



Annual Report

2021



**a chance
to grow**

Changing lives through brain-centered programs since 1983

OUR MISSION

To promote the maximum development of the whole child and adult through innovative, individualized and comprehensive brain-centered programs and services.



OUR VISION AND APPROACH

A Chance To Grow is a place where children and adults can receive the support and guidance they need to achieve their highest possible potential.

Based on an understanding of brain development, we provide an array of clinical & educational programs all under one roof, as well as services to partner clinics, charter and public schools.

Special thanks to the staff of A Chance To Grow for helping to compile the information in this report.

A Chance To Grow is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization. A Chance To Grow does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, creed, gender, religion, age, disability, sexual orientation, marital status, or national origin.

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A MESSAGE FROM OUR DIRECTOR

Erica has been with A Chance To Grow for the past 21 years, previously serving as Director of Clinical and Home-Based Services.



Erica Dickerson
Executive Director

Dear Friends,

Our mission is to help individuals reach their full potential at home and in their environment. We do this by focusing on brain function at the most basic level. We work with children and adults whose brain injuries, illness or inadequate learning skills make daily living difficult. By building neural pathways, we help them with the ability to hear, see, move and communicate – all essential to learning and success.

We know that Minnesota has some of the highest rates of educational and health inequity in the country. Children of color here are far less prepared than their white counterparts to enter kindergarten. Moreover, communities of color have the highest rates of disability in the state. On pages 4 through 7 of this report, you can read about the wide range of services we offer designed specifically to ensure school readiness and help individuals with disabilities live independently. Unfortunately, not all of them are covered by insurance or government subsidies. This creates considerable barriers for families of color, whose poverty rates are significantly higher than for whites.

We believe that A Chance To Grow has a unique contribution to make in the fight for removing the barriers to education and health care that prevent people from being their best selves. I want to highlight two initiatives we have launched to make services available where most needed and least accessible.

We now have four sites within Somali-owned partner clinics to provide occupational and speech therapy services to children with autism. The Somali community has higher rates of autism, with most children further along the spectrum. This partnership allows us to provide these services in a culturally familiar environment where they can feel safe and accepted, and it helps to remove the barriers of language and transportation that keeps some families from getting services.

Our new S.M.A.R.T Steps program is designed to bring training and mentoring in our approach to Family Child Care Providers. Children of color are more likely to experience out-of-home care than white children, and Family Child Care is more affordable and convenient since it is available during hours that center-based care is not for parents who work later shifts and weekends. S.M.A.R.T. Steps makes quality care that enhances school readiness available to the families that need it most, while giving providers professional development at times and at a cost that works for them.

We are committed to doing our part to remove barriers to equity in health and education in all our programs and hope you will join us in this effort. Your donations will help us provide these vital services that insurance doesn't cover to people who can't otherwise afford them.

Gratefully yours,

Erica Dickerson

CLINICAL SERVICES

Below are brief descriptions about each of our Clinical Services, including the in-person sessions our practitioners performed at our ACTG and Partner Clinics in 2021.



OCCUPATIONAL THERAPY

Pediatric Occupational Therapy (OT) services that empower children to develop the skills they need to grow into healthy, independent adults.

OT Sessions: 4,878



SPEECH-LANGUAGE PATHOLOGY

Speech and Language Therapy (SLP) for children and adults of all ages experiencing communication or speech challenges.

SLP Sessions: 2,118



THE NEURO INTEGRATIVE CLINIC

Combines several interventions that promote brain growth and development by strengthening neurological connections through purposeful movement.

NI Clinic Sessions: 574



CONTRACT SCHOOL-BASED SERVICES

On-site OT and SLP services to charter schools, providing student-centered therapies on-site by licensed practitioners for students on IEPs.

Hours of OT & SLP: 7,247
Schools Receiving Services: 20



A Chance To Grow partners with multiple off-site clinics to bring our specialized Occupational and Speech Therapy services to populations that have a more difficult time accessing them. Read our story on page 8 for more information about our partner clinics.

PARTNER CLINICS



ISKA, Inc.
OT Sessions: 1,231
SLP Sessions: 870

Smart Therapy Center, LLC
OT Sessions: 256
SLP Sessions: 54

Minnesota Therapy Center, Inc.
OT Sessions: 82
SLP Sessions: 9



R'Future Wellness & Autism Center
OT Sessions: 65

CLINICAL SERVICES

In response to the COVID-19 pandemic, A Chance To Grow's Clinical Services have continued to offer teletherapy services to clients as needed.



VISION CLINIC

Whole family vision care providing vision exams, developmental visual testing, preventative eye care, and glasses prescriptions.

Vision Exams: 293



OPTOMEYES VISION THERAPY

Optimizing the conversation between the brain, eyes and body. Custom therapies for all ages to improve functional vision & visual processing skills.

Vision Therapy Sessions: 211



AUDIOLOGY CLINIC

Diagnostic assessments of hearing & auditory processing skills for all ages, as well as interventions and referral recommendations.

Auditory Evaluations: 69

SERVICES FOR ALL

Partner sites service children, who for multiple reasons, experience health inequity. From unreliable transportation to uncertainty navigating the healthcare system, to language and cultural differences, there are many challenges these families face.

Our collaboration with partner clinics allows us to address these barriers, serving as advocates for these children and families, which ultimately increases the effectiveness of the treatments.



NEUROFEEDBACK BRAIN TRAINING

A holistic, computer-based brain-training program that turns brainwave signals into information that invites the brain to balance its rhythms.

Neurofeedback Sessions: 265



AUDIO-VISUAL ENTRAINMENT

A holistic brain-training program that uses lights and sounds at pre-programmed frequencies to guide the brain into a meditative state.

AVE Trainings & Sales: 7

EDUCATIONAL SERVICES

A Chance To Grow's Educational Services strive to promote academic readiness by addressing barriers to academic success. Below are brief descriptions about our Educational Services and highlights from 2021.



MINNESOTA LEARNING RESOURCE CENTER

The MLRC provides workshops and mentoring services for educators on how to implement ACTG's S.M.A.R.T. program (*Stimulating Maturity through Accelerated Readiness Training*) in preschool and elementary classrooms, as well as for in-home child care providers.

266 Educators Trained in 4 States

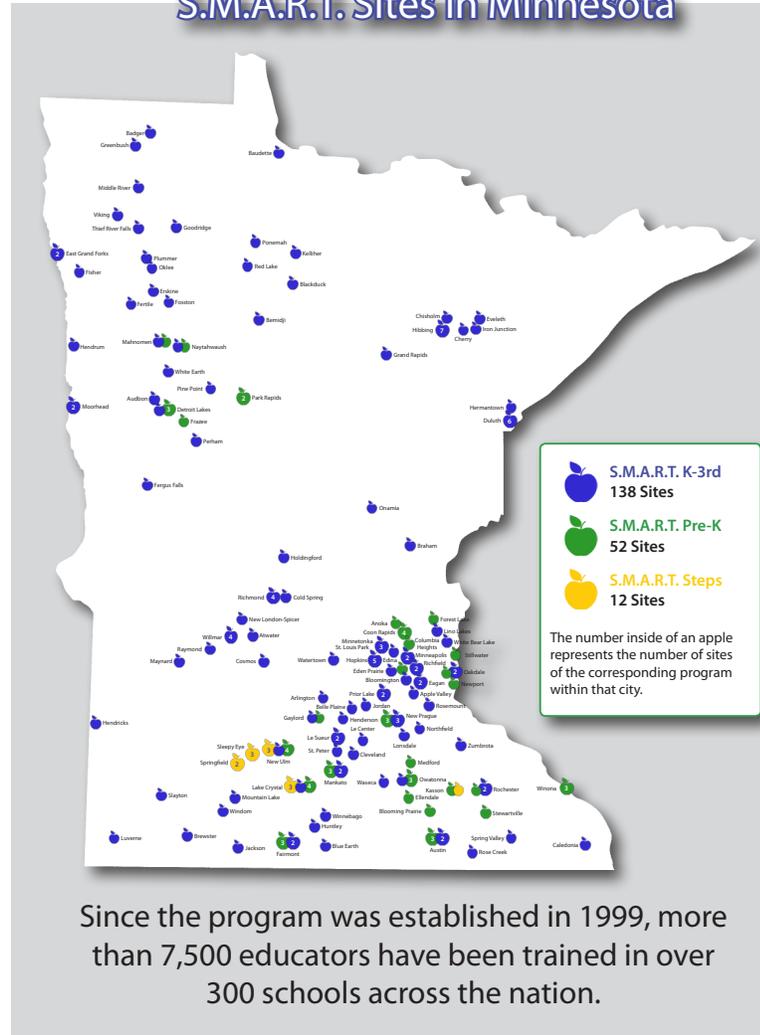
S.M.A.R.T. Workshops: 6 / Pre-K Workshops: 6

Mentoring Visits: 101

S.M.A.R.T. Steps: 12 Child Care Providers Trained

S.M.A.R.T. Steps Mentoring Visits: 43

S.M.A.R.T. Sites in Minnesota



TURNQUIST CHILD ENRICHMENT CENTER



Turnquist Child Enrichment Center is an NAEYC-accredited, Strong Beginnings site, and a 4-star Parent Aware Certified child care center for children ages six weeks to five-years-old. We emphasize cognitive development to help each child reach his or her full potential. Additionally, teen parents are provided with transportation services to help foster a stable home environment and serve as a stepping-stone on their path to self-sufficiency.

Children Served: 45 / Parents Served: 42

100% of Teen Parents continued education or entered workforce

7,061 lbs. of food provided to Turnquist families

HOME-BASED SERVICES

A Chance To Grow's Home-Based Services provide support to families who are caring for loved ones with special needs. Below are brief descriptions of our Home-Based Services and highlights from 2021.



PERSONAL CARE ASSISTANTS

ACTG's Home-Based Services provide families with Personal Care Assistant (PCA) services for children and adults with a variety of physical, mental, behavioral and emotional needs. Our program pairs a client with a PCA and, with our staff of Registered Nurses, creates a custom care plan tailored to the client's situation.

PCA's Provided: 133
Hours of Care: 126,197
Clients/Households Served: 77



WAIVER SERVICES

Home-Based Services provides two waiver programs, Respite Care and Homemaking, to homebound individuals. Respite Care gives caregivers a break from taking care of their disabled child(ren) or adult. Homemaking helps individuals manage a variety of daily tasks to enhance their quality of life.

Respite Care Hours: 1,046
Homemaking Hours: 719
Nurse Visits: 1,000

"Home-Based Services staff are like family. They are so kind, caring, and understanding and they take the time to know not just the client, but the client's entire family/support system. I feel like I can contact them about anything even if it's not related to my services and they will always do what they can to help!" - PCA Client

COMING IN 2022

Our Vision Clinic has added new equipment, including the RightEye Vision Tracking System and the Topcon Retinal Camera, to better serve our client's vision needs.

S.M.A.R.T. Steps, the MLRC's pilot program aimed at bringing S.M.A.R.T. activities to Family Child Care Providers, will open its 4th cohort this year, training new providers across Minnesota.

Home-Based Services has implemented Mobile Touch/EVV, a new time recording system for PCA's and caregivers to clock in and document the care they provide to families.



OUR PARTNER IN THE SOMALI COMMUNITY

The Somali community has higher rates of Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) than other groups, but there are barriers - language, culture, or transportation - that prevent these children from getting services.

To help remove these barriers, in 2019, we began a partnership with ISKA, Inc., a Somali-owned community service organization, founded by Ifrah Hudle, a human services professional.

ISKA Inc., located in St. Louis Park, has a staff of 25 that works with children from birth to age 21; They currently see about 30 children a year. When it opened in 2016, ISKA offered an adult waiver program where they could help disabled individuals in their homes. However, says Ifrah, "After a year or so, we saw that a lot of clients, especially younger ones, were getting diagnosed with autism and other developmental delays." Ifrah heard about A Chance To Grow at one of the high schools to whom we provide services and reached out to us.



Ifrah Hudle
ISKA Inc. Founder & CEO

The two organizations developed a program for Somali children that combines behavioral and developmental approaches. The young clients receive EIDBI services from ISKA that include targeted interventions designed to improve behavioral challenges and self-regulation, cognition, and other areas. They also receive Speech/Language and Occupational Therapy from ACTG staff.

This more intensive approach is necessary. According to Ifrah, "There are high numbers of Somali children with autism here and most of them are further along the spectrum. In Somalia, there isn't a medical word for autism. So when they come here, a mother would call and say 'I think my son may have these signs, can you help me?' So we partner with the families to understand their needs, we help them set up schedules and routines, make appointments, help them with insurance and so on."

"Children usually have the initial diagnosis from their doctor, but many parents say that at the first visit, doctors don't take their child's symptoms seriously, or they misdiagnose them, or prescribe the wrong medication. The mothers get discouraged and don't go back. I tell them, stay with one doctor, give them a couple of sessions with that individual before they label or diagnose. I want medical professionals to really listen to our clients."

Another barrier is access to transportation. Many families have difficulty finding transportation that meets their needs, particularly when their children have a hard time adjusting to strangers. Ultimately, says Ifrah, "We hired staff to provide transport, so that children will become familiar with one person."

It was also vital to establish an environment that honored cultural and religious practices. Says Ifrah, "We follow Islamic beliefs and customs, so they come to us knowing that our space will not have anything that they are against."

This creates an environment of safety and trust. Says Ifrah, "We have a client who's about 7, she used to go to a mainstream agency, but now she comes to us. Her mom told us that every time she comes here, she puts on the headscarf. At the mainstream schools, she takes it off. The kids feel like they could assimilate with us. They look like us, we look like them, they feel much closer to us."

ISKA, INC.

Providing the highest quality of care within cultural norms and to help special need individuals and their families achieve an independent, self-sufficient and dignified life.



According to Michelle Koyama, the Assistant Director of ACTG's Clinical Services, this actually strengthens the bond between ISKA and ACTG. "ISKA staff makes it feel like a community. There was a child, 4 years old when we started, who couldn't express herself to strangers. At ISKA, she could see how other people she trusted, trusted us. For example, her mom sat in on a session and the girl witnessed the three-way conversation between the ISKA staff, her mom and I, in both English and Somali. We were able to go much deeper in conversation than what is typical with an interpreter, and that allowed our relationship to be more therapeutic faster."

This program has a tremendous impact on its young clients and their families. **In Somali, "iska" means "to belong," to "have a sense of self."** Michelle describes the impact on one young girl:

"At 4, she had very little awareness of her environment or how she interacted with it. She could not even hold a crayon, she was unable to see detail, draw recognizable shapes and so on. She's 6 now, and recently gave me a picture of herself. It has details, like her arms and legs and eyes, it has butterflies and flowers, it has dimension. The picture shows an awareness of self and she's even created a safe space for herself in it." In a sense, the drawing demonstrates how, through her progress there, the child embodies the spirit of ISKA: She has found a place where she belongs and there, she has begun to have a sense of self.

IN MEMORIAM



Marlene Myers, one of ACTG's greatest benefactors, passed away on December 17th at age 79. She is remembered as a kind, funny and generous spirit who never passed up a chance to help a child. Thanks to her, we have the Marlene Myers Nature Garden, the smallest school forest in Minnesota certified for children's education. Its outdoor classroom and variety of gardens allow Turnquist children to learn about a variety of ecosystems. We will always remember Marlene with gratitude and love.



In November of 2021 our long-time custodian, Jon Gudding passed away. In addition to keeping our building in great shape, Jon was a vital member of our community. He made everyone feel welcome, provided endless entertainment for our students, and served as "building therapist" to anyone who was dealing with a problem that day. Jon was a warm, caring, generous soul, and he is greatly missed by staff, clients, families and students alike.



We also note the passing of Dr. Kjeld Johansen, a pioneer in auditory disabilities and the creator of the Johansen Individualized Auditory Stimulation (JIAS) program, used in our Audiology Clinic for over 25 years to address auditory processing deficits. Thanks to his work, thousands of children have improved hearing. We are honored to continue his life's work.

FINANCIAL STATEMENT

Below you will find A Chance To Grow's 2021 Financial Statement, including revenues, expenses, assets, and liabilities. This statement is also available at www.ACTG.org.

Operations

Revenues	2021	2020
Contributions	776,294	442,832
Foundations	136,024	168,201
Program Service Revenues	4,857,991	4,642,168
Special Events	21,749	43,796
Rent & Other Income	748,232	709,387
Total Operating Revenue	6,540,290	6,006,384

Expenses

Program Services	5,072,372	5,115,878
Administrative Services	199,320	173,552
Fundraising	182,999	255,326
Building Operations	404,213	458,179
Total Operating Expenses	5,858,904	6,002,935
CHANGE IN NET ASSETS	681,386	3,449

Assets

Current Assets	2021	2020
Cash & Investments	1,112,574	1,054,494
Receivables	284,575	331,898
Inventories & Prepaid Expenses	405,583	186,991
Total Current Assets	1,802,732	1,573,383

Long-Term Assets

Net Land, Buildings, Equipment	3,100,507	3,254,337
Other Assets	21,862	25,664
TOTAL ASSETS	4,925,101	4,853,384

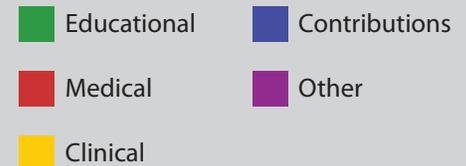
Liabilities & Net Assets

Current Liabilities	2021	2020
Current Portion of Long-Term Debt	198,856	209,000
Accounts Payable	76,371	56,880
Accrued Expenses	432,465	386,196
Deferred Revenues	167,974	632,961
Total Current Liabilities	875,666	1,285,037
Long-Term Debt	797,711	998,009
Total Liabilities	1,673,377	2,283,046

Net Assets

Unrestricted Net Assets	3,251,724	2,570,338
TOTAL LIABILITIES & NET ASSETS	4,925,101	4,853,384

2021 Revenues = \$6,540,290



2021 Expenses = \$5,858,904



SUPPORTERS

Our sincerest thank you to all the individuals and organizations who supported A Chance To Grow in 2021. We are very grateful for friends like you.

Foundations

The Fred C. & Katherine B. Andersen Foundation
 The Northland Foundation
 The Otto Bremer Trust
 The Richard M. Schulze Family Foundation
 The Sauer Family Foundation
 The Southern Minnesota Initiative Foundation
 The Wedum Foundation

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SUPPORT A CHANCE TO GROW

For families that are fortunate to have access to good health care and medical insurance, many of the services we offer are easily accessible. But for those who don't -- who are the ones most likely to have undiagnosed neurological or developmental issues -- our services can seem out of reach. You can ensure that **EVERY INDIVIDUAL** can get the assessments and services needed to provide pathways to success.

To give a child or adult a chance to grow, we invite you to visit the donation page on our website at www.actg.org/donate or scan the QR code below to make a contribution. If you wish to send a check, please mail to the address below and make the check out to:
A Chance To Grow, 1800 2nd Street NE, Minneapolis, MN 55418.

- For \$40, you can provide a child with a 30-minute intervention that builds foundational capacities.
- For \$120, you can give a child a day in the supportive setting of Turnquist Child Enrichment Center.
- For \$500, you can give a child a program to develop auditory pathways to process information.

**ANY AMOUNT YOU GIVE WILL HAVE A
HUGE IMPACT ON A CHILD'S LIFE.**

Scan to Give!



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