Families First

ANNUAL IMPACT REPORT

2025-2026



Message from the CEO

Dear Friends,

As Families First continues its 135-year legacy of strengthening families, we are navigating a changing and increasingly complex environment. Families face rising living costs, housing instability, mental health challenges, and barriers to essential resources, while nonprofits contend with funding uncertainty and growing demand.

We see these challenges clearly, and we are responding with focus and determination.

Our staff and Board are taking proactive steps to strengthen Families First for the future. We are:

- Investing in revenue-generating services to support long-term sustainability.
- Refining our strategic plan to align our goals with changing needs and resources.
- Building strong partnerships that allow us to leverage resources and expand our collective impact.
- Advancing *Navigating the Future*, our three-year, $3 million major gifts campaign to strengthen our financial foundation and meet the evolving needs of families.

These efforts are about more than weathering a difficult season. They are about building an organization that is stronger, more sustainable, and ready for what comes next.

I remain deeply optimistic about our future and grateful for the people who make this work possible. Our Board and donors continue to stand with us. Our partners bring invaluable expertise and resources. And our staff shows up every day with extraordinary dedication to the families we serve.

Together, we are moving forward with purpose, strengthening families, building resilience, and changing lives. Thank you for believing in Families First and for helping make this work possible.

With gratitude and hope,

Paula Moody

Paula M. Moody, LCSW, MS
Chief Executive Officer



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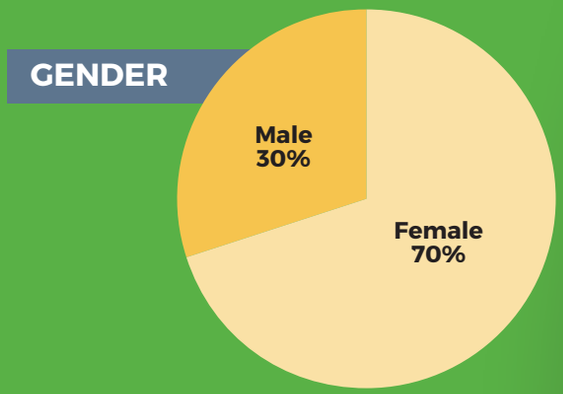
Elizabeth Somers
Community Volunteer

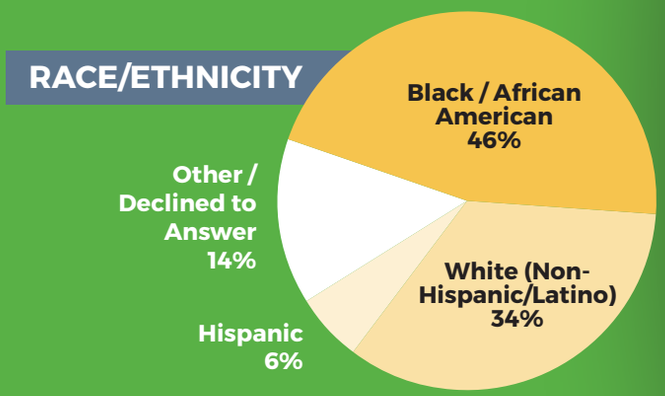
Michelle Stewart
Partner, ***King & Spalding, LLP***

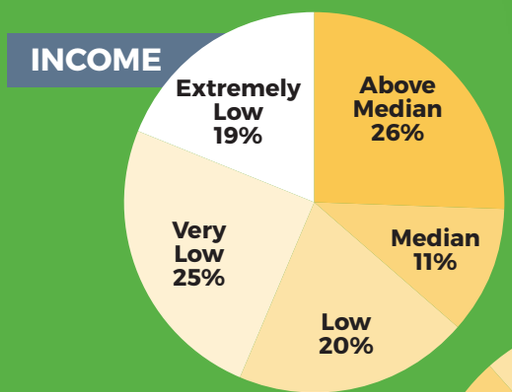
Damien Wilson
President, ***WD Advisors*** *and Head of* ***HBCU Brilliance Initiative***

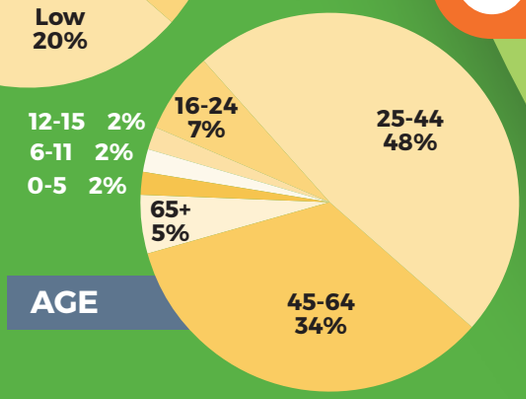
Our Impact in Georgia

In 2025-2026, Families First supported **12,977** children, youth, and adults through our programs. Among those who shared demographic information, two-thirds were women, nearly half identified as Black, and 64% were from low-income households.









Impact Areas

LUCY C. VANCE CENTER FOR BEHAVIORAL HEALTH

BEHAVIORAL HEALTH SERVICES
Counseling, Peer Support, Skill Building, & Case Management

COMMUNITY BASED PSYCHIATRIC SERVICES
Medication Management & Nursing

PARENTING & ADOPTION SUPPORT SERVICES

PARTNERS IN PARENTING
Co-Parenting Trainings & Curriculum Sales

PARENTING TIME
Co-Parenting Facilitation

GEORGIA CENTER FOR RESOURCES AND SUPPORT
Adoption, Guardianship, & Kinship Family Services

NATIONAL TRAINING & DEVELOPMENT CURRICULUM
Adoption, Foster Care, & Kinship Preparation Classes

NAVIGATOR SERVICES

COMMUNITY NAVIGATOR MODEL

NAVIGATOR 2-GEN MODEL
Chispa (Parents as First Teachers)
Teenage Pregnant & Parenting

Lucy C. Vance Center for Behavioral Health

The Lucy C. Vance Center for Behavioral Health helps individuals and families build resilience and express, process, understand, and cope with challenging behaviors and life events that affect quality of life. Many of the people we serve face chronic stress related to childhood trauma, family violence, health challenges, substance use, and housing instability.

Vance Center Impact

1,748
behavioral health counseling sessions provided

76%
of clients showed progress toward their treatment goals

Preparing the Next Generation of Behavioral Health Leaders

The Vance Center continues to strengthen the professional pipeline for behavioral health providers, giving emerging clinicians the chance to learn and serve alongside experienced professionals. This year, we hosted **4 master's-level interns, 5 pediatric psychiatry residents, and 2 pediatric psychiatry fellows**. We also employed two associate-licensed professional counselors, who both became fully Licensed Professional Counselors this year—ensuring families have access to well-trained, compassionate care.

Expanding Access Through Community Partnerships

Families First is extending behavioral health services beyond our walls by partnering with organizations that already serve families in their communities. This year, the Vance Center partnered with:

- **Grady Health System** — hosted their mobile primary care clinic
- **Latin American Association** — provided on-site behavioral health services to LAA families
- **Neighborhood Cooperative Ministries** — brought behavioral health support to families in Gwinnett through our Crisis to Career partnership
- **Morehouse School of Medicine** — hosted weekly psychiatry clinic serving children and young adults ages 4-21
- **YWCA – Phillis Wheatley Center** — partnered with the new center to provide behavioral health services to women at the Phillis Wheatley Center, opening in 2027
- **Internship Program** — trained the next generation of clinicians in collaboration with Agnes Scott College, Clark Atlanta University, Georgia State University, and the University of Georgia



Our Services

Intervention

- Behavioral Health Services: Counseling, Peer Support, Skill Building & Case Management
- Community-Based Psychiatric Services
- Medication Management & Nursing

Prevention

- Strengthening Resiliency
- Addressing Social Determinants of Health



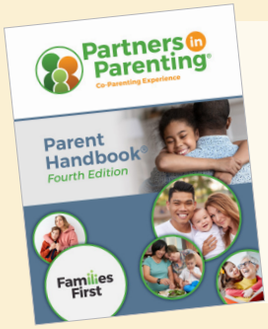
"I've really appreciated my time working with Families First. Talking through difficult issues and taking time for self-reflection has helped me move forward with confidence and courage. I've felt truly heard and well cared for throughout the experience. It has been a refreshing and rewarding experience that has inspired me to keep moving forward."

— Vance Center Client

Parenting & Adoption Support Services

Continuing our 135-year legacy of caring for children and families, Families First equips parents and caregivers with the knowledge, resources, and hands-on support they need to build stronger, more stable homes.





Championing Healthy Co-Parenting

Partners in Parenting is an evidence-informed co-parenting program that helps families experiencing divorce and parental separation put their children's well-being first. Through interactive education, parents build skills to communicate, manage conflict, and create stable, nurturing environments for their children.

This year:

918 parents completed Partners in Parenting, impacting **1,279 children**.

Families First secured a contract with **Cobb County Superior Court** to facilitate the co-parenting curriculum three times per month beginning in October 2025.

"I took this course on my own volition to become a better father, co-parent, and person, and I am so happy that I did. After just one four-hour class, I feel like a better man, father, co-parent, and overall person. I'm forever grateful for the support, professionalism, and dedication of the entire team."

— Partners in Parenting Client



Additional Parenting & Adoption Support Programs



Parenting Time: Access and Visitation provides education, resources, and case management to help parents navigate Georgia Access and Visitation laws, reduce conflict, and increase meaningful parenting time. Services include parenting education, mediation, parenting plans, and support with supervised visits.

This year:

258 individuals received Access and Visitation services.

235 group parenting sessions were held, exceeding the annual target of 205.

107 parents increased their parenting time.



Georgia Center for Resources & Support (GACARS) provides a comprehensive network of post-placement services for Georgia's adoptive, guardianship, kinship, and foster families. Families receive training, resources, referrals, and personalized support to help them navigate the challenges of caring for children who have experienced trauma, loss, and separation.

24,808 services delivered to adoptive, guardianship, kinship and foster families.

19,550 GACARS trainings were completed.

Launched ***Rooted in Resiliency***, a new podcast connecting families with resources and support.



NTDC Hub NTDC classes equip foster, kinship, and adoptive parents with essential skills and information to care for children who have experienced trauma, loss, and separation.

800 individuals successfully completed NTDC training.



Navigator Services



Families First's Navigators walk alongside families as they overcome challenges and build pathways toward long-term stability. Through individualized, wraparound support, each family works with a Navigator to develop a Family Care Plan with measurable goals and connections to resources for housing, basic needs, employment, education, behavioral health, and other community services.

"Whenever I hear my children laugh in the house, I know I did something right. They're not hungry, they're safe, and they're not depressed." - Tony

COMMUNITY NAVIGATOR

Community Navigators provide one-on-one support to help families overcome barriers and access the resources they need to thrive. Together, each client and Navigator develop a Family Care Plan focused on measurable goals, from securing safe housing and meeting basic needs to pursuing education, employment, and stronger family well-being.

462
households received wraparound Navigator Care

96%
of participants have safe housing

100%
of teens avoided an open Division of Family and Children Services case while enrolled

TEENAGE PREGNANT AND PARENTING PROGRAM (TAPP):

TAPP empowers young parents to build safe, strong families while creating a foundation for their own futures. Through education, coaching, and individualized support, TAPP promotes healthy pregnancies and births, newborn care, effective parenting, school retention, and on-time graduation. The program also supports family stability by helping young parents delay subsequent unplanned pregnancies and build the skills needed to thrive.



CHISPA

Meaning "spark" in Spanish, Chispa helps children ages 0–5 reach their full potential by equipping Spanish-speaking parents and caregivers with education, in-home guidance, and tools to support early childhood development. Using the evidence-based Parents as Teachers model, Chispa fosters strong family engagement and helps children build a solid foundation for school and lifelong success.

95%
of parents made good progress or achieved their parent interaction goal



LOVING *the* LEGACY

135 YEARS OF IMPACT

2026 Loving the Legacy Sizzle Reel

SCAN TO VIEW

On March 19, 2026, Families First gathered at the Atlanta History Center for Loving the Legacy, our cornerstone annual benefit and a celebration of our 135th anniversary. The evening honored the families, advocates, and community partners who have shaped our legacy since 1890 and celebrated the enduring impact of Families First.

The night highlighted what makes that impact possible: the resilience of the families we serve, the dedication of those who walk beside them, and a mission that grows stronger with every generation. Thanks to the generosity of our sponsors, donors, and guests, we raised $328,940, helping fuel our work to strengthen family resilience across Atlanta and throughout Georgia.

The evening's most powerful moments came from those who have lived our mission. Serving as Mistress of Ceremonies was Jahna, whose journey out of domestic violence toward independence and success embodied the legacy we celebrated. Guests also heard from Deona, who shared how the Lucy C. Vance Center became a safe place to heal, helping her regain confidence as a mother and as a woman navigating both healing and ambition. In her words, "Families First didn't erase my past. They helped me process it while building my future."

Stories like Deona's and Jahna's remind us why this work matters. At Families First, we believe that once you're part of our family, you're always a member of our family. This night was a moving reminder of a bond that has held for 135 years and counting.



Dominique: One Determined Dad

SCAN TO WATCH

Save the Date

Thursday, March 18, 2027

Georgia Aquarium

Scan for tickets

Back to School Bash

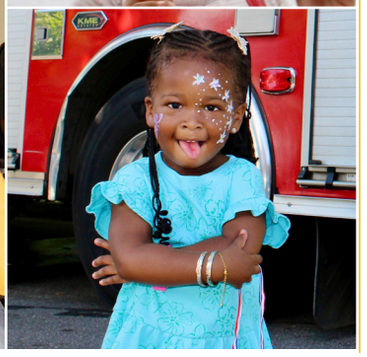
A Joyful Start to the School Year

The Back-to-School Bash is Families First's annual community celebration designed to prepare students and families for a successful school year. Held each July, the event provides essential resources including school supplies, backpacks, groceries, and lunch, along with access to community services, all within a festive atmosphere of games, entertainment, and connection.









Impact at a Glance

Made possible by the generosity of our sponsors and community partners:

- **1,012 attendees**
- **792 backpacks** filled with supplies, plus **104 individual supply kits** distributed
- **300 bags of groceries** provided to families at no cost, sponsored by Kroger
- **81 free haircuts** offered on-site
- **35 community partners** delivering vital resources and support













Gift-a-Family

A Brighter Holiday for 221 Families

Gift-A-Family invites the whole community to make the holiday season special for families across metro Atlanta, delivering gifts, essential items, and moments of joy right when they matter most.

Through the generosity of our donors, volunteers, and corporate partners, every single family who enrolled in Gift-A-Family had a sponsor this year.

- **221 Families**
- **830 Children**
- **100% Sponsorship**





Jean Childs Young RESILIENCE FUND *for women & children*



Advocating for Single Moms

On May 2, 2026, Families First hosted the **Jean Childs Young Forum on Empowering Single Moms**, bringing together community leaders, advocates, policymakers, and supporters for a morning of education, advocacy, and action. The forum explored the financial realities facing single mothers through expert perspectives on affordability, healthcare access, and culturally responsive family support.

Andrea Young, Jean Childs Young's eldest daughter and a member of the Resilience Fund Committee, moderated an engaging panel featuring:

- **Dr. Jasmine Clark**, Georgia State Representative and Assistant Clinical Professor, Emory University
- **Dr. Ana LaBoy**, Senior Research Associate, Georgia Health Policy Center
- **Sydney Royes**, LCSW, Director of Behavioral Health, HEALing Community Health
- **Soledad Ruiz**, CHISPA/Navigator Services Supervisor, Families First

Attendees put their compassion into action by assembling personal care kits and writing heartfelt notes of encouragement for mothers participating in our Navigator program ahead of Mother's Day, while also donating essential items to support families with young children.



$13,000
in Sponsorships

30
New Mom Kits



Learn more about the JCY Resilience Fund

Endowed Scholarship Awards

Victoria

Victoria knows what it means to step away from a dream and find the strength to return to it. After a financial hardship interrupted her education, she made the decision to come back and finish what she started, re-enrolling at Atlanta Metropolitan State College for the spring 2025 semester. As a mother, she carried an added motivation: the future she is building is not hers alone, but her son's, too.



With support from Families First and the **Carol Dunlap Reiser Scholarship**, Victoria was able to cover tuition for her final semester and keep moving toward the finish line. In May 2026, she earned her bachelor's degree in business administration, completing a journey that once felt out of reach.

At this year's Loving the Legacy, her Families First counselor, Jacqueline Slack, LPC, CPCS, spoke on Victoria's behalf, describing her as extremely determined and steadfast in her resolve to make a difference for herself and her son. Victoria, in turn, credits Slack for believing in her and pushing her toward greatness.

As Victoria reflects, ***"Your belief in me has given me hope, motivation, and the opportunity to create a better life for us."*** With her degree now in hand, Victoria is building that better life for herself and her son.



Deona

You may have met Deona at this year's Loving the Legacy. At just 22, she has built a life that looks accelerated on paper: graduating from South Atlanta High School at 17, earning her degree from the University of Georgia at 20, and now studying at a local Atlanta law school while working part-time as a paralegal. But behind that momentum was a harder truth. Deona had learned early to equate strength with silence, carrying years of unhealed pain on her own.

When she gave birth to her daughter, Isabella, in January 2025, the life she had so carefully structured began to feel fragile. On leave from law school, back in her childhood home, and without income of her own, Deona found herself confronting old instincts to isolate and to handle everything alone. In April 2025, she found Families First.

Working with her Families First counselor, Candi Arthur, Deona finally had a safe place to set down the weight. Through their sessions and additional support from our Navigator program, including child care, guidance, and resources, she rebuilt her stability and confidence as a mother and as a woman pursuing her goals while healing from the past. When Families First awarded her the **Jean Childs Young Scholarship**, it affirmed the future she is actively building: a career in law devoted to advocating for the people too often overlooked.

As Deona reflects, *"Families First didn't erase my past. They helped me process it while building my future."* Today she is back in law school, Isabella is thriving in day care, and Deona is moving forward, no longer from survival mode but from a place of awareness and support. We can't wait to see the advocate she becomes!

Fiscal Year 2026 Financial Report

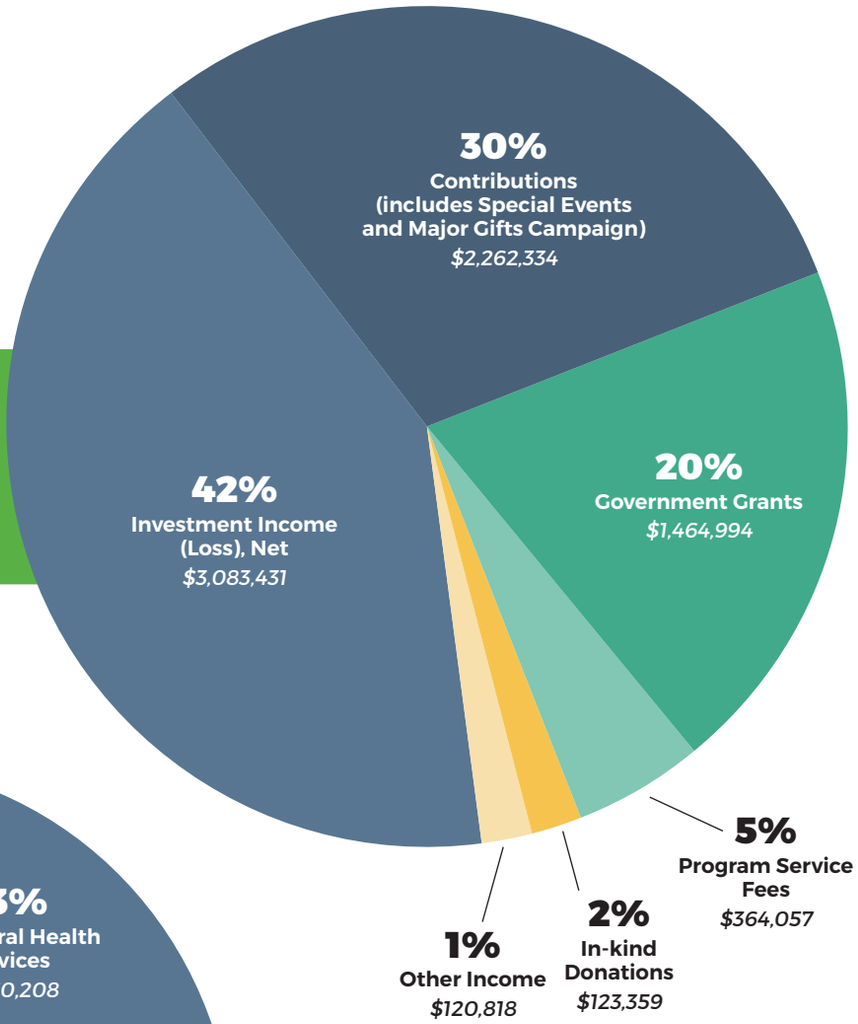
Platinum Transparency 2026 Candid.

Charity Navigator FOUR-STAR

Families First has achieved the highest standards of charity excellence from both Candid (formerly GuideStar) and Charity Navigator. These awards indicate our commitment to effectiveness, reliability, and transparency.

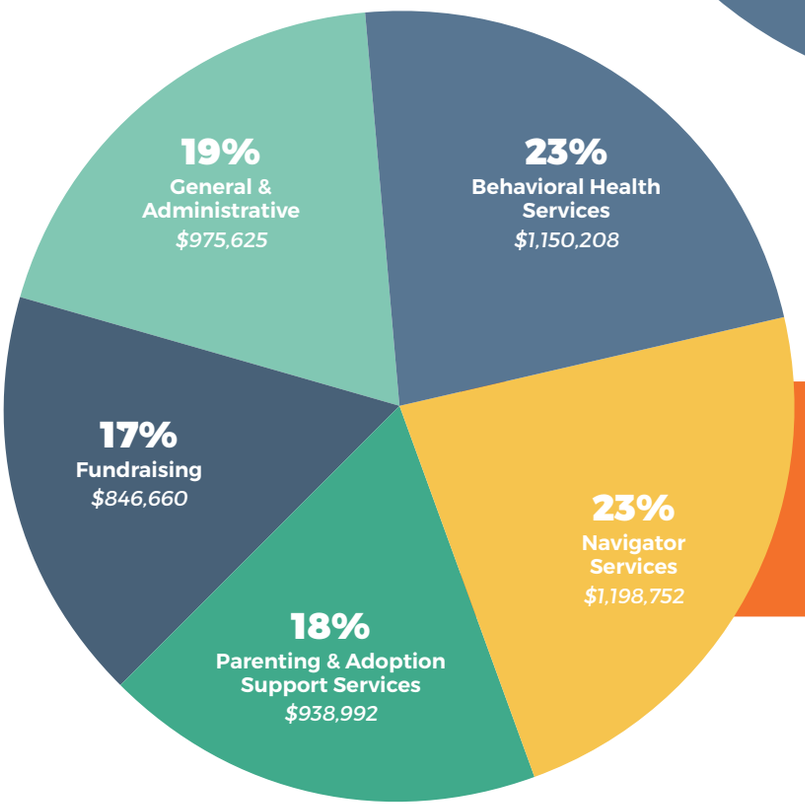
REVENUE

TOTAL
$7,418,993



EXPENSE

TOTAL
$5,110,237



**The financial data presented for FY26 is unaudited. Fully audited information will be made available on our website after the board's review and approval.*

Families First

80 Joseph E. Lowery Boulevard, NW
Atlanta, GA 30314

THANK YOU TO OUR 2025-2026 EVENT SPONSORS!

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ELIZABETH & KIRK SOMERS **LUCY VANCE** **JOHN WIELAND**

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