



# Northland Area Family Service Center Annual Report 2021



**Mission: "We provide education, mentoring and support services that build strong individuals and families in the Northland Community Schools District."**

**Vision: "As a result of our work, we are breaking the cycle of generational poverty one family at a time."**

Northland Area Family Service Center is an independent non-profit agency physically located in Remer, Minnesota serving residents living in the entire Northland School District. Begun by a group of concerned citizens whose goal was to support families in our area by making them stronger, the Family Center has continued to serve area residents through the collaborative efforts of public and private agencies, community members and Northland Community Schools. The Family Center continues to reach out to the community by developing programs that build on the strengths of all participants.



We would like to take this opportunity to thank those who have partnered with us on our work during 2021. The board of Directors continue to be instrumental in leading our organization during this past year, with continued virtual monthly meetings and leadership. We appreciate the gifts of money from donors in helping us provide education, mentoring and support services that build strong individuals and families in the Northland Community.

We would also like to thank Cass County MN for the funding we received from the ARPA Grant (American Rescue Plan Act). Due to the funding we received from this grant, we were able to replace one of the two furnaces located at the family center, which was over 20 years old.

If you would like to learn more check out our website:

[www.northlandfamilycenter.org](http://www.northlandfamilycenter.org)

Leslie Bouchonville, Executive Director

218-566-3636

[director@northlandfamilycenter.org](mailto:director@northlandfamilycenter.org)

**2021 has been a very challenging year for so many, the Northland Area Family Service Center was also included.**



## **Family Support**

**Staff:** Linda Leverty



**Who we served in 1627 open hours: 348 total connections:**



### **Resource and Referral**

- 91 clients were referred to outside sources (BiCAP, Food Shelf, HHVS (and other services))
  - 8 clients accessed Family Center computer for unemployment services, job searches and forms that we have available.
  - 18 clients received assistance from Family Center staff to complete application forms for Bi-CAP & Cass County Health Human & Veterans Services.
  - 32 clients received assistance regarding MNSure, for applications or had questions.
  - 60 persons faxed paper
  - 57 people were provided with other “in-house” assistance
  - 82 people accessed copies
- We have noticed that due to COVID-19, our “walk-in” traffic to the Family Center is down from previous years. Clients were able to perform the majority of services from on-line applications. We continued to receive phone calls from clients requesting assistance for other cases.

### **MN Legal Kiosk Project (computer use)**

- The Family Center has obtained 2 Legal kiosks computers, which provide access to legal aid services to individuals without access to wifi or technology. These Legal Kiosks offer the public the ability to apply for civil legal aid services, access legal resources, and, in some cases, attend online meetings and remote court hearings in privacy.



Unfortunately, at this time there has not been any public use of these computers.



# Healthy Families America® — AFFILIATE —

## FAMILY CENTER HOME VISITING

Serving the Communities of:  
Northland, Pillager and Pine River-Backus



## Program: Family Center Home Visiting

**Staff:** Lee Anne Bettenberg – Family Support Specialist

**Program Goals:** Build and sustain community partnerships to systematically engage overburdened families in home visiting services prenatally or at birth, cultivate and strengthen nurturing parent-child relationships, promote healthy childhood development and growth, and enhance family functioning by reducing risk and building protective factors.

- The Northland site completed 157 visits during 2021 with 8 families.
- The program is guided by an Advisory Board, which meets quarterly.
- Northland Family Center and Pine River-Backus each have a Family Support Specialist and work as a team with two Family Center Directors to provide this program.
- Retention rates are very high for the families currently involved.

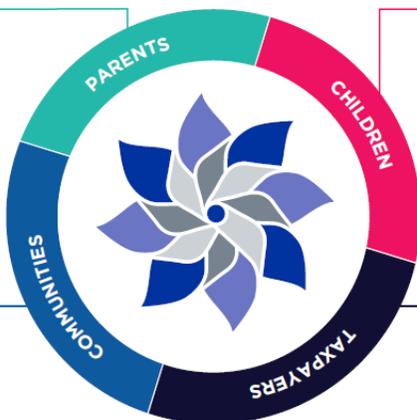
### Both Taxpayers and Families Benefit from Healthy Families America. Here's How:

The main participants in HFA home visiting are the parents themselves, who experience benefits such as:

**41% REDUCTION** in alcohol use, and increased education, which can lead to better jobs and earnings

Decreased maternal depression, with rates dropping nearly twice as much in two years compared to a control group

These benefits mean that, for every \$1 invested in Healthy Families America, communities get a return of \$1.46, and even greater benefits (\$3.16) for families involved with Child Welfare<sup>1</sup>



Children in HFA benefit in multiple ways including:

**Fewer** Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) such as physical abuse and neglect

**Greater** school success, and 50% less likely to be retained in 1st grade

HFA benefits taxpayers too, through cost-savings such as:

**Reduced** need for special education  
**Reduced** use of public assistance/ food stamps for some families  
**Reduced** health costs of low birth weight infants

<sup>1</sup>DuMont, K., Kirkland, K., Mitchell-Herzfeld, S., Ehrhard-Dietzel, S., Rodriguez, M. L., Lee, E., Layne, C., & Greene, R. (2010). A randomized trial of Healthy Families New York (HFNY): Does home visiting prevent child maltreatment? Washington, DC: National Institute of Justice.

# ParentChild+

Equal Possibilities From The Start

## Program: ParentChild+

Parent Child+, is a program of Northland Area Family Service Center and Jewish Family and Children's Service of Minneapolis. Our service area covers the Northland and Pine River/Backus school districts.

**Staff:** Andria Strenge and Ashley Hesse – Early Learning Specialists

ParentChild+ is a free home-visiting program that works to strengthen families and empower parents by providing them with the skills and resources they need to prepare their children for school success. The program is built around an intensive two-year home-visiting model that builds school readiness, child development and parenting skills. ParentChild+ helps the whole family address challenges and prepare for the future.

- Participating families receive free educational books and toys
- Families begin the program when their child is 18 months to 2.5 years old
- Trained early learning specialists work with families in their homes two times a week for two years

Our specialists model engaging and educational activities for parents and children together, and then support parents as they take on the role of their children's first teachers. Children who participated the ParentChild+ are 50% more likely to be ready for kindergarten and graduated high school at a rate of 30% higher than their socio-economic peers.

Some challenges occurred with COVID. On a biweekly schedule, visits continued during the pandemic virtually via zoom, YouTube, facetime, phone and in person. We did comply with CDC guidelines. For all types of visits, educational materials were provided to families.

**In 2021, 613 visits were completed with 4 children graduating from the 2<sup>nd</sup> year program. Program runs September to the end of May. This is a 2-year program.**

### ParentChild+ 2021 graduating students



# Family Center Preschool

Family Center Preschool is part of the Northland Early Childhood Collaborative. Our goal is to provide learning opportunities within a rich caring environment to better prepare each child for kindergarten.

**Staff:** Stacey Barrick –Teacher, Randi Robison and Julie Erpelding - Assistants

January 2021 - May 2021

10 students were enrolled in this session of preschool.

## 2021 Preschool Graduates



# Family Center Preschool

Staff: Stacey Barrick –Teacher, Randi Robison - Assistant

September 2021 – December 2021

Fall of 2021, 11 children attended preschool.





## Child and Teen Check Ups (C&TC) Outreach

**Staff:** Linda Leverty

### Outreach efforts

- Mailed reminder letters to families in Northland School District who are on Medical Assistance for health checkups.

## Northland Family Fun Nights

Due to COVID, unfortunately this wonderful event was not offered.

## Toys For Kids

**Staff:** Volunteers

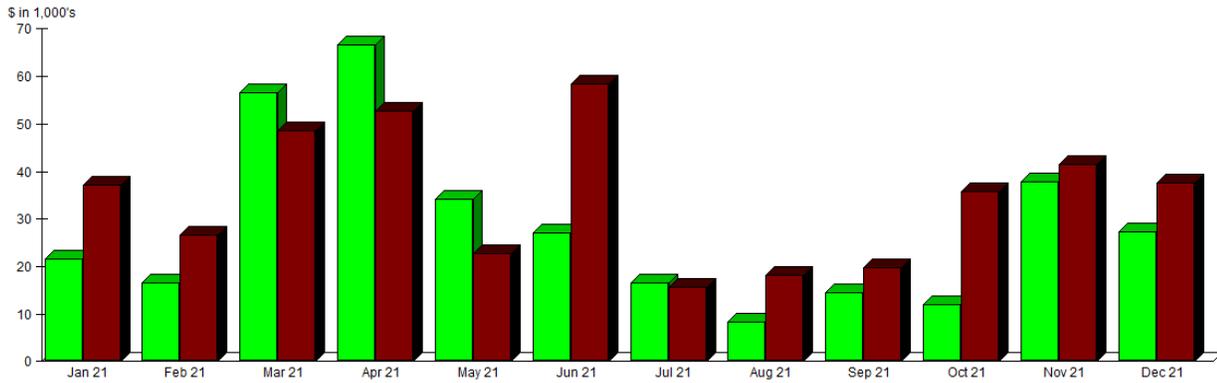
This is the seventh year the Family Center collaborated with volunteers to help area children have a brighter holiday. The Family Center served as the fiscal host for donations. Volunteers coordinated the program and distributed the gifts to families before the Holidays.

Served 52 Families – 128 children

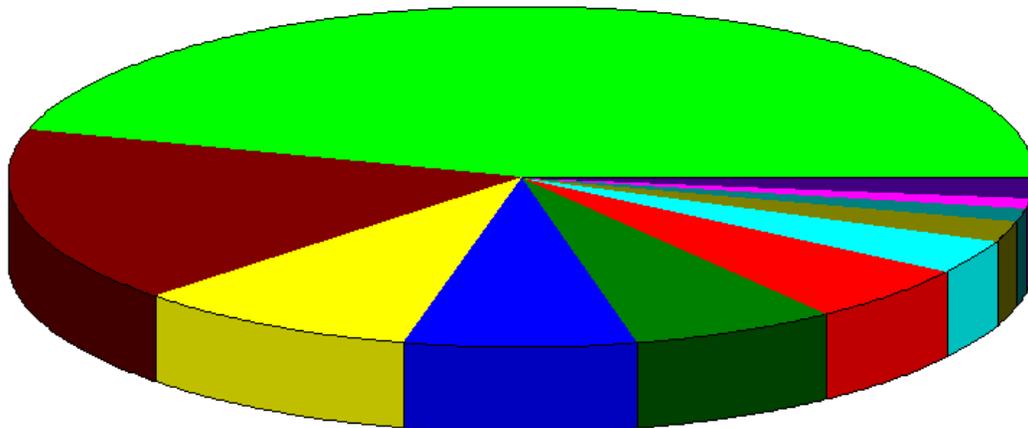


Income and Expense by Month  
January through December 2021

Income  
Expense



Expense Summary  
January through December 2021



66000 - Payroll Expenses	45.64%
62800 - Facilities and Equipment	16.93
65000 - Operations	8.92
80400 - Prog. Director Admin Allocations	7.38
62100 - Contract Services	6.68
65100 - Other Types of Expenses	5.43
68300 - Travel and Meetings	3.35
60900 - Business Expenses	1.96
80100 - Capital Purchases	1.42
65060 - Propane	1.00
Other	1.29
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$415,036.98</b>



# Northland Area Family Service Center

## Family Council

### Officers

President: Barbara Anderson  
 Treasurer: Cheryl Desoto  
 Secretary: Kit Arnquist

### Directors

Marlyn Holman  
 Brandon Otway  
 Faye Zorman

About us ~ who and where  
 we are:

### Staff

*Executive Director:*  
 Leslie Bouchonville

*Home Visiting:*  
 Lee Anne Bettenberg  
 Andria Streng  
 Ashley Hesse

*Preschool:*  
 Stacey Barrick  
 Randi Robison  
 Julie Erpelding

*Administrative Manager/Program Support:*  
 Linda Leverty



Our Service Area



Phone: 218-566-3636

Fax: 218-566-1303

320 Eagle Ave NE, PO Box 304, Remer MN 56672

Email: [director@northlandfamilycenter.org](mailto:director@northlandfamilycenter.org)

Website: [www.northlandfamilycenter.org](http://www.northlandfamilycenter.org)

Facebook:

[www.facebook.com/NorthlandAreaFamilyServiceCenter](http://www.facebook.com/NorthlandAreaFamilyServiceCenter)