



ExtraordinaryFamilies
NURTURE. THRIVE. REPEAT.

2023 Impact Report



30TH ANNIVERSARY EDITION

Our Mission

To help children and youth in foster care have the childhoods and futures they rightfully deserve.

Our Vision

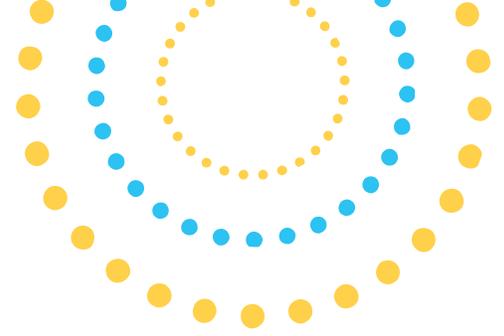
Every child, youth, and family in child welfare will have the ability to achieve their hopes, fulfill their dreams, and thrive.

Our Values

Everything we do is through the lens of our core values:

Empathy
Integrity
Justice

Collaboration
Dedication



2023
by the numbers

140

children in foster care joined with resource families

129

resource families providing safe and loving care

95%

of children experienced only ONE resource home

114

transition-age youth served

Message from Our CEO

As we celebrate the **30th anniversary of Extraordinary Families**, a pioneering force in foster care and adoption across Los Angeles County, we reflect on our three decades of support for the children and youth in our community's foster care system.

Established in 1993, our dedication to provide love, safety, and a sense of belonging to all of our children in care has not wavered. We will continue to provide every child and youth with the support, security, and opportunities they need to live their best lives.

Our collective expertise and support of our community enable us to tackle the challenges that lie ahead and continue to make a deep and lasting positive impact for those we serve.

On this momentous occasion, we extend our deepest gratitude to our community of supporters, families, mentors, board members, partners, doors, volunteers and staff. Your dedication and collaboration have been instrumental in our achievements over the past three decades and we're honored to continue this journey together.



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Nurture. Thrive. Repeat.

FOSTER CARE



Nurture safe and loving homes for children in the child welfare system

FAMILY SUPPORT

Offer prevention services, helping families build resilience and stability



ADOPTION

Support and join children with forever families



UP4YOUTH

Provide resources and mentors for youth with child welfare histories



ADVOCACY

Advocate for child-centered policies for a more just future



Gold Standard Model of Care



For 30 years, Extraordinary Families has been joining children in foster care with stable, nurturing families and supporting vulnerable youth transition out of the system and into adulthood. Our person-centered model reduces childhood trauma, encourages safety and stability, and empowers children and youth to heal and thrive.

In 2018 and 2022, Extraordinary Families earned the prestigious three-year accreditation by CARF International, a non-profit, independent accreditor of health and human services. CARF monitors and guides agencies worldwide to ensure top-quality services are delivered following best practices in the industry.

Additionally, since 2009, we have been a recognized leader in supporting and serving LGBTQ+ families and youth by the All Children, All Families program, and we were among the first and continue to be recognized as an innovator in supporting and serving the LGBTQ+ community – which is the highest tier of recognition.

2023
by the numbers

140
hours of resource
parent training

129
hours of support
in guided groups

“ We realized that the most important thing was making sure that these kids got what they needed in the moment that they needed it.
- Adam ”

Meet Opal's
forever family:
Adam & Ernesto!





33

Children safely
reunited with
their families

Foster Care

Foster care offers temporary havens for children unable to stay with their families due to abuse or neglect. Resource (foster) families offer safe, nurturing homes for these children, supporting their healing and growth while their parents work on addressing the challenges that brought their children into care. Reunification is the goal, focusing on preserving family bonds and prioritizing the child's welfare.

Simon & Benito providing safe haven

The kids going back to their families is super important, and that is the ultimate goal...It fills our hearts that we are able to support these families.

- Benito

When the social worker arrived at their home with a six-month-old baby boy, Simon and Benito felt a mix of excitement and nerves when they first held him in their arms. Having never parented before, they were stunned by the sudden responsibility. But their natural instincts soon kicked in, they recalled all their training and preparation, and they quickly dove into parenthood.

Joining ExtraFam as resource parents in 2022, Simon and Benito were driven by a deep desire to create a forever family through adoption while helping children in need along the way. They embodied child-centered care, dedicating themselves completely. After seven months, the first baby they cared for was reunited with his family. In that time, they realized how deeply this experience could expand their hearts. They maintain a relationship with him and his family, remaining a part of his life and extended network of loving adults.

Simon and Benito have since cared for and supported the reunification of five children with their families. "It's really hard, at first," Benito shares, "but it turns into happy memories and more children to love."

Presently, Simon and Benito are nurturing a five-month-old baby. Every simple interaction with her fills their hearts with pride. Offering advice to those embarking on a similar journey, they reassure, "even though it can be tough, you've got this, and you can do it! Don't give up, because there's no greater joy."



Christina & Adrian together again

“Christina’s” anticipation of raising her son, “Adrian” turned to devastation when her child was taken into foster care instead of returning home with her after his birth at the hospital. Feeling bewildered and overwhelmed, Christina spent every moment allowed with Adrian during monitored family time at ExtraFam. She clung to every fleeting moment with him, treasuring the daily photos shared by his resource parent.

As the days turned into weeks, and weeks into months, Christina’s determination only grew stronger. She threw herself into growing as a parent and improving her circumstances, attending parenting classes, therapy sessions, and court hearings with relentless dedication. Along the way, she formed deep connections with other parents going through similar struggles, finding solace and solidarity in their shared experiences.

Nearly sixteen months later, after meeting all requirements and demonstrating her stability and commitment, Christina was finally able to bring Adrian home. Adrian’s resource parent, who supported her every step of the way, had become a mentor, and continues to play a significant role in their lives, lovingly known as “forever Auntie R.”

Christina’s journey is a poignant reminder that, especially in the hardest of times, a caring, compassionate community makes all the difference. It underscores the importance of those willing to dive in and provide support in times of deep struggle. For Christina and Adrian, their journey back to each other was not easy, but it was worth every obstacle overcome and made possible by Christina’s profound strength and perseverance and a caring resource parent who was willing to be there every step of the way.



“My ExtraFam social worker became a friend - with boundaries, of course. She listened, and if I had questions, she answered the best she could and she believed in me.”

- Christina



Adoption

If the court determines it is unsafe for a child to return to their family, adoption by the child's resource family becomes the plan. Through shared experiences and strong bonds, these children gain stability and a sense of belonging. This journey highlights the transformative power of love, turning temporary care into a lifelong commitment to family.

Jamie & Mary infinite bonds

Follow us on Instagram
to see more of our
resource families!



Jamie and Mary had always dreamed of starting a family together. However, after successfully helping two children reunite with their families, the grief they experienced after saying goodbye left them feeling uncertain about their readiness to parent again. They found comfort within their community of fellow ExtraFam resource families. Offering advice and lending a listening ear, the group provided invaluable support, helping them with the challenges of the unknown on their fostering journey. "You have to be willing to ride the waves," Jamie recalls, "you might have a plan, but there may be surprises." With the group's guidance and encouragement, the couple were reminded of their role: to provide a child with a loving home for however long that child needs.

When the call came about Dylan, their hearts swelled with a mixture of excitement and apprehension. Overcoming their nerves and bolstered by their commitment to provide love and stability for children, they welcomed Dylan into their home.

Throughout Dylan's time in their care, the couple prioritized maintaining her ties with her family of origin. Recognizing the significance of these bonds, they enriched Dylan's life with a sense of belonging, community, and family.

Their journey towards adopting Dylan underlines the profound impact of love and the significance of honoring a child's heritage. By supporting Dylan's connections with her family of origin, they not only provided a loving home but also nurtured her sense of identity and belonging.



Carrie & Bobby

it takes a village

Carrie and Bobby's journey to parenthood began with a simple desire to make a difference. When they first learned about fostering through ExtraFam, they felt like it was meant to be. They attended orientation and training and felt drawn towards the warmth and encouragement they received. "Every step of the way, we were more encouraged."

Their journey had its ups and downs. They experienced the bittersweetness of children leaving their care but remained resolute. When they got the call about Hairo, they knew it was their moment. From then on, he was family, no questions asked.

Despite Hairo's health challenges, they never once considered backing down from being his parents. "When the doctors asked if we were still going to do it, it was like, 'Wait, this is not a question. This is our child,'" Carrie recalls.

They were committed, but also recognized the importance of a strong support system. Amidst the uncertainties, they leaned on each other, their families, and a network of friends for encouragement and guidance. However, it was Hairo's caregiver, Dora, who became their saving grace. "We just felt like a little angel person fell into our laps," Carrie reflects. As Hairo's health improved, they celebrated each triumph, their bond deepening with each shared victory. Carrie's mother also played an indispensable role in Hairo's upbringing, offering her sage advice and boundless love. Together, with their village, they embraced their roles as Hairo's parents wholeheartedly, cherishing every moment of their journey.

Carrie and Bobby's dedication didn't stop at Hairo's adoption. They saw firsthand the impact of foster care and felt compelled to give back. "We were drawn to it," Bobby reflects, "there's so much need in LA." Motivated by the collective efforts of their fostering community, they became ExtraFam ambassadors, advocating tirelessly for the foster care system. Their journey isn't solely about Hairo; it's about forging a better future for all children in need.

"You'll be surprised at how much you will love, learn, and grow from opening your home and heart in this way."

- Carrie





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Children joined
forever
families through
adoption

Family Resource Center

strengthening families

Thanks to a legacy grant from the John Gogian Family Foundation, our new Family Resource Center (FRC) will provide a range of prevention and early intervention services to help families build resilience, provide a stable and nurturing environment, and address root causes to prevent child abuse and neglect. The FRC, which represents a network of services and resources, will support at-risk and systems-involved families with children of all ages.



Nurturing Parenting Program

This trauma-informed, family-centered curriculum increases parenting skills, secures attachments, and prevents child abuse and neglect.



Guided Family Time

The greatest predictor of successful reunification is ensuring supportive, quality family time between a parent and their child.



Case Management

The Center will help families navigate and access needed services that help fulfill legal requirements for reunification.



**Anticipated Launch:
Summer 2024**

UP4Youth

As adolescents transition into adulthood, they encounter a multitude of challenges. However, for those individuals “aging out” of foster care without the safety net of a forever family, these obstacles are magnified, intensifying the struggle ahead. In response to this critical need, our Unlimited Possibilities for Youth program (UP4Youth) stands as a beacon of support and guidance.

UP4Youth is dedicated to empowering these youth by providing them with the tools and resources necessary to navigate the complexities of adulthood with confidence and resilience. Through a comprehensive array of services, including education and employment assistance, coordinated access to essential resources, and personalized mentoring, we strive to equip them for success.

At UP4Youth, we recognize that a successful transition into independence hinges on more than just tangible skills; it requires a nurturing support system and a sense of belonging. That’s why we foster a community of care, where participants can find encouragement, understanding, and companionship as they embark on their journeys toward self-sufficiency.

We believe in the boundless potential of every young person, regardless of their past. By offering unwavering support and guidance, we aim to empower them to realize their dreams and forge fulfilling futures.

UP4Youth is entirely funded through private philanthropy. This ensures that young adults like sisters Destiny and Eva have access to the resources they need, in the way they need them, when they are needed.

2023

by the numbers

12

Youth placed in paid internships

Meet
Destiny & Eva



Unstoppable Youth breaking the cycle

At the age of 6, Michelle told her attorney she didn't want to be reunified with her mother. She recounts this day vividly, expressing that in that moment, all she could think about was that one day she'd have children of her own. She didn't want to continue the cycle of familial trauma, abuse, and addiction. She wanted more for her future children. Michelle was determined to break free from all she'd known and forge a new path, taking with her an example of what she did not want to be from her tumultuous upbringing. She was ready to thrive.

Michelle is the first person in her family to graduate high school, the first to obtain a college degree, the first to end a vicious cycle of drug use and addiction, and, she proudly proclaims, "the first person in my family to end generations of awful parenting... my dreams of being the mother I've always wanted has been fulfilled."

Now a mother of three, she often feels exhausted and overwhelmed. The demands of developmental services and extracurricular activities for her children have made it challenging for Michelle to advance her career and education. With the support of the UP4Youth internship program, she has found an opportunity that offers the freedom and flexibility to balance her roles as a mom and a budding professional. She plans to enroll in a four-year university in the fall of 2024.

"Extraordinary Families has helped me obtain a job that I love and has given me amazing mentors, while also allowing me to bring hope to many others who have faced similar life-changing circumstances. [I am] the first person in my family to choose what is right. I broke the cycle."



“ExtraFam has helped me find the confidence within myself to realize that I am able to do things I didn't think I could.”
- Michelle”

Follow our UP4Youth Program on Instagram to see more of our youth!

Advocacy

We champion the rights and needs of children and youth in the child welfare system through awareness, policy change, support for families, and ensuring that children in care receive proper services and resources. Through these efforts, we strive to create a more affirming and nurturing environment for these children and youth, ultimately working towards positive outcomes for all vulnerable youth.

- Helped secure \$8.8 million for one-time bridge funding for Foster Family Agencies. Advocated for and helped secure \$4 million to increase capacity for expedited background checks.
- Advocated for legislation aimed to provide extra educational support for disadvantaged students to improve their academic outcomes.
- Engaged our constituents to support measures to provide mental health first aid training for school personnel to better address the psychological distress among California youth.
- Signed letter of support urging California's congress to pass legislation to continue Medicaid coverage for kids in foster care.
- Advocated and helped ensure the removal of discriminatory barriers to mental health services for youth covered by Medi-Cal.
- Engaged in advocacy efforts for legislative protection of LGBTQ+ youth in foster care, creating safer and more inclusive environments for them and ensuring their access to affirming and supportive care.



Welcomed & Affirmed

In light of the escalating assault on LGBTQ+ rights across state legislatures, our commitment to advocacy and support of LGBTQ+ youth and families has never been more steadfast. Through our continued active engagement with initiatives like the Human Rights Campaign's All Children - All Families program, we uphold the highest standards as Innovators, ensuring that inclusivity remains at the forefront of our work.

The surge in anti-LGBTQ+ bills, which has seen a troubling threefold increase between 2022 and 2023, demands attention. With over 500 bills targeting the fundamental rights of LGBTQ+ individuals and communities, spanning realms from education to healthcare and public accommodations, to even the expression of identity through drag performances, the landscape is fraught with challenges. The passage of 84 restrictive bills outside of California underscores the urgency of our collective response.

In Solidarity with the LGBTQ+ community, we adamantly reject these assaults, recognizing them as egregious attempts to silence and erase marginalized voices. The propagation of misinformation, rooted in discrimination and animosity, has manufactured false narratives, perpetuating perceived "threats" that serve only to deepen the marginalization of transgender and non-binary individuals. This not only harms them directly but also undermines the fabric of our society.

Central to our advocacy efforts is a focused dedication to LGBTQ+ youth, who face significant barriers to equal access in educational settings and vital, gender-affirming healthcare. The denial of these basic rights not only impedes their personal development but also poses a threat to the cohesive and inclusive future we strive to build. We are unwaveringly committed to a world where everyone is embraced and celebrated for who they are.



“My heart is so full...I couldn't imagine us not doing this journey because there's so much reward in it.”
- Vidari



Meet Vidari and Jennifer!



30th Anniversary Gala



Celebrating our 30th Anniversary Gala was a monumental occasion that brought together our community with a sense of pride and gratitude. As we looked back on three decades of service to Los Angeles County's foster care community, we couldn't help but feel an immense appreciation for the journey we've traveled and the lives we've touched.

Throughout the years, our dedication has made a profound impact on countless children and youth, providing them with support, stability, and hope for a brighter future. This year's gala was particularly special as we had the privilege of honoring individuals who have exemplified our mission through their steadfast commitment and significant contributions.

Francesca Orsi, Paris Barclay, and the Broverman-Pierce family were spotlighted for their remarkable efforts in shaping our community's response to the needs of children and youth in foster care. With Carson Kressley serving as our Master of Ceremonies and the invaluable support of our Board Members and staff, the gala was a testament to the strength of our collective efforts.

As we celebrated our achievements, we were reminded that our work is far from over. While we take pride in our accomplishments, we recognize the ongoing challenges facing our community. With the continued generosity and support of individuals like you, we are confident in our ability to continue making a difference for another 30 years and beyond.



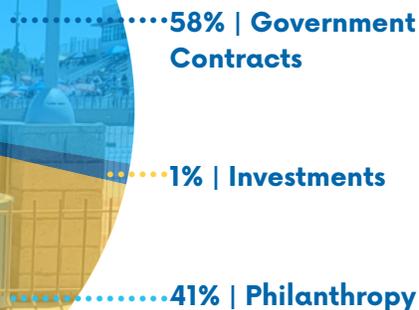
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Financial Highlights

100% goes directly to support children, youth, and families

\$4,993,760
REVENUE



\$3,862,013
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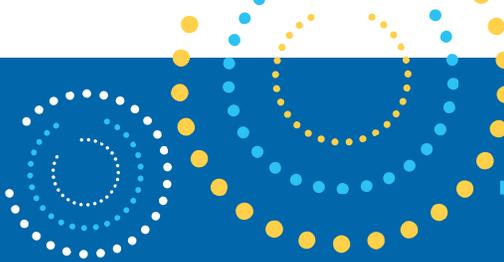
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-  **In-kind donors**
Our children love the welcome home packets you provided
-  **Long Beach donors**
You help us expand our outreach across the Long Beach community
-  **UP4Youth donors**
You support the growth of our next generation of young adults
-  **Holiday toy drive donors**
You were the magic to this holiday season

GET INVOLVED

Now, more than ever, there is much to be done. Your continued support enables us to expand our efforts and further harness the proven power of nurturing relationships.

DONATE

- Make a donation
- Donate gift cards, toys, and bus passes
- Donate on behalf of a loved one

VOLUNTEER

- Become a resource parent
- Mentor a youth
- Hire a young adult
- Participate in events

FOLLOW US

- Follow us on Facebook or Instagram at @extraordinaryfamilies
- Sign up for our email list
- Host a party to help share our mission

For more ways to get involved, visit [extraordinaryfamilies.org](https://www.extraordinaryfamilies.org)



Extraordinary Families

NURTURE. THRIVE. REPEAT.

Extraordinary Families

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