



Performance and Quality Improvement Report 2022
Crossnore Communities for Children



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The PQI REPORT is published as part of the Performance and Quality Improvement process. This publication is for the benefit and information of friends of Crossnore Communities for Children. With questions about this report, please contact Meredith Martin, Vice President of Programs, at (336) 721-7600 or mmartin@crossnore.org.

PHOTOGRAPHY: Staff and Friends of Crossnore Communities for Children

DESIGN: Patrice Williams, Communications Manager

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ACCREDITATIONS



At Crossnore we serve children. And what child doesn't like a new Lego set? As you probably know, Lego sets come disassembled in separate bags with lots of pieces and parts. If you opened all the bags and poured them into one pile they would mean nothing. It is only after hard work and close attention to detail that you get to see the story that comes together from a Lego set. This year has been a fun yet challenging Lego-building experience for our data team at Crossnore.

Fiscal year 2022 has been a year of building at the agency as a whole. Our performance and quality improvement (PQI) strategy has been in constant growth in response to this building. This year our data capabilities have been taken to a new level with the addition of Ryan Wilkins, our Senior EHR Systems Administrator to the team. Ryan has partnered closely with Wes Furlong, our Data Analyst Consultant, Becky Keener, our Quality Coordinator, and me to ensure data is clean, accessible, and mapped together so that we can make informed decisions, like many of the ones you will see in this report.

We have partnered regularly with leaders and stakeholders throughout the agency to ensure our work is responsive to the needs of our organization. Each member of our team has brought their bag of Legos (their expertise) with a willing spirit and an open mind. What we have created is something that we hope tells you a story about the work of Crossnore Communities for Children this past year. We hope you enjoy it.

Meredith Martin, MDiv, MSW, LCSW
Vice President of Programs



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Strategic Plan Review

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/SOURCES

- October 1, 2021 to September 30, 2022, unless otherwise noted
- Agency maintained databases

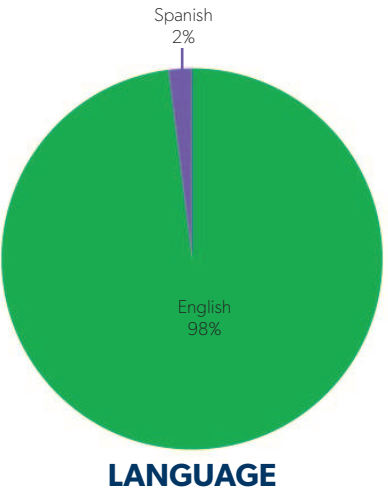
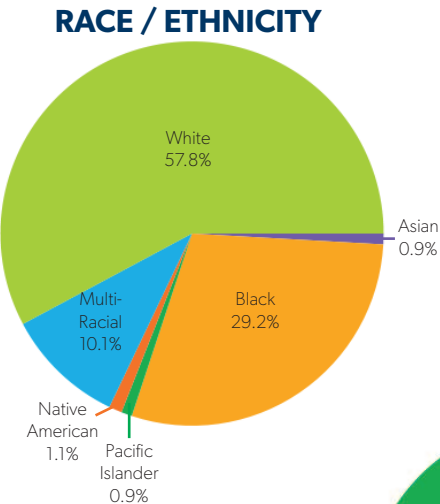
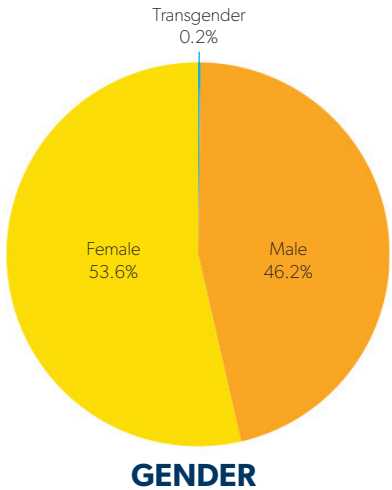
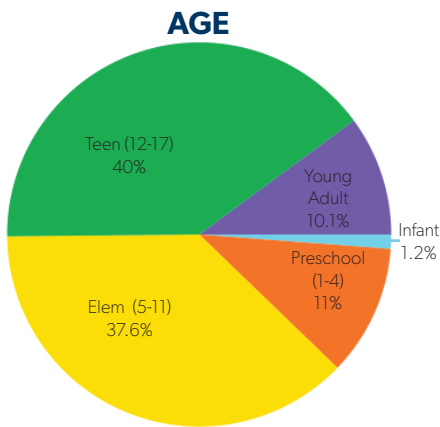


Who We Serve

“Crossnore continues to pay attention to the clients we serve and to the people seeking our services so that we can ensure our service array is responsive to the needs of children and families across North Carolina. For example, in our referral data we saw increased demand for services for youth aging out of foster care; as a response, we have doubled the percentage of young adults we have served this year. Our programs must meet the needs of the people we serve.”

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

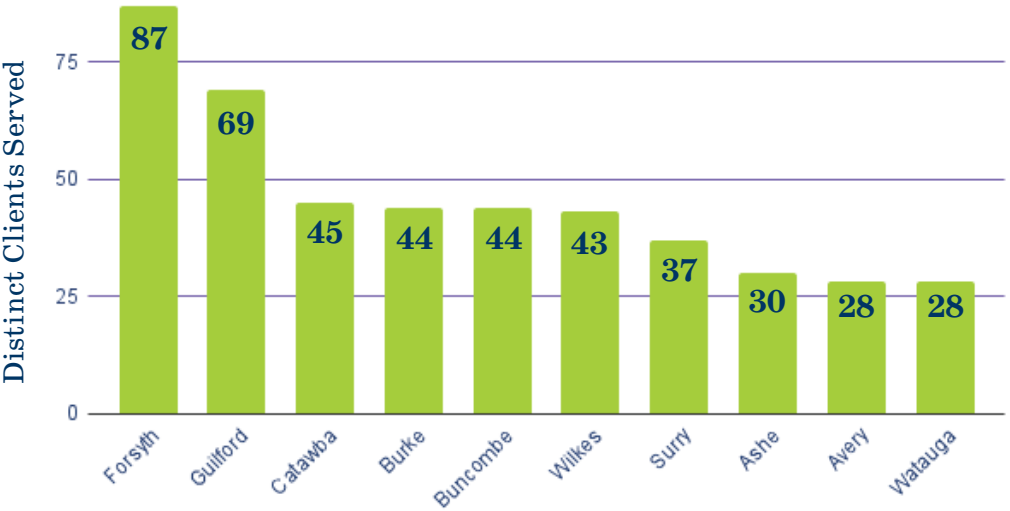
Total Distinct Clients Served: **611** (and their families)



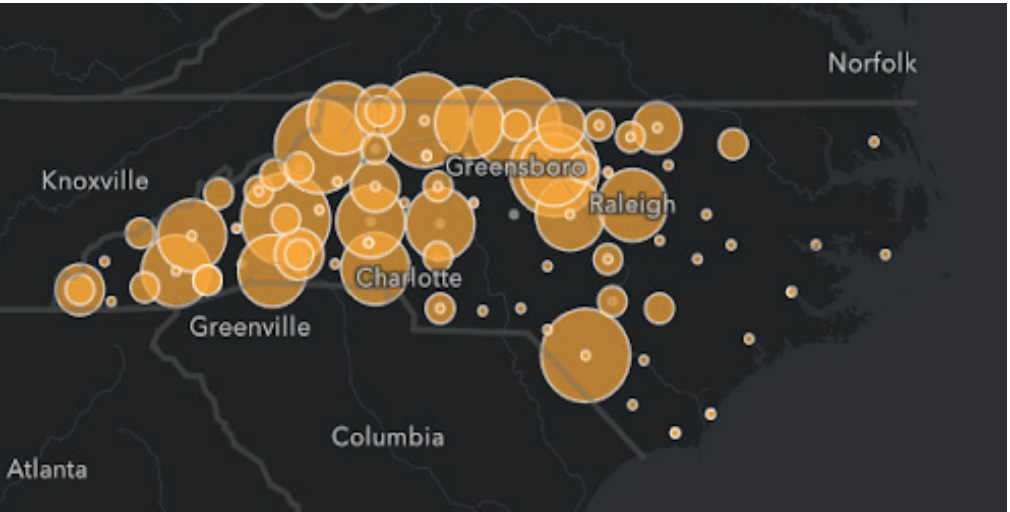
Spotlight: Counties Served

This fiscal year, Crossnore received 3299 distinct referrals from 73 distinct counties in North Carolina.

Top Counties Served By Child Welfare Programs

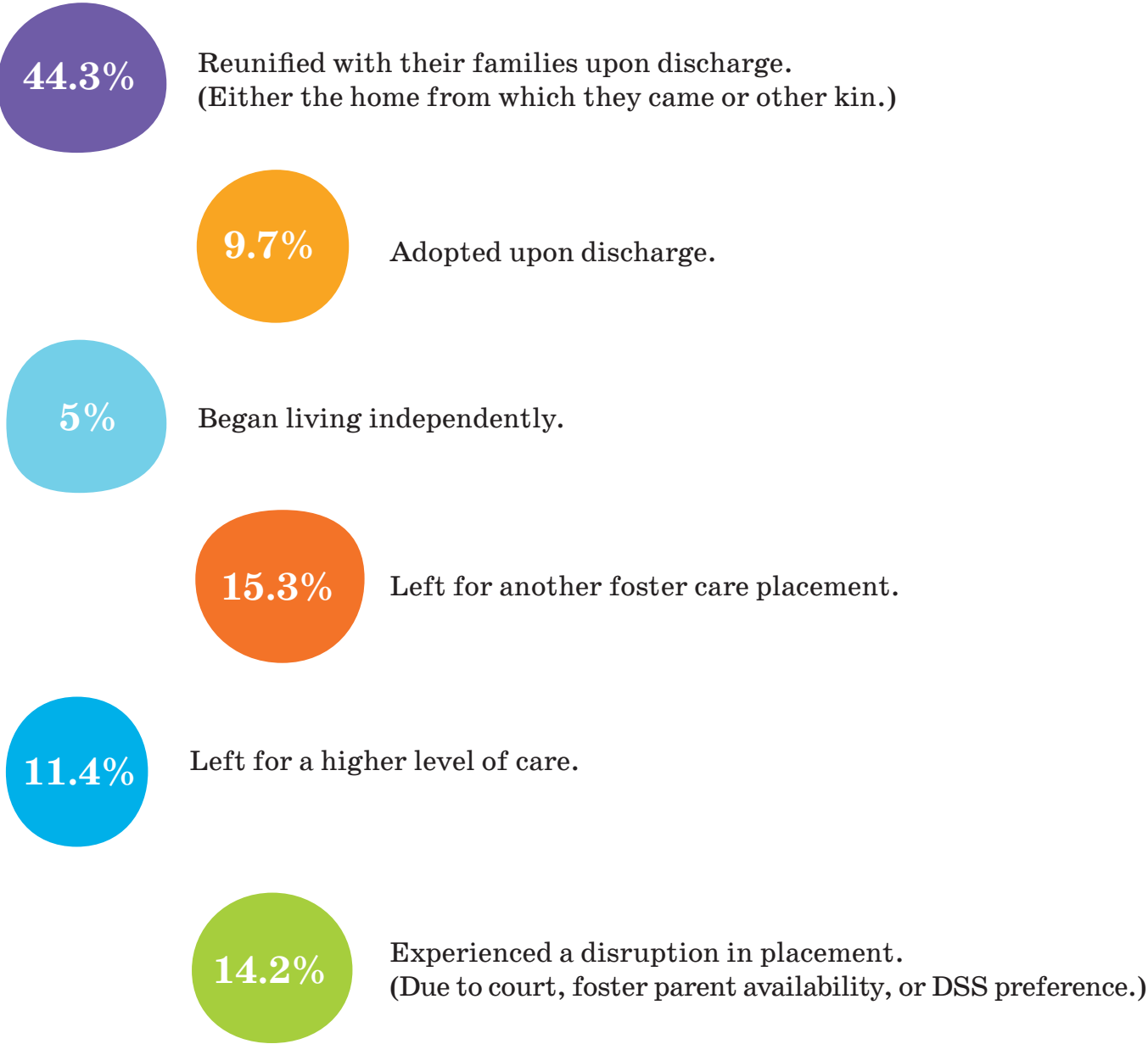


As Crossnore has built its data-driven culture, we have used web-based mapping software to reflect the density of our referrals from different counties across the state. The larger the dot, the more referrals we are receiving from a particular location.



Permanency Outcomes

This fiscal year, we discharged 213 unique clients from our placement-based services.



Spotlight: New Programs

Crossnore believes that children belong in their families of origin whenever possible. Because of this, we have launched two new service lines this year: Bridging Families© and Homebuilders®. Homebuilders® teams work closely with a family to remove the safety concern *instead* of removing the children from the home. Bridging Families© uses professional foster parents and a team of clinical and case management staff to support families of origin while their children are in foster care. The goal of Bridging Families© is to safely reunify families. Bridge parents are full-time paid staff who work with both the children and parents to address needs in the family so that families can stay together.

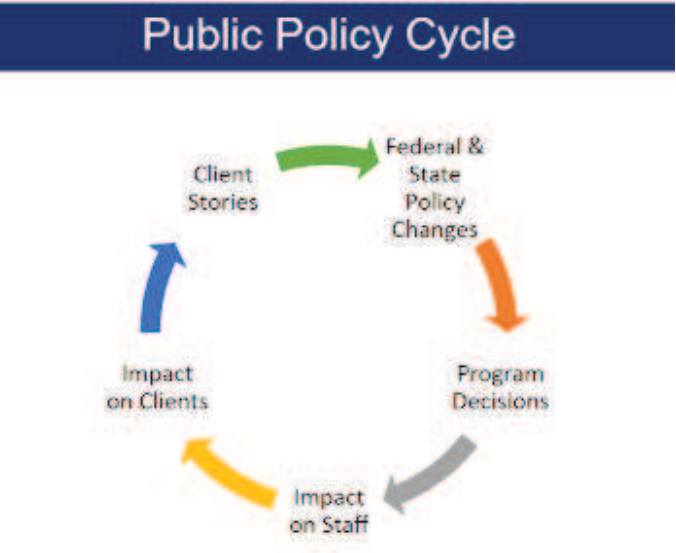


In their inaugural year at Crossnore, these programs have already served:

- 31 children in Homebuilders®
- 10 children in Bridging Families©

The Role of Public Policy

Brett A. Loftis, JD, our CEO, and Dr. Sarah Norris, Chief Program Officer, lead our agency’s public policy work. Crossnore’s program continuum has been designed in response to public policy. We are active in advocacy efforts to change the system so that children and families have what they need to be safe and together.



Clinical Services



It is well-known that mental health services are seriously underfunded and this is particularly the case for children. Crossnore is committed to serving children and families that have significant obstacles to accessing mental health treatment services. Through foundation grants and other donor-advised funds, Crossnore is able to provide some youth access to needed clinical services at low or no cost. We would always like to do more.

During the past year, Crossnore's clinical leadership team used clinical claims data to identify the number of treatment sessions most frequently needed for a successful course of mental health treatment. Having this information improves our ability to ask for support from the larger community, as we are able to inform our supporters about the true cost of treatment for one child. We are also better able to plan for the number of children we will be able to serve at low or no cost each year. Finally, this data has helped us to more accurately assess the gap between service costs and reimbursements rates. Using clinical claims data to inform our clinical and business practices has helped our clinical department to become even stronger in Fiscal Year 2022.

Academic Growth Metrics

Academic achievement is often interrupted when a child enters foster care. Our goal is to help clients succeed in all ways while with us. As a part of this work, in FY22, Crossnore continued to partner with the Winston-Salem Forsyth County School system to provide tutoring services for the children in our care.



At entrance to our programs:

- **74% of children tested below average for reading**
- **91% of children tested below average for math**

At post testing as a result of Crossnore's tutoring program:

In Reading:

- **13% of children improved more than one full grade level**
- **69% of children improved at least one full grade level**
- **18% of children stayed the same**
- **0% decreased in academic performance**

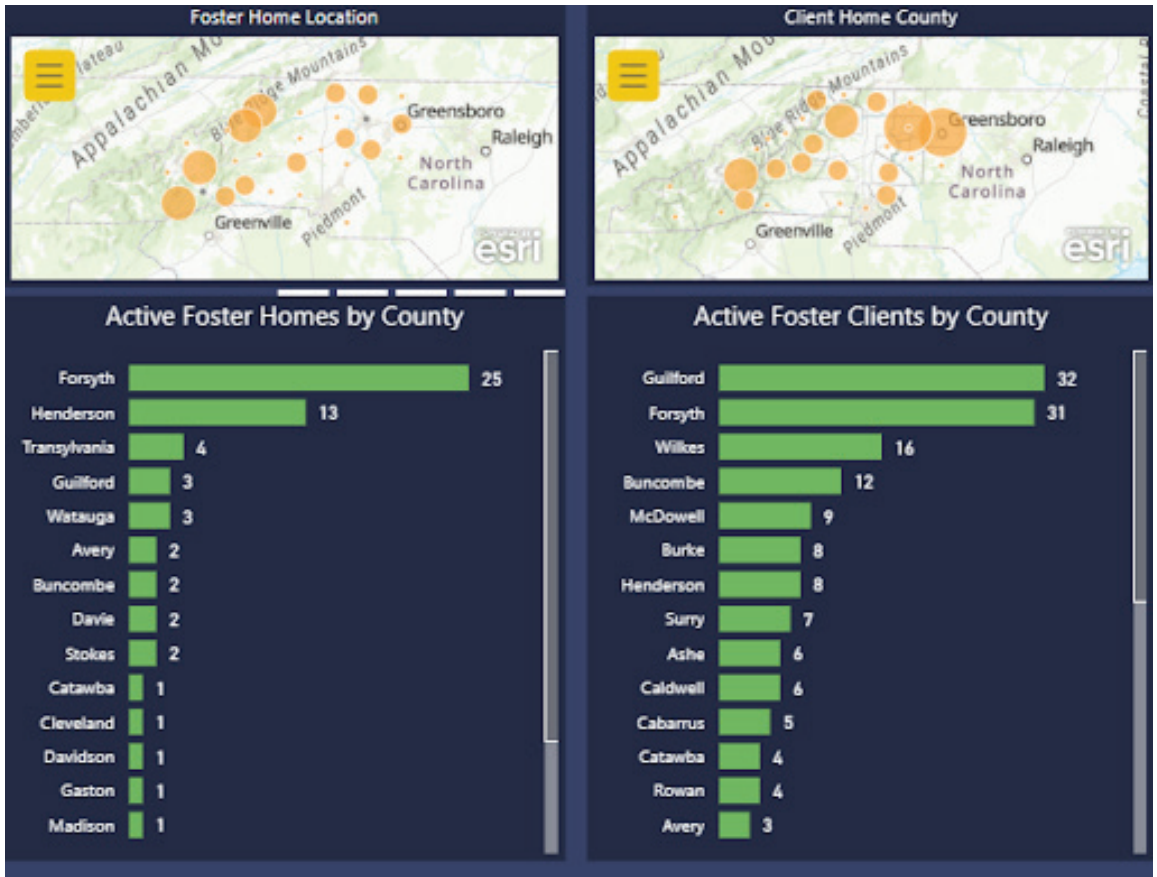
In Math:

- **5% of children improved more than one full grade level**
- **78% of children improved at least one full grade level**
- **16% of children stayed the same**
- **0% decreased in academic performance**

In FY23 Crossnore is excited to add an educational transitional coordinator to its team. This role will be housed within the WSFCS school system and will ensure children who exit our services are successfully transitioned to their new school upon discharge. This position will continue to help our client's academic growth!

Matching Foster Homes with Referrals

Data is a powerful tool when helping children find foster homes close to where their families of origin live. While there are multiple factors that inform the best placement for a child or sibling set who must be placed in foster care, proximity to their home community is ideal. Crossnore is paying close attention to where our placements come from as we participate in proactive recruitment of foster families across North Carolina. In Fiscal Year 2023, we look forward to evaluating other demographics that lead to strong matches between referrals and foster homes.



Preparing Clients for Success through Program Structure

In August of 2022 Crossnore aligned its campus-based foster care and Youth Independent Living programs on its Winston-Salem and Avery County campuses under one director on each campus. After reviewing data, the team learned that clients who transitioned to our Youth Independent Living program from our campus-based foster care program are more successful than referrals who come from external agencies.

While we still accept external referrals, we are more intentionally using campus-based foster care to prepare youth for independent living while in an environment that has more built in support. For example, clients are coached on how to administer their own medications and/or learn to prepare meals so that they are ready to be successful as young adults living independently.



Spotlight: Recreation and Spiritual Life

In our 2021 client survey, we heard that our residential clients wanted more fun and recreational activities. As a direct response to our clients' feedback, Crossnore was able to create a new role on our Winston-Salem campus, Spiritual Life & Recreation Coordinator.



Megan Boyles has taken that role to a level we could never have expected. She has created great connections with host churches throughout the community, gone on fun trips to places like the White Water Center, did an “Amazing Race” throughout downtown Winston-Salem in collaboration with downtown businesses, and collaborated with the educational and clinical departments to help prepare our clients for real life situations they are facing. Without our clients' feedback we would not have made this important investment!

External Reviews

External reviews are an important part of our agency's PQI process. We are grateful for the positive feedback and praise we received from our oversight bodies. Results from these reviews are evaluated by leadership and additional PQI strategies are initiated, as needed.

- In November 2022 Crossnore's child welfare programs were reviewed by Mecklenburg County Department of Social Services. Plans of correction were accepted and put into place for all identified opportunities for improvement.
- In October 2022 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 April 2022 Crossnore's mental health services were monitored through a post payment review by Sandhills Center. Plans of correction were accepted and put into place for all identified opportunities for improvement.
- In December 2021 Crossnore's mental health services were monitored through a post payment review by VayaHealth. Plans of correction were accepted and put into place for all identified opportunities for improvement.



Spotlight: Care Management Agency

In August of 2022 Crossnore was certified by the National Committee for Quality Assurance (NCQA) and the Department of Health and Human Services Division of Health Benefits as a Care Management Agency (CMA). The certification process was rigorous and Crossnore was one of the first agencies to be certified in the entire state. Crossnore's team began providing care management services across western NC on December 1, 2022 in partnership with three of the state's managed care organizations: Sandhills Center, VayaHealth, and Partners Behavioral Health.



Diversity, Equity, Inclusion and Belonging

In June of 2020 Crossnore published a statement about its commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion. During FY 22, Crossnore worked with Dr. William Lewis and Willhouse Global to move our commitment from words to action by creating alignment between our DEI priorities to our strategic plan, curation of a leadership retreat and offering a series of Facilitating Brave Conversations workshops. Crossnore's DEIB team also hosted a Celebrating Black Authors and Their Stories Panel and a Bias Training Series for employees throughout the organization.



“Crossnore wants to create a safe and supportive space that welcomes and values everyone’s unique experience and authentic self. We stand against discrimination on any basis including, but not limited to, race, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity and expression, age, physical ability, nationality, socio-economic status, religious beliefs, and any other characteristics that are a part of our identity. It is critical that we prepare our team to meet our clients where they are. Understanding and embracing their intersectionalities are key. DEIB is our central lens in all of our strategies and planning.”

- Angela Woods, JD, MBA
Chief Operations Officer

Facilities

Crossnore’s facilities team works incredibly hard to keep our regular programs and service lines up and running. In addition, our teams have overseen many large-scale projects to help support the launch of our new service lines.

- Miracle Grounds Coffee Shop & Cafe on our Avery campus was able to expand their menu offerings to our customers with the addition of a new hood, a larger cooking area, and computer ordering system.
- Crossnore is transforming homes on our Winston-Salem campus that have been historically used for staff into Bridging Families homes. These homes are being renovated and will create a neighborhood of families supporting large sibling sets and their families as they prepare to reunify.



Left: Avery campus Facilities Team



Right: Winston-Salem campus Facilities Team



Finance and IT

Finance: This year Teresa Huffman, CFO, has reworked her department to ensure the team is designed to meet the needs of a growing organization. Particular emphasis was placed on creating a role that helps programs eliminate waste and minimize expenses.



Information Technology (IT): IT is a critical part of our agency’s infrastructure. This year we were able to create a new position, Senior EHR System Administrator, as an investment in our software infrastructure to prepare a pathway, strategy, and workflows needed for value-based contracting and new service lines. Our Senior Information Operations Manager has also spent a great deal of time upgrading our hardware and ensuring staff have what they need to provide the services we offer to children and families across North Carolina.

Human Resources

Like many companies, Crossnore has experienced an increase in turnover this year in the wake of the pandemic. As we go into FY 23, we are trying new ways to invest in staff retention.

How We’re Investing In Our Staff:

- Pay Bands for all positions were reviewed. Our current average annual salary is \$52,617, an **11.9%** increase compared to last year.
- This past year we focused on pay adjustments for all Cottage Parents, Resident Advisors, and Bridge Parents (64 total), who received an average increase of **10.84%**.
- **28** new positions were created to support new and ongoing programming.
- **37** employees were internally promoted or transferred to new positions with increased opportunity.
- We have continued implementing our new Human Resources Information System (HRIS). This system has increased efficiency and employee access to information. This past year we implemented the performance management, benefits election, peer recognition, and learning management platforms. Upon the launch of our recognition platform, staff shared agency-wide recognition for one another more than **200** times in the first two months.
- The growth of our HR team includes **two** new positions with specific focus areas on Benefits and Compliance. Our two new staff, along with the current HR team members, have all been integral in implementing our new technologies. These two roles were created in response to staff surveys and external reviews.



Melissa McIntyre


WAS RECOGNIZED FOR:

EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE

child/family focused, understands triggers, builds relationships with others, positive attitude towards job, energy, enthusiasm, accepts feedback appropriately, presents a positive, helpful, and professional image of agency in appearance and attitude, cooperates with others.

ON NOVEMBER 15, 2022 BY MIKAYLA NELSON FOR:

"Child and family focused, positive attitude about the job, energy and enthusiasm" doesn't even come close to fully describing your dedication to serving our kids! I appreciate all of the support and hard work you have been doing with our kiddos, as they work through their trauma. You are valued and appreciated!"



Chenelle Wiles


WAS RECOGNIZED FOR:

SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

Helping others be successful, spending time supporting and teaching others.

ON OCTOBER 07, 2022 BY ELIZABETH SHELF FOR:

"Chanelle does a great job with creating a safe space for her students to have open and honest dialogue. Chanelle facilitates creative house meeting while encouraging and supporting healthy communication/relationships."



Sandy Turja-Olivares

WAS RECOGNIZED FOR:

SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

Helping others be successful, spending time supporting and teaching others.

ON OCTOBER 17, 2022 BY KACY CARTER FOR:

"Thank you so much for your help with the TRC event. The food was amazing, but you all went above and beyond with your attention to detail and attentiveness!"

Spotlight: Dietary Services

Our Dietary Services Team made many lasting safety changes as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. During the first year of the pandemic they changed the way they feed our clients by instituting masking, social distancing, proactive preparation for quarantines and food supply shortages, and resourcing all locations with cleaning and sanitizing products.

During this past fiscal year, clients began eating together in our dining halls again. In order to continue safety, disposable plates and wrapped silverware were used to reduce contact. Extra attention is paid to sanitizing bathrooms, tables, and door handles to ensure our group living environment stays safe.



Development

During FY 22 Crossnore’s team:

- Increased membership in the Hope Society by 12% .
- Increased number of major gifts (\$10,000+ annually) by 28% .
- Increased new donors to Crossnore by 12% , a total of 730 new donors!

Nearly 70% of American adults do not have a Will. Crossnore has partnered with FreeWill so our donors can more easily and securely create a free estate plan that is tailored to meet their needs. In 2022, 23 total bequests were created using the FreeWill software with more than \$2.1 million in estimated gifts to the organization.



"It has been great reconnecting in person with so many Crossnore friends in this state and beyond. One thing is for certain—interest in and love for this organization has never been stronger! Crossnore donors are helping make so many wonderful things possible for North Carolina children and families. More than \$7.6 million dollars was given in 2022 to support the work we are doing to strengthen our communities and rebuild the essential idea of home."

-Caroline Hart, CFRE
Chief External Relations Officer and Deputy Director

Spotlight: First Time Donor

First time donor to Crossnore Communities for Children, Judy B. Nye, says that she had heard of Crossnore and was familiar with our work, but it was a tour of the Avery Campus that compelled her to make her first contribution.

"I was amazed by the passionate commitment of the Crossnore employees during my tour. I have always had a heart for children, but hearing about the new Bridging Families Program© had a tremendous effect on me. [I was impressed by] the focus on preparation to successfully reunite children with their families, if possible. While it was a delight to hear about ‘The Bird Cage,’ I recognized the magnitude of children coming to Crossnore in crisis. [From the Bird Cage or Treehouse, Winston-Salem’s campus equivalent] they are given something of their own—their own bed linens, toiletries, clothes, and shoes. Children are accepted the way they are—nurtured, not judged. Crossnore is a place for [children in foster care] to continue maturing in a safe environment after they age out of foster care."



Fostering Communities

Fostering Communities works to shift the landscape of foster care to include the whole community. We recognize the holistic support of foster parents and the children in their homes leads to healthier and more successful foster care outcomes.

- This year, as a part of Fostering Communities, Crossnore connected with
- **10** Host Churches
 - **26** Partner Churches
 - **64** Identified Prospect Churches
 - **85** groups through conferences, speaking engagements, and awareness events

Fostering communities also received in-kind donations to support children and families in our care valuing **\$136,569!**



Miracle Heights Adventures

Miracle Heights Adventures engages groups in experiential learning activities that embody the spirit of adventure, build resilience, and empower collective success.

- In the first fully public fiscal year of operation, Miracle Heights Adventures worked with **1,952** participants from across the region.
- MHA experienced **699%** growth in income between FY 2022 and the year prior.
- Through Discover Scholarships, we were able to provide adventure-based counseling to **73** Crossnore clients in FY 2022.



Communications

Goal:

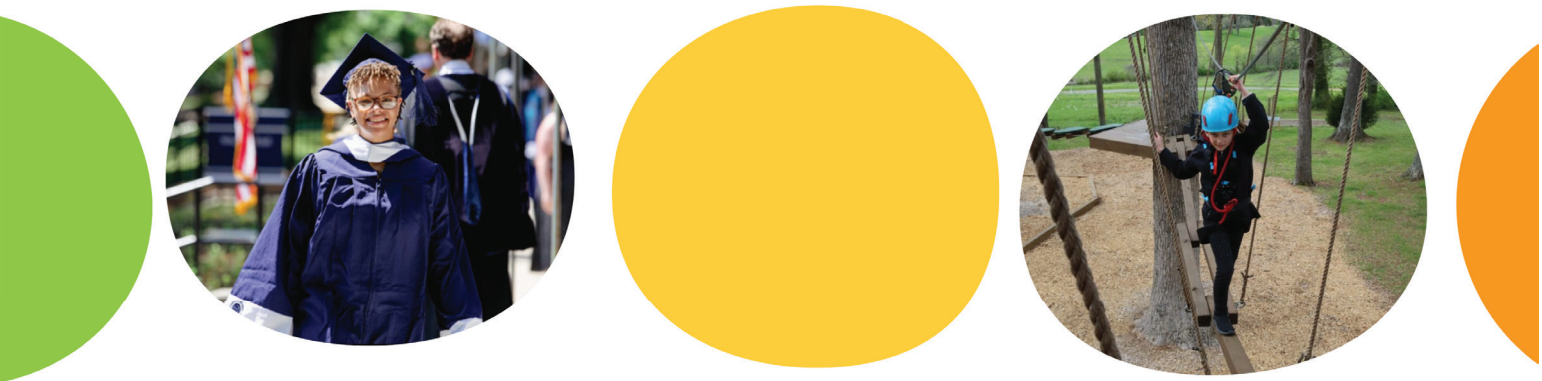
Grow the Crossnore brand as the regional leader in high quality, holistic child welfare services, and innovative organizational training and consulting.

Outcomes:

- Successfully led the development of a new website for Crossnore Communities for Children.
- Grew the average number of monthly website visitors to **9,209**.
- Increased our total social media followers to **16,205**.
- Increased email subscribers to **5,499**.
- Achieved an open rate of **44.33%** for our monthly e-newsletter (industry standard is 31.7%)



The way home.



Board of Trustees

- An average of **81%** of the Board participated in all four Board meetings in 2022
- **100%** of the Board made a contribution to Crossnore in 2022
- **63%** of the Board participated in a donor cultivation event or activity in 2022



Trustee Feature: Kim Barnhardt

Although Kim Barnhardt’s volunteer name badge only states her name, there’s a joke around here that it should really say “Volunteer Queen.” After retiring from 18 years of nursing, Kim is a staple on our Avery campus, always finding ways to serve our staff and children. She is also a valued member of Crossnore’s Board of Trustees.

Kim is also our Birdcage Sorter Organizer Beautifier Extraordinaire. The “Birdcage” is our storage and store area on our Avery campus where cottage parents can bring children to get what they need. There are many sections to the Birdcage including necessities and

toiletries, clothing, winter coats and hats, bedding, school uniforms, books, craft supplies, baby and toddler supplies, seasonal items, and more. Our young ladies’ favorite area is the prom section where they can pick out a beautiful dress in the spring. We also have a room full of new toys where cottage parents can pick out gifts for the children’s birthdays.

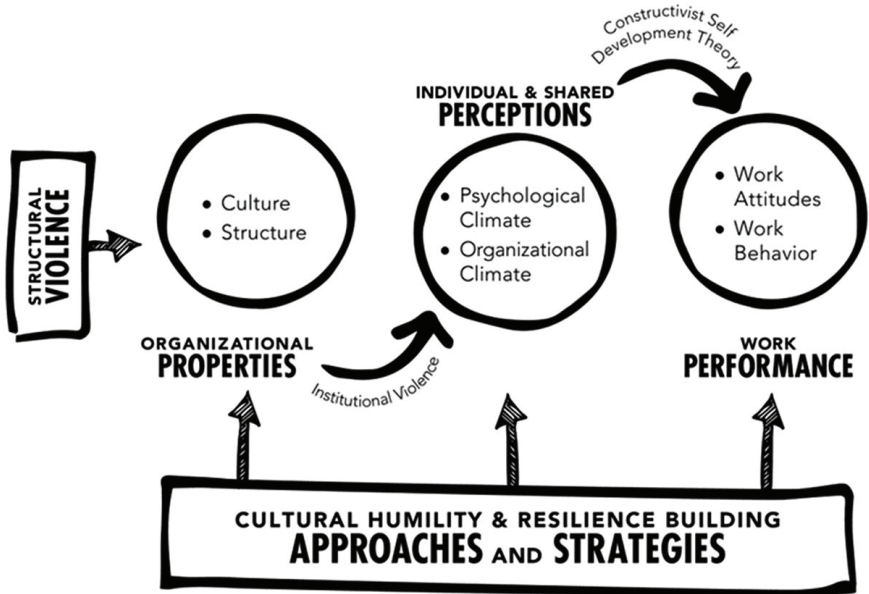
Kim organizes donations as they come in, sorting them, and putting them in the appropriate areas. She hangs all the clothes and orders them by sizes. She pulls the used items out and sends them down to the Sales Store, and reorganizes items on the racks and shelves after folks have come through to “shop.” “I like this nitty gritty work,” says Kim. “The staff do so much. They need to be able to get in and get out quickly, and they need to be able to focus on the children. If I can make it easier on them, I want to do that. It gives me joy.”

“These children are our future,” Kim states simply. “Crossnore is doing all they can to give them hope and a sanctuary. It has changed my perspective on the world. I know that I can help make a difference. I can help Crossnore make a difference. No matter how big or how small, all of us can make a difference.”

Center for Trauma Resilient Communities (CTRC)

Crossnore’s Center for Trauma Resilient Communities (CTRC) is pleased to announce the publication of its first research article. *The Trauma Resilient Communities (TRC) Model: A Theoretical Framework for Disrupting Structural Violence and Healing Communities* was written by Beatriz Vides, CTRC co-founder, Dr. Jennifer Middleton, CTRC Faculty, David McCorkle, CTRC co-founder, Shantel Crosby, CTRC faculty, Brett Loftis, CTRC co-founder, Rebecca Goggin, CTRC Program Coordinator, and Emily Edwards, School of Public Health and Information Sciences at the University of Louisville.

From the Abstract: “Grounded in theories on constructivist self-development, structural violence, and organizational social context, and utilizing a resilience framework, the Trauma Resilient Communities (TRC) Model aims to promote healing from the aftermath of trauma and violence within organizations and communities. Its goal is to improve organizational culture and climate through shared knowledge, understanding, language, practices, values, and culture to create safety for all stakeholders. The model’s theoretical framework is described, including a logic model addressing dynamics across all system levels.”



Read the full article by using this link or scanning the QR code below.

bit.ly/3NxWBpp



Acknowledgements

Thank you to the following individuals without whom this report would not be possible:

- All **our case responsible, program excellence, and administrative staff** who contribute to data entry and collection. The endless hours our staff spend collecting, logging, and reviewing data is invaluable. We could not do this work without their commitment to social responsibility and excellence.
- **Wes Furlong** of Telos Analytics gave so much of himself this year to our organization. His work on behalf of Crossnore, much beyond his contractual duties, has been incredibly impactful. The complexity of our data model could literally not have been achieved without him. We have truly integrated Wes into our team and look forward to continued partnerships for years to come.
- **Ryan Wilkins**, our Senior EHR Administrator, was an integral addition to our team this year. His partnership with existing staff helped us open new data sources to our data model. We are stronger because of this addition to our team.
- **Becky Keener**, Quality Coordinator, truly lived into her title this year with reviewing our data pipeline for quality and accuracy. She single-handedly helped keep the scores of data enterers aligned. We are grateful to Becky’s attention to detail and her commitment to our work.
- **Sarah Norris**, Chief Program Officer, for being our executive champion and supporting this work across her entire division and beyond.
- **Patrice Williams**, Communications Manager, for her support with design.
- All **agency leaders** who championed PQI in their respective areas.



Wes Furlong



Ryan Wilkins



Becky Keener



Meredith Martin

Goals for 2023

This upcoming year is the final year in our current strategic plan cycle. Our goal in 2023 will be to equip our leadership with the information they need to make data-informed decisions around our next strategic planning cycle.

We plan to do this by:

- Continuing to hone our data pipeline to ensure we have the right metrics.
- Expanding the use of data-driven decision making through Power BI dashboards to all three of Crossnore’s divisions: programs, operations, and external relations.
- Continue training our leadership on how to use data in their work effectively and efficiently.
- Evaluating our IT infrastructure to ensure we are prepared for a modern and innovative way of demonstrating the effectiveness of our growing service array.



Letter from the CEO

At Crossnore Communities for Children, Performance and Quality Improvement is an organization-wide process. It takes all of us—our presence, our skills, our plans, our failures, and our resilience—to make strides in this process. Each year, employees across our agency set departmental, team, and individual goals in service of our Strategic Plan. In monthly supervision, team meetings, leadership meetings, and annual reviews, the outcomes of these goals are studied. This is how we continue to serve children and families well.

I am grateful to each member of our staff who have contributed to the outcomes you read about in this report. I am also looking forward to what we will achieve in this final year of our current Strategic Plan. Utilizing the data we have collected has enabled us to innovate with new ways of working and, most importantly, new ways to serve children in western North Carolina.

In our fiscal year 2023, we will continue honing our data collection, as well as increasing our response to what the data is telling us. In this way, we will be able to meet any challenges that arise in the child welfare system and offer children and families the best services possible to help them on their journey to find home.

Blessings,

Brett A. Loftis, JD
Chief Executive Officer





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