



**ARMS WIDE**

PRESERVING & FULFILLING FAMILIES

**2023**

# Impact Report





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# A Letter From The President and CEO

Dear Arms Wide family and friends,

In the ever-evolving landscape of child welfare in Texas, Arms Wide has remained steadfast in its commitment to adaptability and excellence in service delivery. Arms Wide's accomplishments in 2023 were a testament to our collective resilience, commitment, and unwavering dedication to our mission.

Recognizing the need for innovative approaches to address the complex needs of children and families, Arms Wide continues to develop and implement service offerings to meet the evolving needs of the children and families we serve. **In 2023, we expanded services to include therapeutic foster care, continued to develop our kinship care and permanency support programming, and refined our name identity to reflect the scope of our services more accurately.** As President and CEO, I am continually inspired by the dedication, passion, and ingenuity of our team members, whose collective efforts drive our mission forward year after year.

**At Arms Wide, we are committed to creating and sustaining connections** – whether that be through introducing children to nurturing foster parents and keeping siblings together as they experience foster care or through reuniting children with their biological family, and maintaining and preserving established connections through permanency support services. We know that within these connections, children feel safe, loved, nurtured and empowered to grow into the best versions of themselves.

As we plan the changes to be made in response to shifting structures of the Texas foster care system, it is vital that we keep these connections in sharp focus. The powerful stories of connection that we hear from our families, one of which you can read about in this report, are only made possible by your support. **This report only shows the tip of the iceberg of the connections that we have the privilege to help build, strengthen and maintain.**

With a steadfast dedication to our mission and values, we remain poised to meet the challenges and opportunities that lie ahead, continuing to make a meaningful difference in the lives of those we serve. We hope you continue to stay connected with Arms Wide throughout this year to see the impact of your continued support. I invite you to follow us on social media, subscribe to our newsletter and read our blog at [armswide.org](https://armswide.org) to witness the families that we are preserving and fulfilling, together.

**Thank you for your continued support and partnership in our journey towards creating a path for all children to be loved within a family and all families to feel supported.**

With gratitude,



DeJuana S. Jernigan, MSW, LCPAA



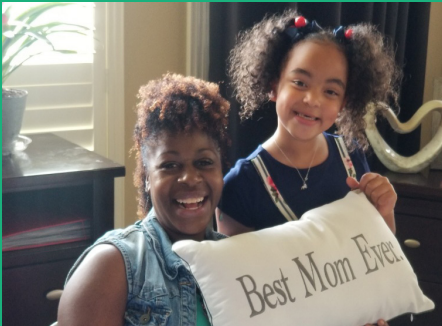
# Celebrating Families Fulfilled



*March 2023*



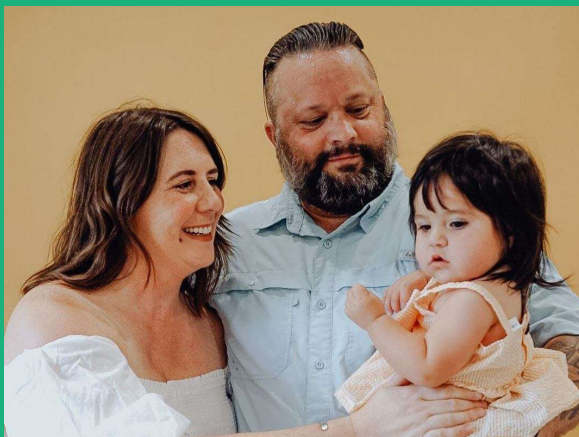
*March 2023*



*May 2023*



*November 2023*



*November 2023*

# The Shalack Family

## LONG JOURNEY TO FAMILY



Tiffinie and Jonah Shalack wanted to adopt for nearly 20 years but never felt ready for it. The decision to become foster parents is often accompanied by uncertainty about being prepared. Once they came to terms with this, they took action to start the process of becoming foster parents. They learned of Arms Wide by happenstance and contacted our Corpus Christi office to begin the training process.

For the Shalacks, fostering was challenging yet rewarding. Tiffinie and Jonah made the courageous choice to care for children who were in need of “emergency” foster care. This meant that they had to be prepared at any moment to accept a child into their family. “We would take in a kid at 10 p.m. with very little notice and no information on them, except maybe their age,” Jonah says.

*“As stressful as it is for the parents, it’s a scary situation for the child, so you want to try to make everything as comfortable and calm for them as possible.”*

They were dedicated throughout the entire fostering process, driving an hour and a half into Corpus Christi for trainings, meetings, and family visitations. As federal employees, they both received a full three months of paid leave to be foster parents, which they used to its full extent. They also credit the team at Arms Wide for their success in this great responsibility. “Arms Wide understood how hard it was when the children would leave us, so they would check in on us regularly and offer their support,” Tiffinie said.

Although they welcomed multiple children into their home, it was the very first one that changed their lives. Tiffinie and Jonah welcomed Adelynn in August 2022. Little did they know they would be a forever family just over a year later.

“We know the goal of fostering is reunification but something about her was different,” they said. “The moment she was placed with us, we knew we wanted to adopt her. We were completely smitten.” They began the process of adoption as soon as Adelynn became legally available to adopt, and with the help of Arms Wide, celebrated the fulfilling of their family on National Adoption Day on November 18, 2023.

“Adoption day was so overwhelming; it felt like getting married,” said Jonah. “You kind of go through the motions, and you’re in shock of what’s happening in the moment. By the evening you can finally process what happened.”

“The next day, I said something about ‘our daughter,’” Tiffinie continued. “Not foster daughter. It felt so good to finally breathe, knowing there’s no chance she can be taken away from us anymore.”

*“The end result far outweighs any of the stress and uncertainty of fostering and adopting. You don’t realize how much love you can have for a kid until you have one.”*

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

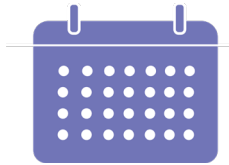
# 2023 Program Outcomes



## Foster Care

16,604

Days of foster  
care provided



## Foster Care Adoption

33

Finalized adoptions



80

Children supported in  
foster care



11

11 children matched  
with permanent  
families



## Kinship Care

3

Largest sibling  
group:  
3 siblings

14

Age of  
youngest child:  
14 months

17

Age of  
oldest child:  
17 years

13

13 families supported  
through kinship care



## Permanency Support

770

Services to 770 children



6,963

6,963 hours of case management services



100%

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

1,682

1,682 days of respite provided for parents

1,436

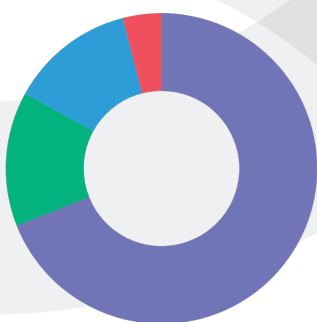
1,436 hours of therapy

686

686 days of residential treatment care

2023

# Revenue & Expenses



69%	Government Service Fees	\$3,005,189
14%	Contributions	635,862
13%	Foundation Grants	570,447
4%	Investment Income	165,707

<b>Total Support and Revenue</b>	<b>\$4,377,205</b>
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43%	Post Adoption / Post Permanency	\$1,698,754
32%	Foster Care	1,350,950
16%	Foster Care Adoption	492,625
9%	Management and General Costs	393,060

<b>Total Expenses</b>	<b>\$3,935,389</b>
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## Our heartfelt thanks to the following donors who made gifts between January 1 and December 31, 2023:

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*—Debbie Muery  
Arms Wide Foster & Adoptive Mom*

