

2024 ANNUAL REPORT



Creating communities free of family violence.

SYNERGY'S 2024 IMPACT

Synergy's vision and mission to end family violence starts by taking care of the most vulnerable individuals in their moments of crisis. We know that when trauma is not addressed, survivors become more anxious and more isolated, and as other symptoms appear, the uphill climb to resiliency becomes harder.

This year we saw overall increases in the number of children, teens and families in need of mental health and domestic violence services. The patient to provider ratio, especially in Platte County, remains one of the largest issues we are working to solve with waitlists and crisis calls for mental health and domestic violence services continuing to grow.

program & service highlights

- **Platte County Children's Services Fund:**

Synergy led a Coalition of agencies and community members to pass the Platte County Children's Services Fund ballot measure by 56% on November 5, 2024. The Platte County Commission passed an order to block its implementation and a lawsuit was filed on February 19, 2025 to overturn the order.



- **Domestic Violence Offender Treatment:**

Synergy has become known across Missouri for its excellence in treating domestic violence offenders. Numerous Missouri counties are now referring offenders to this program. As the program continues to grow, the complexities of telehealth, communication, and data management will be addressed.

- **Succession Planning:** Synergy board members set a framework to begin a transition to new leadership in late 2025 or early 2026 when co-executive directors, Robin Winner and Dennis Meier retire.

- **Capital Campaign:** The \$15.8 million campaign to construct the Forest Hill Village campus and build financial reserves progressed well. At the end of 2024, the total amount committed was \$14.3 million.

- **Clinical Training and Supervision Partnership:** To bring relief to the long waiting lists for mental health counseling, Synergy began a partnership with the University of Missouri-Kansas City (UMKC) to train first-year clinical practicum students from UMKC. These students require more supervision and training than interns or post graduate students, however they will benefit from earlier field experience.

- **Youth Services:** Two housing navigators started in 2025 to support youth ages 18-24 to find sustainable housing. The funding is through the Youth Homelessness Demonstration Project grant with the Department of Housing and Urban Development.



impact stats



27,971

clients served through residential, outreach, clinical and school-based programming and services.



61,455

nights of safety were provided to children, youth, individuals and families in our residential program.



64,013

hours of service provided to our Kansas City community through our programming.



FOREST HILL PROJECT

In March of 2024, we broke ground on the Forest Hill Village, an apartment community for domestic violence survivors and their families. The project is estimated to be completed in July of 2025, and will feature eighteen 2-, 3-, and 4-bedroom apartments. The complex will feature 24/7 on-site staffing to provide supportive services and assistance to the families living in the apartments.

While living in the apartments, clients will pay up to 30% of their earnings for rent and utilities, to be placed into a savings account to serve as a “nest-egg” to use when they transition to independence. The residents will have access to case management and therapy services, while learning skills to build independence prior to moving on from our shelter programs. Residents will be assisted in furthering their education and employment training, securing gainful employment, quality childcare, food and household needs, transportation, and health care.

The program model is based on the best-practice design approved by the CDC for survivors of domestic violence and their families. Individuals will be invited into the program following careful vetting of their housing needs and commitment towards improving their life and the lives of their children. The average stay will be two years or whenever the family is ready to transition to independence.

With many years of work in this arena, we understand that this transitional housing model is truly life-saving and transformational in overcoming generational family violence and chronic homelessness. We see survivors become safe today and strong tomorrow as they become resilient and independent, changing their lives and their children’s futures.



RESOLVE CRISIS

Devin's Story

Devin*, 20, was found sleeping behind an auto parts store during a routine Street Outreach outing; a task our Street Outreach team does regularly to identify and help unhoused youth throughout the Kansas City metro. After connecting with our team members, Devin shared that he had severed ties with his family, child, and the child's mother. Not ready to enter a shelter, the Street Outreach team provided him with a tent and essential outdoor gear, reassuring Devin that he could reach out if he needed additional help.

Our Street Outreach team stayed connected with Devin, who began working to reconnect with his loved ones, create a safety plan, and re-engage in his role as a father. Devin would frequently reach out to his case manager for guidance in following his safety plan and working to independently complete tasks such as obtaining his Social Security card and finding a job.

Devin has also worked to foster a positive, platonic relationship with his child's mother and has shown remarkable determination to change his life. With our Street Outreach team's support, he has resumed working and is staying with a friend, no longer sleeping outside the auto parts store. He eagerly awaits his housing voucher and looks forward to having a stable home where he can spend quality time with his son.

** Names have been changed to protect the identity of the individuals.*

Did you know...? In 2024, our Street Outreach Services team **distributed 14,006 survival items** to unhoused youth in the Kansas City metro.



programs

Crisis Hotlines: Children 816-321-7060, Youth 816-741-8700, Domestic Violence 816-321-7050
Compassionate operators provide emotional support and referrals to shelters and other community resources for victims of family violence.

Safe Place: 816-505-4811
A network of sites throughout the community to connect youth in danger with safe shelter or other assistance.

Street Outreach: 816-204-6747
A collaboration between Synergy and partner agencies to provide basic necessities and assist homeless young people in reaching educational, vocational and housing goals.

BridgeSPAN & Medical/Legal Advocacy: 816-321-7050
BridgeSPAN provides hospital-based domestic violence intervention & support services, while medical and legal advocates guide survivors through the often complex medical and legal systems.

PROVIDE SAFETY



Molly's Story

Molly*, and her two-year-old daughter became homeless after Molly's mother was evicted from their home. Her mother told her that, as an adult and mother herself, Molly would need to find her own housing for her and her daughter.

As a high school senior, she did not have much money saved to support herself and her daughter, as she could only work on the weekends when childcare was available. Despite these challenges, Molly was determined to take care of her daughter and finish high school. For a while, the two relied on sleeping on friends' couches until she learned about Synergy's Maternity Group Home. Molly was accepted into the program and for the first time since having her child, she and her daughter did not have to share a room.

With stable housing and help from our program staff, Molly was connected to childcare for her daughter and could focus on her studies. She successfully earned her high school diploma and began attending MCC Maple Woods. Our case managers helped her secure a job and taught Molly financial life skills that eventually helped her purchase a car and transition into her own apartment.

Today, Molly continues to meet with her case managers and therapists to keep her on track so she and her daughter can have bright, independent futures.

** Names have been changed to protect the identity of the individuals.*

Did you know...? In 2024, our Transitional Living Program & Maternity Group Home provided **2,793 safe nights of sleep** to teens and children.

programs

Emergency Shelter

- **Synergy House: 816-741-8700**
Shelter and counseling for youth ages 12 to 18 who are in crisis due to abuse, family dysfunction, abandonment, homelessness or parental emergencies.
- **Domestic Violence Center: 816-321-7050** Emergency shelter and support services for adult domestic violence survivors and their children.
- **Children's Center: 816-321-7060**
A 16-week, attachment-based parenting program focused on building parent-child relationships after residing in a home where family violence was present.

Temporary Housing

- **Transitional Living: 816-505-4814**
18 months of stable housing, counseling, case management and support to enable youth and young families to transition from homelessness to self-sufficiency.
- **Rapid Rehousing: 816-398-1966**
Safe, stable housing and support services to enable domestic violence survivors and their children to escape abuse without becoming homeless.

PROMOTE HEALING

Jenny's Story

Jenny*, 15, was not unsure about disclosing her victimization during her first interview at the Children's Advocacy Center. She provided minimal details during the interview, and the team was unable to move forward without adequate evidence and probable cause.

Never pushing Jenny to share more than she was ready to, the interviewer assured her that she could return in the future if there were more details she was willing to share. The team member remained in contact with Jenny's mother throughout the following months, providing connections to support and assistance.

While working with a therapist, she began to feel comfortable and confident in returning to the Children's Advocacy Center for a follow-up interview. In her second interview, Jenny was able to provide more details and information about her abuse. The information she shared with our interviewer was provided to local law enforcement so they could respond and potentially pursue charges against the abuser.

Despite the uncertainty of whether charges will be brought forward, the additional interview and support from our advocates throughout the entire process has provided Jenny and her mother the opportunity to heal and grow.

** Names have been changed to protect the identity of the individuals.*

Did you know...? In 2024, the Children's Advocacy Center completed **342 forensic interviews**, helping children share their experiences in a healing and trauma-informed environment.



programs

Medical, Dental & Vision Care: 816-505-4865

Our on-site clinic is consciously designed and operated to overcome the barriers that prevent homeless and at-risk children and youth from accessing regular healthcare. A variety of services are provided utilizing collaborations between healthcare providers.

Mental Health & Counseling Services: 816-587-4100

A wide-range of counseling services to strengthen individuals and families and help them function in a healthy way including: Individual, Couple, Family & Group Counseling; Art, Movement, Music & Play Therapy; Other Behavioral Therapies.

School Based Integrated Services: 816-321-7470

Trauma informed services delivered in schools to help students overcome trauma and develop the social and emotional skills necessary to be a successful learner and reach their full potential.

Children's Advocacy Center: 816-321-7040

A multidisciplinary team approach to preventing, Investigating, prosecuting and providing healing services for child abuse victims. A collaboration between law enforcement, Children's Division and other child serving agencies to conduct forensic interviews and offer advocacy support to children and families who are navigating the child welfare system.

BUILD STRENGTH



Connor's Story

Connor's*, 18, journey with the Teen Parent Support group began during a difficult time when he, his child, and the child's mother were living in his car. His social anxiety and shyness, due to years of disappointment from the adults in his life, created significant barriers in his life. With the encouragement of our team, Connor began attending sessions, gradually building trust and connections with the staff and other fathers in the program.

Over time, his confidence grew, and today, his son is thriving in daycare, where he socializes well with other children. Connor secured a job with the help of our resources and continues to attend case management and therapy sessions. His determination and resilience are evident as he continues his journey towards stability and independence.

** Names have been changed to protect the identity of the individuals.*

Did you know...? In 2024, our Teen Parent Support Group helped 19 young mothers and fathers learn vital parenting and life skills.

EFFECT CHANGE

self-reflection in our Offenders Intervention Program

Throughout 2024, Offenders Intervention Program clients were asked to consider the impact of their abuse on their intimate partners. The group discussed how taking power and control away from their partners fractures their senses of individualism, safety, and ability to form relationships.

The activity helped the abusers grasp the gravity of their impact to form goals around remaining non-abusive. These goals and self-reflections help the abusers grow and continue to working towards living a violence free life; creating meaningful impact in their communities and in the lives of their children and future partners.

programs

Build Strength

- **Youth Resiliency Center:** 816-741-8700
A unique place to promote growth and healing for at-risk youth through: a clinic providing medical, mental, dental and vision services; support groups; computer lab and education center; creative arts center and recording studio; indoor basketball court and teaching kitchen; and center for homeless youth to eat, take a shower and do laundry.
- **Teen Parent Support:** 816-505-4816
Education, case management and mentoring for pregnant and parenting teens up to their 22nd birthday.

Effect Change

- **Offenders Intervention:** 816-505-4805
An intensive therapy experience that holds domestic violence offenders accountable for their behavior and equips them with the tools they need to choose alternatives to violence.

finances

revenue



- 79% Federal/State/Local Grants
- 11% Public Support & Events
- 6% Foundations & Trusts
- 1% Client & Insurance Fees
- 1% United Way
- 2% Other

expenses



- 85% Program Services
- 10% Management & General Admin
- 5% Fundraising

executive directors

Robin Winner
Co-Executive Director

Dennis Meier, Ph.D.
Co-Executive Director

board of directors

executive committee

Jim Caniglia, Chair
UMB Bank

Laure Christensen, Secretary
Park University

Ryan H. Powell, O.D., Vice Chair
Vision Source Eyecare

Cheryl Givens, Treasurer
Community Member

members at large

Michelle Brown,
CBIZ

Vanessa New,
North Kansas City Schools

Greg Personelli,
Argosy Casino Hotel & Spa

Teri Newhouse, CPA
Gladstone Auto Trim &
Upholstery

Tom Isenberg,
Community Member

Rachel Price
STINSON LLP

Tommy W. Taylor,
Polsinelli, Retired

Michael Russell,
Liberty Hospital Foundation

Cassie Dawalt,
Valera Health

Rosemary Salerno,
Aristocrat Realty

Dustin Kerr,
QuikTrip Corporation

Wayne Threatt,
WBT Strategy Consulting LLC

Michelle Lehrman,
American Century Investments

Johnny Waller Jr.
Community Volunteer

Ryan Miller,
Jackson County Prosecutor's
Office

resiliency board

Jennifer Berka,
Hollis + Miller Architects

Russell Love,
Park University

Jason Brummett,
First Federal Bank of Kansas City

Claire Rodgers,
City of Liberty

Jordan Chaplick,
MazumaCredit Union

Melissa Ware,
QuikTrip Corporation

Daniel Goodwin,
Olsson

Amy Washam,
Northwest Missouri State
University