

Carolina Children

Diligent Efforts Connect and Reunite – Father and Son –



After six years in foster care and a number of placements, Jaedon was referred to CHS's Child-Focused Recruitment program. A fun-loving, energetic child, Jaedon wanted nothing more than to be a part of his own forever family. But sadly, due to his significant trauma history and overwhelming feelings of not having a sense of belonging, he struggled with behavioral issues.



Jaedon and father
William Woodward

Jaedon's Child-Focused Recruiter, Karma, completed an additional case file review and found information on a possible birth father. Deep within the case file, it was documented that Jaedon's mother had mentioned who she believed the father to be many years ago. After reaching out to family members and other connections, Karma received a call from William Woodward, who was the prospective father. He wanted to know if Jaedon was his child, and if so, he wanted to be a part of his life.

Through paternity testing it was confirmed that William was Jaedon's father, and Jaedon wanted to connect with him. Karma and Jaedon were together when he received his first letter and photograph from his father. Jaedon beamed, "Ms. Karma, this is my twin. I don't have to have 'unknown' on my birth certificate for my father anymore, I have a name."

William and Jaedon began building their relationship with letters and weekly phone contacts. His father remained consistent in his life, and Jaedon was able to build a relationship with his stepmother and half siblings. William was supportive, attentive, and devoted

to Jaedon's needs throughout the process and assured everyone that he would be in Jaedon's life forever. He continually expressed his desire to have Jaedon live with him in Rhode Island. Jaedon continued to express his desire for this as well.

A year ago, Jaedon's father's parental rights were finally reinstated, and the judge said, "Jaedon, you can go home." After completing the necessary paperwork along with many pictures and tears of joy, Jaedon and his biological father flew home together to Rhode Island that evening to embark on their forever.

In June, William participated in CHS's reTHINK Permanency Conference as part of a panel of fathers who shared their experiences navigating fatherhood and supporting their children's paths to permanency.



After being awarded parental rights, William participated in CHS's reTHINK Permanency Conference



Child-Focused Recruitment focuses on identifying a forever family for the longest-waiting children in foster care who are three times more likely to be adopted in this program.

Last year, CHS served 649 youth through these services.

INSIDE
THIS ISSUE:

LEARN MORE about inspiring women and their connections to CHS, our first-ever reTHINK Permanency Conference, and opportunities to engage with CHS in support of children and families.



CHS PRESIDENT & CEO
Brian Maness

BOARD OF TRUSTEES

David Shuford – Chair

Blair Alligood

Tucker Andrews

Robert H. Borden*

Gary L. Bowen, Ph.D.

Anthony F. Bucci

Jane L. Cochrane*

Ramona Denby-Brinson, Ph.D.

Rabbi Andy Koren

Gail M. LeBauer

Cathy Levinson

Susan L. McDonald

Sallie A. McMillion*

Molly Shaw

Mary Sheppard

Kay Stern*

Lee Youngblood

Tamera Ziglar

*Life Member

Fall always brings a sense of transition as children return to school, the seasons change, and we look ahead to holiday celebrations. For Children's Home Society, it brings the opportunity to reflect on how we continue to change and grow, always focusing on our mission to promote the right of every child to a permanent, safe, and loving family.

In this edition of Carolina Children, you will find Jaedon's story and how, through the work of one of our exceptional staff, he was united with his birth father. You will hear about three incredible women with ties to CHS who are making a profound difference in their community. And you will find celebrations of our second annual Sunshine 5k and our reTHINK Permanency Conference – both great successes.

You will also find exciting opportunities to make a difference through our Hope for the Holidays and Little Red Stocking campaigns, along with a call for speakers for our 2024 A Place to Call Home series.

Speaking of transitions and change, this Fall edition of Carolina Children marks the last biannual newsletter we plan to publish in this format. We are excited to debut a new magazine next year, sharing the tremendous impact you make possible for children and families.

Please know how grateful I am for your support of Children's Home Society and our collective work. Thank you so much for the positive difference you are making for so many children and our communities.

My best,

Brian Maness
President & CEO



Brian Maness



November is NATIONAL ADOPTION MONTH

November is the month when the broader community acknowledges the efforts of those whose lives have been impacted by adoption and those who facilitate the process. This month helps spread awareness and encourages all to learn about adoption. National Adoption Month celebrates the families who have grown through adoption, recognizes the journeys of the many children who are still waiting for their forever families, and creates awareness of how easy it is to make a difference even if you cannot adopt.



In recognition of National Adoption Month, a few memorable photos of CHS adoptions from recent years.

Celebrating WOMEN'S LEADERSHIP

Three special women with ties to CHS were honored with
2023 Greensboro News & Record Inspire: Celebrating Women's Leadership Awards.



Tanya Dickens

TANYA DICKENS, a CHS adoptive parent and Community Leadership Council member, is owner of the Savor the Moment bakeries in Greensboro and High Point and an active CHS volunteer. Tanya was named Woman of the Year.

"For me, Children's Home Society represents hope for children in need of a safe space and a loving family. They lead with heart, passion, and a desire to make children and families whole. This was definitely our experience when my husband and I initially began fostering and ultimately adopting through CHS over 16 years ago. CHS continues to provide the same quality of care for children and families today, and I am grateful for the opportunity to continue my support for children in foster care through my connection with CHS."



Emily Linden

EMILY LINDEN, CHS volunteer and supporter, is a communications executive and was awarded for Excellence in Philanthropy.

"When I became a parent, I started thinking critically about the health and well-being of kids. CHS provided a way to channel some of those thoughts into productive action and provided a great framework for how to think and advocate for kids."



Rebecca Starnes

And our own **REBECCA STARNES**, CHS Chief Program Officer, received the Inspire Award for Excellence in Nonprofits.

"Every day I get to work with amazing people who are putting their energy, thought, and compassion into supporting children and families across North Carolina. CHS is committed to learning in order to further improve and grow our services toward our mission of every child in our state having permanency, safety, and love from a family."

The Inspire Awards celebrate women who have truly excelled, not only in their professional lives, but as leaders and role models. These women share a strong sense of self, a success-driven work ethic, and the extraordinary accomplishments to show for it. Their commitment, vision, and talents make them true leaders.

Our Regional Director of Philanthropy Caitlin Stay was named the Inspire Woman of the Year last year.

Photography by Woody Marshall, News & Record Staff Photographer

Storytellers Inspire A Place to Call Home Guests



*A Place to Call Home 2023:
Speaker Excerpts*



This year's annual *A Place to Call Home* events in Charlotte, Greensboro, and Raleigh provided an intimate setting for change-making storytellers from across the state to share their lived experiences. Our guests were so moved by their stories of how family shaped who they are, what they believe, and how their family experience has forever enriched their lives. It was a chance to think about how we are forever changed by the love and support of our families and how all children deserve that strong foundation.

Even if you attended one of the events, please take a few minutes to view the highlight video as it features each of the speakers from all three events and will remind you why you are part of our CHS community.

And watch for more to come on our Spring 2024 A Place to Call Home events!

MARK YOUR CALENDARS FOR THE FOLLOWING DATES:

Thursday, April 11: Greensboro Luncheon

Thursday, April 18: Charlotte Dinner

Thursday, April 25: Raleigh Luncheon

**We are accepting
applications for storytellers
through November 30.**

*We'd love to hear your story of what
family means to you.*

www.chsnc.org/a-place-to-call-home

Summer saw lemonade stands popping up across the state...

hosted by some of our youngest advocates who embraced the chance to help other children. While selling lemonade to support children and families, they were able to experience the joy that comes with giving. Let us know if you'd like to join us next year!



First Lady Kristin Cooper Presents Family Champion Awards at Children's Home Society's reTHINK Permanency Conference



In June, North Carolina First Lady Kristin Cooper presented the Family Champion Awards recognizing social workers across North Carolina who work to strengthen families, build families, and advocate for families. The awards were presented as a part of the reTHINK Permanency: Unlocking Pathways from Foster Care to Permanency Conference hosted by CHS in partnership with the North Carolina Department of Health and Human Services.

Addressing the award winners and attendees, Mrs. Cooper said, "It's so wonderful to be in a room with people who are so invested in taking care of children and making their lives better. I'm really honored that you invited me to be here, and I'm honored to be around such great champions for children."

Held in Raleigh, the reTHINK Permanency Conference brought together family service professionals and advocates from across the state to explore permanency planning for youth experiencing foster care. The awards ceremony luncheon was hosted by the Institute for Family, a program of CHS, and was underwritten by Blue Cross NC's Healthy Blue Medicaid plan.

Conference participants attended keynote and breakout sessions to explore all paths that youth in care can take from



foster care to permanency with family. Speakers and session leaders at the conference included families with lived expertise navigating child welfare systems and influencers in the child and family well-being movement.

CHILDREN AWAITING ADOPTION

Please visit www.chsnc.org for more information about these and many other children who are available for adoption.



Fabian, 12

charming and energetic, with a bright infectious smile and great sense of humor



Sarah, 13

loves healthy foods – asparagus, broccoli, bananas, apples, celery – and also loves cheeseburgers and strawberry ice cream



Nathan, 15

spends his free time drawing, watching movies, and putting together his Lego sets



Jasmine, 13

loves stuffed animals and using her imagination when playing with her dolls



Children's Home Society of NC presents



Sunshine

5K & Family Festival



The Second Annual CHS Sunshine 5K & Family Festival

was held in June at Country Park in Greensboro bringing together families for a fun-filled morning to raise awareness and support for the needs of children and families. Almost 300 enjoyed the 5K Walk/Run, two Kids' 100-Yard Dashes, music from DJ Doc Mike, special performers, princesses and superheroes, food trucks, local vendors, face painters, games, and other kids and family activities. We hope to see you next June!



The third annual Sunshine 5K & Family Festival
is coming in June 2024.

Sunshine 5K & Family
Festival 2023 Recap



Hope for the Holidays

For the more than **900 children** living in foster care with Children's Home Society, many are not able to celebrate the holidays with their families. CHS is working hard to ensure that all children in our care have a reason to celebrate. It has never been more important for CHS to collect and distribute gifts, and we need your help!



How You Can Make A Difference:

Beginning **November 1**, select a child(ren) from our Hope for the Holidays web page and fulfill the child(ren)'s wish list(s) by spending a pre-determined amount for each child based on age. We also welcome the donation of gift cards (preferably Visa, Target, Walmart, or general retailer) so that a parent or child can select the perfect gift.

Gift Drop Off: Nov. 27-Dec. 1

We suggest the following gift amounts, based upon the child's age:

Infants (0-2): \$100

Preschoolers (3-5): \$150

Elementary (6-12): \$175

Teenagers (13-21): \$200

chsnc.org/hopefortheholidays

Sponsors:

Platinum:

WILLIAMS
AUTO GROUP
EST. 1957



JEREMY CHINN
Foundation

Gold:

94.7 Today's Best Country
QDR

WellCare



Wish Lists Launch:

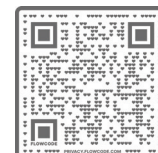
November 1

Gift Drop-Off:

Nov. 27-Dec. 1

Don't have time to shop? You can make an impact in a child's life by making a monetary donation, please visit:

chsnc.org/donate





PO Box 14608, Greensboro, NC 27415-4608
1.800.632.1400 • www.chsnc.org

Nonprofit Org
U.S. Postage
PAID
Greensboro, NC
Permit No. 11
*Return Service
Requested*



Home is Where the Family is.

For many decades, communities have come together to support our mission through The Little Red Stocking Fund. The number of NC children in foster care continues to rise. CHS puts children in foster care on a path to: reunification with their family of origin, relative guardianship, or an adoptive family. Join us in ensuring all children have a permanent, safe, and loving family.

Our Families. Our Future. Depend on You.

DONATE TO THE LITTLE RED STOCKING FUND:

chsnc.org/lrs

MISSION

To promote the right of every child to a permanent, safe, and loving family.

VISION

Every family is supported by trusted resources that lead to equitable opportunities for enduring family success.

CORE VALUES

*Compassion.
Integrity. Excellence.
Innovation.*

Asheville • Charlotte • Fayetteville • Greensboro • Greenville • Morganton • Raleigh • Wilmington • Winston-Salem