

Lifeline



A WORD FROM THE PRESIDENT



It is with great excitement that I share with you the launch of two transformative programs at Circle of Care—**BEYOND** and **Fathers Empowered**. These initiatives mark significant milestones in our ongoing mission to support families in their journey of healing and growth after adoption and to empower fathers as key figures in their children’s lives.

BEYOND is an 18-month fully funded pilot that represents our commitment to families who have adopted children out of foster care. Focusing on early intervention and relationship-building, the program provides families with connection and support when they need it most. **BEYOND** will offer access to training, monthly follow-ups, support groups, and a digital toolbox that empowers churches to launch support groups for families in their congregations. Our vision is to support families well beyond the “happy ending” of adoption but through the entire journey as they navigate the complexities of integrating a child into their home. Funding for this pilot was generously provided by the Paul Milburn Gift Fund and the Sarkeys Foundation.

We are also thrilled to launch **Fathers Empowered**, a program dedicated to supporting fathers in their parenting journey. Fathers are essential in shaping the lives of their children, yet are often overlooked in the discussion of family support. **Fathers Empowered** seeks to change that by offering fathers the tools, skills, and resources to become more engaged, effective parents. Through the 24/7 Dads curriculum, fathers will receive coaching that empowers them to build stronger, healthier relationships with their children, increasing their ability to provide guidance and stability and thereby strengthening entire families and communities. Funding for this program has been provided through a 3-year grant from Oklahoma Human Services.

Both **BEYOND** and **Fathers Empowered** represent our unwavering commitment to fostering long-term, positive change in the lives of children and families, which is only possible through your continued support. Your generosity allows us to expand our reach, deepen our impact, and provide families with the resources and connections they need to thrive. Your partnership means everything to us as we continue to make a lasting difference in the lives of those we serve.

Together, we embody the theme of our 2024 Year End campaign, Above & Beyond. Thank you for making help, healing, and hope happen.

Keith Howard

President & CEO

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Our Team



Open your phone’s camera and click the QR code to view.

BEYOND THE “FINISH LINE”



“No one who hasn’t walked this journey can truly understand what you’re going through,” Ashley Fuhr says as she describes her family’s journey through fostering and adoption.

Ashley and Russell Fuhr became Circle of Care foster parents in May 2019. After originally thinking she’d be a “one-and-done mom” after the birth of their biological child, the pair felt the call to foster and eventually to keep sibling sets together. That year they welcomed two children, one age 4 and the other 17 months, into their home. A year later, the kids’ biological mom gave birth again, and the Fuhrs welcomed a third child. “We went from one biological child to 4 total kids in 12 months,” Ashley chuckles reflectively.

The rapid change in family size came with its own unique challenges. The family had to

move to a larger home with more bedrooms and purchase a vehicle big enough to hold 4 car seats. “We made a lot of sacrifices,” Ashley recalls. But as she describes, the support for foster families is abundant and God provided what they needed every day. Four and a half years after the first kids arrived in their home, they became forever members of the Fuhr family.

That’s usually where we end the story, after the “finish line” of adoption day. But as Ashley tells it, that’s only the beginning of stories like the Fuhr’s. “You get all this support when you’re a foster family, and much of that never goes away,” she says. But as an adoptive family, it can be difficult to find resources to help with ongoing financial needs like childcare or other resources like trauma-informed counseling.

“You’re kind of out on an island

after you adopt. Some see foster care as the end goal, but the gaps and loss endured don’t go away. Rallying around these kids and families is essential,” Ashley says.

That’s the reason BEYOND exists. Circle of Care’s new pilot program is committed to providing connection and support to families after adoption. Cindy Boecking, BEYOND Director, describes the vision for the program.

“Once the adoption is finalized and papers have been signed, a family can often feel like they’re on their own. We understand that adoption is not a one-time event; it is a lifelong journey for the child and the family. In Oklahoma alone, we have around 20,000 children who have been adopted. Our program, BEYOND, seeks to expand access to vital supports for adoptive families in our state. Our mission is to provide support groups,

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training classes, and family-strengthening opportunities for families after adoption. We want to see families thrive not just on adoption day, but for all the years that follow.”

Cindy and her family know the challenges of fostering and adoption themselves, having begun their own journey almost 15 years ago. “There were no support groups or classes we could find,” she says. “Thankfully, we found a group of other families who were on the same journey. Those friendships not only helped sustain us during the highs and lows, they also challenged us to keep learning and doing everything we can for our children. I can’t overstate how crucial this support has been to our family.”

It’s a sentiment that Ashley echoes wholeheartedly. “Having someone there to help as a resource is

huge,” she says. “I was so excited to see that Circle of Care was doing something like this for families.”

As Ecclesiastes 4:9-12 says, “Two are better than one because they have good return on their labor; for if either of them falls, the one will lift up his companion.” BEYOND is there to make sure no post-adoptive family is alone and that every family has the support they need to thrive along every part of their journey.

BEYOND is all about support. The phrase “It takes a village” holds true for each family who selflessly opens their home to a child. You can join our mission to support families beyond adoption by offering respite, a listening ear, a meal, or sharing about our program with an adoptive family that you know. If you are part of a faith community, we have developed a digital toolbox that can be used

to empower your church to launch a support group for adoptive families in your congregation.

“We would love to help you create your own support group at your church or in your community. It’s easier than you might think,” Cindy says.

To learn more about this exciting new program, access our resources page, or discover how you can do more to support families post-adoption, visit our new web page at <https://circleofcare.org/programs/beyond/> or contact Cindy Boecking at (405) 823-1706 or cindy.boecking@circleofcare.org.

“We want to see families thrive not just on adoption day, but for all the years that follow.”

CELEBRATING COMMUNITY



This year, we witnessed something truly special—communities united in generosity and a shared vision for our mission. Thanks to your participation and support, our annual fundraising events were a huge success, raising funds to power our programs, expand our impact, and further the mission of Circle of Care.

In Oklahoma City, our annual Friends of Children Banquet brought friends together from across the state to enjoy good food, amazing art, and inspiring stories. “We had a great time at the OKC fundraiser this year! The program was so impactful that it motivated us to become monthly donors. We are excited to partner with such a great organization,” said Norman Hall, a Moore resident.

Tulsa brought the energy with the Tulsa Beach Party, a family-friendly event at the Oklahoma Aquarium.

Families of all shapes and sizes enjoyed the exhibits of marine life, fun drinks and appetizers, and learning how Circle of Care was meeting critical needs of families and children in crisis.

Also in Tulsa, Circle of Care was honored to be the beneficiary of Arrowhead Consulting’s 3rd Annual Charity Golf Tournament. “As a foster and adoptive parent, I always look for organizations to support that help protect and grow families. Circle of Care is an incredible organization that does just that. I’m grateful to Arrowhead Consulting for partnering with Circle of Care to help continue their mission,” commented Brennan Segraves, Broken Arrow resident.

Last, but certainly nowhere near the least, in Woodward our 2nd Annual Adult Prom reminded us that we can raise money to help those in need while laughing with

friends and dancing the night away to fantastic music.

Beyond the numbers, these unique events deepened the connections in the communities that we serve that make our work possible. We met new faces, rekindled relationships with longtime supporters, and saw businesses, families, and individuals come together in ways that inspired us all.

We are overwhelmingly grateful to you for being part of the ongoing journey of Circle of Care. Together, we continue to bring help, healing, and hope to children and families in crisis across the state. As we look ahead to next year, we’re excited to host events that create more opportunities to partner together to impact communities large and small. We’re so grateful to have you by our side—here’s to a future of continued partnership.

IN 2024, OUR SPECIAL
EVENTS RAISED

\$119K

THANK YOU TO EVERYONE
WHO ATTENDED AN EVENT,
MADE A DONATION, OR
SIGNED UP TO BE A
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Save *the* Date

2025 FUNDRAISING EVENTS



MAY 1

Crescendo
new in 2025

Oklahoma City



AUG 25

Arrowhead Golf
Tournament

Tulsa



SEPT 13

Adult Prom

Woodward



CIRCLE OF CARE

REACHING HURTING KIDS



Research shows that 1 in 3 kids will experience at least one potentially traumatic event during their childhood. Circle of Care staff understand this statistic well and provide regular support to foster and adoptive parents in Oklahoma as their families welcome children with trauma into their homes. This year, with funding from a Petree Grant from the Oklahoma Methodist Foundation, Circle of Care began providing free, specialized training for its church partners to help them begin the process of providing trauma-informed care within their existing children's and youth programs. The training, called, Reach Hurting Kids, uses an engaging, evidence-based curriculum comprised of two 2-hour modules: (1) *How Trauma Affects the Kids We Love and What to Do About It*, and (2) *Discipline: Obstacle or Opportunity?*

The modules can be presented as a half-day training or broken into

1- or 2-hour blocks over multiple weeks. The Reach Hurting Kids Workshop was developed by Robert Crosby, Ph.D., a research psychologist with over 25 years of children's ministry experience, Lori Crosby, MFT, RPT-S, a registered play therapist who specializes in treating childhood trauma, developmental psychologist Erin Smith, Ph.D., instructional design expert Torria Davis, Ph.D., and Pastor Kayla Smith. Churches who participate in the first two modules of the training with Circle of Care can receive a discount on a lifetime license for the entire training package from the Reach Hurting Kids Institute.

Circle of Care Vice President of Development, Shannon Davis, said, "It is core to our mission of providing help, healing, and hope to be able to equip our church partners around the state with this valuable resource. We see the effects of trauma on children and

youth every day in our work, and cannot think of a better community of people than the local church to wrap around these children with trauma-informed care. Our hope is that by providing this free resource, we can equip our churches with practical tools for better serving children and families from hard places." Rev. Jim Perkin, Nichols Hills United Methodist Church, the first church to host a Reach Hurting Kids training, stated, "Our church is so excited to be partnering with Circle of Care in this important work. We loved hosting the Reach Hurting Kids training in our fall schedule of classes this year and look forward to hosting again in early 2025."

If your church would like more information or would like to schedule this training for your volunteers and/or community, please contact Shannon Davis at shannon.davis@circleofcare.org or 405-219-9327.

HELP US FINISH STRONG & GO...



**ABOVE &
BEYOND**

Your year-end gift enables Circle of Care to maintain our positive momentum from this year and launch positive outcomes for our clients into 2025.

Scan the code or visit circleofcare.org/donate/ to give today!!

**Will you
join us in bringing
help, healing, & hope
to many children & families
across the state of OK in 2025?**



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HONORS & MEMORIALS WINTER 2024

Circle of Care sincerely appreciates the following, who support this ministry through the Honors & Memorials program.

IN MEMORY OF

Gladys Rena Nutting
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Donald Batson
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Clare & Myrtle Williams, my parents
The Bishop Trust

IN HONOR OF

Shannon Davis
OKC Nichols Hills United Methodist

Trudy Howard
Jerry W. Albin

Dortha Crews Woods
James Consedine

Stephanie Peña
Abigail Peña

We regret any errors or omissions. Help us correct our records by writing Circle of Care, 1501 NW 24th Street, Suite 214, Oklahoma City, OK 73106, or by calling us at (405) 530-2078.

GIVING IN HONOR & MEMORY

To set up your gift, please contact Kyla Powers at kyla.powers@circleofcare.org, or send a check with the remittance envelope included in your Lifeline.





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Help, Healing, and Hope since 1917

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