



2017
Statement of Impact

30

YEARS &

4185

FAMILIES

LATER



Dear Friends,

When Drueding Center first began as Project Rainbow thirty years ago, I am sure that no one could imagine the monumental achievements we have accomplished in helping some of the most vulnerable members of our society find a home of their own and break the cycle of homelessness and poverty.

As an organization, we have much to celebrate. Over the last thirty years we have served over 4,185 families who arrive with very few possessions and face the terrible uncertainty of homelessness. Families make up the largest numbers of the homeless in America yet they are often invisible. They leave Drueding Center with confidence and the skills to thrive, because a home is more than simply a roof over one's head.

Drueding Center is the only transitional housing program to be Sanctuary™ Certified, a model of providing trauma-informed services. Further, we offer a National Association for the Education of Young Children accredited/STAR 4A childcare program. One of our proudest accomplishments is the successful adaptation of a Housing First approach in Transitional housing.

During the last year we honored these achievements beginning in March at our annual Stairway to Our Future event, which recognized Drueding Center's strong legacy of positive change.

Another highlight of this special year was our 30th Anniversary Block Party for residents, graduates, staff and the surrounding community. As I visited with the block party guests, it was easy to see that our community is really in many ways one big family. At this event past, present and future truly mingled together. Current residents could see that hope can become real possibility.

Hope and possibility are very much a part of Drueding Center's guiding principle to end the cycle of poverty and homelessness for the families we serve. While the challenges continue to be great, our community is stronger than ever.

As we move forward we will honestly evaluate existing programs, explore options to insure fiscal viability, reimagine current Drueding Center space for maximum service to our clients, and continue to be a leader in the transitional housing community, while of course always maintaining fidelity to our mission.

This process promises to be an exciting journey and we look forward to working with many of you as we progress.

With gratitude,

Anne Marie Collins, MS
VP/Executive Director

Charlotte McKines
Board Chair

Hope, Defined. Drueding Center Objectives and Services


In one comprehensive program, Drueding Center offers long-term support services and transitional housing for families and their children. Removing barriers to a stable life, Drueding transforms two generations – parents and children – to break the cycle of homelessness.

Recognizing and healing the underlying issues of trauma that lead to hopelessness is key, and takes time. Drueding Center is Sanctuary™ certified, a philosophy and framework through which organizations create healing environments to counteract the deep-seated effects of trauma. We provide families a safe place for healing and educational support to help them learn financial responsibility, successful parenting, establishing career goals, and other life skills. Long-term outreach services follow the families after they have attained independent housing, offering continuing support and mentoring.

Families Benefit From:

- Transitional housing for 30 families at a time
- Ongoing Case management
- Clinical counseling
- Computer Learning Center
- Life skills education
- Help securing housing
- Licensed, NAEYC accredited, full-day high-quality child care; rated 4A PA Keystone STARS (the highest rating possible)
- After Care support in their new homes for up to 7 years
- *Blueprint* community-based care management to additional formerly homeless families currently living in public housing
- Permanent supportive housing to families with disabilities through *New Neighbors*
- Exclusively healthy, fresh food choices and education in the *Green Light Pantry*





“
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Desiree's Story - Long-term Success

Nearly 25 years ago Desiree Porter, infant daughter “little Desiree,” and 5-year-old son, Stephen, were staring into the ugly face of homelessness. Desiree herself was the daughter of a teen mother who struggled with drug addiction. Desiree's father moved often and eventually faded out of her life. By the time Desiree came to Project Rainbow - later known as Drueding Center - she had suffered from undiagnosed depression for years and had moved 25 times in almost as many years.

Desiree arrived at Project Rainbow grateful for a safe place to live. The program enabled Desiree and her family to move into a large efficiency-style apartment. They shared a communal kitchen and another common living area with other residents.

There was a little adjustment, she acknowledged, sharing her new environment with 19 other young families from different backgrounds. “There were a lot of young girls who really didn't have life experience,” she noted. As one of the older mothers, she quickly took on a leadership role, eventually serving as the resident assistant to keep an eye on the well-being of the other residents.

The year at Project Rainbow was busy for this young family. Desiree worked hard to hone her life skills, becoming a stronger parent and refocusing to move into more permanent housing, with the ultimate goal of owning her own home.

Sister Bernice, who Desiree still calls “my angel,” was assigned as her caseworker. Sister Bernice was there nonstop for Desiree, even driving her to regular doctor appointments for little Desiree's ongoing ear problems.

Desiree's son was enrolled in a local school and the Center's program offered support with homework. Onsite childcare watched

over her daughter while Desiree attended community college. She credits the warm and stimulating environment provided by the day care center as a contributor to her daughter's later success.

Desiree's mindset was indeed determined and hopeful. After twelve months at Drueding Center, housing voucher in hand, she and Sister Bernice went to look at an apartment in a housing project. The expectation of setting up a safe place to live was suddenly dashed. “It was like a “horror movie, the stairwell, elevator and hallways all smelled like urine, everything was filthy and the apartment, on the 20th floor wasn't even finished,” Desiree recalled. She knew she

couldn't move her family into that environment and panicked, thinking she would be living in the street. Desiree remains grateful to Sister Bernice, who arranged an extension for Desiree at Project Rainbow. Shortly afterwards Desiree's family transitioned into a new, safe condo in the Villa de Haca complex. A year later, Desiree and her family moved into the permanent home of which she had always dreamed, through the rent-to-own *Endow a Home* program through Resources for Human Development.

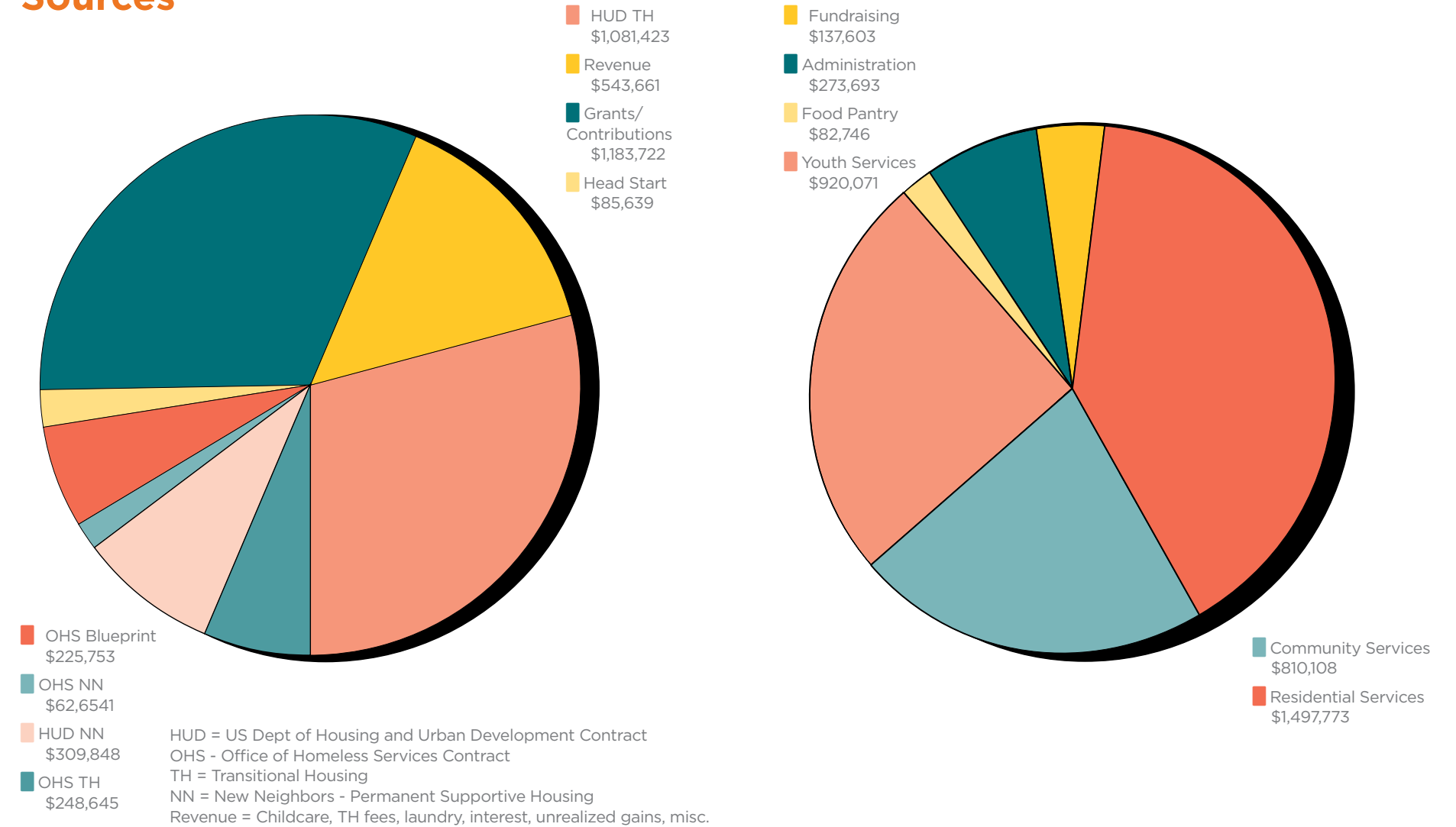
Desiree counts her After Care case manager, Anne Marie Collins, as key to her success. A self-admitted procrastinator, Desiree was highly motivated by Anne Marie's regular visits. Even with the strong foundation she received while in transitional housing and the great feeling of living in your own home, Desiree asserts extended support is necessary. "You still have issues to manage like mental and social health, time management, paying bills, and child care."

Life continued to have challenges for Desiree. Although she left community college, she persevered, always working. She kept her focus on owning her own home and making sure her children did well in school. Her son Stephen finished his education and joined the Air Force, now raising a family of his own. Desiree's daughter, Desiree Grant, attended the Gesu Catholic School, Germantown Friends School, and the University of Pennsylvania School of Nursing. She now works as a nurse in the cardio-thoracic unit of Einstein Hospital. Her mother is also proud of her for reaching back with a helping hand through her volunteer work at Drueding Center. "Little Desiree" has started a personal care item drive for the center which she hopes will become an annual event. Most importantly for her mother, Desiree is an example to "other little brown girls that it can be better." Desiree credits a stable home with her children's success and is proud that they

didn't grow up in an unhealthy environment like she did. She is especially pleased that her children do not recall the challenges Desiree powered through as they grew up. But it takes more than just a stable home. Anne Marie gives Desiree high parenting marks. "She had her struggles, but she was tough on her kids and had very high expectations. She modeled the behavior she wanted to see, to make sure they did better than she did, but in a very grounded way."

Anne Marie notes that success is defined differently for each person. "Every family has their own measure of success. For someone with developmental delays just being able to keep a steady job and pay the bills is enormous, while others attend graduate school and become working professionals. Every achievement is a victory."

Expenses and Revenue Sources



Healing Takes Time

The majority of our young mothers come to Drueding Center having suffered years of disabling trauma. As children, 87% experienced trauma such as physical abuse or neglect, sexual abuse, living with parents who had a mental health or substance abuse issue, or were in foster care. And as adults, most are domestic violence survivors, have a mental health issue, or have experienced other significant trauma such as violent crime.

Drueding's team offers these young women the support to strengthen self-worth, instill hope, and guide their future well-being. After Care for up to seven years offers invaluable continuity, stability, and support to these families as they navigate the challenges of daily life.

The Impact to Two Generations

Homeless children are twice as likely to experience hunger as other children, most experience educational delays or interruptions due to frequent moves, and overall are less healthy than their counterparts, according to the American Psychological Association.

With support from Drueding Center, mothers begin to heal from their own traumas and are equipped with the skills to be better able to provide for their children. With access to education, child care, therapy, and life skills coaching, they raise healthier children who are more self-sufficient and better prepared for their own lives.



2017 in Review A Program That Works

Our Families in 2017, by the Numbers:

- 49 in Transitional Housing
- 118 in After Care
- 224 in *Blueprint* Case Management
- 18 in *New Neighbors*
- 201 in the *Green Light Pantry*
- and 58 children in Child Care

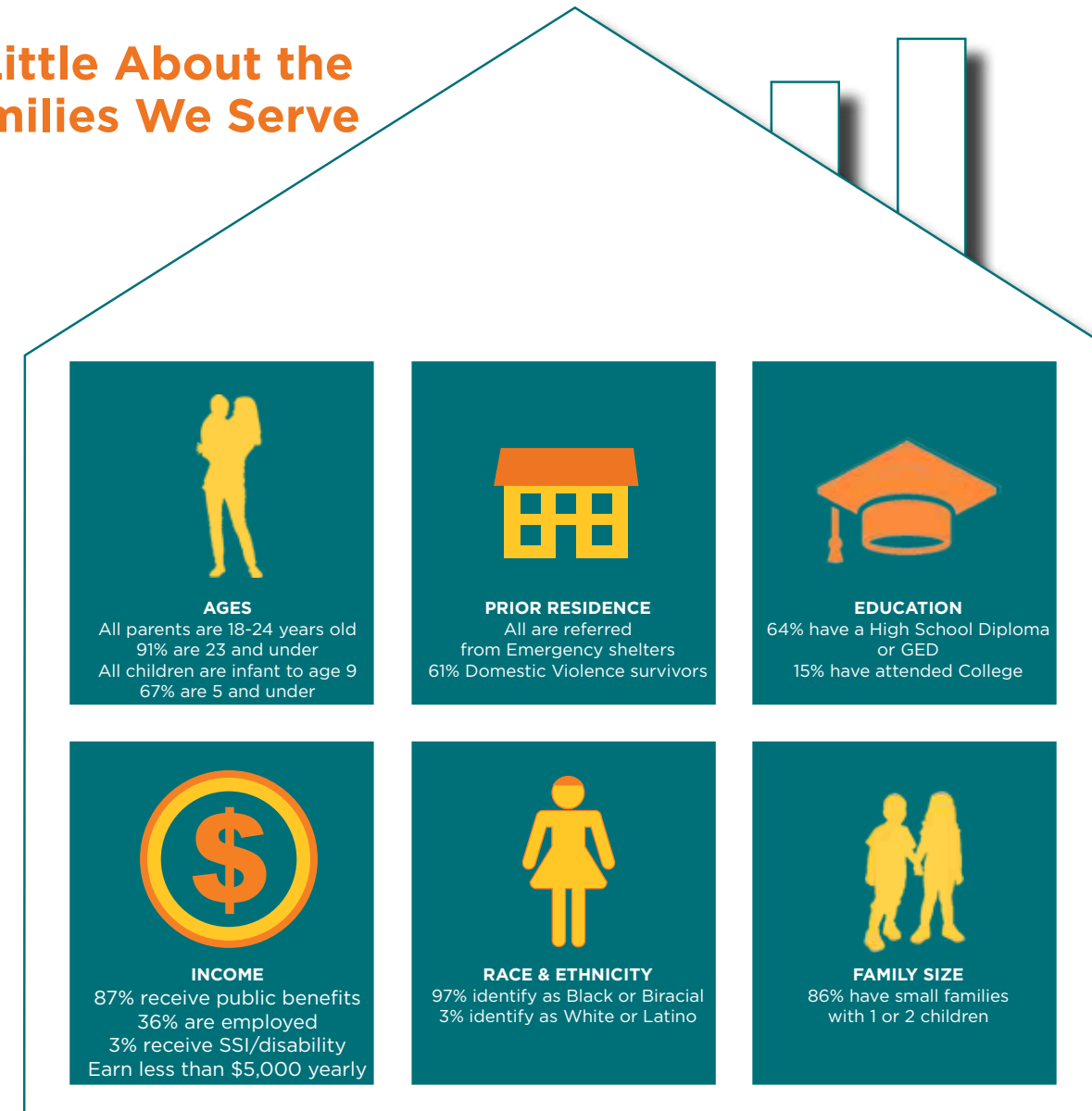
Our Residential families are succeeding:

- 86% moved into permanent housing
- 91% increased their self-sufficiency score
- 48% decreased symptoms of trauma

This Year, of our Graduates:

- 97% who are able, are working, in school, or in a program
- 84% maintained employment for 12 months
- 93% of those in After Care maintained permanent housing for 3 years

A Little About the Families We Serve



Rental Subsidy Program Launch

Finding safe, affordable housing is a challenge that many families face after their stay at Drueding Center. To help families move successfully into their next phase of renting an independent apartment, we introduced *Drueding Rental Assistance Program* (DRAP) in 2017. This innovative program provides rent assistance to families who meet program eligibility requirements including employment, contributing to a savings account, and a successful record of meeting financial obligations—each of which are closely associated with self-sufficiency.

By leveraging our established relationships with private landlords, we negotiate lower rental rates on safe and appropriate apartment units. Under DRAP, Drueding Center provides subsidies directly to the landlords of these families during the first two years of their leases. Ongoing support from Drueding helps to mitigate any issues that may arise and promotes long-term stability for these young families.



Thanks to our Supporters Healing Can Happen

Ayesha's Precious Gifts

Energy, expertise, and time are among the most precious gifts a board member can contribute to any non-profit organization. The Drueding Center Board of Directors is indeed lucky to have Ayesha T. Selden, who is very generous with all of these.

After a successful career as a certified financial planner for a Fortune 500 company and launching her own real estate company, Ayesha wanted to give back in a way that would make a meaningful impact in her community.

She was especially interested in organizations assisting women in transition, particularly women with children who needed a helping hand to get back on track. Through a family friend, she found out about Drueding Center and joined the Board at the end of 2016.

One of the key aspects of Drueding Center that resonates with Ayesha is the dedication to high-quality early childhood education. She feels strongly that providing a solid foundation as early as possible is one of the best ways to “help break the cycle of poverty.”

Ayesha feels a strong connection to the organization through the stories of current residents and alumni of the program. Noting Drueding Center's success in keeping in touch with its past participants, Ayesha emphasized that the best way to understand the program is by talking to individuals in every stage of their journey of transition.

In her board capacity, Ayesha offers fiduciary advice and assists with Drueding Center's signature fundraising event, *Stairway to Our Future*. Since joining the Board, Ayesha has also given generous financial support, donating between \$20,000 and \$25,000 annually. She understands that supporting families successfully does not happen quickly and that monetary support of Drueding Center's vast network of programs is vital.

Another aspect of Drueding Center that really energizes Ayesha's work is the strong leadership team. “It is easy for board members to be committed to an organization when they work with leaders who know what they are doing and are so committed themselves to these mothers and kids.”

Celebrating 30 Years of Family Successes at Drueding Center

In 1987, seeking to serve the community's most vulnerable families, the Sisters of the Redeemer founded Project Rainbow. Over our 30 years, we have developed a legacy of the most wonderful kind – over 4,000 families who have the skills and support to look forward to a better future.

The year of 2017 was filled with events at which we celebrated the successes of 30 years of hope. Our annual gala, *Stairway to Our Future*, in March saw nearly 300 distinguished guests, friends, and supporters gather to honor and celebrate the good work of Drueding Center on behalf of the women and children that we have the privilege to serve.

Our Graduation Ceremony in June was a joyous event for the families moving onto their next steps, with coverage by NBC 10 News carrying their success stories of overcoming adversity. Our *30th Anniversary Block Party* for residents, graduates, staff and our neighbors in September was a festive event attended by hundreds, with refreshments and entertainment provided by our generous corporate partners.

Thrifty Deals and Good Deeds

The Holy Redeemer Thrift Store is one of Drueding Center's largest supporters – contributing over \$536,000 since 2011 through its customers and their purchases. Located in a 16,000 square foot former supermarket at 473 E. County Line Road in Hatboro, The Thrift Store offers a large selection of reasonably priced furniture, clothing, housewares, jewelry, and decorative items. Fully 50% of the Thrift Store's net proceeds are donated to Drueding Center, so shopping there means you're supporting the families of Drueding Center.



In Gratitude and Recognition

In 1987, seeking to serve the most vulnerable families, the Sisters of the Redeemer founded Project Rainbow. The name Drueding Center was later adopted to reflect the charitable leadership of Bernard Drueding Jr. and his family in growing this organization.

With each gift of time or financial support from our donors, volunteers and board members, we are able to further our reach and impact on the lives of our most fragile community members. Drueding Center, its staff, and the families we serve offer you, our supporters, our most heartfelt gratitude for believing in us and extending your gifts.

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