



R i c h m o n d

Care • Counseling • Adoption

Annual Report  
2021 - 2022



Dear Friends,

Last year, this letter opened by wondering if 2020 would be the most difficult year in JFS' history. But, rising to meet once-in-a-lifetime challenges is what JFS does. JFS was built for this. Every day we are responding to today's needs and strategizing for the future with the help of partners and friends like you.

Today's needs are numerous and diverse. We began our sixth resettlement effort helping families from Ukraine start new lives in Richmond. After a COVID hiatus, we started offering Personal Care Aide (PCA) training classes again in both the East and West Ends. The Partnership for Behavioral Health in the East End now has a dedicated full-time counselor serving three neighborhoods: Fairfield, Mosby, and Creighton Courts. We started providing neuropsychological evaluations for seniors - an important step to ensure older adults live safe, healthy lives.

While we've known for some time that our nation's population is aging rapidly, the pandemic brought into sharp focus the need to strategize for the future to ensure our healthcare system can serve the ballooning number of seniors. We've worked alongside Beth Shalom Senior Living to establish a new organization: an in-home hospice agency rooted in Jewish values and serving all.

**Partners and friends like you make all of this possible.**

Our PCA training program might still be on hiatus, but thanks to an anonymous donor who believed in the importance of JFS offering accessible PCA training, we trained new Care Aides using a hybrid curriculum of online learning and hands-on training. East End community leaders and organizations partnered with JFS to support and expand counseling services for children and their families in East End public housing communities. Local foundations, Richmond Memorial Health Foundation and the Bob and Anna Lou Schaberg Foundation have invited JFS to be a partner, along with Family Lifeline and others, in a collaboration designed to value In-Home Care Aides and the work they do through a series of meaningful supports for them, including wage increases.

Evidence of your impact fills the following pages. You helped families grow and college students access compassionate, timely therapy. You ensured seniors got the care and support they need, no matter how far away their families live. You found loving homes for children in foster care and helped adults start a new career in healthcare. You empowered JFS to fulfill our mission: to *Transform Lives and Strengthen our Community*.

We are profoundly grateful.



**WENDY, ERIC, AND SANDY ACCEPTING THE NEIL NOVEMBER DISTINGUISHED COMMUNITY SERVICE AWARD AT THE JCFR ANNUAL MEETING**

## JFS Board of Directors

- Eric Shoenfeld President · Dr. Michael Mandel 1st Vice President · Michael Sievers 2nd Vice President
- Cindy Boswell Secretary · Martin Miller Treasurer · Sandy Sisisky Immediate Past President
- Dr. David Galpern · Ken Golden · Sara Griebel · Ryan Mitchell · John Myers
- Ashley Noell · Seon Rockwell · Cantor Dara Rosenblatt · Rosemary Seltzer · Cheri Yochelson

# 2021 - 2022 Impact and Demographics

THE ONLY LOCAL AGENCY approved by the Council on Accreditation to provide adult guardianship, adoption services, case management, home care and support for older adults, and counseling for adults and elders.



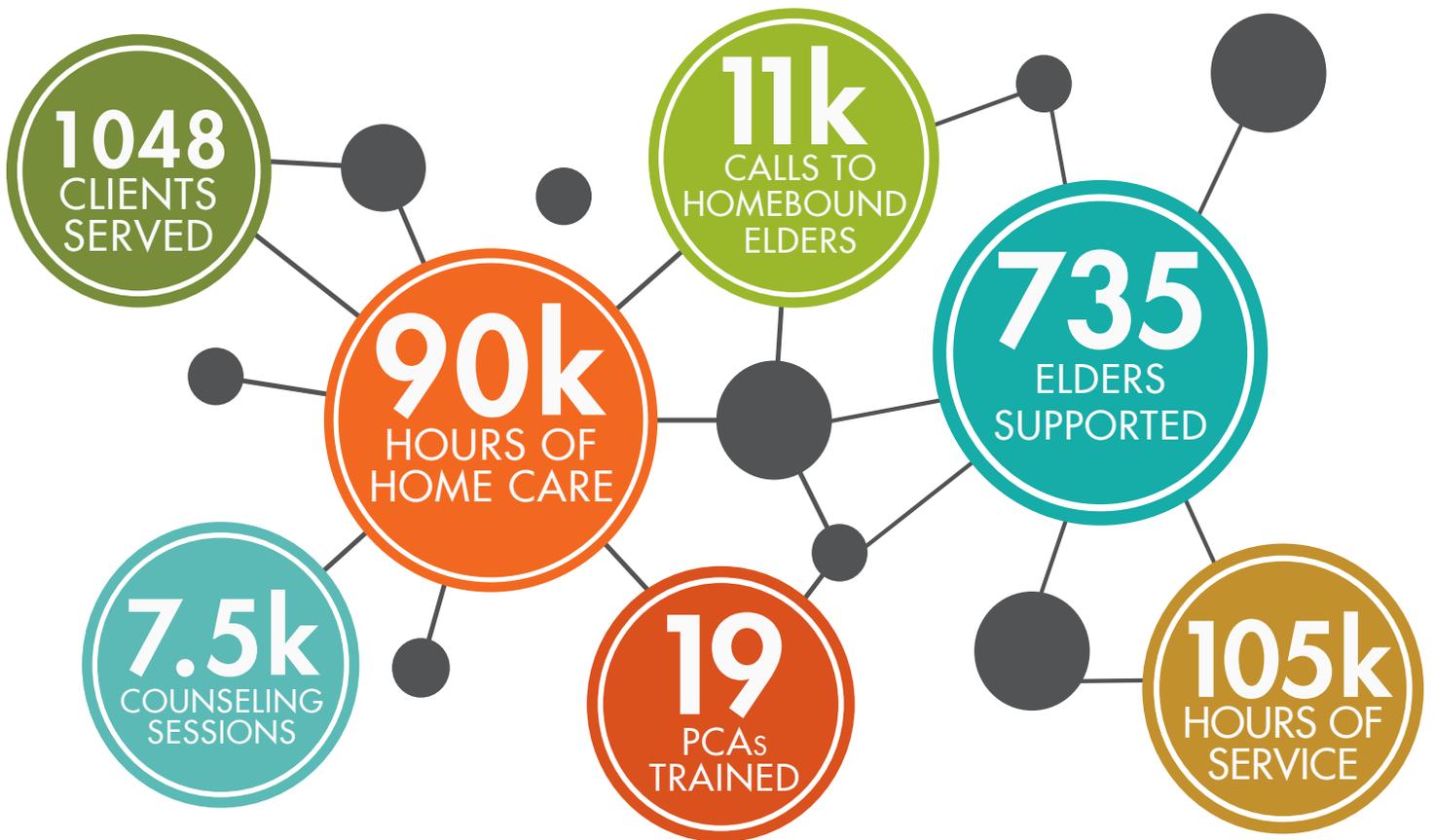
**26%**  
of clients are 75 or older



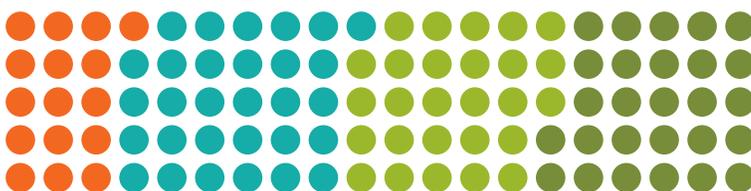
**64%**  
of clients are low-income



**51%**  
of clients live in Richmond City



## Clients by Age



- 0 - 24 years old
- 25 - 49 years old
- 50 - 74 years old
- 75 and older

**8** children moved from foster care to loving homes

**20** families in crisis aided by the Jewish Care Line

**123** youth with Medicaid received counseling

“I can always tell that everyone who works with my mom truly cares about her.”

As Miss Joe got older, she lived rural Cumberland County all by herself. She had been widowed twice, had no relatives nearby to help her, and her only child, Dale, lived over 3 hours away. Her mental health made it impossible for her to get help at her home.

After a lengthy hospitalization, JFS became Miss Joe’s Guardian in 2014, to help her get the care that she needed and make decisions that would give her a better life.

JFS helped Miss Joe move from her house, which had become uninhabitable, to a senior living community which offered many of the services that she needed on-site. Over the time JFS has worked with Miss Joe, she has gotten the mental health treatment and medication that she needs.

Her son, Dale, says JFS becoming his mother’s Guardian



MISS JOE WITH FLOWERS ON HER BIRTHDAY

was a huge blessing because he knows now that she has proper care and he can see that his Mom’s mental outlook is much improved.

“I’m still not used to the new Mom. I can have conversations with her and show her pictures of her grandchildren; all things that were impossible before. I can always tell that everyone who works with my mom truly cares about her. They always call me and consult with me, even though they don’t have to.

“Since Ashton came on board as Mom’s Care Manager, there has been a huge difference! She’s wearing new outfits, she’s got her hair done, and there are decorations up in her room.

“With Ashton’s help, in December we had a family holiday dinner for my mom in a private room where she lives. My wife and kids and I all attended. I had a very nice Mother’s Day visit with Mom too!”

## How can a Care Manager help?

- Coordinate services at JFS and elsewhere
- Act as an advocate in medical appointments
- Assist with transitions to a senior living facility
- Help with paying bills or signing up for benefits

## What is Guardianship?

When an individual can no longer make decisions and needs someone to ensure their best quality of life, a judge can appoint JFS as their Guardian. We then work to meet each client’s unique emotional and physical needs.

# ... and Beyond

Dear Ms. Kreuter,

My wife, Dana, and I reside in California. In November of last year, I received word that my mother had been hospitalized, and while her condition was not expected to be immediately life-threatening, it was very serious. I traveled back to Richmond for what I expected to be a couple of weeks to see her out of the hospital and back into her home - or possibly to set her up to move to an assisted living facility.

It soon became clear that she would need first to go to a rehab facility, and then to assisted living. Dana, back in California, had the idea to engage a care manager to help. Dana found JFS and spoke to Frank Fox, Care Services Director, and Frank assigned Cate Hawks to help us.

The rehab facility had an outbreak of COVID-19 cases. Mom was continuing to test negative, but we wanted to cut short her time there. Then, the day before she was scheduled to move out, Mom tested positive. Cate and Dana worked non-stop to get it set up so Mom could go straight from the rehab facility to a treatment center offering monoclonal antibody infusions, and from there into isolation at the assisted living facility.

I showed up at the rehab at 7:30 on Mom's moving day. The facility seemed to have no idea what was going on. A woman I had never seen before was walking towards me. She said "Robert? I'm Cate." Dana and I had not asked Cate to come and did not know she would. But I started crying in relief that she was there, as it seemed all our plans were falling apart.

The next five weeks were a rollercoaster. Mom came through COVID with only mild symptoms. Cate worked miracles, helping me get Mom where she needed to be and get the equipment she needed. In the first couple of weeks Mom

was at the assisted living facility, there were several crisis moments where Cate went well above and beyond to solve the problems.

By late January, Mom appeared to be reasonably stable. My 23-year-old son arrived in Richmond, and with Cate on the job, I was comfortable coming back to California. I had been away for three months. I was home for less than a week when mom was rushed to the ER again with low oxygen levels. They got her stabilized, but in a big conference call - including Mom, my son, Cate, the doctors, and mom's best friend - we decided Mom would go back to her apartment at the assisted living on hospice. We engaged JFS caregivers to supplement hospice services.

I did not return to Richmond. My daughter flew to be there, and she and her brother were there for the last few days. Mom died on January 27th. Cate was a great help to my son and daughter before and after my mom's death. So, I can tell you the basic facts of what Cate did for us with Frank's support. But I really can't tell you how important it was to us. To me. And, I know, to my mom.

Those three months was the most difficult time of my life. I cannot imagine how I would have survived the last 6 weeks of it without Cate. Dana asked me to add these words, and I completely agree: While most deaths are challenging, it is possible to die a good death or a bad one. Cate helped make it possible for Mom to die as good a death as possible by supporting us all, heart and soul. She was an unflinching advocate, an angel, and a godsend for whom we will always be deeply, deeply grateful.

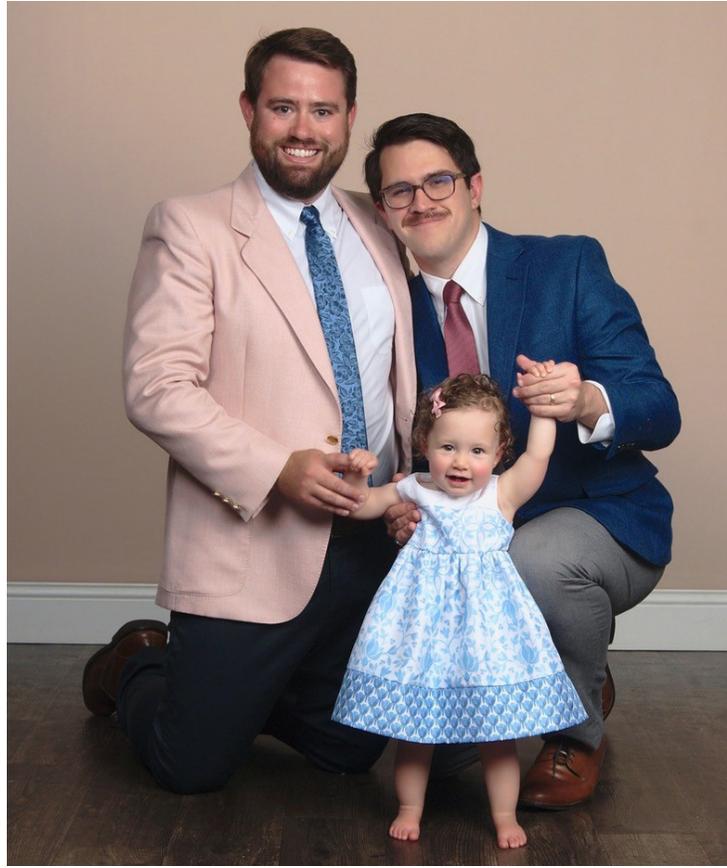


# Adoption

When Jacob and Catesby were ready to begin the journey to parenthood through adoption, they explored every option. They decided they wanted a local adoption attorney who they could sit down and talk with and who embraced equality for all kinds of parents. They chose Colleen Quinn at Quinn Law Centers, who then recommended JFS because of her ongoing relationship and respect for our Adoption Supervisor, Teresa Birchett, and the work JFS has done with same-sex couples.

Jacob and Catesby began the rigorous, multi-step Home Study process with Teresa at the JFS offices in January 2021. Adoption Home Studies focus on the potential parents, their relationship, parenting of their child, and the suitability of their home. Their Home Study was more stressful with the outbreak of Covid-19 and the social distancing protocols. They remembered "moving from the JFS office, to meeting in our yard, to meeting one at a time on our front porch."

At the same time, they created their own website and a booklet about their hopes to bring a child to their family. They ran Google ads online to help identify a birth mother who might be interested in talking to them. Several people contacted them, but just as they had been warned, tried to extort money from them.



JACOB, CATESBY, AND JANE

The right mom contacted them on May 11, six weeks before her due date. When asked why after looking at many potential parents she chose Jacob and Catesby, the mom said she chose them because everything she saw in their ad and on their website focused on their families. Colleen drew up the paperwork for Jacob and Catesby's Semi-Open Adoption for the baby, and the mom agreed. Less than 30 days later, Jacob and Catesby were present for Jane's birth.

Looking back now that Jane is a year old, Jacob and Catesby are thankful for what they learned through the Home Study process. "We were

asked good, thought-provoking questions. We were asked to write a biography of us, and we were making ourselves vulnerable; especially because the Home Study process has an uncertain outcome. Then, it was so affirming to hear that we were able to face the challenges of parenting because of what we identified in our biographies."

Jacob and Catesby plan to talk to Jane early and often about her journey to them and theirs to her and about their family. "We were extremely lucky for our adoption experience. We are having the best time being parents to Jane! We have met with others to encourage them to pursue adoption and we would definitely go through the process with JFS again."

"We were extremely lucky for our adoption experience.  
We are having the best time being parents to Jane!"

# Counseling

JFS had already begun expanding the reach of our counseling program into Richmond-area senior living facilities and East End public housing communities by the time the pandemic arrived. But, how did JFS counselors start serving students at Virginia Tech nearly four hours away?

“We were making plans to help Jewish Life at VCU when Dr. Mike Mandel, the 1st Vice President of our Board, connected me to Sue Kurtz, the Executive Director of Hillel at Virginia Tech,” JFS CEO Wendy Kreuter remembered.

“I spoke with Sue: she was already seeing students express stress and concern about being back on campus with COVID. We quickly hosted an information session with her students about mental healthcare and how JFS could help by telehealth.”

Sue recognized the potential of the partnership right away. “I believe the stigma of depression, anxiety and mental wellness still persists and the impact you all are making with young adults is going to really make a difference,” she said.

One of those young adults at Virginia Tech was Briana. “I tried therapy at school, but didn’t get what I needed or wanted out of it, and it can take like six months to get an appointment,” Briana said. “I wanted to try something new, so when I heard from Hillel about the partnership with JFS, I felt like it just landed in my lap.” When asked about her experience with her JFS counselor,



BRIANA AT GRADUATION

Briana was effusive with her praise. “It was unlike any other therapy experience I’ve had. I felt that I was really cared for and listened to. After I met [JFS counselor] Lynn, I didn’t want to go back to anyone else. I know a couple other Hillel students who have really benefited from therapy with JFS too, and we’ve all really bonded over it.”

Briana knows about the benefits of therapy: she graduated with a double major in psychology and human development. “I’m someone who preaches therapy and learned about it in class and did all my projects on it,” she joked. “Now I’ve started my Masters in Public

Administration and Policy to go into HR leadership management. Lynn also helped me figure out my next steps and what kind of career I want to go into.”

But even more important than career advice, Briana learned resiliency. “That was the thing I needed most for myself after losing a loved one to COVID, doing classes online for a year... It’s something that means so much to me and I really value it. I’ve been bringing up resiliency in all my interviews for internships lately.

Lynn, Hillel, my family – they all helped me realize that even though I don’t have control over what happens, I do have control over how I bounce back and how I can make things better for myself and my community.”

“It was unlike any other therapy experience I’ve had. I felt that I was really cared for and listened to.”

# Lights of Love

JFS volunteers engage with homebound seniors year-round with calls or visits. In an effort to do something special for the holiday season, JFS began "Lights of Love," which invites the community to give personalized gifts to their neighbors whose holidays might pass without a single celebration. Every year the program has grown - this year more than 100 homebound elders, children in foster care, and low-income families received gifts!

After this year's gifts were wrapped and delivered by JFS volunteers, Teresa Baldwin, JFS' Chief Operating Officer, started to receive more than her usual number of phone calls and letters. Many of the people who had received Lights of Love gifts were calling to thank her and the many volunteers who helped them have a happier holiday season by bringing them a bag of gifts. There are snippets of four of them included!

Memories of the generosity and kindness of so many people who volunteer to buy gifts, wrap gifts, and deliver gifts keep us warm all year long! Thank you!



TOYS, BOOKS, AND GAMES COLLECTED BY RUDLIN TORAH ACADEMY

*"Mr. S from JFS came to my house to deliver a gift package from JFS. He was very kind and courteous, a wonderful gentleman. Thank you very much! I just don't know how to thank you and JFS for all your kindnesses to me."*

"I am crying because I am so thankful! I don't know if I deserve all of this but I am so excited about all these packages! Please give thanks to everyone who helped with this! Thank you, thank you, thank you!"

"I thank you so much and I appreciate you so much for sending me my Christmas gifts! I hope you have happy holidays and a very happy new year!"



ACCEPTING A GIFT OF BIKES FROM RABA FOR CHILDREN IN FAIRFIELD COURT

DROPPING OFF PRESENTS AT BETH SHOLOM



"I just received my gifts today and I'd like to thank you and all the volunteers involved, including delivering them to my house! Thank you for all these very nice and wonderful gifts and please extend my appreciation to everyone for their kindness and generosity."

# "A Hand to Hold" and CONNECT

November is Adoption Awareness Month, and it's always the busiest month on JFS Connecting Hearts' calendar! Every November for the last five years, we have partnered with WTVR CBS 6 to present "A Hand to Hold": a multimedia campaign that puts the spotlight on children and teens in Central Virginia's foster care system. Nearly 800 kids of all ages and backgrounds in our community are awaiting loving families and the pandemic makes their dreams even more difficult to achieve.

We kicked off the campaign with CONNECT: a virtual beer, wine, and cider tasting event co-presented with Garden Grove Brewing Co. and WTVR CBS 6. Longtime Connecting Hearts events emcee, CBS 6 anchor Bill Fitzgerald, reprised his role as host and enthusiastic advocate.

The event featured interviews recorded with three teenagers who experienced foster care. Each of them shared their answer to a simple question: what can adults do to help kids like them? Fitzgerald echoed one of the most powerful answers: "to catch me when I fall."

JFS Connecting Hearts connects potential foster, adoptive, and kinships parents year-round to local Departments of Social Services across Central Virginia with the goal of finding loving families for every child in foster care. But nothing attracts more attention to the needs of kids in care than the "A Hand to Hold" campaign. Three times



THE CBS 6 TEAM TOASTING TO CONNECT

daily in November CBS 6 features the voices and stories of children in foster care. The children featured are often the most difficult to match with a loving home – teenagers, groups of siblings, and kids with complex needs – giving thousands of potential parents a unique chance to connect with a child they might never have gotten the opportunity to meet.

We also heard stories from adults who knew one of the featured children. One caller said, "One of the children was a member of our church youth group, so it broke our hearts when we saw him on the news. We've been praying for him."

Another shared how she'd grown up with two boys' mother and was interested in adopting them. A third person "was surprised to see her on CBS. We always had a great relationship: I'm an author and she loved reading my books. I would love to adopt her."

To everyone who tuned in to CBS 6, shared posts on social media, or attended CONNECT, thank you! It is truly an honor to share our mission with you. JFS Connecting Hearts is also profoundly grateful for all our CONNECT sponsors – Debbie Johnston, Eric Shoenfeld, Sandy Sisisky, Hirschler, Truist, Carroll Plumbing & Heating, Inc., Susan Brewer, and Nancy and Tom McCandlish. Your compassion for children and teens in foster care in our community is humbling, and we hope to CONNECT with you again soon!

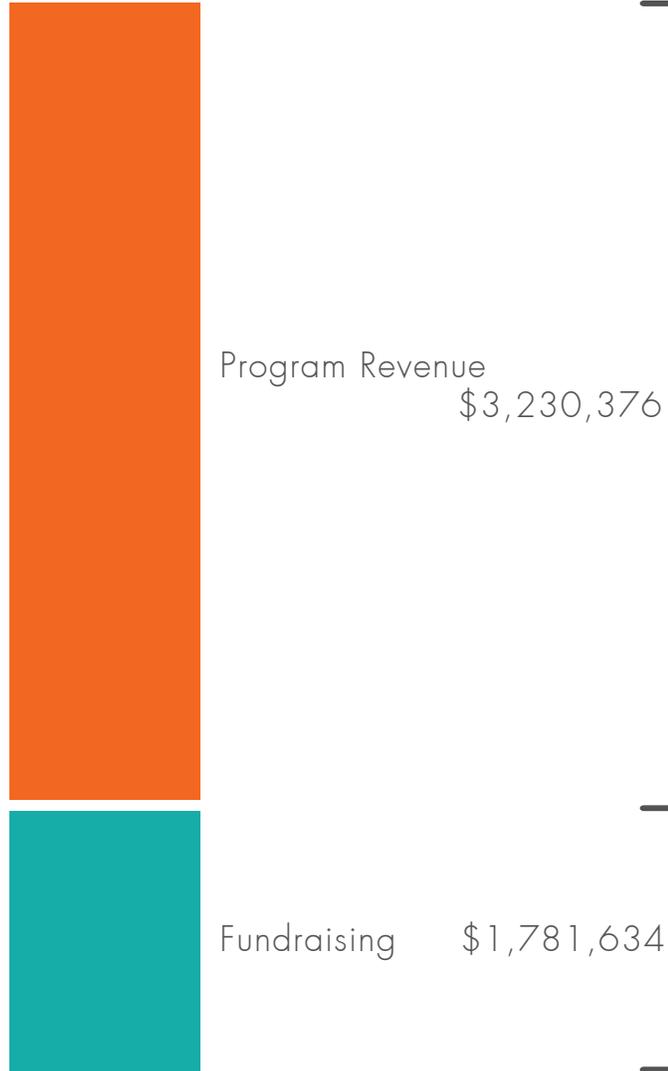
**883,000**  
Television Viewers

**707,000**  
Social Media Engagements

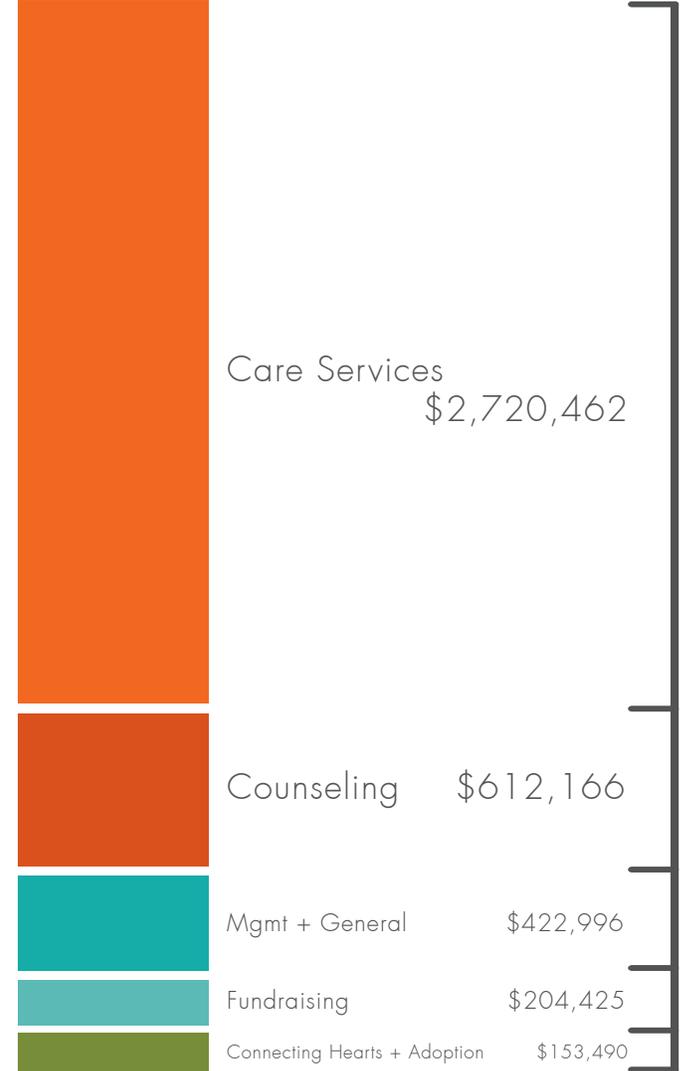
**3,000**  
Website Visitors

# 2020 - 2021 Financials

## Revenue



## Expenses



Thank you JFS Volunteers!





For 173 years - through pandemics, recessions, and wars - Jewish Family Services has served Richmond's families and individuals of all ages, faiths, and incomes with exceptional care, guidance, and support.

Thank you for helping make it all possible.



[www.jfsrichmond.org](http://www.jfsrichmond.org)

6718 Patterson Avenue, Richmond, VA 23226  
804.282.5644 · [information@jfsrichmond.org](mailto:information@jfsrichmond.org)

Transforming Lives. Strengthening our Community.