



ANNUAL REPORT
2023

WE
STRIVE
FOR
A
SPIRIT
OF
HUMILITY





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In loving memory of past Brigid's Path
board member, Shelly Heller

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We strive for a spirit of humility.

In 2014, then-foster mother Jill Kingston had three babies born substance-exposed enter her care in various stages of withdrawal. She quickly learned there was little-to-no training available for foster parents that specifically addressed the challenges she was seeing, both in caring for the babies and trying to relate to their biological parents.

She believed there had to be a better way to care for families than turning them over to the foster care system and hoping for the best.

Since 2014, Jill and countless others have joined together to build that better way. While all of the Brigid's Path values (see the back cover of this report for the full list) are driving forces in our work, living our "We strive for a spirit of humility" value continues to be especially critical for building something entirely new.

In these pages, you'll discover why we are at a pivotal time for Brigid's Path. You'll learn how we work with grace and perseverance, do our best to listen to a variety of ideas, and remain open to change.

We don't have all the answers. We don't have all the gifts and skills. But we have faith that when we show up with a willingness to listen and learn alongside each other, building a better way for babies and families is possible – and it's happening.

Work with grace and perseverance.

Be constantly learning and trying to improve. No one has all the answers.

Recognize everyone has different gifts and that all gifts are needed to fulfill our mission.

Listen to diverse ideas. Be open to change.

Openly give and receive constructive feedback.

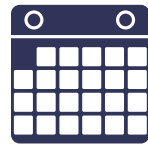


2023 INFANT CARE OUTCOMES



55 babies

Received care at Brigid's Path in 2023; we served 57 babies in 2022



52 days

Average length of baby stay; an 18% increase from 2022, providing more time for families to identify and make their next steps



12 days old

Average age at admission, a 2.5 day decrease from 2022



65% of babies

would have immediately gone into foster care from the birth hospital if Brigid's Path wasn't an option



Babies went home with

50% Mom
22% Kinship
2% Higher Level of Care
2% Safe Families
4% Both Parents
20% Foster Care



156 Caregivers 101 Children

Number of lives of babies and kin impacted in 2023



9

Ohio counties served



242

Total number of babies cared for from opening in December 2017 through December 2023

Building a better way of caring for babies

Traditionally, babies who begin to show symptoms of withdrawal from prenatal substance exposure after birth are sent to a neonatal intensive care unit (NICU) for monitoring. Children's Services is called, a case opened, and more times than not, that baby will enter the foster care system.

Building a better way of caring for babies and families starts at birth. When a baby is medically stable, which babies with NAS often are, she/he can be transferred to Brigid's Path before beginning medication to ease their symptoms.

At Brigid's Path, we help newborn babies be as comfortable as possible as they go through withdrawal from prenatal substance exposure. We focus on providing a home-like, comfortable environment. We provide the specialized care babies with NAS need to thrive: small and frequent feedings, low stimulation, constant rocking and cuddling, immediate diaper changes, and meeting every physical need as quickly as possible.

We use medication when necessary, but we've found that babies in our care need less medication than babies in traditional care settings because of the specialized, immediate care we are able to provide.



WHO IS CARING FOR BABIES AT BRIGID'S PATH?

At every hour of every day, our team of trained nurses and patient care assistants is taking care of the babies we serve. They are assisted with cuddling, rocking and soothing by trained, dedicated volunteers. Neonatal nurse practitioners and Pediatric neonatologists from Dayton Children's oversee the care of each of our babies.

WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO CARE FOR BABIES WITH A SPIRIT OF HUMILITY?

Part of living with a spirit of humility is being open to change and having a willingness to learn and adjust as we go. In caring for the babies we serve, we continue to implement new opportunities for child development and sensory care. In 2023 we introduced additional tools for age-appropriate music, as well as new methods of visual and tactile stimulation to meet the wide variety of development needs our babies have during a 90-day stay with us. After all, a two-day-old baby has very different needs than a nearly 3-month-old!

WHY DO STAFF CHOOSE TO WORK AT BRIGID'S PATH?

"I have a younger sister who battles substance use disorder and alcoholism. Our family's journey has been long and rocky, and because of my personal experience, I understand a lot of what the mothers of our babies are going through and their struggles. We are here to get the baby through withdrawal and hopefully guide mom into treatment by showing we care and are here to help. We are hopeful!"

"I love giving back to our community while being able to use my nursing skills with babies and mothers. I love seeing the outcome for the families we've served, and I love that I get to snuggle babies for a job!"

"I've always known I was put here to help serve others. I can say that I've found my true calling. Brigid's Path brings me an abundance of joy and so much fulfillment contributing to something much bigger than me."

Neonatal Abstinence Syndrome (NAS) describes the group of conditions faced by newborn babies born exposed to an addictive substance like medication, opioids or other legal and illegal substances. Prenatal exposure can cause babies to experience withdrawal upon birth, and symptoms of NAS include: sleep problems, irritability, tremors, trembling, seizures, high-pitched crying, diarrhea, vomiting, low birth weight, stuffy nose, feeding difficulties, dehydration, sneezing, sweating and breathing problems.

2023 FAMILY ADVOCACY OUTCOMES



5 events for families to support each other and celebrate their continued success! Nearly 300 family members attended!



25 prenatal mothers engaged
When we connect earlier in a pregnancy, we have more time to help mom prepare for birth and be her own advocate.



15 court hearings attended, providing support to mothers and families



In 2023, we hosted **nearly two dozen classes** for our families.

Our families logged more than **231.5 hours** of education in 2023. That's more than **9.5 days** of education!



54% of our babies had moms who roomed in during the stay

2% had both parents who roomed in during their stay

2% had dads who roomed in during their stay



1 birth attended

We show up for families however they need us. In 2023, we experienced a first when a prenatal mother asked a family advocate to support her during birth!

Building a better way of caring for families

We believe every woman can be a great mother. And, the women we accompany often lack safe and steady housing, transportation and other basic human needs. Sometimes mothers are ready to seek treatment for substance use disorder; sometimes not.

Often, mothers come to us having experienced cycles of trauma and hopelessness. Until they connect with Brigid's Path, they've never had a champion or been able to see that realizing their own potential is possible. It's nearly impossible to achieve what you cannot see as an option for your own life.

We are family-centered. We create space for mothers, fathers and babies to have a safe, home-like place to establish their bond and begin their family life together. We encourage parents to room with, care for and bond with their babies as much as possible.

WHO IS CARING FOR FAMILIES AT BRIGID'S PATH?

Our team of two full-time Family Advocates accompany mothers in the hard and holy work of walking through Children's Services cases, finding housing, coordinating care,

securing transportation and more. They are supported by our nursing and administrative staff.

WHAT DID WE LEARN ABOUT CARING FOR FAMILIES IN 2023?

We've seen that it is deeply beneficial for our families when we give them as many opportunities as possible to be in community with each other. They need – and want! – the support from each other and to provide support for one another.

In 2023, we began hosting quarterly events for families who have "graduated" from Brigid's Path. Those same families, along with the families who currently have babies at Brigid's Path, are invited to ongoing classes for parenting, art, wellness and a variety of other topics.

We have weekly family meetings for all parents with a baby currently in our nurseries to talk about how things are going, build a sense of community and address any concerns. Our nurseries are set up for community living, and these meetings give us an opportunity to dialogue about expectations and experiences. We also host weekly sober support meetings for current and past Brigid's Path mothers.

In addition, we continue to work with community partners and support outreach events, including the 2023 Overdose Awareness event at the Levitt Pavilion.

WHY DO FAMILY ADVOCACY STAFF CHOOSE TO WORK AT BRIGID'S PATH?

"Being able to love other people and let them know that they matter and are loved exactly the way they are is so important to me. I love that I am able to do that through the work I do!"

"Our work here matters in so many ways, but perhaps especially because we don't put the mothers we serve in a box. Yes, we want to help them move forward. But I think the most important part of our work is the way we come alongside mom wherever she is in her recovery journey and love her. Helping our mothers feel known, seen and loved, rather than trying to force them into a specific way of doing things, makes all the difference."



In August 2023, we hosted our first family reunion, bringing together many of the families we've served in our six years of operation. To see so many babies and toddlers thriving because of the work we've done together was incredible!

Our nursing team works closely with mothers, fathers and families to support them in caring for their babies, including coaching on techniques for feeding, principles of safe sleep, ways to calm a fussy baby, changing diapers and more.

To help maintain a caring and home-like environment, each family at Brigid's Path is expected to adhere to guidelines for conduct. This includes following our visitor and curfew policies that help families stay focused on healing and caring for their babies.

We engage families with:

- Quarterly family gatherings
- Ongoing classes for parenting, art, wellness and a variety of other topics
- Weekly family meetings
- Weekly sobriety support
- Outreach events

All gifts are needed to fulfill our mission.



STAFF SPOTLIGHT

TERRI STUCKY has been blessing Brigid's Path since 2016 in a variety of roles, including front desk volunteer, cuddler, donation sorter, office manager and volunteer coordinator. She's helped plan our signature and family events, feed staff and families and care for our entire Brigid's Path family in more ways than we can ever count.

In every task, Terri embodies a spirit of humility. She's quick to admit opportunities to learn and works with a fierce passion for our families and staff. Terri is nearly always the first to dive into a new project, and she is a beautiful balance of detail-oriented, focused, playful and passionate.

Fun facts to know about Terri:

- She and her husband Michael have four children
- Her favorite place to travel is Water Island in the U.S. Virgin Islands
- Her fondest Brigid's Path memory is getting to hold the very first baby
- She lived in the Cleveland area until 12 years ago
- When she was a child, she wanted to be an opera singer
- Previous jobs include being a travel agent, a youth minister and an administrative assistant

BOARD MEMBER SPOTLIGHTS



BOB HAUSMANN has been a tremendous gift to Brigid's Path as an early supporter and long-time board member. His own deep spirit of humility and drive to serve continues to bless us.

"In 2014, I was asked to share some thoughts on a potential building for Brigid's Path. I knew nothing about the organization's mission, but I was happy to share my time and talent to help someone in need.

My "yes" that day changed my life. It was very apparent God was calling Jill to do something that had never been done. She needed a LOT of help, and the more she shared her dream, the more I wanted to be part of it.

With my professional background, I was able to engage with architects, contractors, code officials, etc., to create the facility for Brigid's Path. At the same time, Jill was engaging attorneys, donors, churches and more. Our enthusiasm was contagious!

God brought the right people at the right times, including the first day of demolition. So many volunteers

had shown up that the dumpster was filled to capacity in no time. Without additional space to place debris, there was little left for volunteers to do.

As we were realizing our dilemma, a woman stopped by; she wasn't sure why, but she felt called to stop. We talked, and someone she had met the day before was the contact we needed to deliver additional dumpsters and keep the project moving that day.

From day one, we've been in unchartered water. We often look back and say we're glad we didn't know what we didn't know; we've been climbing a mountain with valleys all along the way. We continue to be humbled by everyone who has helped in our journey and the way God has brought together so many people's simple "yes" to create something new."



JOHN GARRITY joined the Brigid's Path board in 2020 and continues to lead us with strategic counsel, quiet humility and purposeful grace. We are grateful for the countless ways he makes our work possible.

"When I first met Jill, I saw firsthand how Brigid's Path was willed into existence out of a passion to serve and provide a better way for families.

The capacity for Jill – and through her leadership, the Brigid's Path team – to question, to explore and learn, and to balance humility with not taking no for an answer, has allowed the organization to grow and thrive.

"We don't know, but we know how to find out" was a common theme for Brigid's Path in its early days, and as we continue to serve babies and families six-plus years later, that same approach remains. "That's never been done before" is a reason to get curious and ask more questions to pursue the desired outcome, rather than a barrier that stops progress.

Through an incredible network of staff, volunteers and engaged community partners, the Brigid's Path team has rallied around an identified, unmet need and works with fierce passion to build a solution for Ohio's families.

We've made a lot of progress, and there is still much work to do. With hearts open to change, grace and perseverance, we'll keep building a better future together. "

VOLUNTEER SPOTLIGHT



LINDA JANES joined our Brigid's Path family as a volunteer in spring 2022. She's deeply compassionate and serves our families with abundant grace.

WHAT IS A GIFT YOU HAVE THAT YOU MAY BE TOO HUMBLE ABOUT?

I'm probably too humble about my ability to care for other people. I was a caregiver for my husband and my father for 20 years, so I have a keen ability to anticipate and act on what is needed in various situations.

WHAT IS A WAY YOU TRY TO EMULATE HUMILITY IN YOUR LIFE?

Volunteering at Brigid's Path has been so humbling because it opened up a whole world to me that I wasn't familiar with – and how blessed I have been! Comforting the babies is so rewarding. I really love most everything about volunteering here. I feel that the world would be so much better off if everyone worked together and followed God's word, and that's what we're doing here.

Fun facts to know about Linda:

YOUR FAVORITE SEASON AND WHY?

Summer! I love being outside, enjoying fresh air and sunshine!

SOMETHING YOU ENJOY EATING?

I think my favorite food is ice cream. Or pizza! I LOVE food!

SOMEWHERE YOU LOVE TO TRAVEL?

I had the chance to go out west and travel the big loop, hopping the National Parks for lots of hiking and sightseeing. Wow! The beauty was unbelievable!

Scan the QR code to watch Mariah and Glo's story.

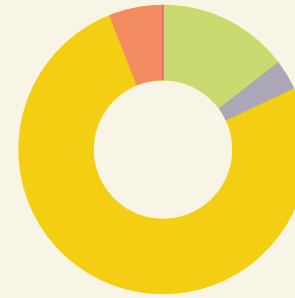


Working with grace and perseverance

THE WOMEN AND FAMILIES

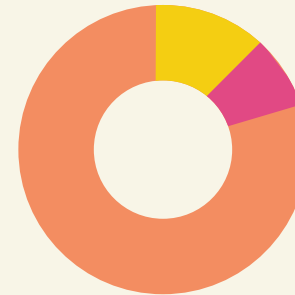
we accompany are some of the fiercest, most determined people we have ever met. This video from our partners at Stand Together Foundation introduces you to one of those families: Mariah and Glo.

INCOME



Grants	\$2,754,971
Contributions	\$537,823
Donated Goods and Services	\$213,699
Fundraisers	\$118,253
Other Income	\$1,529
TOTAL INCOME	\$3,626,275

EXPENSES



Program	\$2,869,896
G&A	\$449,753
Development	\$287,314
TOTAL EXPENSES	\$3,606,963

Building a new way of caring for babies and families takes time and patience.

FOR THE FIRST SIX YEARS OF OUR WORK, we have relied heavily on donations, grants and state general revenue funds to cover our operating costs. Families do not pay out-of-pocket for the care they receive at Brigid's Path, keeping us accessible to every family.

As we work to build a new model of care, we're also building a sustainable reimbursement model for the medical services we provide. For more than eight years (even before we accepted our first baby!), we have worked alongside the Ohio Departments of Medicaid, Job & Family Services and Children & Youth to create a long-term funding structure. **We expect to begin to receive this funding in 2025 – a TREMENDOUS milestone for Brigid's Path!**

Community support has carried us to this point, and receiving reimbursement for the care we provide will finally create a sustainable, long-term model for Brigid's Path. Until that model is in place, though, we have a budget shortfall of \$800,000.

Since our humble beginning, we have operated with a spirit of hope and optimism, and we are confident that community support will help us bridge the gap into our next, sustainable chapter. In closing this gap, every financial gift matters deeply.

How will you help?

2023

COST PER BABY PER DAY:

\$1,480 (AT BRIGID'S PATH)

\$6,284 (HOSPITAL NICU)

OUR NORTH STAR:

Every baby deserves to grow up in a thriving family where they can achieve their God-given potential.

WE ARE CULTIVATING COMPASSION.

Every day, we work to create a new way of caring for babies and families. It's hard and holy work, made possible by living our values:

We are grounded in faith.

We are bold.

We strive for a spirit of humility.

We are good stewards.

We are family champions.

WAYS TO SUPPORT:

Make a financial contribution: brigidspath.org/donate

Join the Circle of Hope: brigidspath.org/circle-of-hope

Host an event or fundraiser: brigidspath.org/get-involved

Become a volunteer cuddler and helper: brigidspath.org/volunteer

Pray for our babies, families and work!



BRIGID'S PATH

3601 South Dixie Drive
Kettering, Ohio 45439

937-350-1785
info@BrigidsPath.org

www.BrigidsPath.org