of how changing the federal child-welfare financing system to allow more effective investments can safely reduce the need for foster care and improve the lives of children and their families.





Each year, the federal government provides about \$7 billion to states and tribes to support child welfare services. This funding authorized by Title IV-E of the Social Security Act, is matched by additional state and tribal funding. But the bulk of the federal money can be used for only one intervention – foster care. And as the old adage goes, you get what you pay for. In this case, the federal appropriation of funds primarily supports maintaining children in foster care, even though federal policy supports safely reducing the need for foster care and improving the well-being of children.

Ohio is one of 21 states and the District of Columbia that have been given Title IV-E demonstration waivers that allow them to use funding designated for foster care on a broader array of services. The program essentially allows

a county or state to spend Title IV-E funds not just on foster care, but on strategies that would decrease the need for foster care and improve child, family and community well-being.

“In the '90s, the federal government knew that Title IV-E needed to look different,” said Jennifer Justice, deputy director of Ohio’s Office of Families and Children. “The federal government had the wisdom to say, ‘Let’s let some states try something different.’”

Among the demonstration project pioneers was Lorain County. With a population of 280,000 in 1998, Lorain County was small enough to make a rapid adjustment in child welfare services but large enough to create a model that could be applied by other systems.



“You don’t always get the best services when you try to fit children into funding. When you are fitting funding to the needs of a child, you get much better outcomes and much better services.”

- JUDGE DEBRA BOROS

This made the shift more manageable for Lorain County Children Services Director Gary Crow. Using the newly available local control in 1997, he began to implement a variety of prevention programs, including in-home services, fast-track adoptions and other behavioral health and education programs.

Lorain County’s child welfare system, which once spent nearly 50 percent of its budget on foster care, now spends 11 percent on foster care.

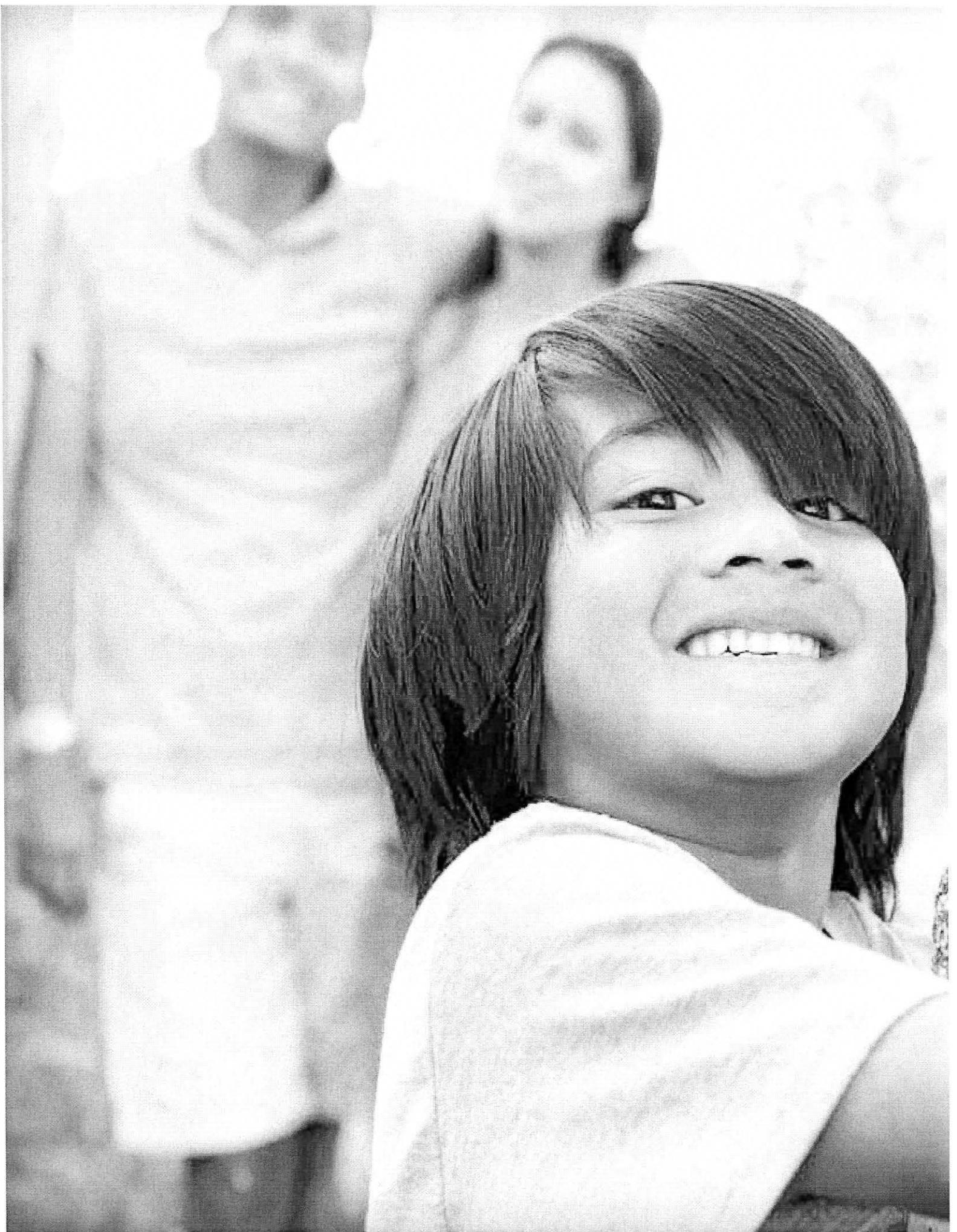
The results have been dramatic, not only in Lorain County but across the state. Since the start of the demonstration project in Ohio, the need for foster care in counties with those projects has declined by 39 percent. At the same time,

children in demonstration project counties are more likely to be served in their own home, cared for by relatives, spend fewer days in foster care and achieve permanency sooner than children in counties not using Title IV-E funds with some capacity for strategic investment.

And, adjusted for inflation, Lorain County is spending less on the same services than it did 15 years ago. “You don’t always get the best services when you try to fit children into funding,” said Judge Debra Boros of Lorain County’s Domestic Relations Court. “When you are fitting funding to the needs of a child, you get much better outcomes and much better services.”

That is a cornerstone of any Community of Hope.







SECTION FOUR GIVE SMARTER

Building a Community of Hope doesn't end with better coordinated and targeted services by government agencies. It must also involve private and philanthropic groups working differently than they have with government and local communities.

Examining a longstanding approach to philanthropy hits close to home for Casey Family Programs. We were created nearly 50 years ago by Jim Casey, the founder of United Parcel Service. For many decades, we used our resources to provide high-quality, long-term foster care services to children. Through that work, we were able to help thousands of children across America.

But over time we began to ask ourselves a difficult question: Is this enough? For every child we served directly, there were thousands of others in public child welfare systems that we were not able to directly help.

So a decade ago, Casey Family Programs began a transformation in approach. We began to partner with public child welfare systems and help increase their capacity to work with communities to improve child safety and success. We didn't come in with a prescription; we came in to listen and to learn from the system's leaders, managers and staff themselves. We provided expertise and resources that supported improvements sought by those running the system. And we created opportunities for those leaders to learn from each other.

Providing direct services to children and families remains a critical part of our work. But now we seek to develop and demonstrate practices and policies that can help inform change for public child welfare systems and private service providers.

We believe that in building Communities of Hope, a tremendous opportunity exists for major givers to drive long-lasting and fundamental improvements.

A recent letter from Jennifer and Peter Buffett (youngest son of Warren Buffett) of the NoVo Foundation helps to articulate how changing the approach to philanthropy can better support progress for families. Too often, the letter said, what we get from giving is "short-term fixes and feel-good stories" that don't produce lasting change:

"Choices are inevitable in a foundation since there's never enough money to go around, but it's possible to make these choices in ways that support other people to determine their own futures, especially those who have less power. This is the polar opposite of philanthropy that imposes a vision from outside, an approach that's rapidly becoming a new norm. Philanthropy doesn't have to be this way, just as foundations don't have to see people as passive recipients of their largesse, or ignore the outside forces that create poverty and inequality."

- JENNIFER AND PETER BUFFETT

We believe that in building Communities of Hope, a tremendous opportunity exists for major givers such as private and corporate philanthropies to partner with the community-driven efforts of parents, local leaders, advocacy groups, government leaders, faith-based and civic institutions, youth and others to drive long-lasting and fundamental improvements.

A growing number of foundations are leading the way. One example can be found at Bloomberg Philanthropies. Its three-year, \$24 million project called the Innovation Delivery Team is focused on five American cities – Atlanta, Chicago, Memphis, Louisville and New Orleans – and is designed to help the mayors drive reforms through data collection and targeted response.

Under the program, Bloomberg Philanthropies funds technical staff within the mayor's office in each city to identify solutions for two major initiatives each mayor has requested.



GIVE SMARTER



Or consider the Aspen Institute, a Washington, D.C.-based educational and policy studies organization. Its Opportunity Youth Incentive Fund organizes community collaboration to help young people ages 16 to 24 who are neither enrolled in school nor employed. Launched in July 2012, the fund targets education, job training and placement for young people by bringing together grants and technical support for a collection of organizations under one umbrella.

What is the common thread here? Each of these philanthropies works within a larger theory of change, which suggests that social improvement starts at the local level, and works in partnership with the community and with existing structures to support progress.

Just as important, they are investing in long-term and sustainable change that goes beyond grant cycles.

“... foundations working together can create much more impact than simply the sum of their individual efforts.”

- FSG REPORT

This type of collaboration isn't yet fully common place – but it also isn't rare. According to a recent study commissioned by FSG, “There is clear evidence – although admittedly not well-documented – that foundations working together can create much more impact than simply the sum of their individual efforts.”



GIVE SMARTER

3349



Creating a nation where all its children are free from physical and emotional harm will require solutions that reach children within their families and those families within their communities.

Conclusion

Leadership, measurement, investments, giving – each has the power to transform lives. When they work together under a collective vision of success, they can transform entire communities and sustain results across generations.

That is the lesson we have learned in working with government leaders, human services systems, families, policymakers, foundations, community leaders and many others across the country.

Children are growing up safer. Families are growing stronger. Communities are becoming more supportive.

Together, we are building hope.

But the work is not easy. For every success, new challenges arise. For every obstacle overcome, new barriers present themselves.

Creating a nation where all children are free from physical and emotional harm will require solutions that reach children within their families and those families within their communities. This means encouraging the design, evaluation, funding and implementation of intervention strategies that take into account the interconnectedness of children, families and their communities. It also means helping these communities – especially the community members themselves – increase their own capacity to define, implement and track progress toward their goals.

Too often, we respond to child victims of violence within the narrow confines of child-centered intervention strategies. We fail to recognize and deal with the factors that affect the families and communities where those children live.

Just as we do not live in silos or categories, we cannot resolve child maltreatment and its related issues in silos. To make any lasting headway in preventing child abuse and neglect and in treating its devastating effects, we must consistently view children in the context of their families, view families in the context of their communities, and view any intervention – and its funding – in the context of a family and community-support network.

Through this holistic approach, we will build a solid platform that can ensure the safety and success of every child in America.

It is within this approach that we will create a lasting Declaration of Hope for all of our children.

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 1415 L Street
 Suite 780
 Sacramento, CA 95814
 916.503.2950

San Diego Field Office
 3878 Old Town Avenue
 Suite 100
 San Diego, CA 92110
 619.543.0774

Colorado

Indian Child Welfare Programs Office
 1755 Blake Street
 Suite 275
 Denver, CO 80202
 303.871.8201

District of Columbia

Washington, D.C. Public Policy
 and Systems Improvement Office
 2001 Pennsylvania Avenue NW
 Suite 760
 Washington, DC 20006
 202.467.4441

Georgia

Georgia Systems Improvement Office
 Martin Luther King
 Community Resources Center
 101 Jackson Street NE
 Third Floor
 Atlanta, GA 30312
 404.228.1821

Idaho

Idaho Field Office
 6441 Emerald Street
 Boise, ID 83704
 208.377.1771

New York

New York Investments and
 Systems Improvement Office
 250 Greenwich Street
 7 World Trade Center
 Suite 46B
 New York, NY 10007
 212.863.4860

Texas

Austin Field Office
 5201 East Riverside Drive
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San Antonio Field Office
 2840 Babcock Road
 San Antonio, TX 78229
 210.616.0813

Washington

Seattle Field Office
 1123 23rd Avenue
 Seattle, WA 98122
 206.322.6711

Yakima Field Office
 404 North Third Street
 Yakima, WA 98901
 509.457.8197

FINANCIALS

Spending on strategic initiatives, services and research

\$46 million

Assist public child welfare agencies

\$29 million

Directly serve children and families

At the end of 2013, Casey Family Programs assets totaled \$2.2 billion.

In 2013, Casey Family Programs spent \$116 million in pursuit of our vision of safely reducing the need for foster care and building Communities of Hope for all of America's children and families.

Most of that money is spent on strategic initiatives, services and research to help ensure that all children can have a safe, loving and permanent family.

\$20 million

Foundation operations

\$2 million

Conduct research to understand what's working

\$8 million

Inform and educate policymakers and the public

\$2 million

Provide education scholarships for youth in foster care

\$5 million

Strategic initiatives and services

\$4 million

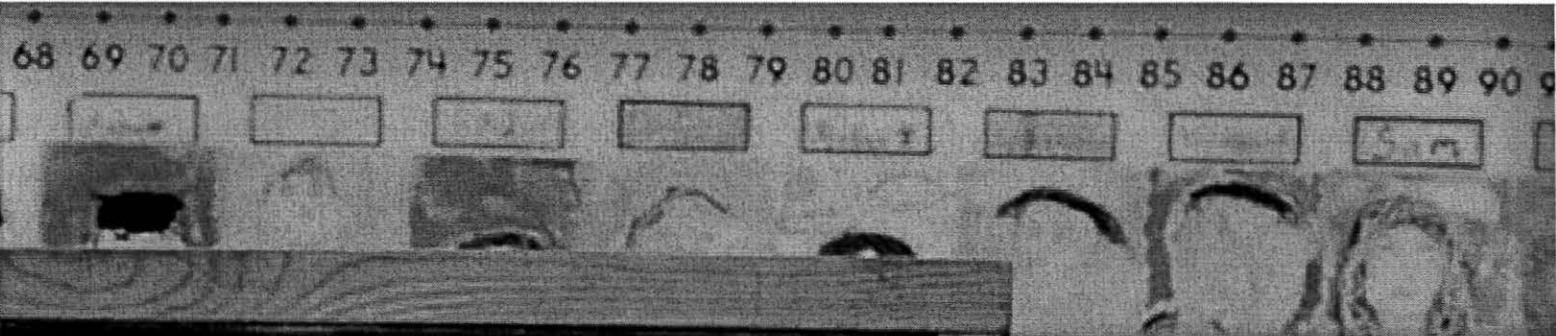
Provide Indian child welfare services

WE BELIEVE

Every child deserves a safe, supportive and permanent family.

Every family should have the support of a strong and caring community.





Every community can create hope and opportunities for its children and families.

Everyone has a role to play in building Communities of Hope.

$$2 + 5 =$$

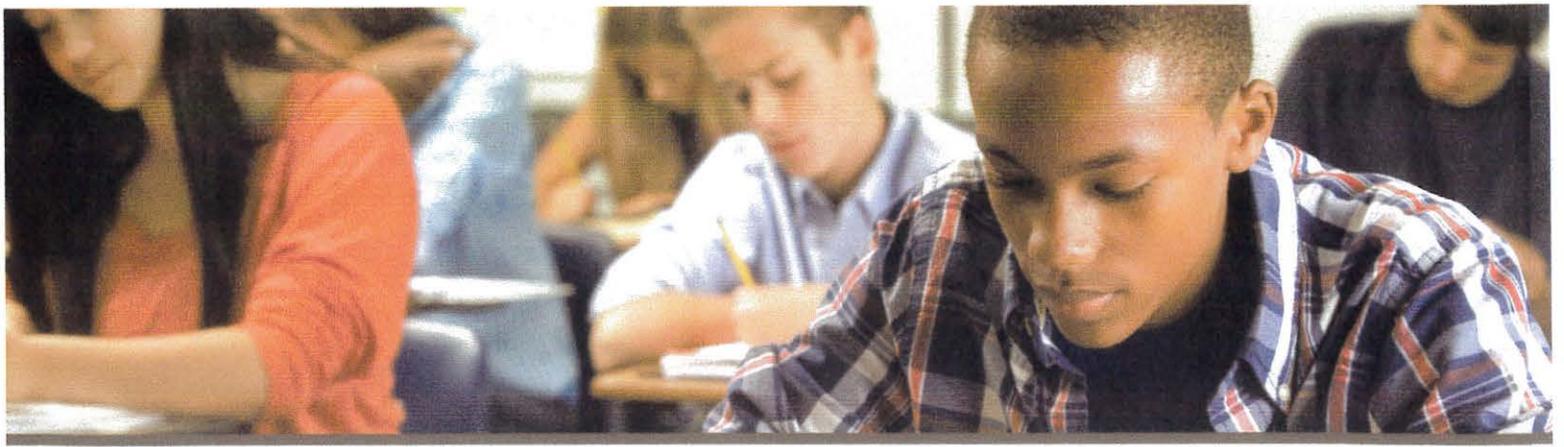


casey family programs

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A Declaration of Hope | May 2014



6 to 1

For every \$6 spent to maintain children in foster care, only \$1 is available to invest in a wider array of services that prevent the need for foster care.

The federal government spends about \$4.4 billion a year under Title IV-E of the Social Security Act to maintain children in foster care. By comparison, about \$700 million a year under Title IV-B is available to be invested in a wider array of practices and interventions that keep more children safe and make more families strong.

Last year about 223,000 children across the country were removed from their families and placed in foster care. But that is only a fraction of the children who came to the attention of state and local child welfare systems.

In fact, more than 3 million children annually are involved in investigations or assessments of abuse, neglect or other issues that can profoundly impact their opportunities to grow up happy, healthy and prepared to succeed in life.

A tremendous opportunity exists to transform America's child welfare system to ensure more of these children and their families receive the support they need. But we must make smarter, more effective investments in the kinds of interventions that safely reduce the need for foster care and promote stronger families.

The federal government provides approximately \$7.6 billion annually to states through its two main sources of dedicated child welfare funding, Title IV-E and Title IV-B of the Social Security Act.

Rather than promoting innovative and proven approaches that better serve children and keep them safe, the bulk of federal funding can only be spent on maintaining children in foster care.

These restrictive funding rules hinder the ways that child welfare systems can work with their communities to keep children safe.

In fact, for every \$6 spent to maintain children in foster care, only \$1 is available to be invested in a broader array of services that safely prevent the need for foster care.

Transforming child welfare to dramatically improve the opportunities and outcomes for children doesn't need to begin with the appropriation of more money, but it must begin with states and local systems having the ability to make smarter, more effective investments in what works best.