

Children's Aid Society of Mercer County

350 West Market Street
Mercer, PA 16137
724-662-4730
www.casmercercer.org

Children's Aid Society of Mercer County (CAS) is a private, non-profit, 501 (c)(3) multi-service agency whose programs are designed to change the lives of children and families for the better.



"The best way to find yourself is to lose yourself in the service of others."

-Mahatma Gandhi

Annual Report – 2023

Mission Statement

Children's Aid Society is dedicated to the overall well-being of children and families.

Vision Statement

Children's Aid Society is committed to supporting children and strengthening families and communities.

Director's Message

The year 2023 was a year of transitions. I started my position as Executive Director, which led to Ashley Eck taking my place as the Director of Adoption and Permanency Department. Her transition led to a couple more transitions in her department. Children's Aid Society hired a new Fiscal Director and Public Relations Coordinator. With so many transitions and employees learning their new positions, 2023 was a year to remember. We gained new staff members, found our new groove as a new administration, and learned how to rely on each other as a cohesive team.

New playground equipment was installed thanks to the Buhl Grant we received the previous year. We also were able to cut down some dangerous trees on our property thanks to the financial donations and support from the Community Foundation and Ben Bissett Chevrolet. Our Christmas Family Referral Program received an overwhelming amount of support from the amazing community this year and was able to help more children and families than we did in 2022. We had a successful Golf Outing in June and are excited to add a couple of new fundraisers to our calendar in 2024.

Although there have been several major transitions in the past year, I am proud that this agency continues to provide uninterrupted, quality services, as it has for over 135 years, to the children and families we serve.

Heather Alt

Executive Director

Through contracts, agreements and partnerships with several other agencies and organizations the Staff of CAS provided services to 2,053 individuals in 2023, listed as follows:

Adoption & Permanency - 782

Birth Parent Counseling, Adoption Home Studies, Independent Adoptions, SWAN Services, Search & Reunion Services

Adoption Support Groups- 179

Held the fourth Thursday and one Saturday each month

Christmas Family Referral Program - 830

Gifts and food for families in need at Christmas

Creating Foundations - 117

Mentoring for transition age youth

Family Based - 123

Family-based, in-home Mental Health Services

Foster Care - 58

Foster Care Services

Jumpstart Day Care - 62

*Child Care for ages 6 weeks to 12 years.
6:30 am – 5:30pm*



Christmas Family Referral Program

Funding Sources

CAS receives funding for its programs from various sources including but not limited to the following:

- Carelon
- Keystone Stars
- Community Foundation
- Mercer County Behavioral Health Commission
- PA County Contracts
- Budd Trust
- Landis Trust
- Buhl Foundation
- Deitz Family Trust
- CCIS
- Lindsay Trust
- Statewide Adoption and Permanency Network
- Community/various donors
- Fee For Service
- Fundraisers
- Donations
- Grants

80% of CAS funding was from SWAN, county contracts, and programs funded by Medicaid.

Revenue in 2023:

\$1,883,195.38

The Board of Directors and Staff would like to thank all the donors who have generously given to our programs throughout the year. All monetary donations and donations of food, clothing, toys, books, etc. throughout the year have made it possible for our programs to provide extra services to the children and families with whom we work. The yearly outpouring of gifts and donations during the Christmas holidays enabled CAS to provide a very happy holiday for 830 children in Mercer County. So many wonderful organizations, companies, churches, and individuals have made it possible for our programs to meet the needs of our consumers and “give a little extra” when needed.

CAS is a Member/Affiliate of:

- Keystone Stars
- Mercer Chamber of Commerce
- Grove City Area Chamber of Commerce
- Greenville Area Chamber of Commerce
- Shenango Valley Area Chamber of Commerce
- The North American Council on Adoptable Children (NACAC)
- Statewide Adoption & Permanency Network (SWAN)
- The Human Services Council of Mercer County
- The Pennsylvania Council of Children Youth and Family Services (PCCYFS)
- The Pennsylvania Department of Human Services
- Carelon
- PA Association of Non-Profit Organizations (PANO)
- Society for Human Resource Management (SHRM)
- PA Childcare Association (PACCA)
- Manufacturers and Business Association

Board of Directors in 2023:

Mr. John Campbell, President	Mr. James Sankey
Mrs. Becky May, Vice President	Mr. Norm Swiger
Mrs. Ann Stranahan, Second Vice President	Mrs. Chelsea Bombatch
Mr. John Harper	Mr. Thomas Dobson
Dr. David Reimold	Ms. Roberts Miller-Budd Trust Representative
Mr. Hugh Ringer	

Staff Members in 2023:

Susan Adams	Bethany Collins	Kristi Pearsall
Heather Alt	Ashley Eck	Angela Pickens
Karissa Armour	Kayla Emery	Chelsea Porter
Chelsea Bailey	Matt Hazi	Cari Prezioso
Marissa Baker	Destiny Hubbard	Dottie Quillen
Vaughn Barley	Charann Hughes	Mackenzie Richards
Jacquelyn Basinger	Shaun Keck	Becky Rodondi
Lauren Belin	Hannah Kent	Katrina Rueberger
Nate Best	Tori Lovell	Grace Snyder
Lindsey Boettner	Joe Macri	Patti Ryder
Jessica Bonetti	Nicole Magargee	Terrie Seidel
Susan Bordonaro	Kinsey Masotto	Vickie Styers
Sonia Bradshaw	Maura Mulligan	Justin Townsend
Darcy Branca	Vicki Mulligan	Ashley Uiselt
Katherine Chesters	Emily Palmer	Christina Veres
Leah Christy	Victoria Paradise	Don White
		Sara Whitman

CAS holds licenses through the Department of Human Services for the following:

Adoption
Child Day Care
Foster Care
Mental Health and Substance Abuse
Administration of Private and Children & Youth Services



New Playground Equipment purchased with the Buhl Foundation Grant received in 2022.

“It takes a big heart to help shape little minds.”



Coffee with a Cop at Jumpstart Daycare



"When we decided to become foster parents, we had no idea what to expect. We didn't personally know any other foster parents. We reached out to Children's Aid Society and the staff really helped guide us each step of the way with training, support groups, and home visits. We have experienced some wonderful moments with our children and when we needed more guidance our caseworkers were there to offer support and services. We are so grateful for the amazing staff and the love and commitment they show to their families. We have fostered 4 children in the past 3 years, adopting one of them last year. We feel so blessed to be a part of their lives." -The "R" Foster Family

"Every child deserves a champion-an adult who will never give up on them, who understands the power of connection and insists that they become the best they can possibly be." -Rita F. Pierson

Testimonials from Consumers

"I appreciate the flexibility and quality of care. Everyone at Jumpstart were kind and helpful." (Jumpstart Daycare)

"As a first-time mom, I was so nervous about sending my son to daycare. However, the staff at JumpStart made it so easy. When he asks to go to school each day, I know I picked the right place!" (Jumpstart Daycare)

"I am truly thankful for Jump Start Daycare. Leaving my son is never easier; however, on the days I drop him off, I know he is loved and well taken care of. He always gets excited to see his teachers, play with his friends, and show me all of the fun crafts he creates. I do not know how the teachers do it every day, but I am really glad that they do, and they do an amazing job at it. I do not know what I would do if I did not have such a wonderful daycare for my son." (Daycare Program)

"They were so nice and helpful. We wish we could have kept them longer. They were insightful and a true blessing to my family." (Family Based)

"This program cannot get any better. It is truly an amazing program." (Family Based)

"Everyone that helped was great. They were responsive and accommodating to our needs as well as validating." (Family Based)

"Our worker is amazing! She was very supportive, encouraging, and informative. She is very consistent with carrying through on contact and visits." (Post Permanency)

"We enjoyed the time with others-we felt so much better after leaving. It was a great time to be heard and to also hear how others are doing." (Support Group-Post Permanency)

"Children's Aid Society is a very helpful agency that goes to extreme lengths to help out kids." (Child in the Adoption Program)

"The staff was very sweet and caring. I am very blessed to have had each of them through this process." (Adoption and Permanency)

"You are awesome, and you do a lot for the children." (Creating Foundations Mentoring Program)

"Meeting my mentor was the best day of my life." (Creating Foundations Mentoring Program)