

# 2022 Financial Report

# OUR IMPACT



## SHARPENING OUR FOCUS in 2022

Kids Belong is celebrating 10 years! What began as a conversation and a challenge to continue the conversation around foster care has grown into so much more. We've seen our reach and our impact grow as we've connected and supported foster and adoptive families throughout West Michigan.



Over the years we've grown into 2 closet locations, support groups, family nights, back to school events, birthday baskets, support teams, Christmas stockings, parent nights, and now housing for aged out foster youth.

Today we are more committed than ever to building a better foster care system in West Michigan. Our programming is organized around the idea that when we connect, support, and develop foster and adoptive families, we strengthen those families and help make better outcomes for foster kids.

## 2022 KEY NUMBERS

- 100 and 400. We provided backpacks and school supplies to 100 families and 400 kids at our Back To School Events
- 310 kids received Christmas Stockings
- 12 and 4. We hosted 12 large scale family events so that foster, adopt, and kinship families had the chance to meet, connect, and feel the support of their community. These events were hosted by 4 different churches throughout West Michigan.
- \$153,909.05. This is the current total raised so far for First Place, our new housing program for aged out foster youth
- 183. We served 183 different families through events and programming in 2022. That means we were able to bless and support around 800 different moms, dads, and kids connected to foster care.

## 2023 GOALS

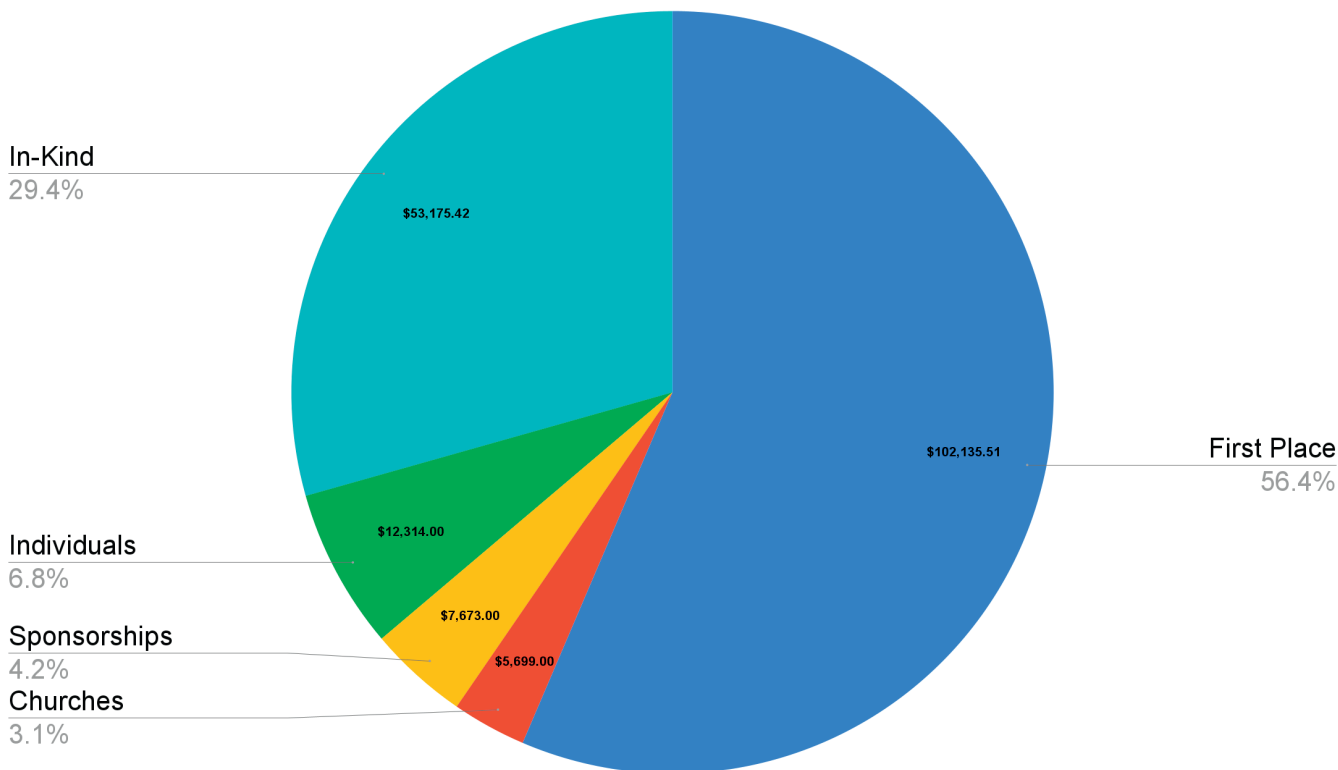
- We are seeing the addition of paid staff for the first time in 2023. Jeff Steele is now serving as Executive Director for Kids Belong. Executive Director Salary has already been donated by a sponsor church to cover the rest of 2023
- We will continue to invest more heavily in teens and foster youth. In addition to First Place, we will see greater investment in programming and services for teens and the families who foster teens.
- We will build the first of our First Place homes in 2023. Possibly more? Be sure to read the First Place update and info on page 4.
- We are setting a goal to reach \$30,000 in donations between business sponsorships, churches, and individual/family gifts for 2023 to support our families and kids.

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## 2022 Giving



2022 Giving: \$126,124.97 (Including First Place donations)



In-Kind donations continue to drive most of our programming. Closet donations of new and gently used items remains the foundation for much of the support that we are able to provide. Our closets are not just places for shopping, but they are gathering places for support groups and events. Our Family Fun Nights throughout the year are usually connected to a closet location so that families can shop and pick up diapers while they are also spending time with other families.

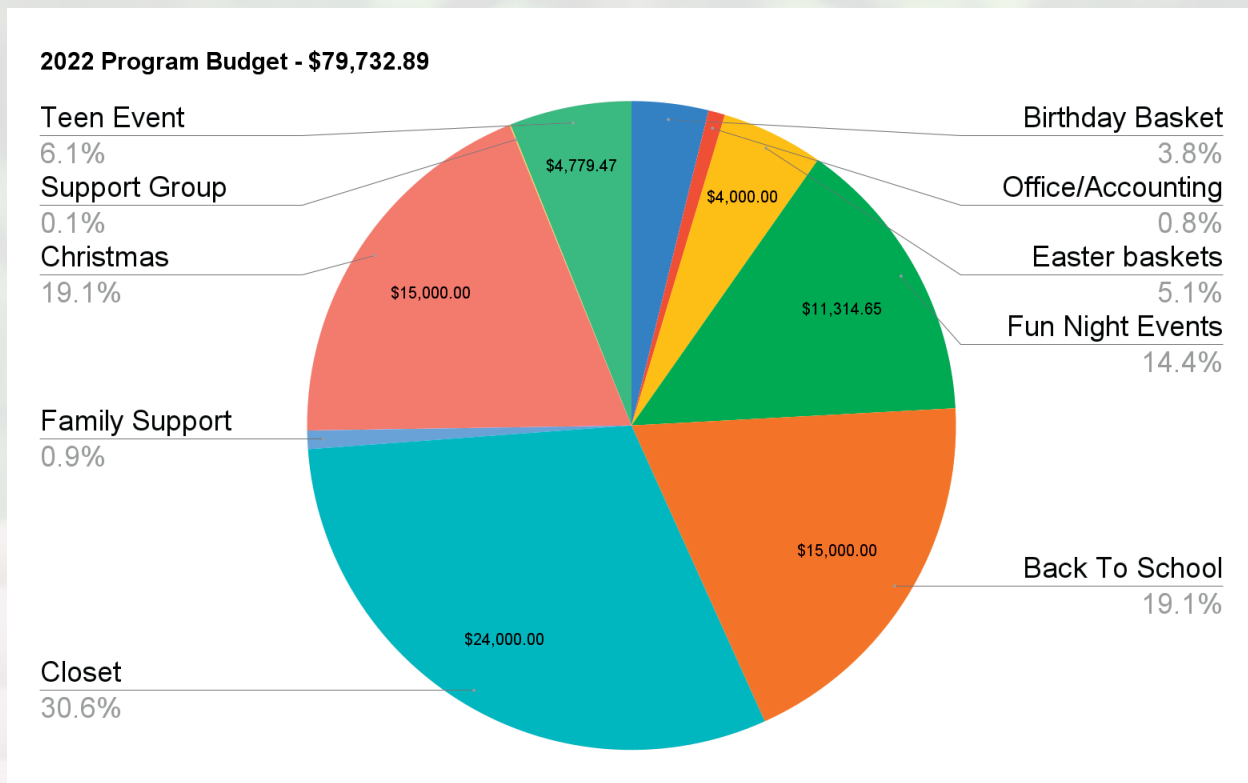


Christmas stockings were an extremely popular way to support again this year, with over 300 stockings provided to area foster/adopt kids. These stockings were almost entirely provided by donation, with very little need for cash spending.

Sponsorships from local businesses and churches also helped keep events running, providing many opportunities for supporting our local foster care community.

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## 2022 Spending



The spending above is the full program expense including cash and in-kind donations. Back To School, Closet, and Christmas Stockings are our largest three programs, and each relies heavily on in-kind donations. (The chart does not cover our first place fundraising or spending as that is a special project). Our 4th largest program in 2022 was Family Nights, which uses almost no in-kind donation. The majority of the sponsorships and general donations support these community building events.



We cannot overstate the importance of hosting these events. The more foster/adopt families can spend time together, the more they build community with one another. The more parents are surrounded by community and more supported they feel, the better they can weather the storms that come with foster care and adoption and the longer they can stay a part of it.

This in turn makes better outcomes for the kids in their care, lower rates of placement disruption, and lowers the burden on the system in general.

When you give you are not just buying a backpack or providing a meal, you are helping to build better, stronger families and better outcomes for foster kids.

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## First Place

First Place, by Kids Belong, is our new initiative to help youth achieve stable housing in Muskegon. Most kids who age out of foster care at age 18 have no credit and no rental history, which means their prospects for getting an apartment are very slim. Without a stable place to live, youth are left to try to find whatever accommodations they can, which could mean with friends on couches, staying in unhealthy living situations, or in homeless shelters. In the US, 1 in 5 youth who age out of foster care become immediately homeless.

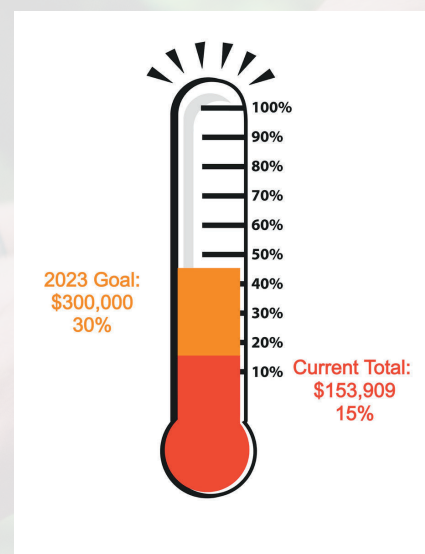
## FUNDRAISING PROGRESS

To date, Kids Belong has raised over \$153,000 of the estimated 1 million needed to bring this full plan to completion.

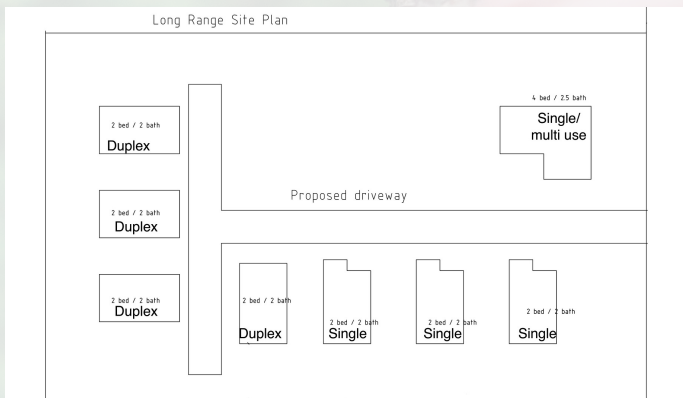
The great news is that we can build in stages, and we are currently at a place where we can begin construction! We are still jumping through a few hoops the city has placed in our way, and hoping to break ground in the spring of 2023.

## 2023 GOALS

We will build at least 1 duplex in 2023. If we can raise another \$300,000, we will build 2 more duplexes for a total of 6 housing units available for aged out youth at the end of the year!



## The Plan



A very positive thing has come out of the delay from the city, and that is a change to Muskegon's zoning ordinance. Before October 2022, a residence with 1 bedroom was required to be 850 sq ft minimum. For our purposes, that meant building 2 bedroom units at 950 sq ft in order to maximize our investment, but requiring all youth to have a roommate.

In October the city passed an amendment lowering the minimum for 1 bedroom to 550 sq ft. We will still build some of our original 2 bedroom units, but we can now also build duplexes in almost the same size building. We believe the option of a 1 bedroom unit or a 2 bedroom unit will help us better meet the needs of youth's varying circumstances.