



# IMPACT REPORT

## Equipping Families for Success

To create a world where every child has stable housing, families need a myriad of resources. Wellspring's Family Resource Fairs (FRFs) aim to make these disparate resources accessible, eliminating barriers and helping families regain stability.

An FRF provides a fun environment where families can meander from booth to booth, learning about available resources in a respectful and open setting. Prizes like children's bicycles and grocery store gift cards donated by generous community partners make the occasion joyful for families. At one booth, a family can learn more about rental or utility assistance. At another, they could request a box of diapers through the Wellspring Family Store. For job seekers, employment partners are present to recruit for open positions. A children's play table is equipped with crafting supplies, and Early Learning educators keep children entertained while their guardians browse other booths. Everyone is welcome to partake in tasty snacks, supplied by generous community partners, and served by volunteers. No family leaves empty handed.

Building off the successful model of Family Resource Exchanges, which have not taken place since the COVID 19 pandemic began, Wellspring began hosting FRFs in 2022. Wellspring held two in-person FRFs to fill a gap and make wrap-around resources more accessible.

Ending family homelessness is not a task that Wellspring can accomplish alone, FRFs are a way for several community organizations to come together to provide critical resources to families in need. Past partners include Odessa Brown Children's Clinic, Seattle Public Library, alongside employers like Enterprise

and Amazon. Building alliances among service providers serves families better, and FRFs create a space where families can receive immunizations, books, job opportunities, diapers, and housing support in one day, in a warm and welcoming environment.

At the first Wellspring FRF in June of 2022, over 315 people arrived on a Saturday morning, some hours early, grateful for services being provided. By the end of the day, Wellspring prevented 81 evictions, helped 21 families move into new homes and placed two families in motels who'd been displaced due to domestic violence and an apartment fire. It became clear the community need was greater than anticipated and Wellspring prioritized hosting an additional FRF. The second FRF in August focused on back-to-school readiness, serving over 215 people, and equipping 180 children with everything they needed to succeed that school year.

Community support is critical in the success of FRFs. From generous sponsors to supply food, decorations, and giveaways, to the volunteers that create a welcoming and supportive environment, everyone has a vital role. Wellspring's focus for 2023 is expanding on this success, to reach new neighborhoods



and families who may not be able to travel to Rainier Valley. Wellspring's next FRF will be in June in Renton, focusing on Father's Day and supporting fathers and their families. We will host a back-to-school FRF in August at our Rainier location.

If you or your company is interested in supporting these high impact events, please reach out to [volunteer@wellspringfs.org](mailto:volunteer@wellspringfs.org). One of our greatest needs is volunteers with fluency in Spanish, Tigrinya, Amharic, Somali, or Oromo.

## Volunteerism Starts Early

At Wellspring Family Services, we believe everyone has the power to grow, thrive, and change themselves and their whole community. This mentality extends to our program participants and volunteers. Every community member can make a difference in the lives of their neighbors, no matter how young, old, or busy they may be. This is the guiding principle that nurtures our volunteer community of students, families, corporate partners, faith communities, and committed individuals.

Mr. Carter, a Special Education Teacher at Franklin High School, has been leading

student volunteer groups at Wellspring for 10 years. He shares, “[I bring students to volunteer] to see that even with disabilities, they are still able to give back to the community while at the same time building a repertoire of career skills to help them in the future.”

When Wellspring Board Member Kristin Misner-Gutierrez was looking for ways to involve her children in the causes she cares about, she arranged a volunteer day for their entire class.

One Wellspring volunteer says, “The motivation to volunteer and offer my time

and talent is mostly from life experience. I know I was in a situation many times where I felt like we needed help.”

Longtime Wellspring volunteers and Seattle Rotarians, Einer and Marilyn Handeland share, “Our grandchildren have played a part in our motivation to volunteer. They have joined us at Wellspring’s family events.”

Systemic change can start with one person, event, classroom, who care enough to support their community. To everyone who has shared their time and talents with Wellspring, we thank you.

## Board Member Spotlight: Meet Mo

Mo Malakoutian is a change maker. An active member of his community, Mo provides invaluable leadership through his work at Amazon and his board service at Wellspring. Mo sat down with our Chief Development Officer, Asa Tate, to discuss family homelessness and the big impact individuals can have.

### How did you first become involved with Wellspring?

One of my lifelong commitments has been to volunteer and serve the broader community. I’m extremely passionate about helping vulnerable people, especially children in our community. I was introduced to Wellspring Family Services in 2014 and have been part of the Wellspring community ever since.

My journey with Wellspring began when I was asked to co-lead the formation of Wellspring’s Associate Board, a group of young professionals with a desire to help to end homelessness for families by growing awareness and community support. I’ve made lifelong friends as a result. Today, I serve as Treasurer for Wellspring’s Board of Directors and on the Finance Committee.

### Why is prevention so important as part of the Wellspring approach to ending homelessness for children, youth, and families?

No one can fully understand how difficult it is for families to get the help they need. This is why I’m so proud of the impact we can make with Wellspring to prevent and end homelessness.

I believe prevention is key because it interrupts the cycle and the likelihood of someone experiencing this trauma. It is also much more cost-effective. Our society could do itself much justice by starting with prevention as a goal.

### What would you say to someone considering getting involved with Wellspring?

There are countless ways to get involved, whether rolling up your sleeves and sorting donations for Wellspring’s Family Store, sharing your expertise, or helping to advance our legislative agenda to address systemic inequities that keep our neighbors unhoused. In fact, Wellspring has been a source of education for me when it comes to the power of advocacy.

Many people want to get involved and don’t know where to begin or what to do. I would encourage those reading this article to join me and donate to, and/or volunteer with Wellspring.

Instead of just thinking about the impact you have on yourself and your family, consider the broader society. It will make you happier and make society better as a whole. Everyone can help in a small way and when we work together, we can solve problems and have significant impact.



“Our society could do itself much justice by starting with prevention as a goal.”

Wellspring welcomes all who are committed to making the world a better place for their neighbors. If you’d like to get more information about how to join our growing community, visit [wellspringfs.org/get-involved/](https://wellspringfs.org/get-involved/) or scan the QR code at right.



# IMPACT 2022



## FAMILY STORE

Wellspring's Family Store is a free community resource available for clothing, toys, diapers, hygiene items, books, and so much more serving pre-birth to 17 years old.

**4,301**

Children Served

**526,164**

Diapers Distributed

**79%**

Increase in Orders Filled from 2021



## HOLIDAY GIFT DRIVE

The Giving Together Holiday Gift Drive creates change at year end by allowing families facing homelessness to shop and receive brand new holiday gifts for free.

**1,525**

Children Served

**4,103**

Gifts Donated



## EMPLOYEE ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

Wellspring's Employee Assistance Program is a nationwide service for employers to provide front line care and support to employees facing life's challenges.

**388**

Employers Relied on Wellspring's Employee Assistance Program

**20,246**

Employees Utilized Wellspring's Employee Assistance Program

**237,843**

Employees Accessed Wellspring's Employee Assistance Program



## VOLUNTEERS

Volunteers are the beating heart of the work we do at Wellspring.

**572**

Total Volunteers

**2,134**

Hours of Service

**90%**

Increase in Total Volunteers and Volunteer Hours from 2021



## HOUSING

Wellspring helps families stay housed, find housing, or secure transitional housing.

**1,432**

Total Families Served

**1,045**

Families Provided Rental and Utility Assistance

**11**

Tenant Education Classes Offered



## EARLY LEARNING CENTER

Wellspring's Early Learning Center is the only program statewide exclusively serving homeless families.

**48**

Students from 36 families

**5:1**

Student Teacher Ratio for Preschool and

**4:1**

for Pre-Toddler and Toddler classrooms

**252**

Hours of Therapeutic classroom support

## Shedding Light on an Invisible Crisis

As I reflect on 2022, it is both rewarding and disheartening to see the number of children and families who sought out services from Wellspring Family Services. I've given a lot of thought to their journeys and how each family is unique. The homelessness crisis is complicated – and especially so for a mother and child who are scared and struggling.



There is visible homelessness and there is invisible homelessness. The visible gets the attention of politicians and the media. People don't like looking at homelessness, businesses don't like being impacted by homelessness, and most discussions (and debates) about homelessness are about what is visible. But visible homelessness is only the tip of the iceberg! It is less than 20% of total homelessness. The invisible homeless (over 80%) is the experience of families with children and youth. Literally, 80,000 children and youth experience homelessness in a year in Washington – enough to fill Lumen Field.

Over the last three years, many families have found themselves facing crisis for the first time. For others, the circumstances of our times have made their situation increasingly dire. In either case, Wellspring is here, in service to one child, one family, one solution at a time.

At the close of our 130th year of service to the community, we embrace a commitment to the families we proudly serve. We celebrate their strength, determination, and resilience to overcome challenges. Wellspring pledges to continue the fight to end family homelessness while providing exemplary service to those who come through our doors.

Let us all look towards the day when the Wellsprings of the world aren't needed. Until then, we are here, dedicated to ending family homelessness by preventing it before it happens and intervening early when it does.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, reading "Heather Fitzpatrick".

Heather Fitzpatrick  
Chief Executive Officer

## Wellspring and OL Reign Champion Change

In 2022 Wellspring launched a partnership with Seattle's OL Reign professional women's soccer club, a shining star of American sports franchises. In addition to excelling on the soccer pitch, OL Reign is renowned for empowering diverse and underrepresented communities. In that spirit, OL Reign's front office, players, and fans leaned in last year to embrace Wellspring and our mission to end family homelessness.

OL Reign's Legend Campaign graciously honored Wellspring President & CEO Heather Fitzpatrick before the club's April 17 match at Lumen Field. The Legends Campaign, a partnership between OL Reign and Starbucks, celebrates women for their extraordinary contributions to our community in the Pacific Northwest and beyond. In addition to honoring Heather's civic leadership, the award called attention to the need to permanently address family homelessness in our community.

At their annual Kids Day Match on August 7th, the club and their fans teamed up with Wellspring to raise funds and collect essential school supplies all children need to start the school year feeling confident and prepared. Wellspring staff and volunteers were stationed throughout Lumen Field to greet fans and accept donations. Fans generously donated \$1,671 and 275 school supply items that warm sunny day! Following the match, KIRO TV interviewed OL Reign captain Lauren Barnes and Associate General Manager Santiago Gallo to amplify the impact of the game day collection drive.



Soon after, more players got into the swing of things - in the heat of a playoff push no less - and collected clothing at their practice facility for the Wellspring Family Store.

"For us, at OL Reign this partnership is extremely important", said Gallo, "As a club, and as people, we represent diverse groups such as the LGBTQ+, Black, AAPI, and Latinx communities that are striving for change and looking for representation. We want not only to be role models on the pitch for these people, but also be a motivation to dream and achieve those dreams. By partnering with Wellspring, we think we're on the right track to help children succeed at school and continue their education. Wellspring and OL Reign are a natural fit."

Wellspring looks forward to teaming up with the OL Reign during the 2023 season to raise awareness and support for families facing homelessness. For more information about the OL Reign or to purchase tickets, visit [olreign.com](https://olreign.com).

# Volunteer Leadership Grows the Mission

At Wellspring we know healthy communities bring diverse voices, perspectives, and skillsets together so all people can thrive. We're so proud of the individuals who volunteer their time and talent to help us end family homelessness for good.

A Market Retail Manager at First Interstate Bank, Jenn Gladish is a driving force in her role as the Community Engagement Chair for Wellspring's Associate Board, but that's not where her service stops. She's also involved with the Seattle Rotary 4, President of Domestic Abuse Women's Network's Board of Directors, and a committed volunteer with the YWCA, Seattle Angels, and Real Escape from the Sex Trade.

Asked recently what she would say to somebody on the fence about volunteering or donating to a non-profit, Jenn offered encouragement.

"Ask what you want your community to look like. Ask what you want your life to be. And take action."

Deceptively simple, this framework allows Jenn to show up wholeheartedly for her family, her career, and organizations she supports. Her work in banking rewards a community-centric

approach and her experience as a mother inspires her service.

In spite of limited time, Jenn has a big impact as a parent, professional, and community advocate.

"Know your boundaries. I think so many people are afraid that volunteering will take up all their free time, but it doesn't. Know what you value, know what the limits on your time are, and commit yourself to the causes you care about."

For Jenn, one boundary is time with her family, however, this doesn't keep her from volunteering, it just informs where she spends her time.

"As a single mother of three, Wellspring's mission resonates with me. Wellspring serves the whole family and it's visible and transparent, so the community knows what's going on and the people who need the services Wellspring provides can find them."

These commitments have made Jenn a powerhouse in her work with nonprofits and are allowing her to spread her wings as an incoming officer with Seattle's Rotary 4. While her leadership style and voice are still emerging, Jenn offers unique perspective on



the ways non-profits and for-profits can work together to make our community stronger for everyone.

"Non-profits have a lot to gain from thinking about the intersection of their missions... I'd like to see more non-profits making connections allowing their overlapping missions to go further. Beyond that, corporations should work to become fully integrated parts of their community. Individuals in Seattle need different things from their bank than people in Billings, Montana. Corporations want to be a part of something sustainable that leads back to service, enriches our employees lives, and makes our communities healthier."

Wellspring is grateful for Jenn's service and excited to continue partnering with her to build a healthy community for every family.

**"Ask what you want your community to look like. Ask what you want your life to be. And then take action."**

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