



BECAUSE OF YOU, A BOLD VISION FOR SAFETY, HEALING, AND HOPE IS BECOMING A REALITY.

What began as an ambitious \$10.8 million goal has become an extraordinary community achievement: together, you helped raise more than \$11.7 million. That generosity positions Family Services to lead the way in creating a transformational shelter where survivors and their families will find safety, dignity, healing, and hope.

Your impact is already taking shape as we make way for the future. This year, meaningful progress at the future shelter site included a partnership with the Winston-Salem Police Department, whose officers conducted valuable training exercises before demolition began. Their presence helped prepare the site for its next chapter and offered a powerful reminder that this project is more than a building—it is a community-wide commitment to safety, response, and restoration.



Rising construction costs, inflation, and additional site preparation needs have created new pressures, and Family Services is working closely with architects and contractors to identify cost-saving opportunities without compromising the safety, quality, or functionality survivors deserve.

We look forward to welcoming survivors and their families into a safe, modern facility anticipated to open its doors in fall 2027—and to carrying forward the same spirit of generosity into the full continuum of care Family Services provides every day.

Within these pages, you'll discover an equally important and more comprehensive shift toward additional agency priorities—needs that are urgent, interconnected, and essential to Family Services' mission. Flexible unrestricted support allows the agency to support classroom staff managing children's emotional needs; expand counseling capacity as anticipated Medicaid program changes increase pressure on families and providers; respond to the growing need for forensic interviews for children who have experienced abuse; and deepen collaboration across the early childhood landscape.

Your generosity is helping bring a new shelter to life, and it is also ensuring Family Services can respond beyond any single project—with flexibility, compassion, and strength wherever the need is greatest, just as this agency has done for over 120 years. Thank you for standing with us as we move one step closer to a safer, healthier future for every child, family, and survivor we serve.

With gratitude,

Danna Wortman Tom Adams

Danna Wortman & Tom Adams
Campaign Co-Chairs, One Step Closer Capital Campaign



UNDER THE UMBRELLA OF COMPASSION, YOU CHANGE LIVES

Every day, Family Services walks beside children and families through life’s storms, offering care when it is needed most. The generosity of Grogan Society members makes that steady presence possible, sustaining the high-quality, evidence-based programs and continuum of support that help every person we serve move toward safety, stability, and their fullest potential.

Annual support gives Family Services the foundation to grow with purpose and respond to urgent needs. It strengthens our strategic pillars by advancing growth and stability through partnerships, investing in the infrastructure, talent, tools, and technology behind strong programs, sustaining trauma-informed and outcomes-driven approaches, and equipping team members through professional growth and wellness. In this way, annual philanthropy fuels not just programs, but the people, systems, and compassionate culture that make lasting impact possible.

“Our community has the resources and the responsibility to respond to families in need and to assist them to become self-sufficient.”

MISS ANNIE GROGAN



New leadership donors who make unrestricted annual gifts of \$1,000 or more are welcomed into the Grogan Society with an umbrella, a symbol of the steady protection and support their generosity provides. As we navigate an evolving philanthropic landscape, this reliable leadership support remains our strongest foundation.

“This year, the funding support we need from our ‘umbrella’ is \$1.9 million,” explains Chief Development Officer Michelle Speas. “That’s the reality of our daily operating budget that private donations help sustain. We would not be here without the individual support from our loyal donors who make that happen.”

The umbrella we present to new Grogan Society members is more than a token of appreciation. It is a reminder that their generosity extends far beyond a single gift and carries with it a legacy of philanthropy rooted deep in our agency’s history.

“When a Grogan Society member carries their umbrella, we hope they remember the lives they help protect and the community of solutions they are creating,” Speas shares. “The umbrella started because of a gift first given to me by former Family Services President, Sarah Y. Austin, and it’s that same act of selfless generosity that we see represented in our Grogan Society members still today.”

Speas will show you the original compact, brown plaid umbrella from Austin, still safely tucked in her office for an emergency. It was given to her following a visit when Austin insisted on shielding Speas from the rain before she left. It was this moment captured in time, inspired by the selfless act of giving that continues to ignite the generosity of so many others.

This commitment inspires others and provides stability, strength, and hope to our neighbors across Forsyth County. Your support today carries a simple but powerful truth: when a community comes together in support of one another, no one must face the storm alone.



Learn about the
Grogan Society

YOU ARE HELPING US SAY “YES” TO HEALING

Last year, 769 children, individuals, and families reached out to our professionals seeking counseling. Behind every one of those requests was someone looking for help, often during one of the most difficult periods of their lives.

What sets us apart? We are there to answer every single call.

For many, that first call marks the beginning of navigating a complex system, and we’re here to help every step of the way. Our team includes six full-time counselors, a part-time counselor, and a Clinical Specialist who triages new referrals. Last year, we completed 4,358 counseling sessions, welcomed 200 new clients, and provided 200 Strengthening Families Program sessions for youth and their parents or caregivers.

Our Clinical Specialist is a vital resource, helping clients understand their options and connecting them with community resources when our services are not the right fit or our caseload is full. Even when direct services aren’t possible, we aim to ensure everyone has a clearer path to getting the help they need.

As one community professional who regularly refers clients to Family Services for specialized care shared: “As a Licensed Clinical Mental Health Counselor for the past 32 years, I have worked with many other agencies, and there is none better than Family Services. You have an incredibly talented, skilled, compassionate, and stable group of counselors and support staff who make a profound difference.”

For many people, finding a counselor who is both qualified to address their needs and financially accessible can be difficult. Our staff works to provide compassionate, skilled counseling services regardless of a client’s ability to pay. Approximately 70% of those receiving counseling at Family Services use Medicaid or receive services through our sliding scale because they are uninsured or underinsured.

“Therapy at Family Services plays a critical role in connecting community members to healing regardless of their ability to pay the full bill or how intense the trauma is,” said J. Nelson-Weaver, Chief Program Officer of Clinical and Community Services. “We stand in the gap for our community.”

But meeting the community’s growing need requires resources to support those in need.

Beginning in January 2027, changes to Medicaid eligibility requirements in North Carolina could create additional barriers to services for some adults who currently rely on Medicaid for their healthcare. Our clients may face new work or community engagement requirements, more frequent eligibility reviews, or lose coverage entirely, suddenly unable to afford the physical and mental health care they need. We anticipate that more individuals may turn to Family Services needing affordable care through our sliding scale, and at that moment, we want to be able to say yes.

That is where community support becomes critical. The need for counseling in our community is already greater than our current staff model can meet, requiring additional capacity to anticipate and respond when someone reaches out for that initial appointment. Nelson-Weaver reflects on this, sharing, “At Family Services, we believe that when a person reaches out for help, our goal is simple: to have the capacity and resources to meet them there.”

OUR TEAM OF PROFESSIONALS



6

Full-time counselors, a part-time counselor, and a Clinical Specialist who triages new referrals



4,358

Counseling sessions last year



200

New clients last year



200

Strengthening Families Program sessions provided last year



A UNIFIED VOICE FOR EVERY CHILD

In a world where children face unimaginable traumas, the existence of Children's Advocacy Centers (CACs) emerges as a beacon of hope and healing. Without a CAC, a child who has experienced abuse may have to retell their painful story to multiple unfamiliar adults, which can amplify their anxiety and inadvertently re-traumatize the child with each subsequent story. The multidisciplinary approach used by CACs like that at Family Services helps create a safe, compassionate environment, enhancing children's opportunities for healing and justice.

First established at Family Services just 25 years ago, our CAC was created to alleviate the burdens that traditional child abuse investigation methods placed on young victims and their families. As one of over 900 CACs operating across the United States, Family Services' program follows a trusted national model, focused on child abuse intervention, advocacy, and prevention in a safe, secure environment.

When a child is referred to the CAC—typically by police or child protective services—they enter a child-focused environment designed to foster trust and safety. Here, they tell their story once to a trained interviewer skilled in asking the right questions without causing further trauma. This approach not only simplifies the investigative process but also ensures that children like Mateo* can recount their experiences in a supportive setting. After suffering years of abuse, Mateo found the

strength to share his story at the CAC, which played a crucial role in his healing journey and pursuit of justice. Stories like his are at the heart of this work for our staff every day.

Family Services CAC Director Ernest Britton shares what guides him in this work: "When you see a child, when you're there at their most darkest moment and you look at them and say, 'No, I am only here for you, and I will listen to you, and I will fight for you, and I will be there for you—' That is why I do what I do."

The impact of CACs can be profound. In the past year alone, the CAC served 200 children and conducted 198 forensic interviews, receiving overwhelmingly positive feedback from caregivers and youth alike. Notably, 96% of non-offending caregivers agreed that Family Services' CAC supported their needs, and every youth reported feeling safe and heard by our staff. This demonstrates the effective and compassionate work being done when families walk through our doors.

The demand for these specialized interviews is on the rise, and currently Family Services must operate on a waitlist model. With increased demand comes an urgent need for support. Due to staff shortages, including 10% of positions unfunded within the Clinical and Community Services division, families are left experiencing longer wait times for forensic interviews and counseling services.

"These delays can significantly hinder a child's healing process and ability to access essential resources," explains Nelson-Weaver. Family Services is committed to carrying out its mission of helping survivors of all ages regain their sense of safety, dignity, and peace. Yet, as Nelson-Weaver notes, "Sometimes, we have to do less with less because there are not enough staff to meet client needs. Hiring an additional forensic interviewer will greatly enhance our support for vulnerable children in the community."

By providing a safe environment for children to reclaim their voice and share their experience, we are improving our services and strengthening the overall support system for families in need. Together, we can ensure every child is heard and receives the comprehensive support they deserve to navigate their healing journey.

"We aim to provide a comprehensive and coordinated response to child maltreatment, streamlining our response to provide services to reduce trauma and enhance the investigation process."

**J. NELSON-WEAVER, CHIEF PROGRAM OFFICER,
CLINICAL AND COMMUNITY SERVICES**

*Not his real name

PROVIDING CALM, CONNECTION, AND CARE FOR CHILDREN AND FAMILIES

Classrooms are facing a rapidly changing mental health landscape across the nation. In the past five years, Family Services' Head Start and Early Head Start programs have seen an increase in the enrollment of children exhibiting dysregulated behaviors, including anxiety, rage, fear, sadness, withdrawal, hyperactivity, and other symptoms.

Infants and young children are often among the most vulnerable—and often overlooked—groups at risk for mental health challenges. About 8% of children under age 5 experience either anxiety, depression, or behavior disorders—a number that increases to over 21% by age 11.* The demand for treatment nationwide is often unable to be met, leaving programs like Head Start and Early Head Start to serve as critical support for children and families with limited access to care.

"We do our very best to provide a safe and calm learning environment so that children can adjust and thrive in our centers," Mental Health Manager Elizabeth Turner, LCSW shares. "Some of our students come from homes that are in active crisis. This can create a dysregulated child who does not experience calm or safety in the home."

Children learn to calm their bodies through co-regulation with steady, connected adults. Family Services becomes the place where children and families come to know safety and calm, sometimes for the first time in their lives. Our wraparound approach focuses on using trauma-informed training on topics ranging from stress and conscious discipline to classroom safety and strategies that support children and staff.

Early mental health intervention is vital for young developing minds, shaped by their experiences and relationships. Our staff connect with caregivers and provide appropriate referrals to community partners to ensure children access essential services. By holding multidisciplinary meetings and making tailored accommodations, we focus on each child's needs, requiring considerable time to support their success.

"In one case, our staff spent six months building trust with a parent while supporting the child in the classroom," Turner explains. "This relationship helped the family access treatment, receive a diagnosis, and begin an appropriate care plan."

Appropriate care relies on adequate staffing and funding support. Head Start and Early Head Start programs can serve only a fraction of eligible families, as enrollment applications continue to increase. Currently, Family Services can only address the basic needs of teachers, let alone the evolving needs of the early childhood classroom, yet we strive to find ways to provide the best care for those we serve.

This year, we needed three mental health consultants to enhance classroom visits, individualized support, family resources, and advanced treatment care due to rising behavioral health issues among young children. We see parents requesting training and small-group support for ongoing treatment, while our staff require specialized training to adapt to the changing classroom environment.



"Early childhood mental health is crucial because it shapes lifelong social, emotional, and physical well-being."

VIVIEN STEARNS, CHIEF PROGRAM OFFICER, CHILD DEVELOPMENT HEAD START AND EARLY HEAD START PROGRAMS

"With more Mental Health Clinicians to cover classrooms, there is more time to offer and implement a reflective supervision program to support teachers and staff, directly impacting how teachers show up for students," Turner explains.

Additional funding strengthens the programs that help children regulate, learn, and thrive in the classroom and beyond. The key lies in more skilled professionals knowledgeable in early childhood behavioral health, preventing additional stressors on classroom staff and families. Increasing parent participation in family support activities requires funded incentive programs, training, and staff well-being programs for a comprehensive approach to success.

"Children flourish when we support the adults nurturing them," Stearns stated. "By enhancing our programs, we can address the early childhood mental health crisis and provide a strong foundation for children and families to ensure a healthy start in life."

*Data and Statistics on Children's Mental Health, CDC, August 2026



INVESTING EARLY AND BUILDING A STRONGER FUTURE FOR CHILDREN

The summit brought together local, regional, and state leaders around a shared purpose: to align policy and practice so every child has a stronger start. Conversations centered on three priorities that are essential to a thriving early childhood system:

- **Early Intervention:** Helping educators and leaders act sooner so children receive support when it matters most.
- **Family, Friend, and Neighbor Care:** Recognizing the vital role informal caregivers play in the child care ecosystem.
- **High-Quality Pre-K:** Expanding access to early learning experiences that fuel success in school and beyond.



“From the opening message by national speaker, author, and early childhood educator Erin Ramsey to 15 focused breakout sessions, the day was designed to move ideas into action.”

LESLIE MULLINIX, PROJECT DIRECTOR OF THE PRE-K PRIORITY (HOUSED AT FAMILY SERVICES)

When communities invest in young children, the return reaches far beyond the classroom. It strengthens families, supports working parents, prepares children for lifelong learning, and helps build the healthy, stable communities we all want to see. That vision was at the heart of the Early Childhood Blueprint Summit, held earlier this year at Winston-Salem State University (WSSU) and hosted by The Pre-K Priority, the Family, Friend & Neighbor Child Care Alliance, Child Care Resource Center, and the Birth–Kindergarten Education Department of WSSU.

Attendees explored local and regional strategies, examined proven national models, and learned how advocacy can shape policies that determine whether families can access the care and education their children deserve.

The urgency of this work was clear. Samantha Cole of the N.C. Department of Commerce shared updates on Governor Josh Stein’s N.C. Task Force on Child Care and Early Education, established in March 2025 and continuing through March 2027. Her message underscored a growing reality for communities across North Carolina: child care is not only a family issue, it is an economic development issue.

“When businesses, policymakers, educators, and families work together, communities become stronger and more resilient,” Mullinix said of the core message behind the summit.

Keynote speaker Candace Witherspoon, Director of the Division of Child Development and Early Education at the N.C. Department of Health and Human Services, highlighted statewide supply and demand trends, educator workforce challenges, and the daily realities families face when searching for quality care. The day concluded with an advocacy panel that translated concern into action, offering clear messaging for local and state leaders on the policy decisions children and families need now.

Already, momentum is building. The success of the Early Childhood Blueprint Summit can be seen in the partnerships that continue across the state and in recent child care wins included in North Carolina’s approved 2026 budget. Legislators established the first-ever statewide floor rate for child care subsidy reimbursements and increased reimbursement rates for programs that accept subsidies—steps that help providers receive more equitable payment and help working parents with low incomes afford licensed care.

For supporters of the initiative, this progress is a powerful reminder that investment in early childhood creates lasting change. Community support makes it possible to convene leaders, elevate community voices, strengthen advocacy, and build the partnerships needed to turn promising ideas into sustainable solutions. The Pre-K Priority coalition is building on this momentum with local stakeholders to explore a new funding framework—one that reflects both the urgency of the need and the promise of what is possible when a community chooses to put children first.

YOUR GIVING SHAPES OUR FUTURE

Every gift to Family Services helps create meaningful, lasting change in our community for children and families we serve. With nearly 90% of Family Services’ income directly supporting programs, you can feel confident that your generosity is creating healthier families and a healthier community right here in Forsyth County.



Choose the Option that Works for You

ANNUAL GIFTS

Gifts made by cash, check, or credit card are the most common ways to make your annual gift, while donor-advised funds (DAFs) and IRAs are also popular.

Tribute and Memorial Gifts: Honor or celebrate someone special.

Recurring Gifts: Monthly or multi-year gifts provide reliable, support and offer installments to make larger contributions more manageable over time.

Donors who contribute at least \$1,000 annually over 5 years are eligible for recognition through the Austin Society.

In-Kind Gifts: Purchase tangible items from our online Amazon, Target, and Walmart wish lists, or use our list to host a local donation drive, perfect for holiday group giving activities.

PLANNED GIFTS

Making a planned gift through the Family Services Foundation supports our long term future while meeting your personal financial goals. Please consult your advisor.

Donors who include Family Services in their long-term plans are eligible for recognition through the 1905 Society.

WAYS TO STRUCTURE A PLANNED GIFT INCLUDE

Wills and Trusts: One of the simplest ways to leave a legacy without affecting current finances.

Beneficiary Designations: Name Family Services as a beneficiary on accounts or life insurance policies.

Income-Generating Gifts: Charitable gift annuities, charitable remainder trusts, or charitable lead trusts can provide steady income and a philanthropic benefit.

DIVERSE ASSETS

Beyond traditional gifts, you can also contribute various non-cash assets:

Appreciated Securities
Appreciated stocks, bonds, or mutual funds can offer a deduction based on fair-market value while helping avoid capital gains taxes.

Real Estate and Personal Property: These can yield tax advantages, depending on how the property is used.

Life Insurance and Business Stock: Transfer policy ownership, name Family Services as a policy beneficiary, or contribute closely held business stock to maximize your gift.

ENDOWMENT GIFTS

Your principal investment remains intact while annual returns provide steady, permanent funding. Contribute to existing funds with the Family Services Foundation—such as the emergency domestic violence shelter—or contact our development team to learn more.

Family Services Tax ID
56-0689235
Family Services Foundation Tax ID
87-2798936

To explore your giving options, contact Michelle Speas, MA, CFRE, Chief Development Officer at (336) 778-7053 or mspeas@familyservicesforsyth.org.



**Office of Philanthropy
and Public Relations**

1200 South Broad Street
Winston-Salem, NC 27101
336.722.8173

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BECAUSE OF YOU, HOPE STARTS HERE

When you give to Family Services, you are helping your neighbors have the stability, security and opportunities that allow families to flourish, now and in the future.



- Safe nights and supports for survivors of domestic violence
- High-quality Head Start & Pre-K education for local children
- Hours of specialized counseling and trauma recovery services

Invest in life-changing support at familyservicesforsyth.org/give or call 336.722.8173

Follow your impact



FamilyServicesForsyth.org