

ANNUAL REPORT 2017

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**wellspring**[™]
family services

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Dear Wellspring Friends,

Our region is in the midst of a homelessness crisis. The causes are complex, and so are the solutions. What has become very clear to me during my past year serving Wellspring—currently as interim chief executive officer—is that the solutions aren't the same for families as they might be for the general population. At Wellspring, we are experts at breaking the cycle of homelessness for children and families. We understand what it takes to make lasting change.

In King County, the number is staggering: it's estimated there are more than 17,000 children who spend their nights in shelters, in cars, in tents, or on someone's sofa. Without intervention, the trauma these children experience as their parents struggle to find affordable housing can damage their relationships with others, their success in school, and even their health. Without help, the outlook for many of those 17,000 is bleak: more than 30% will experience homelessness again when they have children.

This needs to stop. While our community's leaders work on solutions to the homelessness crisis, Wellspring is focusing on solving the challenge at the family level. The first step on that journey is to get children and families out of shelters and tents into stability. Only by addressing both the basic housing need and the impact trauma has on children can we break the generational cycle of family homelessness.

I'm delighted to share with you the impact you, as one of Wellspring's partners in ending the cycle of homelessness for children and families, had in 2017.

Over the next two years, with the support of our strong and engaged board of directors and associate board, with the amazing work done every day by our Wellspring staff, and with the support of Wellspring friends such as yourself, we will help 2,000 children and their family members move out of homelessness and into stability. Over the next two years, with your help, we will make lasting change.

With our gratitude for your support,

Heather Fitzpatrick
Interim CEO
Wellspring Family Services

In 2017, With Help From Our Donors & Supporters:

4,509 Children and families found stability through Wellspring services



69 Children experiencing homelessness attended the Early Learning Center, putting them on the path toward success in kindergarten and beyond

15 Months – the average length of time a child facing homelessness was in our Early Learning Center

1,520 Clients, including **822** children, found housing and support services to help ensure stability



136 Clients participated in Wellspring's Parent-Child Services, helping to build stronger bonds



between parents and their child/children

2,254 Shopping trips were completed by families who received children's clothing and other essential items from our Baby Boutique, our free store for families facing homelessness



\$470,773 – The estimated value of the goods received by children and families from the Baby Boutique

28,168 – The number of diapers distributed to families through the Baby Boutique (diapers are our most-requested item; others are infant formula, hygiene products, wipes and coats)



New Partnership is Expanding Trauma Informed Care for Children

Over the past 30 years through its Early Learning Center (ELC), Wellspring Family Services has helped hundreds of children effectively navigate the trauma that often is associated with homelessness to experience a new-found sense of safety, self-awareness, and confidence. The goal? Wellspring works to help these children succeed in kindergarten and beyond – helping them to become stable youth and mature young adults.



Could such a successful approach ever be duplicated in pre-school classrooms throughout King County?

Megan Beers, Ph.D., Wellspring’s senior director of Early Childhood Services, and her colleague Jenn Sparr, LICSW, Wellspring’s clinical manager, believe the answer is “yes.” And they are not alone, Premera Blue Cross agrees. Premera has selected Wellspring Family Services as a partner organization in their new Social Impact Program, which is working with nonprofit organizations in Washington and Alaska to address behavioral health issues, particularly in underserved communities. The Social Impact Program recognizes the value of providing needed intervention early to improve outcomes for vulnerable children. Through this partnership, Wellspring Family Services is launching its Trauma-Informed Care Training Program to help mitigate the impact of childhood trauma.

The program will train and equip Seattle and King County teachers and community caregivers with the fresh knowledge, understanding, and the skills to work with 500 children that have experienced significant trauma, such as homelessness. This work is focused on helping them succeed in mainstream, classroom settings. And that’s just in 2018. By design, the program will double its capacity in 2019, positively impacting 1,000+ children!

“This is an exciting opportunity to expand Wellspring’s therapeutic reach,” says Beers, who notes that four on-site trainings at Wellspring this year will equip teachers and caregivers to:

- **Establish a sense of safety in the classroom**, critical for children who have experienced early adversity due to challenges such as homelessness, domestic violence, or living with a caregiver with mental illness or substance abuse issues
- **Create strategies and skills** to help children respond to their “big feelings” as they learn to identify and regulate their emotions
- **Help kids make sense of what happened**, “because,” as Beers emphasizes, “children who have lived through trauma need ways to express what they’ve seen, heard and felt through their play, or other outlets

“We know that this curriculum will significantly benefit pre-schools and organizations that don’t have the resources and capacity to provide the wrap-around services that Wellspring offers,” says Beers.

“The research confirms it’s possible to shift the brain’s architecture in the first five years of a child who has experienced adversity. If we do nothing in those first five years, then the long-term impact of childhood trauma carries into adulthood.”

Given current momentum of the training program, Beers sees two clear winners:

- **Trained caregivers** will have the capacity to understand and respond to a child’s social and emotional needs
- **Children that need additional support** will have the experience of a safe and stable caregiver, even years beyond the classroom. That’s because a child’s body and mind remembers the positive influence and impact of a safe, caring adult.

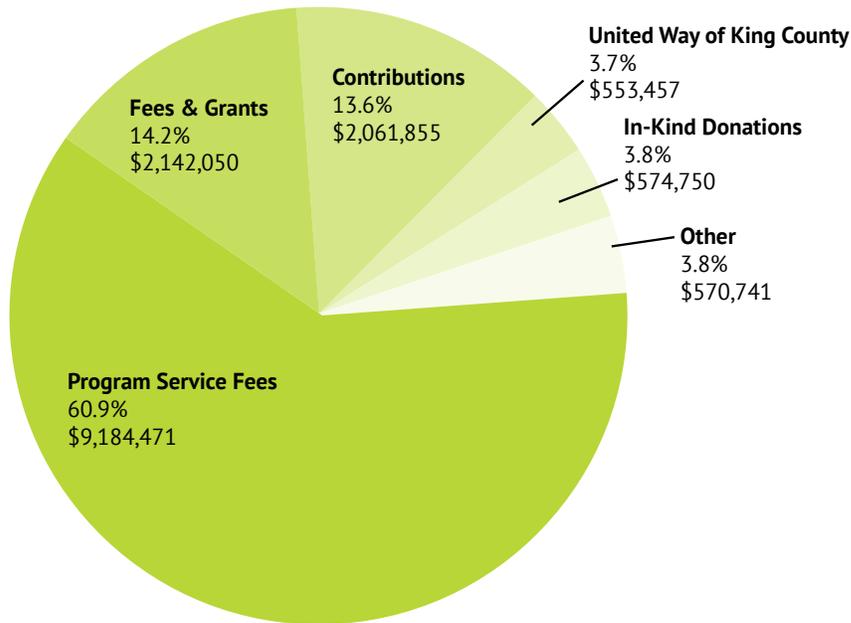
Thanks to the investment by Premera Blue Cross, the Trauma-Informed Care Training Program will prepare a new generation of caregivers throughout King County to help vulnerable children learn how to successfully manage big emotions - providing them a foundation for success in kindergarten and beyond.

“Wellspring’s program will offer the necessary education to support our children,” says Paul Hollie, who leads Premera Social Impact. *“Premera’s goal is that grants awarded to organizations like Wellspring will have a ripple effect in addressing this important issue.”*

Financial Highlights 2017

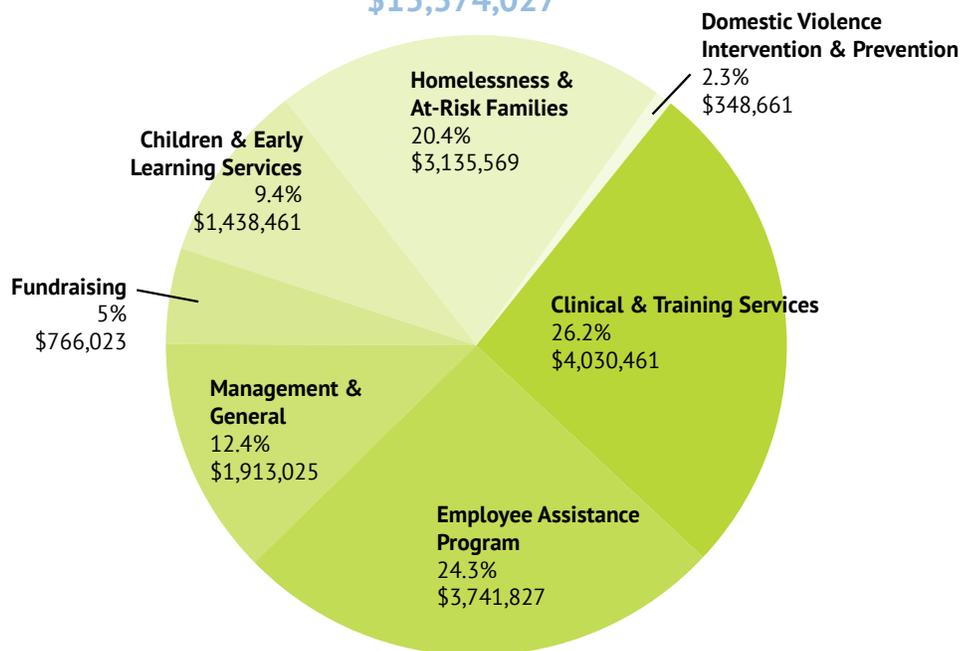
2017 Operating Support & Revenue

\$15,087,324

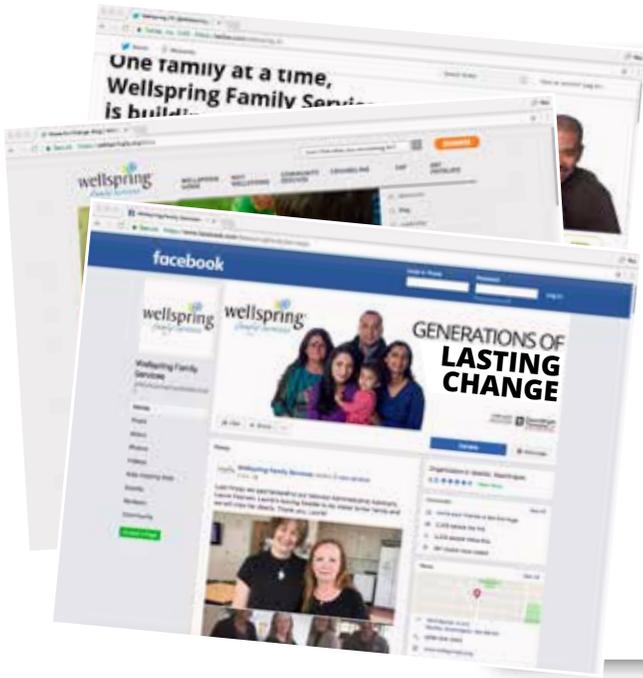


2017 Operating Expense

\$15,374,027



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