



2022-2023

annual report

MorningStar
children & family services





VISION

Brighter futures for all Georgia children

MISSION

Morningstar is a sanctuary where transformative teaching and healing affirms our children through real relationships

VALUES

We look toward the stars...

believing that we are part of something bigger than ourselves.

We shine like the stars...

reflecting the goodness and light that is in all of us.

We reach for the stars...

knowing our best effort makes a difference, every day.

We guide like the stars...

mentoring those in our care through positive words and actions.

We connect like the stars...

linking together to create a community of hope and encouragement for all.

Our Leadership Team

Senior Leadership

Beth VanDerbeck
CEO

Brian Bean
COO

Katrina Chisholm
Director of
Community Counseling

LaToya Scott
Director of
Residential Services

Elizabeth Stephenson
Autism Program
Coordinator

Josh Rustin
Workforce Development
Coordinator

Board of Directors

Rick Shelnutt: Chair
Bryce Bunting Vice-Chair
Jim Davis: Treasurer
Kate Sabbe: Secretary
Cherise Cartwright
Judy Dodd
Nick Doster
Zachary B. Harris
Cornell Harvey
Don Hogan
Jerry House
Michael Scherneck
Susan Watts
Karen Wayes



Home is Always Open

Dear Morningstar Friends,

As we reflect on the past year, we review with gratitude the challenges and achievements of the children and our organization. We recognize it is the collaborative efforts of many - children, staff, and community - which creates change. With this in mind, our new gym mural (pictured on the cover) displays bold shapes and colors, with many arms "reaching for the stars", a reminder that it takes all of us, each boldly doing our part, to create home and healing for Georgia's children.




Over the last year, changes in child welfare, an increasing demand for mental health services, and the continuation of a struggling labor market each required a response from our Board and staff, as well as support from our partners and donors, to keep us moving forward. With each challenge, we pivoted as needed, taking action that demonstrated sensitivity to the children and families we serve and positioning us for continued growth.

The accomplishments worthy of celebration are many. Most notably, we deepened our residential program to support requests from the state to provide care for foster boys with more significant and complex needs. Without us, these children truly had nowhere to go. Additionally, we hired a Workforce Coordinator to give even greater emphasis to helping the boys learn the value of work and how to become good future employees. Finally, photos of continued facility improvements made across our campus are shared here, including the completed renovation of Bradley Cottage.



We know there will be more challenges to face and work to be done in the year ahead. We are confident, together, we can continue to make a difference in the lives of children, providing a safe and nurturing home, education, healthcare, and emotional support, all while helping them build the skills they need to succeed in life.

Thank you for continuing to reach high with us. 
-Beth VanDerbeck, Chief Executive Officer



Morningstar Child and Family Services

Community Services



Counseling

Morningstar's **Community Counseling Clinics** are located in Brunswick and Perry, Georgia. Each clinic provides support and hope to children and families through comprehensive child and adolescent mental health assessments, treatment planning, crisis intervention, therapy services, and medication management.

Residential Services



Autism

The **Autism and Complex Care Program** provides specialized services to support foster children with special mental and physical challenges. Cottage staff and ABA therapists work to assist children in learning basic life skills to aid them in living successfully as they return home or to a foster home.



Workforce Development

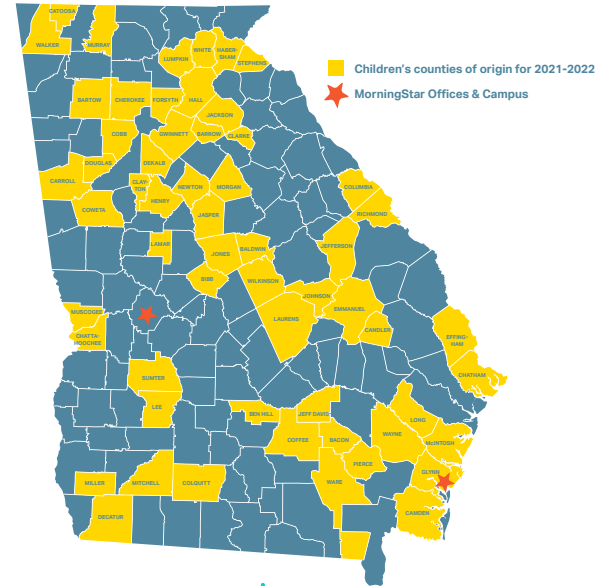
The **Workforce Development Program** provides support to youth with jobs skills training and experience, on and off campus. We believe a high school degree and successful work experience will set these youth up for a successful future as they move to home or an independent living program for young adults.

Children Served

map of service

MorningStar accepts referrals from all Georgia counties

Morningstar's **Residential Services Program** provides home to Georgia's foster children, ages 12 – 21, who have come into care due to abuse, severe neglect, or abandonment. We are the only group home in the state solely serving youth with developmental delays (IQ 40-80). Each child receives services that address their physical, psychological, social, educational, and spiritual needs.



Community Support and Engagement

Oak Grove Island Couples Golf Tournament



The Oak Grove Island Couples Golf Association held its 16th annual golf tournament and silent auction in September at the Heritage Oaks Golf Course in support of Morningstar Children's Home.

100 Women Who Care

Morningstar was honored to be chosen by 100 Women Who Care as 2022's first quarter recipient.



On the Road to Success!

As a community, you came together and helped us raise needed funds to purchase two new buses to help the residents get to school, medical appointments, and field trips. Thank you!



Ashley Furniture

A good night's sleep makes days brighter. Many thanks to Sommer Ferguson and Jonathan Jones from our local Ashley Furniture! They, along with their parent company 1915 South, provided amazing new mattresses and pillows to meet our cottage needs.



Gym Mural



Funds from St. Simons Presbyterian allowed us to collaborate with a local artist to get this beautiful mural up in our gym. It creates a colorful backdrop for basketball games, talent shows, and staff Christmas parties. Thank you!

dinner under the stars

It was wonderful being back on campus for Dinner Under the Stars! Many thanks to Drew Thompson, former Boys Estate residents, and our sponsors and guests for such an impactful evening.



Thank you, 2021 Event Sponsors!

★★★★★ **Title Sponsor** ★★★★★

Georgia Peach World

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- Jack & Kathleen Thornton

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**SAVE THE DATE for
Dinner Under the Stars
Oct. 21, 2023!**

Thank you, 2022 Event Sponsors!

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- Mike & Kathy Scherneck
- Northside Baptist Church
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- Silver Bluff Brewing Company
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- Synovus Bank

★ **Patron Sponsors** ★

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- Lisa & Ellis Johnson
- Maddox Events
- One Way Auto Rentals
- Sue and Jerry House

Bradley Cottage

The Bradley Cottage project was completed in early 2023 and the boys love the more modern, renovated space. Special thanks to the Stuart and Eulene Murray Foundation, specifically Hank and Julie Rowland, who supported our mission with a challenge grant, providing an opportunity for all of us to partner together to improve the living space for our residents. We thank each donor who gave so generously to help us raise the challenge funds, allowing us to move forward quickly to begin and complete this wonderful work. Finally, we thank Susan Watts, founder of SpaceCraft and a member of our Board, for providing the creative vision and oversight of the renovation, assuring the cottage is a safe, beautiful, and peaceful place for the boys to live. Together, we restored a cottage which will serve Georgia's children for years to come.





Living Lent

In 2021, the inaugural Lent devotional series was launched, touching hundreds of people with daily devotional emails, and raising \$30,000 to support the needs of the children. In 2022 and 2023, pastors from across Georgia joined us by providing the devotional words of reflection, which were shared by email and in booklets to a growing group of individuals and churches throughout the state, with over \$50,000 of generous gifts received each year. Special thanks to Becky Livingston for providing the vision and leadership to what has become a meaningful annual faith journey for many, as well as an impactful support avenue to Morningstar.



During Lent, the Stations of the Cross, an art walk toward Easter, was set up just outside the campus gate. Artwork by Jen Norton, a contemporary artist and award-winning painter, were combined with devotions by Reverend Stephanie Smith, Statesboro, to provide individuals and groups an opportunity for thought and prayer.

A Day of Service was coordinated each year within Lent weeks for individuals and groups to give their time to serve on the Morningstar campus. Thanks to Judy Dodd and Pat Parsons for providing coordination of the projects and the 50-100 volunteers who arrived for the annual campus workday.



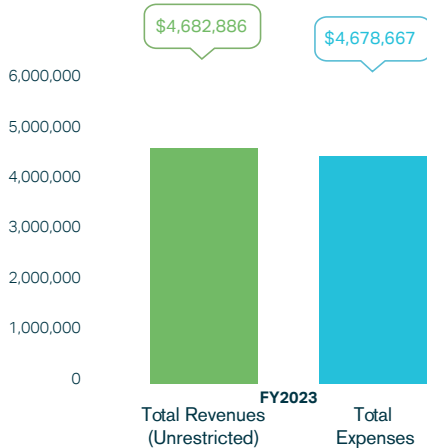


Strategic Plan 2020-2022

Our New Strategic Focus is **Them**: **They** are the reason we exist. **They** are children in need. **They** are families facing unimaginable challenges. **They** are daughters, sons, mothers, fathers. **They** are our clients. **They** are our employees. **They** are volunteers. **They** are partner organizations. **They** are donors. **They** are our leaders. **They** are the communities we serve. **They** are people with needs. Each one of **them**. Our strategy is to understand **them**. To help **them**. To educate **them**. To meet **their** needs. Because only by focusing first on **them** will Morningstar grow and thrive.



Financial Overview and Funding Initiatives



Georgia's child welfare system reimburses less than the cost of care for each resident. Community contributions, essential to the ongoing work of Morningstar, make up the difference in the cost of caring for those we serve.



The Morningstar Children's Endowment Fund

In 2020, through a designated philanthropic investment, this fund was established with Communities of Coastal Georgia Foundation. The designated fund supports the mission of Morningstar Children and Family Services to provide residential and community counseling services to children, youth, and their families. When you make a gift to the fund, you are making an investment in the future of the children we serve. For more information, contact Communities of Coastal Georgia Foundation at 912-268-2561.

connecting
kids
with brighter
days



WAYS TO GIVE TO MORNINGSTAR



CHECK

P.O. Box 370, Brunswick, GA 31521



WEBSITE

MorningstarCFS.Org/Donate