



**ARMS WIDE**

PRESERVING & FULFILLING FAMILIES

2022

# Impact Report





PRESERVING & FULFILLING FAMILIES

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# A Letter From The President and CEO

Dear Arms Wide family and friends,

If you ask five friends what “family” means to them, you will get five different answers. That’s because the word “family” means something different to everyone. We might think of our families as our safety net, our sense of belonging, our identity, or our unconditional love. Through our foster care, foster care adoption, kinship care and permanency support programming, Arms Wide has had the honor of guiding people in fulfilling their own definition of “family”. We recognize that every family’s story is unique, sometimes unpredictable, and always life-changing. And wherever their paths lead, Arms Wide is there to guide, support, celebrate and make a positive impact on the whole family.

Over the past few years, the Arms Wide team has watched the child welfare landscape shift at national and state levels to focus on preserving families. I am delighted to share that as a result of this shift, we have decided to refine the organization’s name to better reflect our approach to working with families who come to us for support. **Moving forward, we will add the tagline “Preserving and Fulfilling Families” to our logo and remove “Adoption Services” from our name.** I encourage you to visit [ArmsWide.org](https://ArmsWide.org) and view our new video to learn more.

The refinement of our name positions us to highlight the fact that, while our commitment to fulfill families through adoption remains the same, our focus has expanded to support and preserve families wherever they are in their journey. We recognize that adoption is just one of many paths to permanency for a child in foster care. As always, our priority is to ensure each child we serve has a safe, permanent family.

As we look toward the future as an organization, we remain committed to providing unparalleled, personalized support for our full range of programs for children in foster care. This includes foster care, foster care adoption, kinship care, and permanency support services for families who have adopted or received permanent guardianship of children who were in foster care. We will continue to excel at meeting each child wherever they are in their journey. As always, our goal is to match and join more children with permanent families, which has been a cornerstone of our programming for 46 years.

We recognize that our ability to continue this life-changing work is possible because of your support. Thank you for being part of the Arms Wide community and seeing us through this important change for the organization. I hope you will continue to be part of the Arms Wide story as we persist in our work of preserving and fulfilling families.

With gratitude,



DeJuana S. Jernigan, MSW



# Celebrating Families Fulfilled



*January 2022*



*January 2022*



*April 2022*



*May 2022*



*June 2022*



*July 2022*



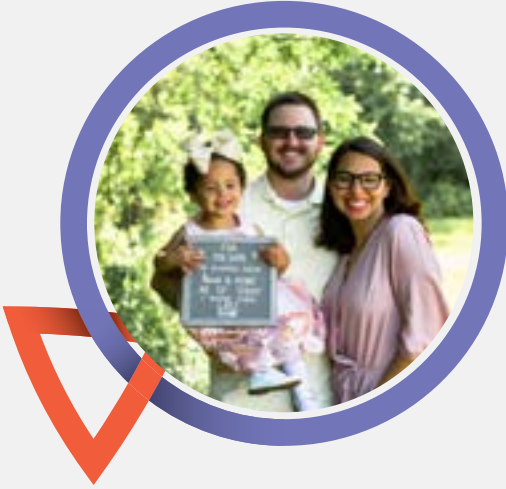
*August 2022*



*September 2022*

# The Fontenot Family

## Keeping Children at the Center



In this Family Spotlight, Audrey and Nicholas Fontenot share their journey of adoption through foster care and their approach of keeping children at the center. Adoption had always been on their hearts when they thought about growing their family. Both Audrey and Nicholas were adopted as children, and they knew they wanted to be there for a child in need of a safe, nurturing permanent family. When the timing was right, they began their journey of adopting through foster care.

First, they fostered two children who were ultimately reunited with family members. Then, 7-day-old Ryleigh came into their lives. Immediately, Audrey and Nicholas loved her and made her part of their family, even though they weren't sure what her path to permanency would be.

Audrey shared that being a foster parent taught her a lot about parenting. Above all, patience! Foster care requires patience with the child welfare system, because there are a lot of rules and home visits, but it is all for the sake of the child's safety. "Also, patience with the kids," Audrey said.

*"You don't know what the kids have been through - you just try to do everything you can to help the kids."*

Keeping the children at the center of their purpose kept the Fontenots going. "We wanted to adopt all [the kids we fostered]—but the main thing is what's best for the kids," Audrey said. And what's best for the children could mean reunification with their biological family, going to a relative's care, or adoption by the foster family. In Ryleigh's case, adoption was the best path forward. Audrey and Nicholas finalized Ryleigh's adoption on May 26 over Zoom. Afterwards, they had a celebration with close friends and family—and of course, cake and confetti!

What is life like now that they have finalized? "It feels mostly the same," Audrey shared, "Except no paperwork—and we don't have to ask permission to go on vacation." One of Ryleigh's favorite activities is helping with yard work, especially helping to mow the grass by taking a ride on the riding lawnmower! They also enjoy swimming, going to museums, and watching movies as a family.

The Fontenots spent over two years working with the foster care system, and they have great advice for future foster and adoptive parents. It's important to understand the process. "Do your research, and make sure you look at everything you sign," Audrey advised.

*"And remember—you aren't doing it for you, but for the kids."*

Patience is key, because the path of foster care adoption is not always straightforward. "It's hard in the beginning - and it may get ugly before it gets pretty," Audrey said. "Be patient, it takes time. It's all worth it in the end."

If you are interested in learning how you can become a foster or adoptive parent, please call 713-681-6991 for more information.

# 2022 Program Outcomes



## Foster Care Adoption

18,533

Days of care provided for 106 children



16

16 children adopted by their foster parents



## Kinship Care

16

16 families supported through kinship care



## Adoption

32

Finalized adoptions



21

21 children matched with permanent families

100%

Maintained superior success rating in which 100% of matches became legal finalizations

## About the Children

4

Largest sibling group: 4 siblings

1

Age of youngest child: 1 year

15

Age of oldest child: 15 years



### Permanency Support

820

Services to 820 children



7,740

7,740 hours of case management services



100%

Support for 100% of children to remain with their adoptive parents

1,838

1,838 days of respite

1,982

1,982 hours of therapy

831

831 days in residential treatment centers



# 2022

## Revenue & Expenses



### Revenue

61%	Government Service Fees	\$2,671,520
25%	Contributions	1,121,543
14%	Foundation Grants	642,760
0%	Investment Income	(122,034)
<b>Total Support and Revenue</b>		<b>\$4,313,789</b>



### Expenses

43%	Post Adoption / Post Permanency	\$1,612,827
32%	Foster Care	1,193,696
16%	Adoption	597,092
9%	Management and General Costs	349,840
<b>Total Expenses</b>		<b>\$3,753,455</b>



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“And remember — you aren’t doing it for you, but for the kids.”

*—Audrey Fontenot, Arms Wide Adoptive Mom  
Finalized May 2022*

