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lehigh Valley Families Together Inc.

annual report 2021-2022

Providing In-home Intervention, Reunification, Placement Transition and Foster Care

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# Message from the CEO

The past year was challenging in many ways. COVID continued to be problematic with staff and client exposure occurring regularly. This created some staff shortages and impacted billing as cancellations were elevated.  
The biggest impact had to do with a limited number of job applicants compared to the number received in past years.  There were times when no one applied even during peak graduation time, which historically has resulted in our largest number of resumes received. This seemed to be moderating somewhat towards the end of the fiscal year,  but the impact was felt in less revenue being generated and consequently led to a loss on the balance sheet.

I’m pleased to report that in spite of the above challenges, our delivery of services remained excellent. The statistics that are part of this report bear this out. We continued to utilize many organizations we have partnered with in the past in order to achieve the positive results. The list of those organizations is detailed later in this report.  
  
LVFT will be operational for twenty years in January 2023. It’s not hard to recall the early days when we started in my Emmaus home. Many of the themes established then continued through the years and are with us today. Looking at each family uniquely and establishing rapport are keys to our services. Partnering with community supports is another foundational concept that has run true to our mission. These will continue into our future.  
At the end of the calendar year I will be taking on a different role with our organization. While I will continue as President of the corporation, Allyn Benech will assume the CEO position. Allyn and I have steered LVFT administratively since our inception and going forward this will continue. She will manage the operations and I will assist her as necessary. We are both looking forward to this realignment as change leads to agencies remaining vibrant with strong vitality. I am confident this will be the case with LVFT.

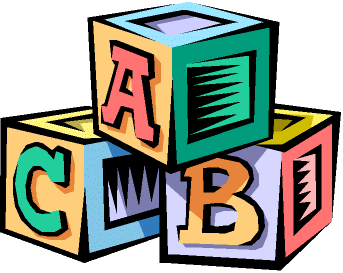
President, CEO and Family Worker  
  
Steven C. Brong

# Community Linkages

During the past year, Lehigh Valley Families Together has worked with the following community agencies, linking our families with these nearby resources in order to facilitate supportive connections.

**Food**

* Anonymous Donor
* Catholic Charities
* Easton Area Neighborhood Center
* New Bethany Ministries
* Pathways
* Project of Easton
* Salvation Army
* SNAP
* WIC



**Day Care/Education/Employment**

* ABA Support Services
* Allentown School District
* Bethlehem Area School District
* Boys and Girls Club – Allentown
* Bright Hope
* CareerLink
* Central Catholic High School
* Charter Schools
* Colonial Academy
* Colonial Intermediate Unit
* Early HeadStart
* Early Intervention
* East Penn School District
* Easter Seals
* Easton Area School District
* Gloria De La Cruz Daycare Center
* Good Shepherd
* Head Start
* Lehigh Carbon Community College
* Lehigh Carbon Intermediate Units 20 & 21
* Lehigh Valley Child Care Center
* Lidl
* Northampton School District
* Parkland School District
* Perfect Fit
* Project of Easton – Fowler Literacy Center
* Office of Vocational Rehabilitation (OVR)
* Safe Start
* Title XX
* Third Street Alliance
* Turkey Hill
* Unconditional Childcare
* Wendy’s
* Whitehall/Coplay School District
* Wilson Area School District

**Supplies and Housing Assistance**

* Allentown Housing Authority
* Bethlehem Housing Authority
* Bright Hope
* CACLV
* Catholic Charities
* Center for Independent Living
* Conference of Churches
* Easton Area Neighborhood Center
* Easton Housing Authority
* ERAP Program
* Help Choice Housing Program
* Hispanic American Organization
* Lehigh County Conference of Churches
* Lehigh County Housing Authority
* Lehigh University Girl’s Field Hockey Team
* Lehigh Valley Outreach Depot
* Life Choices
* LIHEAP
* Mary’s Shelter - Cay Galgon Center
* Met-Ed
* Morning Call Angels
* New Bethany Ministries-Restoration Housing Apartments
* Northampton County Housing Authority
* PA Department of Public Welfare
* Pathways Housing Assistance
* Pinebrook Family Answers Reentry Program
* PPL “On Track”
* PPL Wrap Program
* Project of Easton
* Roof Over Program
* Safe Harbor
* Salvation Army
* Sixth Street Shelter
* The Mill
* Turning Point
* UGI
* Valley Housing Development Corporation
* WIC

**Miscellaneous**

* Allentown Public Library
* Animal Food Bank of Lehigh Valley
* Be Safe After-School Program
* Boys and Girls Club
* CCIS – Title XX Office
* Children’s Home of Easton
* Children’s Home of Reading
* Community Action Committee of Lehigh Valley
* Community Service Foundation
* Compassionate Friends
* Concern
* Crime Victims Council
* Diakon
* Domestic Relations
* Justice Works
* Lehigh County Adult Probation & Parole
* Lehigh County Court of Common Pleas
* Lehigh County Family Court
* Lehigh County PFA Office
* Lehigh Valley Chamber of Commerce
* LVHN Bereavement Services
* Metro Plus
* North Penn Legal Services
* Northampton & Lehigh County Custody Offices
* Northampton County Assistance Office
* Northampton County Court of Common Pleas
* Northampton County Juvenile Court
* Northampton County PFA Office
* Northampton County Prison
* Northampton County Probation Office
* Northampton County Veterans Affairs
* Outreach Depot
* PFA Court Lehigh & Northampton County
* PA Department of Human Services
* Penn DOT
* Pennsylvania Vital Statistics
* Pretrial Services
* Project Child
* Public Defender’s Office of Lehigh County
* Pyramid
* Social Security Administration
* Toys for Tots
* Valley Youth House – Truancy Intervention Program
* Vital Records

**Counseling**

* ABA Support Services
* Access Services
* Averhealth
* Allentown, CTC Methadone Clinic
* Ann Friedenheim
* Berks Counseling Center
* Bet-El Counseling Services
* Bethlehem Counseling Services
* Blue Mountain Psychiatry
* Cedar Point Family Services
* Change on Third
* Community Care Behavioral Health
* Concern
* Crime Victims Council
* Dr. Veronique Valliere
* Drug & Alcohol Intake, Lehigh and Northampton Counties
* Dynamic Counseling Associates
* Forensic Treatment Services
* Haven House Behavioral Health Services
* Hispanic American Organization
* Holcomb Behavioral Health
* Joanne Nigito – Play Therapy
* Jody Matthews
* Katie Coughlin & Associates
* KidsPeace Services
* KSMST
* Lehigh Valley Drug & Alcohol
* Lehigh Valley Family Health Center
* Life Guidance
* Magellan Behavioral Health
* MARS
* Merakey
* Methodist Family Services
* New Directions Treatment Services
* Northampton County Drug & Alcohol
* Northeast Treatment Center
* Omni Health Services
* PA Forensics
* PA Mentor
* Pathway to Healing
* Pinebrook Family Answers
* St. Luke’s Behavioral Health
* Step by Step
* Turning Point – Domestic Violence Counseling
* Valley Youth House
* White Deer Run

**Shelters and Housing**

* 3rd Street Alliance for Women & Children
* 6th Street Shelter
* Allentown Rescue Mission
* American Red Cross
* Mary’s Shelter
* New Bethany Ministries
* Northampton County Housing Authority
* Northampton & Lehigh County Prison
* Pathways Rental Assistance
* Safe Harbor
* Salisbury House-Behavioral Health
* Salvation Army Hospitality House
* Step by Step
* Turning Point
* Valley Youth House Shelter

**Medical and Dental**

* A Pathway to Healing
* Allentown CTC Methadone Clinic
* Allentown Health Bureau
* AmeriHealth Caritas
* AmeriHealth Mercy
* Autism Support Group
* Averhealth
* CHIP
* CHOP
* Children’s Dental Association
* D & A Intake
* Dental Dreams
* Easton Hospital
* Gateway
* Good Shepherd
* Health Network Labs
* Kidscare Union Station in Easton
* Kidspeace Hospital
* Lehigh Valley Hospital Network
* Metro Plus
* Muhlenberg Hospital
* Neighborhood Health Centers
* New Directions
* Outpatient Pediatrics-LVH
* PA Department of Public Welfare
* Path Nurse
* Planned Parenthood
* Pyramid Drug & Alcohol
* Quest Diagnostics
* St. Christopher’s Children’s Hospital
* St. Luke’s Family Practice Center
* St. Luke’s Hospital
* St. Luke’s Kids Care
* Visiting Nurses Association
* Whitehall Dentistry

# Family Stories

## Elaine

We received a referral for a family with domestic violence issues that were negatively impacting their six-year-old daughter Elaine, The parents Alan and Stephanie were actively involved with methamphetamines, creating an unsafe environment which ultimately led to the placement of their daughter in foster care with an LVFT home.

We attempted to work with both parents until Alan was arrested for distributing drugs. This acted as a wake-up call for Stephanie. She entered into forensic treatment for protective parenting and made a commitment to work towards gaining visitations with Elaine. LVFT provided encouragement to stay the course during the times she became frustrated with the pace of treatment. Eventually, she was allowed increased visitation that included Elaine spending time in the family home. We supervised some of the visits which clearly demonstrated the bond between mother and child. There were challenges in getting Stephanie to learn how to parent her daughter instead of being her friend.

Stephanie started working a full-time job and recognized that she could become self-sustaining and independent from Alan. This gave her more confidence that she could raise Elaine on her own.

Today, Elaine and Stephanie are living on their own. Elaine is doing well in school, and Stephanie is working, which has balanced out her life with healthy, normal interactions. She has also entered into a relationship with someone who is far different than Alan. Stephanie remains free of drug use, and recognizes the major impact drugs previously had on her life as well as her daughter’s. Elaine is receiving play therapy due to the dysfuntion in her early years, and we believe with continuing treatment, will end up doing well and have a good life.

## steven

Steven, a seven-year-old boy, was referred by Northampton County Children, Youth and Families’ Division to LVFT in May 2019. He had been placed in foster care due to domestic violence between his mother and her paramour, as well as being physically abused by him. Steven was placed with Ms. Queen, an older single foster parent who already had two sisters ages five and six. He stayed with her for about ten months. Ms. Queen described him as nothing short of a pleasure in the home and was praised as a great student and a huge help to her.

Steven’s placement with Ms. Queen was halted after questions were raised about Steven having inappropriate relations with one of the sisters. When LVFT informed Ms. Queen of the allegations, she was heartbroken at the thought they could be true. Regardless of the validity, she was an active participant in helping Steven make the transition to the Goldsmith family, another licensed home with LVFT, and a family she herself referred to us. The move went as smoothly as possible in February 2020, with Ms. Queen remaining in contact with the family and Steven. She even provided respite care on occasion for the Goldsmiths.

Steven, now eight years old, was welcomed warmly into the Goldsmith family consisting of Jannette and Michael and their adult daughter Alison. The family had known of him beforehand, from interactions with their neighbor Ms. Queen. During his first year with the Goldsmiths, Steven connected well to all members of the family. Michael was a great male role model for Steven and the two bonded through activities of baking, cooking, exercising, and woodworking together. In school, Steven was noted as referring to Michael as “Dad” and Michael had begun to refer to Steven as “my son” when speaking in public. Steven was a bright student, loved by his peers and teachers. Working with Janette, he was able to improve his mathematics and enjoyed the time spent with her. Steven slowly began confiding to Alison about his feelings regarding his life and how he interpreted his experiences. He grew to trust and look up to her for support.

The placement was not without stress. The hardest struggle for Jannette and Michael was the constant feeling of hopelessness due to not being able to prevent Steven from being retraumatized by his biological mother. Steven had phone calls three times a week which were always described as “toxic.” His mother would fill him with empty promises and often passed the phone around between members of the family or complete strangers, not giving him her full attention during phone calls. And his mother changed phone numbers often, making it difficult for Steven to keep consistent contact. At times when there was no contact, the Goldsmiths reported Steven appeared to be in better spirits and his behavior improved. The more phone calls he had, the more regressive his behavior became around the home. He started lying and perfected the skill to the point that everyone believed the lies, leading them to defend Steven at great lengths, only to later learn they were deceived. In addition, Steven would have bed-wetting accidents after phone calls with his mother, and even had an accident on a car ride over a holiday weekend visiting family. Despite these complications, Janette and Michael did well in all their efforts to maintain consistent love, structure, and therapeutic services in caring for Steven.

In July of 2021, Steven’s case was transferred to the “Permanency Unit” through Northampton County Children, Youth and Families. Jannette and Michael were hopeful the new worker would see the negative impact the phone calls were having on Steven and would be able to reduce them. As Steven became involved with child preparation services, we learned that he would receive increased contact with his biological mother through weekly visits. Although Jannette and Michael were not in agreement, they did their best to support any connection between Steven and his mother. Their hearts broke at the effect the visits were having on Steven. After them, he was extremely agitated, disrespectful, and the lying ramped up. He eventually told Janette and Michael his mother had instructed him “not to trust the Goldsmiths, their home wasn’t his home, and don’t worry you are coming home soon, I’ve had it!”

By October of 2021, Steven had begun to separate himself from his mother and came to terms with the knowledge that she was lying to him about all the “progress” she was making to get him back. During one phone call, his mother pressed him by asking “if the court did not allow him to come home to her, who would be at fault?” Without hesitation, Steven was heard telling her he believed it would be her fault for not doing what she was supposed to do. Soon after, the new worker was able to decrease the phone call contact to one call per week. The positive impact this had on Steven’s demeanor was drastic. During the next several weeks, the lying lessened and there were no more accidents. The family was pleased with the joy they saw return in him.

In November of 2021, Jannette and Michael were approached by the County regarding adopting Steven. The couple considered it: they agreed Steven fit well with their family and was such a good kid. However, they felt the lying was a deal breaker for them. Over almost two years, the lies had caused a lot of hurt between family members. On his own, Steven approached Jannette and Michael and asked if they would adopt him. Janette was honest with him as she gently explained they couldn’t. Her reasoning was that they had come into foster care without the intention of adopting, even though they agreed he was a great kid. The other reason was because she would not allow contact with his biological mother. Despite how she felt, she was afraid she would not be able to go through with it as she did not want to prevent a connection between a mother and her son. Steven was sad but respected and understood Janette’s point of view.

As the new year started, so did another opportunity for the Goldsmiths to consider for keeping Steven in the family: the County offered an option called Subsidized Permanent Legal Custodianship . The main difference from adoption was that Steven’s mother would have until he was eighteen to file for custody and try to get him back. After a great deal of thought and discussion among their family members, Janette and Michael agreed they could not part ways with the young boy who had stolen their hearts for the last two years. They agreed to do SPLC as it would not take away any opportunity for mother and son to be reunited in the future if they could be. At the end of February 2022, just two days shy of Steven’s two-year anniversary with the Goldsmith’s, he officially became a part of their family!

## Amiyah

We began working with Amiyah and her 4 children through our Diversionary program. Amiyah needed emotional support, financial assistance, and parenting support since 3 of the 4 youngsters had special needs (2 mental health issues and 1 PICA). We began by establishing a solid relationship with Amiyah who has experienced periods of severe depression through her life. She agreed to see an Intensive Case Manager to assist her with maintaining services in this area of her health. We supported her in obtaining mental health services and an Individual Education Program for her boys including medication management. Although she struggled with her depressive symptoms and energy level, Amiyah always took care of her children. We counseled her through periods when she felt like an awful mother to realizing all of the strength she holds in managing her family’s needs and being there for them. An adult female family friend and Amiyah’s mother also resided in the home to help with childcare and support. When we realized Amiyah’s youngest daughter had PICA, eating things like batteries, chalk, pencil erasers, we walked through the process of speaking with the school, the pediatrician, and a developmental specialist to evaluate and make recommendations. Amiyah was vigilant in keeping dangerous items out of her daughter’s reach. We worked with the County to provide furniture for the household and connected Amiyah to the Easton Neighborhood Center who provided food, utility assistance and most importantly rental assistance to the family. Toward the end of our services, Amiyah’s paramour returned to the household after a successful long-term rehabilitation stay. We were happy to be able to leave the family more stable and connected to precious resources that can help them from here on out.

# Statistics

In-Home Services Families Served 2021 - 2022

Northampton County: 109 Families and Lehigh County: 22 Families

In-Home Services # of Children Served 2021 - 2022

Northampton County: 162 Children and Lehigh County: 72 Children

Foster Care Placements 2021 - 2022

Northampton County: 7 Children and Lehigh County: 4 Children

# Statement of Financial Position

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | | | | | **June 30,** | | | | | | | | | |
|  | | | | | **2022** | | |  | | | **2021** | | | |
| **ASSETS** | | | | |  | | |  | | |  | | | |
| Cash | | | | | $361,656 | | |  | | | $405,168 | | | |
| Accounts receivable | | | | | 38,403 | | |  | | | 57,007 | | | |
| Prepaid expenses | | | | | 10,421 | | |  | | | 11,049 | | | |
| Security deposit | | | | | 1,200 | | |  | | | 1,200 | | | |
| Property and equipment, net | | | | | 0 | | |  | | | 108 | | | |
| Total Assets | | | | | $411,680 | | |  | | | $474,532 | | | |
| **LIABILITIES** |  | | |  |  | | |  | | | |  | | | |
| Accounts payable |  | | |  | 7,242 | | |  | | | | 8,028 | | | |
| Accrued expenses |  | |  | | 22,281 | | |  | | | | 36,411 | | | |
| Total Assets |  | |  | | 29,523 | | |  | | | | 44,439 | | | |
|  |  | |  | |  | | |  | | | |  | | | |
| **NET ASSETS – UNRESTRICTED**  Undesignated  Board designated |  | |  | | 377,157  5,000 | | |  | | | | 425,093  5,000 | | | |
| Total Net Assets Without Donor Restrictions | |  |  | | 382,157 | | |  | | | | 430,093 | | | |
| Total Liabilities and Net Assets |  | |  | | $411,680 | | |  | | | | $474,532 | | | |
|  | | | | | | |  | | | | | | | |
| **REVENUE** | | | | | | |  | | |  | | | |  |
| Program Fees | | | | | | |  | | |  | | | |  |
| Lehigh County | | | | | | | $48,416 | | |  | | | | $72,919 |
| Northampton County | | | | | | | 532,139 | | |  | | | | 699,856 |
| Total Program Fees | | | | | | | 580,555 | | |  | | | | 772,775 |
|  | | | | | | |  | | |  | | | |  |
| Contributions of Cash | | | | | | | 163 | | |  | | | | 725 |
| Contributions of non-financial asets | | | | | | | 2,760 | | |  | | | | 5,648 |
| Interest | | | | | | | 132 | | |  | | | | 131 |
| Total Revenue | | | | | | | 583,610 | | |  | | | | 779,279 |
|  | | | | | | |  | | |  | | | |  |
| **Expenses** | | | | | | |  | | |  | | | |  |
| Program services | | | | | | | 556,314 | | |  | | | | 690,666 |
| Management and general | | | | | | | 75,232 | | |  | | | | 79,341 |
| Total Expenses | | | | | | | 631,546 | | |  | | | | 770,007 |
| **CHANGES IN NET ASSETS WITHOUT DONOR RESTRICTIONS** | | | | | | | (47,936) | | |  | | | | 9,272 |
| **UNRESTRICTED NET ASSETS, JULY 1** | | | | | | | 430,093 | | |  | | | | 420,821 |
| **UNRESTRICTED NET ASSETS, JUNE 30** | | | | | | | $382,157 | | |  | | | | $430,093 |
| **CASH FLOWS FROM OPERATING ACTIVITIES** | | | | | |  | | |  | | | |  | | |
| Cash received from program services | | | | | | $602,082 | | |  | | | | $790,432 | | |
| Cash received from interest income | | | | | | 132 | | |  | | | | 131 | | |
| Cash paid to suppliers and employees | | | | | | (645,726) | | |  | | | | (778,501) | | |
| Net Cash Provided by Operating Activities | | | | | | (43,512) | | |  | | | | 12,065 | | |

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **NET INCREASE IN CASH** | | (43,512) | | |  | | | 12,065 | | | |
|  | | |
| **CASH, JULY 1** | | | 405,168 | | |  | | | 393,103 | |
| **CASH, JUNE 30** |  | | | 361,656 | | |  | | | 405,168 | |

**Supplemental Disclosure of Cash Flow Information**

**Non Cash Operating Activities**

**In-Kind Contributions** $ 2,760 $5,648

**RECONCILIATION OF CHANGES IN NET ASSETS**

**TO NET CASH PROVIDED BY OPERATING ACTIVITIES**

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **CHANGES IN NET ASSETS** | $(47,936) |  | $9,272 |
| **RECONCILIATIONOF CHANGES IN NET ASSETS TO**  **NET CASH PROVIDED BY OPERATING ACTIVITIES** |  |  |  |
| Depreciation | 108 |  | 433 |
| Changes in operating assets and liabilities |  |  |  |
| Decrease (increase) in accounts receivable | 18,604 |  | 11,287 |
| Increase in prepaid expenses | 628 |  | 1,025 |
| (Decrease) increase in accounts payable | (786) |  | (7,424) |
| Increase in accrued expenses | (14,130) |  | (2,528) |
| NET CASH PROVIDED BY OPERATING ACTIVITIES | $(43,512) |  | $12,065 |

# Company Information

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