ON LOCAL, STATE, AND NATIONAL LEVELS, the child welfare and mental health fields continue to emphasize the importance of client and program outcomes. Over the past year, Crossnore's performance and quality improvement (PQI) team has spent time building and preparing our PQI infrastructure for this future.

In October 2020 our organization engaged the services of a consultant who specializes in data reporting and advanced statistical analysis and modeling for program evaluation. In partnership with Crossnore staff, this consultant developed a data strategy and data model based on the agency’s logic models. Once built, the data model allowed for the building of dashboards to be used by program and executive management to monitor outcomes for clients and families. These dashboards were also built with the purpose of informing future decision making for program growth.

All Crossnore staff participate in the PQI process through data collection, entry, processing, and/or interpretation. Together all stakeholders worked together to “clean” data sources and ensure the integrity of the information we capture and report.

This year we also re-worked our use of surveys to collect data from clients and their families, staff, and other stakeholders. We have shifted to a pulse survey model and increased our internal accountability for reporting out data quickly and clearly to those who participate in providing feedback.

This fiscal year we have truly used our theory of change (Plan-Do-Study-Act) on our entire PQI process. We are excited to share some of our highlights from this work with you in this report.

Sincerely,

Meredith Martin, MDiv, MSW, LCSW
Senior Director of Program Excellence
Strategic Plan 2021-2023

CROSSNORE builds its PQI process each year around its strategic plan. This keeps our work focused on the board-defined priorities of the organization.

OUR GOAL
Crossnore Communities for Children will strengthen and expand our ability to serve North Carolina’s most vulnerable children with an array of research-based services in a financially sustainable way. Our focus is the children in the child welfare system, including those who are at risk of entering and those who are transitioning out of the system.

OUR STRATEGIES
- Develop strong internal operations and infrastructure to support a $20M agency with a wide array of services and locations.
- Optimize existing programs and innovate to meet the changing needs of our clients and outside constituents.
- Grow the Crossnore brand as the regional leader in high quality, holistic child welfare services and innovative organizational training and consulting.

Data Timeframe: Fiscal Year 2021 (October 1, 2020 - September 30, 2021), unless otherwise noted.
Data Source: All data included in this report was collected internally by agency staff.

“OUR PROGRAMS RESPOND TO THE UNIQUE NEEDS of our clients and their families by focusing on who we serve. We make informed decisions about program expansion by evaluating our referrals data, particularly populations we currently do not serve in our existing programs.”

- Sarah Norris, Ed.D., MBA, MEd
Chief Program Officer

EXAMPLES OF HOW THIS DATA HAS INFORMED PROGRAM DECISION MAKING:
- Targeted recruitment of and hiring Spanish-English clinical and administrative staff
- Launch of Youth Independent Living program with our unique focus on staff and programming for this population
- Recruitment of staff in all positions who better reflect the racial and ethnic diversity of our clients
Spotlight: Bridging Families

UTILIZING REFERRAL DATA informs our launch of new pilot programs such as Bridging Families, an intensive reunification program for large sibling sets. This program uses professional parents as a part of a multidisciplinary team to support families in achieving permanency.

Families working with a Bridging Families team experience a number of supports to provide the best chance at reunification from a multi-dimensional approach. First, children continue to experience the robust services that have long been expected from Crossnore: nurturing homes, first-class facilities, trauma-informed clinical services, care coordination, educational support, and recreational opportunities that provide children the opportunity to heal, grow, and change. Second, children’s families experience an array of supports and services: evidence-based parent education, live coaching, psychological education on trauma, barrier-free access to family services, a structured approach to shared parenting with Crossnore staff, and a supportive team to provide encouragement and cheerleading on this difficult journey. Finally, whole families benefit from services designed to focus on reunification to make the process both successful and sustainable: family therapy, enhanced family time (including regular opportunities to be together in a home-like environment for extended periods of time), opportunities to maintain large sibling groups together in single placements, and in-home services to facilitate transition.

The way home can be rough and rocky travelling, but we believe more families can come back together stronger, healthier, and more resilient than ever by building a strong bridge for these families to utilize along their journey.

Permanency Outcomes

GOAL.
Children will reach permanency (a safe, permanent home) within 12 months of out-of-home placement.

Permanency may be:
- Reunification with the family from which they were removed,
- Placement with another relative (kinship placement through legal guardianship or custody),
- Adoption, or
- Another planned permanent living arrangement (APPLA).

FOR FISCAL YEAR 2021, were discharges a move towards permanency?

Julie and Madious Attilus, Bridge Parents
Permanency Outcomes cont...

**AT CROSSNORE,** we work to provide placements where children can be placed with their siblings and/or be reunited with siblings from whom they have been separated. Being placed with siblings results in better outcomes for children and families who have experienced out of home placement.

**ACCORDING TO A CASEY FAMILY PROGRAMS ARTICLE**: 
- Approximately 2/3 of children in foster care have a sibling in care.
- More than 70% of children with siblings in foster care are separated from one or more of their siblings while in care.

**SIBLING SET BREAKDOWN**

**% OF CLIENTS WHOSE SIBLINGS ARE ALSO PLACED AT CROSSNORE**

- **YES** 69%
- **NO** 31%

**SPOTLIGHT: PERMANENCY**

**CHRISTINE CORTESE** received her license to foster through Crossnore. She wanted to provide a home for large sibling groups and had no plans to adopt. As they sometimes do with foster care, circumstances change and the opportunity arose for Christine to adopt a sibling set of three placed in her home. On November 19, 2021, 703 days after entering foster care, Christine adopted Nathan, Alexander, and Finian. She is pictured here with the boys on the day of their adoption.

Clinical Outcomes

CLINICAL SERVICES GOAL
Children and families served by our agency experience an improvement in mental health symptoms for which they were referred and/or maintain resilience.

EACH YEAR, CROSSNORE IS ASSESSED BY THE NC CHILD TREATMENT PROGRAM for its Trauma-Focused Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (TF-CBT) program. This year, our assessment showed significant growth:

On a scale of 1 (never) to 5 (always), we went from:

- 3.0 to 4.35 in using standardized clinical assessments in sessions
- 3.0 to 4.2 in ensuring adequate time/materials to do good TF-CBT work
- 3.0 to 4.2 in leadership addressing secondary traumatic stress
- 3.0 to 4.67 in leadership promoting TF-CBT

Spotlight: Therapy Services

CASEY JOHANSON, LCSW works with clients in our Residential Program on our Winston-Salem campus. She is a certified Eye Movement Desensitization and Reprocessing (EMDR) therapist and takes a developmental and attachment-based approach in intervention. Casey also embraces other evidence-based therapies, such as Motivational Interviewing and Mindfulness, as well as play therapy.

By considering the primary diagnoses of our clients, we have been able to recruit clinicians who are training in and/or willing to pursue training in evidence-based therapies, which help our clients and their families find hope and healing.
Educational Outcomes

FOR THE SCHOOL YEAR ENDING JUNE 2021, students living on our Winston-Salem campus made great strides in improving their math and reading skills.

- Two students increased their reading level more than one full grade level.
- 39 students improved their math level, and 55 students improved their reading level up to one full grade level.
- 29 math students and 8 reading students maintained their grade level.
- No students experienced a negative grade level change.

IN 2021, CROSSNORE PARTNERED with Winston-Salem/Forsyth County Schools to create a position with Title I funding for a full-time Educational Support Supervisor who oversees the tutoring program for our child welfare programs in Winston-Salem. This position is an investment in the educational growth of our clients who often come into care more than one grade level below their same-age peers.

Timaiya Stocks joined the Crossnore staff in 2021 and has been overseeing the tutoring volunteers and staff who make such a big difference for the children we serve.

Medical Outcomes

MEDICAL SERVICES GOAL:
Children in our child welfare programs are on track with recommended medical and dental care as defined by Fostering Health.

PERCENT OF CHILD WELFARE CLIENTS who are up-to-date with PCP appointments, immunizations, and dental care, after six months of placement:

- 97% of youth are up-to-date on immunizations
- 98% of youth have had a physical exam
- 98.7% of youth have had a dental visit

IN 2021, WE ADDED A PEDIATRIC NURSE PRACTITIONER TO OUR TEAM!
Heidi Huffman, MSN, RN, PNP-PC, PMHS is our new Director of Health Services. Heidi’s role is an investment in the continued strong medical outcomes of the children we serve. She also made a great “Poppy” at our Trunk or Treat in Winston-Salem in October!
Foster Family Recruitment

BY BUILDING A DATA MODEL which allows us to interact with different data sources in a common dashboard, Crossnore is able to inform future program expansion. One example of this is our “Foster Care Placement Trends” dashboard where we post data for referrals, current active homes, and homes in the application process for analysis. This information informs our diligent recruitment efforts.

CROSSNORE RECEIVES A GREAT NUMBER OF REFERRALS for youth and young adults who need foster care placements. Many families are more interested in fostering babies and young children so it is difficult to find appropriate placements for these teens. Crossnore has made families who seek to foster youth a recruitment priority.

Joshua Farrier and Christoph Herpel, pictured below, are a great success story of these recruitment efforts. The couple has recently been licensed by Crossnore and has moved into a home in Hendersonville which is able to serve up to 5 youth or young adults.

This home is provided by an organization in Henderson County, Homes for Youth. Joshua and Christoph are also passionate about serving youth who identify as LGBTQ+. We are excited about the ways Joshua and Christoph will make a difference through fostering and expanding the network of foster placements for youth, young adults, and those who identify as LGBTQ+ in North Carolina.
External Reviews

EXTERNAL REVIEWS are an important part of our agency’s PQI process. Results from these reviews are evaluated by leadership and additional PQI strategies are initiated, as needed.

IN OCTOBER 2020, Crossnore’s Residential, Foster Care, and Adoption programs were relicensed by the NC Division of Social Services. Plans of correction were accepted and put into place for all identified opportunities for improvement.

IN MAY 2021, Crossnore was reaccredited by the Council on Accreditation with no plans of correction for any of the 16 standards which were reviewed.

IN AUGUST 2021, Crossnore was re-certified for the third time by The Sanctuary Institute for full implementation of The Sanctuary Model®, an internationally recognised trauma-informed model of care.

As a recognized leader in helping children reclaim, rebuild, or reimagine the essential belief in a safe, dependable home, Crossnore Communities for Children recruits and trains prospective foster parents who can provide a safe and stable home to children.

Ongoing supervision and support is provided after placement.

You can change the future for a child in foster care. Apply today to become a foster parent.
Facilities

WITH CROSSNORE’S CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS PLAN AND MAJOR GIFTS FROM DONORS, we renovated three spaces on our campuses for use by the children and families we serve:

- Loftis Gymnasium on our Avery Campus,
- Philip L. Van Every Outdoor Adventure Center in Winston-Salem, and
- Katheryn Northington Recreation Center, also in Winston-Salem.

Finance

CROSSNORE’S FINANCE TEAM is charged with the important responsibility of processing, monitoring, and reporting all financial data for the organization.

IN 2021, THE TEAM:

- Successfully obtained and processed total forgiveness of $2,445M in Paycheck Protection Program (PPP) funds which provided ongoing support for staff during the COVID-19 pandemic,
- Implemented a new credit card receipt system whereby increased accountability for credit card receipts could be monitored by supervisors, leadership, and the Finance Team, and
- Worked to prepare for and shift their workflows in light of Medicaid Transformation in North Carolina. Many new insurance payors and contracts were added to our financial systems. Multidisciplinary teams have worked closely together to monitor denials and ensure payment for all services rendered.
CROSSNORE’S HUMAN RESOURCES has increased the percentage of BIPOC representation in all areas of staff hires over 2020. We have continued to use data from exit interviews to improve orientation and onboarding experiences for new employees.

WE HAVE CONTINUED TO INVEST IN PAY EQUITY for staff. Between May 2019 and October 2021, there has been:

- an investment of $520,000 in equity raises for staff,
- a 17% increase in overall average salary for staff; current average staff salary is $47,020, and
- a 34% increase in dietary aide average rate of pay and 33% increase in sales store rate of pay, which are important metrics charting our agency’s progress toward being a living wage certified organization.

CROSSNORE’S TURNOVER RATE for Fiscal Year 2021 was 28.9% (2020: 28.4%, 2019: 34.93%, 2018: 31.22%).

CROSSNORE HAS INVESTED IN A HUMAN RESOURCES INFORMATION SYSTEM to increase efficiencies in the Human Resources department.

"THROUGH CROSSNORE’S PQI PROCESS, we can concentrate on opportunities for continued improvement in our agency’s operations division. When our operations are functioning as efficiently as possible, we are able to support our staff and clients, and fulfill our mission.

Creating this department and hiring Amber to lead it ensures that we are meeting the needs of our large and diverse staff. It provides the opportunity for us to review all policies and procedures through the lens of DEIB to make certain we are taking care of our staff, and the children and families we serve, in the best way possible."

- Angela Woods, JD, MBA
Chief Operating Officer
Development

CROSSNORE’S EXTERNAL RELATIONS TEAM continued to fundraise successfully in our Fiscal Year 2021, even in light of the COVID-19 pandemic, which resulted in the cancellation of several in-person annual fundraising events.

OUTCOMES:
• Increased membership in the Circle of Friends by 13.7%.
• Increased business and corporate gifts by 19%.
• Increased planned giving donors by 15%.

AREAS FOR IMPROVEMENT:
• Grow the number of repeat donors by 5% for Fiscal Year 2022 (3% growth in Fiscal Year 2021).
• Increase membership of HOPE Society by 5% for Fiscal Year 2022 (4.2% growth in Fiscal Year 2021).

“CROSSNORE’S FUNDRAISING EFFORTS were strong in 2021, although they occurred in a very different way than in the past. We worked harder to steward our returning donors, while continuing to invite new donors to partner with us. We moved events to a virtual format and introduced our Happy Half Hour events, which were very popular and successful. Our first “Fall for Crossnore” campaign in September helped get us closer to our goal for the year. We are grateful to every new and returning donor!”

- Caroline Hart, CFRE
Chief External Relations Officer

Board Engagement

CROSSNORE’S BOARD OF TRUSTEES is an experienced and dedicated group of people. They are highly engaged and invested in Crossnore, the children and families we serve, and the outcomes we achieve. Their support is important to our continued growth and success.

OUTCOMES:
• One hundred percent of the Trustees were oriented and had toured at least one Crossnore campus within one year of joining the Board.
• Achieved our goal of having 75% or more of all Trustees in attendance at Board and committee meetings.
• Eighty-nine percent of Trustees financially supported the organization during our Fiscal Year 2021.
Spotlight: External Relations

CROSSNORE’S REBRANDING EFFORTS were led by Holly Kessler, Director of Communications and Caroline Hart, Chief External Relations Officer. Working with Winston-Salem marketing and consulting firm, M Creative, the work included interviews with staff, Board members, clients, alumni, and community partners. From these interviews and other research, a new anthem was created. and a new look took shape. In June of 2021, Crossnore officially became CROSSNORE COMMUNITIES FOR CHILDREN.

Crossnore Communities for Children describes what we want to create: a community around each child and family we serve. It draws all of our volunteers, donors, and church and civic partners into that community with us. It recognizes the responsibility we all have to provide care for those around us who are in need. The logo with the dots that are different sizes, shapes, and colors also represents those communities — the children and families we serve, and all those who partner with us in this work. “We believe Crossnore Communities for Children is a brand that now accurately reflects our mission and values as a child welfare organization,” said Brett Loftis, Crossnore’s CEO.

Children want to come home. From school, from the playground, from time with a friend. For dinner, for a bath, for bedtime. Going out into the world is only fun and exciting when the promise of returning home is solid and secure. That’s why trauma changes everything for a child. Because the need for home doesn’t disappear even when safety does. This is the guiding philosophy at Crossnore.

Our promise to children and families experiencing crisis is to value and accept them wholly, then to devote our exceptional resources to addressing their needs at home, or when necessary, to finding alternative solutions for children and families at risk. Because an essential step in healing is to regain faith in home—to believe in love and a loving place. This is why Crossnore gives so much to children who often feel connected to so little.

Crossnore Anthem:

We are here with love and strength, counseling and commitment, optimism and opportunity. And that’s just the start. Whatever they need is what we give. Whatever they need is why we’re here.

No organization is better positioned to bring hope and healing to children and families. We offer an unmatched continuum of professional care and services, and we engage with communities and stakeholders at every level to build a resilient ecosystem of support. Because children just want to laugh with friends and feel safe in the world. And then children want to come home.

This is exactly what we want for them, too. So when trauma changes everything, we’re ready to give everything to the child who suddenly needs nothing less.

EXTERNAL RELATIONS

Communications

GOAL. Grow the Crossnore brand as the regional leader in high quality, holistic child welfare services, and innovative organizational training and consulting.

OUTCOMES:

- Successfully led the rebranding effort of Crossnore School & Children’s Home to Crossnore Communities for Children in June of 2021, including a website refresh and new Miracles magazine layout.
- Grew the average number of website visitors to 8,600 (with a one-month high of 11,986).
- Increased our total social media followers to 14,874.
- Increased email subscribers to 4,843.
- Achieved an open rate of 43.89% for our monthly e-newsletter (industry standard is 30.6%).

Cornerstone: External Relations

EXTERNAL RELATIONS

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THE CENTER FOR TRAUMA-RESILIENT COMMUNITIES (CTRC) is a part of Crossnore Communities for Children which helps organizations embed and embody the science of trauma resilience.

In 2021, the Center for Trauma Resilient Communities’ goal was to strengthen and expand its capacity to partner with organizations/communities across the country to build trauma-resilient communities.

TOWARDS THAT GOAL, THIS YEAR THE CTRC:

• Is developing a series five articles featuring the Center’s emerging work,
• Developed a research arm and hired Dr. Jennifer Middleton as the Senior Director of Research,
• Added additional faculty to the team, (pictured below, L to R): Dr. Shantel Crosby, Sally Loftis, Dr. Jennifer Middleton, Dr. Steven Kniffley, and Lina Passuale, and
• Launched an initiative with the Winston-Salem/Forsyth County Schools to bring the Trauma Resilient Community Model to the Winston-Salem community.
THANK YOU to the following:

- Mary Anne Helm, Manager of Quality & Compliance, for excellent leadership in bringing all service lines together to use a common data collection process and for unlimited hours of data cleaning to ensure integrity of the data provided.
- Wes Furlong of Telos Analytics who worked tirelessly with Crossnore staff to build and refine our data strategy and data model.
- Mike Hughett, Network Systems Administrator, for ensuring IT infrastructure to support our PQI system.
- Holly Kessler, Director of Communications, for her design work on the report.
- Sarah Norris, Chief Program Officer, for being the executive champion for our PQI process and truly embodying our philosophy in her leadership, and
- All PQI and agency leaders who championed PQI in their respective areas.

SPECIAL ACKNOWLEDGEMENT goes to the following individuals for their leadership and work on behalf of our PQI process:

- Lisa Melton, Supervisor
- Carly Johnson, Supervisor
- Hillary Angil
- Sarah Brown
- Jessica Camire
- Agnes Fox
- Angie Hall
- Fiera Hughes
- Mair Johnston
- Hannah Phillips
- Kari Rogers-Thomas

Acknowledgements

(L-R) Sarah Norris, Chief Program Officer, Meredith Martin, Senior Director of Program Excellence, Mary Anne Helm, Manager of Quality and Compliance and Wes Furlong, consultant with Telos Analytics, provided leadership for this year’s PQI initiatives.

PROGRAM EXCELLENCE STAFF:
- Mary Anne Helm, Manager of Quality & Compliance
- Becky Keener, Quality Coordinator
- Kelly Smith, Compliance Coordinator
- Debbie Dean, Manager of Referrals & Admissions
- Tanya Williams, Referrals & Admissions Specialist
- Jenny Ventura, Program Assistant
- Karen Kater, Program Assistant
- Kacy Carter, Manager of Learning & Development
- Christina Aquilano, Learning & Development Coordinator
- Timaiya Stocks, Educational Support Supervisor

RESIDENTIAL CASE MANAGEMENT STAFF:
- Amber Kelly, Supervisor
- Krishhuna Hicks, Supervisor
- Ebony Bethea
- Hailey Bullis
- Katrina Eisenman
- Tim Jones
- Evelin Harrison
- Mykayla Nolfin
- Donna Ratcliff
- Mary Beth Shell
- Mandy Smith
- Jacob Yarber

YOUTH INDEPENDENT LIVING:
- Charlene Johnson, Director of Youth Independent Living
- Elizabeth Sheld, Supervisor

DAY TREATMENT:
- Kamrihna Samuels, Director of Day Treatment
- Sarah Cable, Assistant Director of Day Treatment
- Amber Rucker, Supervisor
- Keegan McNeely
- Donald Youmans

PERMANENCY PLANNING & ADOPTION CASEWORKERS:
- Stephanie Parker, Director of Permanency Planning
- Sandy Sauer, Director of Adoptions & Post-Permanency
- Natalie Bowman, Supervisor

*The list above reflects current staff as of the publication date of this report.*
Spotlight: 2022 Goals

“WITH THE RIGHT PEOPLE, CULTURE, AND VALUES, you can accomplish great things.” - Tricia Griffith

PQI IS PART OF OUR CULTURE at Crossnore and we will continue that philosophy into 2022, as we hone our PQI work in the new fiscal year. We will continue to wrap our PQI process around our strategic plan as we launch new service lines and expand our services in a data-responsive way.

In addition, we plan to focus on increasing leadership’s use of data in all decision making by:

- Challenging each program director to identify and monitor at least one use case,
- Crafting and honing static reports on weekly, monthly, and quarterly bases,
- Linking program data with financial data, and
- Honing ways to ensure data integrity.

We look forward to sharing our great outcomes with you, as well as lessons we learn from our PQI process. Thank you for your support of Crossnore as we continue to grow healthy futures for children and families by providing a Christian sanctuary of hope and healing.

Letter from the CEO

“IT IS BETTER TO AIM HIGH AND MISS than to aim low and hit.” - Les Brown

Congratulations to Meredith Martin, Senior Director of Program Excellence, and all of the PQI leaders who worked so hard this year. Gathering and evaluating this data has improved our flow of information and improved our decision-making process.

At Crossnore, our Board, Executive Leadership team, Directors, and staff aim high every day. We are certainly grateful when we hit or exceed the goals we set. But when we miss the mark, we are supported by our Sanctuary Model® commitments and our PQI Plan, Do, Study, Act process. By sharing our goals and outcomes openly and transparently, we practice open communication and social learning. Setting goals and measuring the outcomes create social responsibility for our staff. When we participate in shared governance through the Plan, Do, Study, Act process, we make informed decisions about program continuance and expansion.

As you can see on the left, our 2022 goals are ambitious. But ambitious goals challenge us to be and do better. That’s the point of this whole process—that we continually improve our services to children and families so they can improve their outcomes. Continually aiming high to provide hope and healing helps each child on their journey to find home.

Blessings,

Brett A. Loftis, JD
Chief Executive Officer