



# KERN BRIDGES YOUTH HOMES

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Annual Report & Strategic Plan 2021



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## Introduction from the CEO/Executive Director



KBYH serves children who are robbed of their childhoods, who frequently live each day not knowing if their parents are going to feed them, or if they will be sleeping in a park, or if they will ever attend school. Their parents have abandoned their responsibilities long before these children are removed from their custody. Most of our residents have suffered great trauma: physically, sexually, emotionally.... They come to our door with tremendous issues of rejection and neglect. They are truly wounded. Their spirits, and their souls have been severely traumatized.

In evaluating mental stability in individuals, the most profound issues are the ways in which they get, or more specifically, do not get their needs met on a variety of different levels. Our residents are children who are familiar with never fitting in, and of feeling as though they do not count. Their parents, enveloped in their own problems of substance abuse, domestic violence, and mental illness, have made them feel as though they are deserving the neglect and the abuse they have suffered. They define themselves through their depravity, and their despair.

Many of our children come to us with just the clothes on their backs, and the pain in their hearts.

KBYH is committed to treating the soul, mind, body, and spirit of these children. We remember wonderful experiences we had as children that our residents have never had. We remember what it

feels like to get a new bike, the great satisfaction and self-respect we would have as children to ride in our neighborhood and feel the pride of ownership. We also remember the quiet moments in our minds where we can listen to the music of our generation and have time to reflect. We strive to provide these moments to our children who have rarely had the privilege to reflect on anything.

Before treatment of any kind is initiated, a child must learn trust, recognize kindness in the face of adversity, and let go of the demons of the past. In order for this to be facilitated, foster parents, adoptive parents and staff must be professionally trained, as well as, caring and loving.

Thus, the purpose of Kern Bridges Youth Homes is to provide a safe, stable, and consistent environment for children who have suffered great trauma, and for children with serious emotional and behavioral difficulties. Care is provided in foster homes, adoptive homes, or STRTPs. In order for the services and care to be of high quality we provide support, training, and consultation by highly qualified trainers both from within and outside our agency. In addition, we support community partners who provide auxiliary services by offering free use of our training facility.

The Goal of our Board and management team is to provide a professional and mutually rewarding relationship with all community partners; secondly, to continue to excel at attracting and keeping quality staff; thirdly, to uphold our high standards, and lastly, to continue to stress and maintain fiscal soundness.

John Bacon, MA Psych., MSW, LCSW

A tip of the hat to you!



The Organizational Plan 2019/2024

**Market Position/Profile/Description of the Business**

Kern Bridges Youth Homes, Inc. (Kern Bridges) was established in 1988 as a 501 (c) (3) nonprofit corporation providing foster homes to youth in Kern County, CA. In 1997, Kern Bridges opened its first group home, the Almklov House, which houses 6 children. In 1999 Kern Bridges acquired its adoptions license, and in 2001, Kern Bridges opened its second group home, Casa de Ninos Home, which houses 12 children. Both group homes have been converted to Short Term Residential Therapeutic Programs (STRTP).

**Primary Programs**

Resource Family Homes/	STRTP	Adoptions	Supervised Visitation Program
Director - John Bacon, LCSW	Director - Robert Carter - M.S..	Director - Jim VanderZwan - LCSW	Director - Jim VanderZwan - LCSW
46 children placed on average.	Occupancy of 18 beds is 99%.	The adoptions program completes an average of 8-10 family evaluations per month	The SVP was opened on 8/31/20 and now offers five indoor and one outdoor space for supervised family visitations, with an average of over 500 hours of supervised visit hours being completed per month.

**Child Welfare Issues & Services in Kern County (Source Kern.org)**

Tracking child population helps project a community’s potential needs for education, childcare, health care, and other services for children. The diversity of Kern County’s population continues across a range of factors, including age, race/ethnicity, language, and family type. Understanding the demographic composition of the child population can guide investments that will best support Kern County children and youth in the future.

**Kern County continues to be one of the youngest counties in the state.** Kern County’s child population in 2020 was 253,010. Children represented 28.8% of the county population. 31% of Kern County children were under the age of six.

**Latino children made up the largest racial/ethnic group among Kern’s child population.** In 2020, 61% of Kern County children were Latino and 27% were Caucasian. According to 2020 population data, 5% of Kern’s children were African American, 4% were Asian/Pacific Islander, 3% were multi-cultural and less than 0.5% were Native American.

**A small percentage of Kern County children were born outside the United States.** In 2016, 5.4% of children under age 18 living in Kern County were born outside the United States.

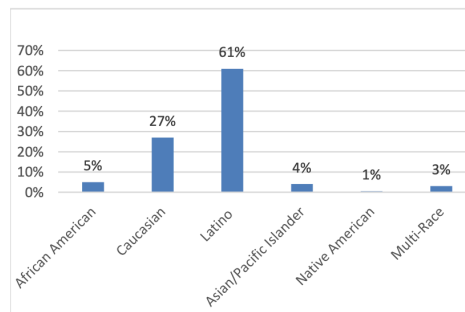
**Students in Kern County public schools are linguistically diverse.** In 2020, 35,301 (22% of total county enrollment) were English Learners. Spanish was the most commonly- spoken language after English.

**Nearly half of all Kern County households were raising children in 2017.** In Kern County, 43.3% of all Kern County households had children under age 18 years. This figure includes married-couple households 59% and 27% of children are in households were single mothers raising children and nearly 10 percent were being raised by single fathers.

**U.S. Census Bureau four-year estimates showed that from 2016, 43% of Kern County children ages 0-17 lived with one or more foreign-born parents.**

**According to 2017 estimates, 4% of KernCounty grandparents were responsible for the care of grandchildren under 18.**

**On July 1, 2020 Kern County Population was 900,202 with a 28.8% Child Population**



**Percent in Child Population Change in Kern:  
2019-2020  
.08% Increase**

## Child Population by Race/Ethnicity

### *Kern County, 2020 Census.gov*

Prior to the pandemic, Kern County had made some improvements in reducing rates of unemployment and poverty in recent years. Poverty is a powerful factor in child development and a child's likelihood of living in poverty varies by age, race/ethnicity, and family structure. The pandemic, within a few months, more than doubled previous years unemployment rates, creating increased stress to Kern families.

- **Kern County's average annual unemployment rate decreased in 2019, but increased substantially in 2020 due to Covid-19.** Kern County's average annual unemployment again decreased substantially from 17.5% in June 2020 to 10.1% in May 2021, according to the California Employment Development Department.
- **Median family income in Kern County rose in 2017, but remains far below the state level.** The median income of Kern County families raising children increased to \$48,878 in 2017, but was 36% less than the state (\$76,912). Median family income varies by family structure.
- **One out of every four Kern families were poor, with single-mother families the most vulnerable.** In 2017, 29.3% of Kern County families were raising their children with incomes below the poverty line, compared to 17.6% in California.
- **Nearly one in three Kern children lived in poverty during 2017; 1.5 times higher than the State average.** An estimated 29.8 percent of children in Kern County lived below the poverty line during 2017. By comparison, California's 2017 child poverty rate was at 18.1%.
- **Nearly 20% of families receive assistance to combat food insecurity.** During 2018, 153,262 Kern County residents live in households with CalFresh (food stamp) participation and 44,268 mothers participated in Women, Infants and Children (WIC) services.
- **More than half of Kern County renters were cost burdened.** In 2018, 40% of renters spent 30% or more of their income on housing costs in Kern County. According to 2020 estimates, Kern renters must earn \$16.37/ hour working a 40-hour week to afford a two-bedroom apartment. A minimum wage worker in Kern County must nearly 50 hours per week to afford rent for a two bedroom rental unit.
- **More than 141,041 Kern County students were eligible for free or reduced price meals at their schools.** During the 2020 school year, an average of 72.6% of students across all

school districts participated in their school's free/reduced meal program, compared the state average of 59.2%.

Safety is a critical part of a child's healthy growth and development. Children who grow up in safe and stable homes are more likely to be healthy, successful in school, and successful in life. Children who face challenges in their home environments such as abuse, neglect, and family violence are more likely to leave school early, become part of the criminal justice system, and in need of public assistance as adults.

- **During 2020, 37 children each day were referred to CPS with allegations of child abuse and neglect in Kern County.** Kern County recorded allegations of abuse and neglect for 13,425 children in 2020, a rate of 53.1 children per 1,000 children, compared to California's rate of 43.4 children.
- **In 2019, an average of 7.3 Kern County children were victims of maltreatment each day.** In 2020, 2,691 children, 10.6 per 1,000, ages 0-17, were victims of abuse or neglect in Kern County. Kern's substantiated child maltreatment rate fell from 13.8 per 1,000 children in 2016, to 10.6 in 2020. Despite its sustained improvement, Kern's substantiated child abuse/neglect rate remains above the California's rate of 6.8 per 1,000 children.
- **As in prior years, neglect is still the most common form of maltreatment in Kern County. Among substantiated victims in 2018,** 88% were neglected - meaning a caretaker failed to provide for the child's basic needs, 3% were physically abused, 2% were sexually abused, and 0.1% emotional abuse and 4% experienced caretaker absence or incapacity. The remaining percentage includes a child being at risk or having had a sibling who was abused.
- **Children of all ages experience abuse and neglect, but the youngest children are the most vulnerable.** In 2020, 468 infants were the victims of child abuse or neglect in Kern County, a rate of 36 per 1,000 infants. When compared to other race/ethnic groups, African American children experienced the highest rate of child maltreatment in Kern County with 24.3 per 1,000.
- **The highest rate of fatal child abuse/neglect continue to be among the youngest children in Kern County.** In 2020, there were 5 child fatalities due to abuse or neglect of which were determined by law enforcement or the Coroner.
- **The rate of Kern County children entering foster care due to abuse or neglect increased from previous year.** During 2020, 953 children were removed from their family home and placed in an out-of-home placement in order to ensure child safety. The rate of children



entering foster care was 3.8 per 1,000 children in 2020, more than the 2019 rate of 3.4 per 1,000.

- **Number of Kern County children and youth living in foster care decreased in 2020.** The number of children and youth in foster care decreased from 1,453 in 2019 to 1,540 in 2020 or 6.1 per 1,000.
- **Fewer Kern children who exited the Kern County foster care system re-enter into foster care after a year.** Of all Kern County children exited from foster care during 2019, 90.8% did not re-enter foster care 12 months from the date of the earliest discharge to reunification or guardianship, compared to 89.6% statewide.

Education is one of the best opportunities a community has to positively impact a child's life into adulthood. Most educational achievement indicators are closely linked with college readiness and economic advancement. Education indicators for Kern County students have improved, however, certain segments of the county's student population excel while others struggle.

Source: California Department of Education

- **Kern's K-12 public school enrollment increased during the 2019- 20 academic year.** Public school enrollment countywide was 206,814 students in the 2019-20 school year. The County's 264 public schools enrolled 7,873 more students than the previous year's count.
- **Nearly three-fourths of Kern's K-12 public school enrollment were considered economically disadvantaged.** During the 2019- 20 school year, 72.6% of Kern students were considered economically disadvantaged.
- **Kern County California Assessment of Student Performance & Progress Scores dip.** Across all grades, 43% of Kern County students in 2018-19, compared to 42% in 2017-18, met or exceeded the English language arts/literacy standard and 29% met or exceeded the mathematics standard compared to California's overall rates of 51% and 40%, respectively. As with past standardized tests, sharp differences emerged in county scores of students from low-income families, English learners, Special Education students, and African-American and Latino students compared to other students.
- **Despite improvement, some student populations continue to experience above average dropout rates.** Kern County students with the highest dropout rates included foster youth students 23% students with disabilities 12.5%, Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander 5.7%, English Learner students 16.3%, and Migrant 7.5%.

- **Kern County high school graduates meeting entrance requirements for UC/CSU systems increases.** In the 2018-19 school year, the number of students graduating with all “A-G” classes completed increased 1.1 percent from 2017-18 with a total of 5,019 students completing the requirements for UC/CSU admission.

### *Market Trends in California*

**1. Foster care costs:** A GF investment continues in support of the transition of children and youth from placements in group homes to STRTPs and Home-Based Family Care (HBFC). The budget assumes that higher costs due to higher STRTP and HBFC rates, increased as part of CCR, will be offset by fewer youth being served in STRTPs with shorter lengths of stay, and more youth served in HBFC. The delta between transitional costs and ongoing costs is to be “trued up” with counties at some point in the future. The 2019-20 budget estimates are based for the first time on actual county costs rather than projections, and the estimates assume fewer youth will transition to HBFC from group homes and more will transition to STRTPs than previously had been projected. The changes in the state’s estimates are reflected in the accompanying chart. Overall, the CCR estimate assumes California’s congregate care caseload will decrease to 2,509 cases in FY 2020-21.

**2. Privatization of Services:** States and counties across the U.S. are embracing privatization as a strategy for improving the cost effectiveness of child welfare and youth services. In the past, noncompetitive quasi-grant arrangements typified the relationships between public agencies and private, not-for-profit child welfare agencies. Over the past few years, however, new types of arrangements—in which private agencies have assumed more responsibility and risk for what were formerly public functions — have become more common. Privatization in Kern County has been the case for the last 14 years via the contract to complete Resource Family Evaluations. [Kern Bridges has held a county contract to provide this service for 14 years now. The current contract runs through 2022 and is currently up for bid. KBYH also secured the contract to provide a Supervised Visitation Program, which was opened on 8/31/20. Additionally, KBYH recently won the RFP to provide ISFC services for Kern County resource families. This contract began in October 2021 and will serve up to 60 youth.](#)

**3. Customer Preference for “One-Stop Shopping”:** Bundling of services allows a provider to offer comprehensive evidence-based services through the continuum of care for a child with the goal of reducing both short-term and longer-term placement and service costs. The bundling of proven effective services may make the company more attractive to funders because of ability to match and mix services for participants. [Kern Bridges provides STRTP, adoptions, Foster Family services now known as Resource Families, Intensive Services Foster Care \(ISFC\), and supervised visitation.](#)

**4. Stakeholders and Grant Providers as well as the State and County Insist on Cost-Efficiencies and Evidence-Based Effectiveness:** There are requirements by the above-mentioned entities to maximize cost benefit and demonstrate efficacy. Rigorous performance measures are required in service plans with clear outcomes defined and cost-maximization documentation required. The child welfare and youth services field is increasingly focused on scientifically proven strategies that will keep children from re-entering foster care and recidivating in the youth services

system once they complete their initial programming. [KBYH participates in the California Benchmark Initiative \(CBI\) and the new COA Benchmark Initiative both which measure key indicators and then compares your agency's numbers with other agency's providing similar services.](#)

**5. Funding Premium on Transitional Services (i.e., Youth Leaving Foster Care):** Children who have been a part of the foster care system benefit from a comprehensive set of services. These transitional services support human linkages among care entities. Whether it is graduating from high school, college or becoming employed, transitional services allow for a complete system and prevent major setbacks once placement services end for an individual. Research suggests these transitional services may have a strong relationship to both child welfare treatment outcomes and efficiencies. [KBYH provides AB12 services for Non-Minor Dependents \(NMD\).](#)

**6. Shift in Demand from High-Cost Residential Services to Lower-Cost Community-Based Prevention Services:** With the decline of institutional care models by funders in both child welfare and youth service market segments, newer community care models have emerged that reduce need for centralized infrastructure and offer the promise of reduced costs through effective prevention. The goal of immediate and long-term reduction in costs requires effective community programming and monitoring and must be subject to objective cost-benefit analysis to document cost savings to be credible. [KBYH is actively involved in AB 403 restructuring foster youth services in California.](#)

#### Kern County DHS' Major FFA-Related Needs Are:

- 1) CSEC (Commercially Sexually Exploited Children) and human trafficking: This area of foster care continues to emerge, and Kern County has indicated that it continues to need resource homes that would consider placement of children who have been sexually exploited.
- 2) Foster placements for teenagers, particularly youth with a high needs or youth transitioning out of residential treatment: [As of October 2018, KBYH has been approved to provide Intensive Services Foster Care \(ISFC\). KBYH has focused its recruiting efforts on acquiring resource homes that are willing to provide ISFC-level services. To date, the ISFC program has provided ISFC services to over 50 clients with predominately positive outcomes.](#)
- 3) Placements for young adults ages 18-21 known as Non-Minor Dependents (NMD): [KBYH has been approved as an AB12 provider and has taken placements as such.](#)
- 4) Resource homes that accept sibling groups: Sibling groups of three or more are typically difficult to place and as such, [KBYH has focused recruiting efforts on finding family families who would be willing to take placement of large sibling groups.](#)
- 5) Foster homes in a child's specific school district: There is an ongoing need to place children such that they can continue in their school of origin. [KBYH makes every effort to find homes that can support this type of arrangement and/or make advocacy efforts to ensure transportation arrangements are made to support the child's educational preferences and needs.](#)

#### Adoption Trends

The advent of CCR/RFA has changed the dynamic of adoption-related services in that all resource families in California are required to complete the RFA process, which approves them for both foster

care and adoption. This has changed how home studies (now called Family Evaluations) are completed for county homes that KBYH is contracted to complete in a variety of ways, including a shorter time frame in which to complete the Family Evaluation (30 days instead of 6 months), a process which no longer utilizes the Structured Family Analysis Evaluation (SAFE) model, and a longer time frame between the completion of the Family Evaluation (FE) and an adoption finalization.

#### Strengths/Weaknesses/Opportunities/Threats

Our current strengths begin with our reputation and high standards, our ability to attract and retain competent staff, and our low staff turnover rate. Additionally, KBYH enjoys great relationships with dedicated and resourceful Resource families (foster families). KBYH was reaccredited by COA in 2018 and our high level of care and service provides short- and long-term support to children and non-minor dependents in need of out-of-home care.

Kern Bridges' weaknesses are that we are dependent primarily on the state budget for funding and the County of Kern for placement of children in Resource (foster) homes. However, that is not the case with youth placed in our STRTPs. Currently we have no open STRTP bed spaces and had an overall 98% occupancy rate for fiscal year 2020/2021. Another issue that is common to all facilities throughout the State is the ever-changing interpretation of AB 403 known as the Continuing Care Reform Act. The final regulations were released in January of 2019.

In addition to State regulations changing the Federal government is requiring changes as well via the Family First Prevention Services Act (FFPSA) requirements for Short-Term Residential Therapeutic Program facilities (STRTPs). Based on a review of our programs the Mental Health auditors determined that KBYH programs are not required to register as (Institution for Mental for Mental Diseases. IMD

Our Resource Family (aka Foster Family) Program received AB 403 certification in 2018. All paperwork for the Group Homes to become STRTPs received final approval in 2021.

Kern County Department of Social Services (KCDSS) is the primary source for children placed in Kern Bridges Youth Homes Resource Families. This is currently done out of choice rather than need or requirement. The state requirement is that 51% of our youth clients must be from Kern County (other counties have begun to use our services). We chose to accept children from other counties, and we do receive placements. The trend, however, continues to be to place children as close to home as possible. The STRTPs experience the opposite. Kern County has only 32 youth placed in STRTPs and we currently have no Kern County STRTP Residents.

New opportunities include recently completing a contract with Kern County for expanded ISFC placements and a contract to provide Supervised Visits for Kern County DHS.

### Critical Success Factors

The critical success factors are to maintain our quality; to develop and promote our niche; continue to provide the necessary support and training for our Resource Families (Foster Families) and to continue to maintain a working, professional relationship with all public agencies, which includes KCDHS, Superintendent of Schools and appropriate state and county agencies.

### Competition

Our competition is, of course, the other 9 foster family agency providers (plus Kern County), 3 other adoption agencies, and the other STRTP providers in town. The main advantage of the other foster care providers (excluding Kern County) is their statewide base. They place children in homes throughout Kern County, and if they do not have a home in this county, they will place the children in other counties.

### Mission Statement and Current Organizational Structure

**Mission Statement-** Our mission is to provide responsive solutions and trauma-informed care to vulnerable children by providing safe homes, accessible services, and engaging in ongoing quality improvement.

### Legal Structure

Kern Bridges Youth Homes is a nonprofit corporation filed under the same name. The officers of the agency, a President, Vice President, Treasurer, and Secretary, determine the direction of the agency through its board meetings.

It should be noted that none of the officers or board members work day-to-day in the business. This allows the agency to have access to expertise and advice at large cost savings, which directly impacts the bottom line and allows growth of the agency.

### Management and Personnel

At present Michael Conard, is the President of the Board. Under Michael and his predecessors, a strong team of very dedicated people who love to work for community needs has been formed. As Board president, his role is to identify strategic plans, corporate charity funding, and set agency standards.

John Bacon, MA Psych., MSW, LCSW is the CEO/Executive Director. John has been working in this arena for forty-two years. As Executive Director, his role is to identify community needs,

develop and implement programs, and to design and operate the agency budget. A complete list of Corporate Officers and the Board of Directors is enclosed.



## Current Strategic Products and Services

### **Resource Families (Resource Families)**

Kern Bridges approves resource family homes for children from birth to 21 years old in need of specialized care (FFA LIC#157202791). Currently, Kern Bridges has 26 resource family homes and an average of 46 foster children. This service represents 39% of Kern Bridges total revenues.

STRTPs (Short-Term Residential Treatment Programs) : Kern Bridges currently operates one 6-bed STRTP for traumatized boys aged 11-NMD (Almklov LIC#157200493) and one 12-bed STRTP for emotionally disturbed boys aged 11–NMD (Casa de Ninos LIC#157201294). Currently, Kern Bridges has 6 male youth at the Almklov House and 12 male youth at the Casa de Ninos Facility. These homes represent 71% of Kern Bridges total revenues.

### **Residential Treatment Program**

The mission of Kern Bridges Youth Homes, Inc. (KBYH) is to provide responsive solutions and trauma-informed care to California’s vulnerable youth by providing safe homes, accessible services, and engaging in ongoing quality improvement. In addition to foster care and adoption programs and

services, KBYH has two short-term residential therapeutic programs (STRTPs). KBYH's Almklov House is a 6-bed STRTP and KBYH's Casa De Ninos House is a 12-bed STRTP. The Casa de Ninos home is located in a rural area on the outskirts of McFarland California while Almklov House sits in beautiful Southwest Bakersfield. The purpose of the KBYH STRTP is to provide a safe, consistent, stable, and secure trauma-informed and culturally responsive environment in which children and youth 11-17 plus NMD with severe emotional and behavioral difficulties can restore a sense of control and empowerment.

Our programs offer a trauma-informed approach with a positive and well-structured environment. Living and learning in an atmosphere of positivity and support allows youth to develop the skills that will enable them to become productive members of their families, schools, and communities. Our program focuses on finding avenues of success for each child while exploring the problems that have caused the child's past placement failures. Our STRTPs are built on the principles that engaging families and exploring new avenues through adventure are fundamental to achieving and sustaining therapeutic gains in adolescence and young adults.

### STRTP Practice MODEL

#### Vision, Mission, Purpose, Goals, Philosophies, and Methods

##### Agency Vision

KBYH serves children who are robbed of their childhoods, who frequently live each day not knowing if their parents are going to feed them, or if they will be sleeping in a park, or if they will ever attend school. Their parents have abandoned their responsibilities long before these children are removed from their custody. Most of our residents have been abused: physically, sexually, and emotionally. They come to our door with tremendous issues of rejection and neglect. They are truly wounded, their spirits, and their souls.

In evaluating mental stability in individuals, the most profound issues are the ways in which they do, or more specifically, do not get their needs met on a variety of different levels. Our residents are children who are familiar with never fitting in, and of feeling as though they do not count. Many of their caregivers were enveloped in their own problems of substance abuse, domestic violence, and mental illness. This has made a vast majority of these youth feel as though they are deserving of the neglect and the abuse they have suffered. They define themselves through their abuse or neglect, and their despair.

Many of our children come to us with just the clothes on their backs, and the pain in their hearts.

KBYH is committed to treating the soul, mind, body, and spirit of these children. We remember wonderful experiences we had as children that our residents have never had. We remember what it feels like to get a new bike, the great satisfaction and self-respect we would have as children to ride in our neighbors and feel the pride of ownership. We also remember the quiet moments in our minds where we can listen to the music of our times and have time to reflect. We strive to provide these moments to our children who have rarely had the privilege to reflect on anything.

Before treatment of any kind is initiated, a child must learn trust, recognize kindness in the face of adversity, and let go of the demons of the past. In order for this to be facilitated, foster parents, adoptive parents and staff must be professionally trained, as well as, caring and loving and be able to provide trauma informed care.

Thus, the vision of Kern Bridges Youth Homes, Inc. STRTP Program is that of a child who has a permanent home where love, safety and stability no know bounds.

### **Agency Mission**

Our mission is to provide responsive solutions and trauma-informed care to California's vulnerable children by providing safe homes, accessible services, and engaging in ongoing quality improvement.

### **Program Purpose**

The purpose of the Kern Bridges Youth Homes (KBYH) STRTP – The Daniel and Nancy Marble Casa de Ninos facility - is to provide a safe, consistent, stable, and secure, trauma informed and culturally aware environment where children with severe emotional and behavioral difficulties can rebuild a sense of control and empowerment.

### **Program Goals**

The primary goal of the program, whenever possible, is to return a resident to a family setting or other lower level of care. This is accomplished through the reduction or elimination of the barrier behaviors that led to the STRTP placement. The Professional Goals of the agency are the Board and Management's commitment to maintain a professional and mutually rewarding relationship with all community partners; secondly, to continue to excel at attracting and keeping quality staff; thirdly, to uphold our high standards, and lastly, to continue to stress and maintain fiscal soundness.



### **Program Philosophies**

- KBYH subscribes to a number of positive philosophies.
- All care is Trauma Informed as are our philosophies.
- Every Day is a new day and in fact every minute is a new minute so there are no carry over consequences. Restrictions are only based on safety.
- All residents are treated as individuals and their treatment plans are individually tailored.

### **Program Methods Overview**

KBYH incorporates the Stop-Gap model of care. It was introduced by McCurdy and McIntyre (2004) and reconceptualizes group care as a short-term (which is the goal of AB 403) arrangement aimed at stabilizing youth sufficiently for discharge to a lower-level community-based treatment. It incorporates evidence-based practices within a three-tiered approach (i.e., environment-based, intensive, and discharge related) of service delivery for group care settings. The two-fold goal of the Stop-Gap model is to interrupt the youth's downward spiral imposed by increasingly disruptive behavior and prepare the post-discharge environment for the youth's timely re-integration. The Stop-Gap model recognizes the importance of community-based service delivery approach while providing intensive and short-term support for youths with the most challenging behaviors.

### **Treatment features of the Stop-Gap Model**

Youths enter the model at Tier I, where they receive environment-based and discharge-related services. The focus at Tier I is on the immediate reduction of "barrier" behaviors (i.e., problem behaviors that prevent re-integration) through intensive ecological and skill teaching interventions. This includes interventions such as token economy, academic interventions, social skills training, problem-solving and anger management skills training. Simultaneously, discharge related interventions commence (Tier II). These activities are designed to connect youth to critical community supports and include Intensive Case Management, Parent Management Training, and community integration activities. To the extent that problem behaviors are not reduced at Tier I, intensive Tier III interventions that include function-based behavior support planning are implemented. Depending on the needs of the individual child, it is anticipated that the duration of service may range from 90 days to one year.

With the Stop-Gap Model being the primary focus of the residential interventions, the Agency Wide Model is the Sanctuary Model which is a Trauma Informed Care Model. The Sanctuary Model is a non-hierarchical, highly participatory, "trauma informed and evidence-supported" operating system for human services organizations, which helps them function in a humane, democratic, and socially responsible manner and thereby provide effective treatment for clients in a clinical setting. The model is entirely congruent with restorative practices, in that it is about working with people instead of doing things to them or for them.

Not a specific treatment intervention, the Sanctuary Model provides a structure and common language for people in human services fields to communicate and collaborate with each other.

The Sanctuary Model has the S.E.L.F. framework at its heart. The S.E.L.F. framework is a trauma-informed tool that helps to orient staff and clients around the tasks necessary to heal. S.E.L.F. is an acronym that represents the four interactive key aspects of recovery from bad experiences. S.E.L.F. provides a nonlinear, cognitive behavioral therapeutic approach for facilitating client movement

through the four critical aspects of recovery: Safety (attaining safety in self, relationships, and environment); Emotional management (identifying levels of affect and modulating affect in response to memories, persons, events); Loss (feeling grief and dealing with personal losses), and Future (trying out new roles, ways of relating and behaving as a “survivor” to ensure personal safety and help others) . Using S.E.L.F., the clients and staff can embrace a shared, non-technical and non-pejorative language that allows them all to see the larger recovery process in perspective. The accessible language demystifies what sometimes is seen as confusing and even insulting clinical or psychological terminology that often confounds clients and line-staff, while still focusing on the aspects of pathological adjustment that pose the greatest problems for any treatment environment.

## Changing Lives Through Adventure

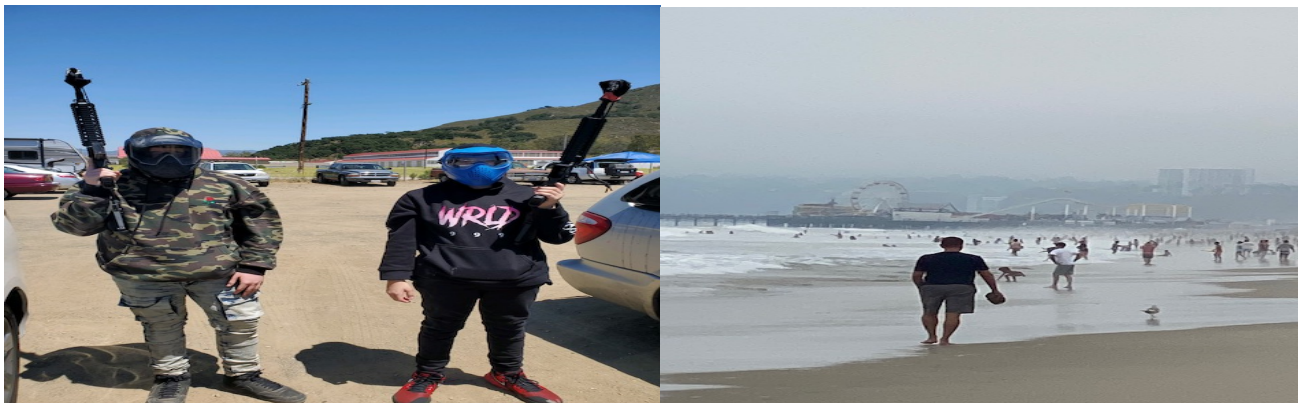
This past year the residents (aged 11 to 18) living in our STRTPs took a trip on Amtrak from Bakersfield to San Francisco to see the infamous Alcatraz Prison. There’s something magical about a journey by train. Sometimes the magic is outside, in the landscape the train- traverses adventure, an experience, an insight into the heart of our state. Alcatraz Island offers a close-up look at the site of the first lighthouse and US built fort on the West Coast. Rich in history, there is also a natural side to The Rock—gardens, tide pools, bird colonies, and bay views beyond compare. The boys had such a great time! This was a great opportunity to show our boys how to use the Mass Transit System to get around California and a way of skill building for something they can use for the rest of their life.



To jump start the beginning of last year’s Fall’s adventures, our boys participated in several high-profile events. These events included the UCLA vs LSU at the Rose Bowl, Bowling at the Fire House, Outdoor Yoga, and lots of preparing and cooking food at home. The boys described the UCLA game at the Rose Bowl thrilling. According to a few of our boys, it was such an exciting experience to be part of an event with nearly 80,000 fans screaming ,yelling, and cheering.



Last summer, one of many events that took place was outings to Santa Monica Beach. While at the beach the boys participated in numerous activities such as boogie boarding, playing frisbee, and digging up sand crabs. Additionally, the boys went paintballing in San Louis Obispo. For many of our boys, this was their first time ever paintballing and they had a blast! Also, our boys went to the Wax Museum, Magic Mountain, and Dave & Busters.



In short, these activities give our boys educational experiences away and in the STRTP environment. Learning in assorted ways can appeal to various learning styles. This in turn, affords each boy the ability to learn something from exercises whether they are visual, auditory, or kinetic learners. Getting our boys outdoors is our mission and our passion when it comes to activities. When we travel, our boys experience unique activities that expose them to real life adventures.

**Adoption Services:** Kern Bridges is licensed to conduct home studies (now called family evaluations) and approve families wishing to adopt foster children (Adoption LIC#157202794). Currently, these services represent about 16.5% of total revenues.



### Adoptions Annual Report

This is the Kern Bridges Adoption Program's 21<sup>st</sup> year. The Adoptions Program originally served to assist KBYH foster parents in adopting foster youth in their care. KBYH continues to provide this service, but also, for the past 14 years KBYH has been contracted to conduct evaluations of KCDHS' county and relative care providers. Additionally, KBYH provides



post adoption services including a support group, adoption family camp, counseling services, and assistance with resource access. The program currently consists of two adoption social workers, an adoptions compliance manager, and a director of adoption services.

KBYH Adoptions has utilized online resources in order to match children in need of an adoptive placement with adoptive families. This has included the use of Adopt Us Kids and the California Kids Connection matching websites.

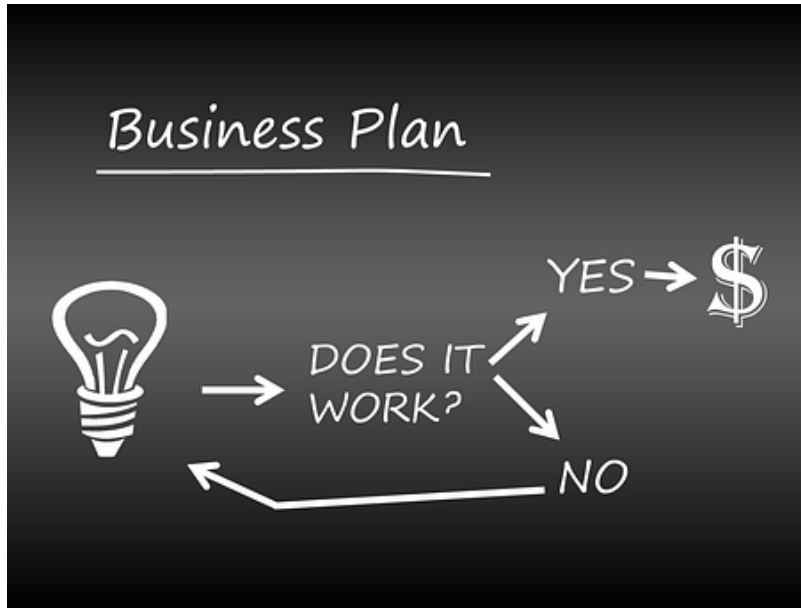
At the end of 2013, KBYH's Adoption program was awarded a \$100,000 grant from the Children's Home Society of California. These funds were used for a variety of projects, including infrastructure, training, post adoption support, adoptive family emergency funds,

recruitment, and outreach. CHS has continued to support the KBYH adoptions program, providing grants of \$10,000-20,000 annually.

Community Education: Kern Bridges provides, under contract, Managing Aggressive Behavior training to county employees at the Jamison Center.

MSW & BSW Internship Program: Kern Bridges accepts MSW and BSW students from California State University, Bakersfield, MSW & BSW Internship Program: Kern Bridges accepts MSW and BSW students from California State University, Northridge, MSW students from USC, Phoenix University, National University, Arizona State University, Brandman University, Chamberlain University, and Walden University.





### 5-Year Strategies/Action Plan 2019-2024

#### Strategic Products and Services

Due to the fact that both our STRTP and foster care programs represent 83.5% of current and projected revenues, these two programs are vitally important to Kern Bridges' future. As of 2020 STRTPs will account for 71% of our income. Our adoption program, once considered ancillary to these two programs, is now accounting for 16.5% of revenues.

#### Positioning

STRTPs - Kern Bridges maintains a 98% to 99% capacity of youth receiving services.

Foster Care - Kern Bridges is one of nine foster family agencies (plus Kern County).

Adoption Services - Kern Bridges is one of three private agencies that provide adoption services.

#### Rate Setting

As with all STRTPs and foster programs prices are fixed per the state's mandate. With STRTPs, the higher rating or level an agency achieves translates into greater services for the clients.

In the past fiscal year foster care rates and STRTPs rates rose 2.11%.



### Progress for Five Year Plan Goals Adopted 2019/2024

1. Pay off all properties. [All properties are paid off.](#)
2. Add new office space for SMH at both STRTP sites. [Update: This is no longer a State requirement and this will be dropped.](#)
3. Install solar system on Stine Rd. buildings: [Update: The solar panels were installed at the Almklov Hose instead and they are functioning well.](#)
4. Develop a master plan to provide continuing education for Upper Management and provide incremental pay increases and education assistance for hourly RCCWs for specific certifications. [Update: This is under review.](#)
5. Become Medi-cal certified. [This is accomplished.](#)
6. Build Financial Reserves to \$300,000. [Update: In progress.](#)
7. Begin CEO search in January 2023 and decide by June 2023. [Update: TBD](#)
8. Further establish and develop ISFC services: [A contract has been signed and we are providing services.](#)
9. Implement a supervised visitation program to assist Kern County with visitation by family's who have children in foster care. [A contract has been signed and services are now being provided.](#)

A new five-year plan will be developed in the coming months.

### Fund Raising

Recent Annual Supporters (and/or events) include:

**The AT&T Pioneers** have supported the FFA program for over 30 years.

**The Children's Home Society of California** has provided \$10,000-15,000 annually for the last 4 years to continue supporting the KBYH adoptions program.



Our Wishmas Tree Program brought in over \$28,175 worth of donations this year.

**KBYH would like to take this opportunity to thank the following people and organizations for donating their time, money, and efforts to help the boys living in our group homes.**



In the year of 2021, the former Junior Miss Kern County, JoVi Mongold, and her parents along with a team of others donated Christmas stockings and gifts for our boys this past Christmas. They gave each boy at Kern Bridges STRTP sites their own personalized gift. In addition, JoVi gave a dynamite motivational speech for the boys. They were all touched, inspired and very gracious. KBYH would like to take this time to recognize JoVi and her entire team for such a wonderful gesture during the holidays. Thank you, JoVi, you're such an extraordinary young lady filled with positive energy and very passionate about making a difference in your community.

We also like to thank other donors who gave this past year:

- Dan Marble, KBYH's founder, who continues to faithfully make an annual financial donation



- Tracy VanderVeen, who makes an annual donation on behalf of her brother, Clarence Westra, who was a founding KBYH board member.
- Various community members who have answered our call for Supervised Visitation Program needs such as couches, TV's, gaming consoles, outdoor play equipment, and miscellaneous toys.
- Alex Balfour, Director of Cushman & Wakefield, has given \$100 each Wishmas Tree year since 2018 increased his giving to \$500 for our STRTP boy's Christmas.
- Ira Cohen, Senior Vice President at UBS, continued to give multiple gifts and assist.
- Sandy Foster, General Manager of Velosio, gave multiple gifts throughout the year, as well as donating a brand-new variable height desk and credenza for use in our Almklov STRTP
- 3-Way Chevrolet and Channel 17 teamed up to create our best Wishmas Tree campaign ever in 2021. Total gifts exceeded \$28,175 with over 650 toys received.
- InterAct Volunteers from Foothill High School, Golden Valley High Schools, and volunteers from Frontier High School, along with employees from Channel 17 and 3-Way Chevrolet helped at our Annual Christmas wrapping day.
- Harry & Ethel West Foundation awarded a grant \$5,000
- Employees of The Wonderful Company continue to donate annually in 2021 it exceeded \$2,000
- KBYH participated in the first ever "Give Big Kern Event" in 2019, but due to COVID 2020 & 2021 were not possible. However, we are back at it in 2022. Every Board Member is providing some kind of donation.
- We happily sent over 40 "Thank You" receipt letters for an untold amount because much of it was actual TV's, Furniture, Beds and various Kitchen items. (Per IRS Guidelines Value is assigned by the Donor

### Key Personnel

CEO / John Bacon, MA Psych., MSW, LCSW / 22 years with KBYH

Ex. Vice President/Adoptions Director / Jim VanderZwan, LCSW / 21 years with KBYH

Ex. Vice President/STRTP Program Director / Robert Carter, M.S. / 21 years with KBYH

Director of Finance / Michael O'Doherty, MBA 3 years with KBYH

Human Resources Director / Kathy Irwin, / 24 years with KBYH

### Social Workers

- STRTP Mark Dominguez, MA / 12 years with KBYH
- STRTP Trina Smith, MS/CJ / Administrator / 13 years with KBYH
- STRTP Abraham Nesheiwat, M. ED/ Administrator / 1.5 years with KBYH
- STRTP Ryan Buck, MSW, ASW / 3 years with KBYH
- STRTP Skye Lopez, MSW / 1 year with KBYH
- STRTP Crisol Jimenez, MSW / 1 year with KBYH
- ISFC/FFA Joe Ortega, MA / 22 years with KBYH
- ISFC/FFA Jennifer Robbins, MSW / 5 years with KBYH
- FFA Ruth Jackson, MA / 17 years with KBYH
- ISFC/FFA Mike Ramirez, MSW / 7 years with KBYH
- ISFC/FFA Marina Hernandez, MSW / 4 years with KBYH
- ISFC/FFA Catherine Santerre, MSW / 3 years with KBYH
- ADOPTION Martha Pantoja-Gonzales, MSW / 4 years with KBYH
- ADOPTION Bianca Ruiz, MSW / 5 years with KBYH
- SVP Cindy Perry / 2 year with KBYH (and 6 years as a KBYH Resource Parent)

Board of Directors

**President** / Stephanie Baker / Retired

**Vice President** / Kevin Danley / Attorney Young Woolridge

**Treasurer / Secretary**/ Jeff Petrini, A/C Electric

**Member** / Mike Conard / Dr. Technology

**Member** / Bill Slocumb / Slocumb Law Offices

**Member** / Mike Nisser / Kern County Human Resources

**Member** / Vic Swall / Bakersfield Police Department

**Member** / Kim Clerou / Educator



Kern Bridges Youth Homes

**Member** / Loni Theresa Hill-Pirtle / LCSW

*Member* / Shannon Davidson, Camping World

**Member** / Day Smith / Entrepreneur

**KERN BRIDGES YOUTH HOMES, INC.****STATEMENTS OF FINANCIAL POSITION  
September 30, 2021 and 2020**

	2021	2020
<b>ASSETS</b>		
Current Assets		
Cash and cash equivalents	\$ 750,018	\$ 643,198
Accounts receivable	629,547	523,836
Grant receivable	148,970	-
Prepaid expenses	71,028	73,302
Deposits	18,182	16,825
<b>Total current assets</b>	<b>1,617,745</b>	<b>1,257,161</b>
Property and Equipment (Notes 3, 4 and 5)	1,086,745	1,105,433
<b>Total assets</b>	<b>\$ 2,704,490</b>	<b>\$ 2,362,594</b>
<b>LIABILITIES AND NET ASSETS</b>		
Current Liabilities		
Current maturities of long-term debt (Note 5)	\$ -	\$ 53,686
Accounts payable	147,622	187,918
Accrued expenses	278,380	246,417
Payable to state of California	117,319	117,319
<b>Total current liabilities</b>	<b>543,321</b>	<b>605,340</b>
Long-term Debt, less current maturities (Note 5)	-	182,624
<b>Total liabilities</b>	<b>543,321</b>	<b>787,964</b>
Net Assets Without Donor Restrictions	2,161,169	1,574,630
<b>Total liabilities and net assets</b>	<b>\$ 2,704,490</b>	<b>\$ 2,362,594</b>
See Notes to Financial Statements		

**KERN BRIDGES YOUTH HOMES, INC.**  
**STATEMENTS OF ACTIVITIES**  
**Years Ended September 30, 2021 and 2020**

	2021	2020
Program Revenues:		
Governmental contracts	\$ 5,845,632	\$ 4,843,440
Other programs	78,972	45,427
Public Support:		
Donations	20,397	30,916
Contributions in-kind	220,100	175,924
Grants	148,970	-
Paycheck Protection Program loan forgiveness (Note 1)	-	517,000
Other Revenue	6,687	13,169
<b>Total revenues and support</b>	<b>6,320,758</b>	<b>5,625,876</b>
Expenses:		
Programs	5,106,682	4,505,340
General and administrative	627,537	644,241
<b>Total expenses</b>	<b>5,734,219</b>	<b>5,149,581</b>
<b>Change in net assets without donor restrictions</b>	<b>586,539</b>	<b>476,295</b>
Net assets without donor restrictions, beginning	1,574,630	1,098,335
Net assets without donor restrictions, ending	<b>\$ 2,161,169</b>	<b>\$ 1,574,630</b>

See Notes to Financial Statements