

Ways to Get Involved

Want to learn more about ways to get involved in helping our community?

1.) Scan the QR Code below

(Using the camera feature on your mobile device)



www.CHSOFNJ.org

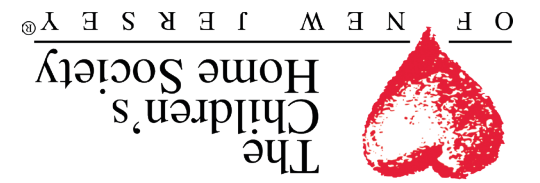
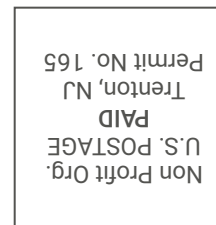
2.) For other questions or more information reach out to Lisa Thibault at the Donor Communications and Engagement Office, LThibault@chsofnj.org



This document was produced by the CHSofNJ Donor Communications and Engagement Office and D2Creative.

For more information please visit www.CHSofNJ.org.

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Resilience in Action

Impact Report 2024-2025 & Newsletter of The Children's Home Society of New Jersey, Spring 2026

"You may encounter Many defeats, but you must not be defeated."

- Maya Angelou

Upcoming Events and Drives

TEDI's 37th Annual End-of-Year Event

May 21, 2026

Back to School Drive

June 29 - August 24, 2026

Run for Hope

May 16, 2026



2025 Year in Review: Leadership, Resilience, and Impact

A Year of Leadership in a Time of Change

Julie Dees' first year as CEO of The Children's Home Society of New Jersey (CHSofNJ) was defined by both extraordinary challenge and meaningful progress. Stepping into leadership during a period of national uncertainty, growing community need, and shifting government priorities, Julie navigated a complex landscape while keeping CHSofNJ firmly focused on its mission: ensuring every child and family has the support they need to thrive.

What began as a "whirlwind" her first 90 days evolved into a year marked by steady leadership, strategic decision-making, and renewed momentum for one of New Jersey's oldest and most trusted human service organizations.

A Message from Our CEO, Julie Dees

As I reflect on my first year as CEO of The Children's Home Society of New Jersey (CHSofNJ), I am filled with gratitude, for our dedicated staff, our partners, our donors, and the families who place their trust in us every day.

This year brought significant challenges. We navigated a federal government shutdown, rapidly evolving funding environments, and a growing demand for services from families representing diverse cultural, economic, and linguistic backgrounds. Across our communities, families faced rising costs of living, workforce instability, barriers to healthcare access, and increased stressors impacting child and maternal well-being.

Through it all, we remained mission-focused.

Together with our leadership team, staff, community partners, and supporters, we worked to ensure our services remained accessible, responsive, and rooted in dignity and respect. I am especially grateful for the strong support and forward-looking vision of the CHSofNJ Board of Trustees, led by Board Chair Micah Parker. Their partnership has been instrumental in helping us navigate uncertainty while positioning our organization for long-term impact.

Despite the challenges of 2025, the steadfast support of our donors made it possible to deliver early childhood development and education to 655 infants and toddlers, maternal and child health resources to 25,133 individuals, and academic enrichment and arts



education to 1,723 students—just a few highlights of the impact made possible through their generosity.

A central priority in my first year has been reframing how we measure success. In the nonprofit sector, sustainability cannot be achieved by minimizing costs alone. We must also invest strategically to maximize impact. That belief guided several important steps forward:

- ♥ Expanding fundraising capacity to deepen philanthropic support and community engagement
- ♥ Leveraging technology upgrades to strengthen operational efficiency and improve service delivery
- ♥ Building strategic partnerships with healthcare providers, businesses, financial institutions, and higher education institutions

These investments strengthen our foundation today while ensuring we can meet growing needs tomorrow.

Throughout 2025, CHSofNJ continued delivering life-changing services, touching more than 68,000 lives across early childhood education, maternal and child health, adoption, counseling, WIC, Head Start, and family support programs, while adapting to a rapidly changing world. As we approach our 132nd year of service, we remain steadfast in our mission to support children and families at every stage of life.

The work ahead is urgent. But I am confident in our path forward. With continued collaboration, thoughtful investment, and the unwavering support of our community, CHSofNJ is stronger, more agile, and well-positioned to deepen our impact.

Thank you for standing with us. Together, we will continue to rise and ensure that more children and families can build stable, healthy, and hopeful futures.

With Gratitude,

A blue ink handwritten signature of Julie Dees.

Julie Dees, MBA, LPC
Chief Executive Officer

WIC Nutrition Services: Supporting Healthy Growth

At the grocery store, she reads every label twice.

With rising food prices and a toddler who can't tolerate most dairy products, even simple choices feel complicated. Managing her own iron deficiency anemia while caring for her 18-month-old son means every meal matters. The stakes are high: his growth, her energy, their stability.

When she connected with our Mercer County WIC Nutrition Supervisor, Miteshri D. Prajapati, Ph.D., she found more than assistance, she found guidance. Through WIC, she receives fresh fruit and vegetable benefits that help her stretch her budget while prioritizing nutrient-rich foods. Lactaid milk, covered through the program, ensures her son gets the calcium he needs without triggering discomfort from lactose intolerance.

Just as important, she gained education and confidence. WIC nutritionists worked closely with her to address iron deficiency through practical, culturally responsive meal planning and clear strategies she could implement immediately. Instead of feeling overwhelmed in the grocery aisle, she now feels informed and prepared.

Today, she describes our WIC program, which helps more than 8,313 individuals each month, as "incredibly helpful" – not only for the food support, but for the reassurance that she is making the right choices for her family's health.

With the right nourishment and trusted guidance, she and her son are building a stronger, healthier future, one meal at a time.



Here for Life: Adoption Services

In his late 60s, Leo found himself facing winter without a home.

An adult adoptee placed through our agency in 1957, he was navigating five years of homelessness and serious heart-related health concerns. To secure housing, he urgently needed official documentation verifying his identity. He also carried a pressing question: was there any family medical history that might explain his worsening condition?

When he called our Adoption Services team, he wasn't just asking for paperwork. He was asking whether the agency that helped begin his life story would still be there for him decades later. Fortunately, our program maintains family records for each adoption dating back 100 years.

Adoption Specialist Aisha Harper carefully reviewed records more than 65 years old. She prepared a notarized letter confirming his adoption and legal name change, along with a summary of available background and medical information, including a family history of heart disease that provided important clarity.

The documents arrived in time.

With proof of identity in hand, Leo secured stable housing before winter set in, ending five years of homelessness. Equipped with new medical insight and a safe place to live, he began rebuilding.

Months later, he sent a heartfelt letter and a \$300 donation in memory of his adoptive parents, writing,

"Your agency helped give me a great start in life, and in October 2023, literally saved my life."

Today, Leo is housed and moving forward, a powerful reminder that adoption is not a single moment in time. It is a lifelong relationship, and a promise we are here to keep.

Name shared with permission.



Trauma-Focused Therapy: Rebuilding Safety and Trust

The three sisters rarely spoke.

When they first arrived for therapy, they sat close together, shoulders tight, eyes scanning the room. Loud sounds made them jump. They clung to one another for reassurance, unsure whether any adult could be trusted. After severe abuse and instability, silence had become their shield.

What was at stake was more than behavior, it was their sense of safety, their ability to trust, and their belief that childhood could hold anything other than fear.

Through Trauma-Focused Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (TF-CBT), therapists Kelly Collins, LCSW, and Heather Reddin, LSW, met the girls with steady patience and clinical expertise. Week by week, they helped the sisters build coping skills, gently process traumatic memories, and put words to experiences that once felt overwhelming. The therapy room became predictable, calm, a place where their bodies could finally relax.

Over the course of a year, small changes became profound ones. The girls began speaking more freely. They made eye contact. They practiced grounding strategies when anxious. Laughter, once absent, began to surface.

At their graduation session, the sisters shared reflections filled with pride. They spoke about feeling stronger, safer, and more hopeful. They wrote about their dreams and the tools they now carry with them.

Three young girls walked in guarded and fearful. They walked out knowing they have voices, resilience, and a future not defined by trauma.

Their healing is a powerful reminder: with skilled care and compassionate support, childhood can be restored. More than 360 children were supported in 2024-2025 with clinical interventions to help them write a new chapter grounded in strength and stability.

Identifying details have been changed to protect confidentiality.



Discover the Impact of The Children's Home Society of New Jersey



A not-for-profit agency, CHSofNJ is a catalyst for creating child-centered, family-focused, diverse communities through a comprehensive continuum of prevention and support services. Our inclusive programs for children and families support child welfare (including abuse and neglect prevention and treatment, adoption, kinship support, and more); early childhood and parent education; clinical and behavioral health services; school-based youth development; and maternal-child health programming and support from pregnancy through labor/delivery and postnatal care. We proudly sponsor federal WIC, 21st Century Community Learning Centers, and Head Start/Early Head Start programs in Trenton. In all that we do, we strive to operate through a trauma-informed lens and be guided by our Diversity, Equity and Inclusion values.

What makes us unique? CHSofNJ's culture since 1894 is to listen to the children and families we serve. We help families decide what they want to achieve, and we support them in attaining the goals they set for themselves. We provide access to skills, knowledge, and resources to empower families and inform life choices. We evaluate our outcomes and adapt our programming and services as needed to best meet the ever-evolving needs of the community we serve.

The Children’s Home Society of New Jersey’s comprehensive family of services comprises six core service areas.

Our support and prevention services are thoughtfully designed and data-informed to support CHSofNJ’s mission since 1894: Saving Children’s Lives and Building Healthy Families!

68,259 Lives Touched in FY 2024–2025

CHSofNJ’s Core Service Areas & Programs

Community & Family Support

39,588 Individuals Supported

- Heritage North Family Success Center
- Heritage South Family Success Center
- Anchor Family Success Center
- State Health Insurance Assistance Program (SHIP)
- Medicare Improvement for Patients and Providers Act (MIPPA)
- Ocean County Child Care Resource & Referral

Child Welfare
Abuse & Neglect Prevention and Treatment; Child Permanency

800 Individuals Supported

- Birth Parent Counseling
- Domestic Infant Adoption
- Post Adoption Background and Search
- Infant Foster Care
- Intensive Services Program
- Kinship Wraparound
- Kinship Guardianship

Maternal-Child Health

25,133 Individuals Supported

- CUNA
- Body & Soul
- Community Doula Programs
- Safer Childbirth Cities
- Pregnancy Testing
- Early Childhood Services
- Central Intake – Monmouth & Ocean
- Healthy Women, Healthy Families
- Mercer County Women, Infants, and Children (WIC)

Clinical & Behavioral Health

360 Individuals Supported

- Pre-Post Adoption Counseling Services
- Ocean Reunification Program
- Ocean Therapeutic Visitation
- Violent Crime Compensation Board Counseling
- Childhood Separation and Loss
- Families and Children Enhancing Emotional Success
- Trauma Treatment for Victims of Domestic Violence
- Enlightenment Peer2Peer

Head Start & Early Head Start

655 Individuals Supported

- Head Start Center Based
- Early Head Start Center Based
- Early Head Start Home Based
- Early Head Start Pregnancy Services

School-Based Youth Development

1,723 Individuals Supported

- Trenton Education Dance Institute (TEDI)
- 21st Century Community Learning Centers/Positive Impact
- Kidsbridge

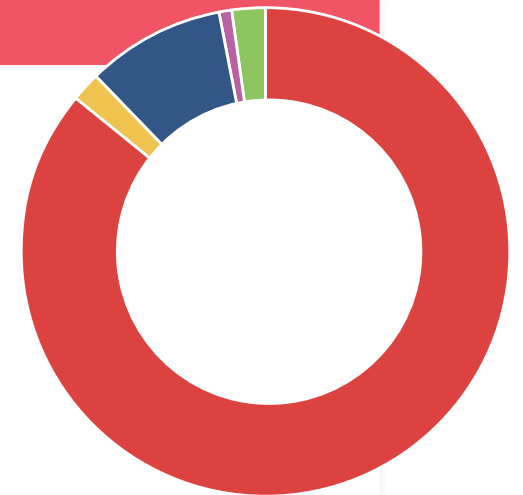
Wrapping Up Our Year’s Finances

Fiscal Year Ended May 31, 2025

The operating budget of CHSofNJ relies on funding from federal, state, and county government grants and private contributions, with a major portion of the budget coming from collaborative partnerships with several New Jersey state agencies. Although the funds we receive from these government grants are our mainstay, private dollars acquired through additional fundraising efforts are necessary to supplement grants in order to provide the level of quality and the intensity of services that are critical to achieve successful outcomes that save children’s lives and build healthy families.

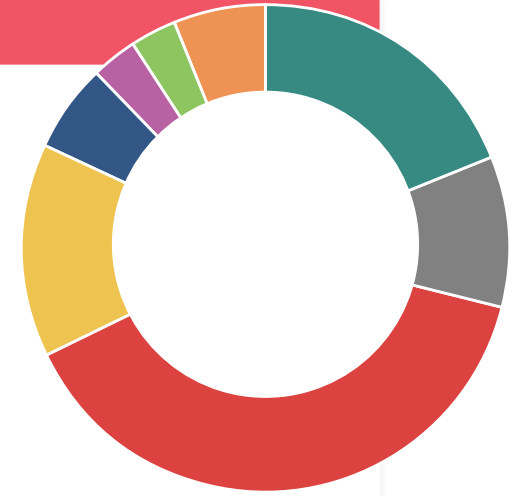
SOURCES OF REVENUE & SUPPORT

Federal, State & Local Contracts	\$ 24,387,647	85.79%
Client Fees	426,174	1.50%
Contributions & Fundraising	2,483,124	8.74%
Rental Activity	398,772	1.40%
Gain On Sale of Investments	115,407	0.41%
Dividends & Interest	614,594	2.16%
Total Revenue & Support	\$ 28,425,718	100.00%



EXPENDITURES BY FUNCTION

Head Start/ Early Head Start Programs	\$ 11,405,328	38.79%
Community & Family Support, Maternal & Child Health Services	5,711,713	19.35%
Early Childhood & Parenting Services	2,961,521	10.03%
Child Welfare Services	1,764,272	5.98%
Kinship Services	969,559	3.28%
Behavioral & Mental Health Services	770,804	2.61%
School-Based Services	1,713,738	5.80%
G&A and Fundraising	4,228,058	14.32%
Total Expenditures by Function	\$ 29,525,013	100.00%



***NOTICE - UNAUDITED FINANCIAL STATEMENT** | The numbers presented in this report reflect CHSofNJ’s unaudited financial statement for fiscal year 2024-2025. CHSofNJ’s annual audit is conducted by CohnReznick, Independent Certified Public Accountants. Investment advisors for CHSofNJ are T. Rowe Price Associates. For a full copy of the audit, contact Chief Financial Officer Bruno Cellucci, BCellucci@chsofnj.org.

Location and Contact Information

MAIN OFFICE AND HERITAGE SOUTH FAMILY SUCCESS CENTER:

635 S. Clinton Ave.
Trenton, NJ 08611

609.695.6274

OCEAN:

1433 Hooper Ave.
Toms River, NJ 08753

609.989.8143

ST. BART'S HEAD START:

1746 S. Clinton Ave.
Trenton, NJ 08610

609.393.3800

ANCHOR FAMILY SUCCESS CENTER:

342 Atlantic City Blvd.
Beachwood, NJ 08721

848.241.9346

VIVIAN SCHAPIRO HEAD START:

1435 Liberty St.
Trenton, NJ 08629

609.341.1700

TRENTON CENTRAL HIGH SCHOOL HEAD START:

400 Chambers St.
Trenton, NJ 08609

609.498.7755

BELLEVUE HEAD START:

715 Bellevue Ave.
Trenton, NJ 08618

609.498.0713

HERITAGE NORTH FAMILY SUCCESS CENTER:

1554 Princeton Ave.
Trenton, NJ 08638

609.393.2980

WIC

1440 Parkside Ave.
Ewing, NJ 08638

609.498.7755

CYO HEAD START:

794 E. State St.
Trenton, NJ 08609

609.989.8143

SMITH SANTIAGO HEAD START:

1198 Southard St.
Ewing Township, NJ 08638

609.393.7400

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Deborah Musick

CHSofNJ Auxiliary Board,
Trenton

Memorial Mary Ann Conover

George Ruch

Al and Shirley DeBlasio

Patricia Maske

Sharon Sullivan

Franklin Frey

Bruce Behounek

Kathleen Smith

Heather Winsor

Joyce Nielsen

Maria Falca-Dodson

Anna Burd

Kris Patten-Burd

Kevin Hughes

Memorial Maryann Dubell Russo

Margaret Mackenzie

Memorial Maureen Nelson McGovern

Irene Johnston

Laura Katana

Erin Lewandowski

Susan Joyce

Elizabeth Lewandowski

Anna Fern-Buneo

Eileen Callahan

Pamela Cipriano

Paul Mitchell

Maureen Riggs

Kathleen Stefek

Karen Kleinschaffer

Kai Zwierstra

Robin Tully

Brian Lewandowski

Tommy McGovern

Suzanne Blundi

Kerry Zona

Sherin McGovern

Kelli Stone

Akuba Guzzo

Cynthia Weiss

Marilyn Carroll

Memorial Maureen Nelson McGovern

Deborah Musick

Maureen Mueller

Donna Pressma

Jacqueline Lynch

Kimberly Brizuela

Katherine Kraeck

Memorial Meta Griffith

Barry Walter

Memorial Midge & Ted Boltz

Holly Boltz

Memorial Mr. Robert E. Urey

Diane Rea

Donna Williams

Memorial Nancy Swites

Mary Beth & David Charters

Memorial Patricia Nardone

Anne Kraft

Memorial Rachel Murphy

Richard Finkelstein

Memorial Robert & Trudy Crozer

Juliette Battisti

Memorial Roberta Sutker

Doris Cohen

Susan Yaron

Memorial Roland & Lilian Fulde

Lilian Fulde

Memorial Stan Crowley

Robert Ciaccia

Memorial Ted Paric

Penelope Stout

Memorial Virginia Auld Hepburn

Cheryl Hepburn Greenhalgh

Memorial William Davis

Grace Davis

Memorial William Patterson

Leona Illig

Early Head Start: Strengthening Children and Parents Together

Each morning, Yanna dropped her son Abdiel off at Early Head Start before beginning long hours driving for Uber and Lyft.

As a single mother without extended family support, every day required careful planning and resilience. She wanted more than stability, she wanted a career, a future, and greater opportunities for her son. But navigating that path alone felt overwhelming.

From the start, she saw Abdiel thriving in the classroom, smiling more, learning quickly, and forming trusting bonds with his teachers. Just as importantly, Yanna found support for herself. The center's Family Advocate met with her regularly, helping her clarify goals and take practical next steps toward steady employment.



With encouragement and guidance, Yanna applied to several beauty schools. She was accepted, enrolled, and within months graduated and passed her certification exam. Today, she is a licensed esthetician, building a professional career, a milestone that once felt out of reach.

Throughout the journey, Early Head Start remained a steady presence. When she needed advice, reassurance, or resources, teachers and staff were there, not only for Abdiel's development, but for her growth as a parent. Yanna's experience is not unique. The staff at each of CHSofNJ's center- and home-based Early Head Start and Head Start programs met the needs of 655 students enrolled in 2024-2025.

“The staff at Early Head Start have a genuine love for the families,” Yanna shares. “They are not here for the money but because they really care about families.”

Today, Abdiel continues to learn and thrive, and Yanna is building a career she is proud of. Together, they are proof that when we support the whole family, the impact lasts far beyond the classroom.

Names shared with permission.

TEDI: Building Confidence and Community

When the music started, the students thought it was just another performance.

Then their teachers walked onto the stage.

The same educators who spend the year encouraging choreography, calming nerves, and cheering from the sidelines surprised students with a lively faculty dance number of their own. The room erupted. Laughter and applause quickly gave way to something deeper—recognition.

For students, seeing their teachers “in their shoes” shifted perspective. They witnessed firsthand the courage it takes to step into the spotlight, remember choreography, and perform in front of a crowd. The experience reinforced a powerful lesson TEDI teaches all year long: growth requires bravery, and everyone—even adults—feels nervous sometimes.

For the faculty, the performance was more than a fun surprise. Preparing together strengthened camaraderie among staff and offered a renewed appreciation for what students experience each week, the vulnerability, discipline, and confidence it takes to perform.

The result was more than a memorable dance. It was a shared moment of connection that deepened trust and belonging across the entire TEDI community.

Long after the music ended, students were still talking about it, inspired by the reminder that their biggest cheerleaders are willing to stand beside them, take risks, and grow together. For the 618 students enrolled in TEDI during the 2024-2025 academic year, this was a valuable lesson.

At TEDI, belonging isn't just taught. It's lived, on stage and off.



Safer Childbirth Cities: Coordinated Care for a Healthy Start

Just weeks before her due date, a first-time mother lost everything in a house fire.

Suddenly displaced and overwhelmed, she struggled to focus on preparing for her baby while navigating the shock of losing her home. During a prenatal visit, her midwife at Capital Health recognized the urgency of her situation and immediately referred her to our Safer Childbirth Cities Perinatal Specialist.

What followed was swift, coordinated action.

Within hours, our team mobilized a network of community partners, connecting her to 211, the Red Cross, and emergency housing through HomeFront. Daily emotional check-ins ensured she never felt

alone in the uncertainty. Despite carrying a full caseload, a CHSofNJ doula stepped in right away, providing steady guidance, reassurance, and hands-on support as she prepared for delivery.



A baby basket donated by the Hopewell Valley Central High School Support Her Club supplied essential items for her newborn and offered something just as important: a tangible reminder that her community was standing with her.

Because of strong collaboration between Capital Health, CHSofNJ, and trusted local partners, crisis gave way to stability. She entered motherhood not in isolation, but

surrounded by coordinated, compassionate care. This coordinated and compassionate care was provided to 46 expectant mothers during the 2024-2025 service year.

Her story reflects what becomes possible when healthcare providers and community organizations work together, ensuring that every mother receives not only clinical care, but the practical support and dignity she deserves.

Identifying details have been limited to protect confidentiality.



How to Make a Difference: Getting Involved in Your Community

Scan the QR code for more details or email the contact listed below.

Lisa Thibault | LThibault@chsofnj.org
Volunteer, Donor Communication & Engagement Office

