



Catholic Charities North Dakota

Annual Report

2022 - 2023



Catholic
Charities
North Dakota

Celebrating 100 Years of Service

Guided by our values, Catholic Charities North Dakota serves people in need and advocates for the common good of all.

There aren't many organizations who can boast 100 years of service with the beautiful mission of serving people in need and advocating for the common good of all. Throughout the years our organization has seen numerous changes and has faced unforeseen challenges along the way. I think every employee, volunteer, board member, and community supporter would emphasize the impressive work that has been done over these 100 years.



Kari Dew
Executive Director

I am privileged and excited to be called to lead this organization. The passion and energy I feel each day from our staff is like no other. I have been blessed these past few months to learn from the best and hear their ideas for our future. The amount of positive feedback regarding CCND that I have heard, just solidifies our need to continue to do what we do best and grow in each area. Our programs are unique and far-reaching and in many ways we are just beginning.

Our focus and dedication to pregnancy and adoption has not waivered and the focus to build stable and nurturing families will continue. Providing these much needed services is what drives our mission and motivates our staff. Our counseling services utilizes the tag line of pursuing peace. In times of uncertainty and challenge, our services have been available to all those in need. We look forward to offering more opportunities across the state for people to come to us in pursuit of peace. Although guardianship is a long standing program of CCND, we have seen tremendous growth in our newest guardianship program focused on the vulnerable. Each day, I am amazed by the expertise, dedication and abilities of our staff. They are the future change agents of Catholic Charities North Dakota.

Our previous leaders have led change through these years and adapted to serve the needs of our communities and state. We, too, will take on that challenge to further our mission in meeting people where they are at and continuing work that results in positive change. I couldn't be more proud or honored to call Catholic Charities North Dakota my new home. With the wonderful people who surround me, we embark on our next 100 years of serving people in need and advocating for the common good of all.



Adoption services with Catholic Charities North Dakota (CCND) have roots tracing back to exactly one century ago, in the year 1923. As we celebrate 100 years of CCND in 2023, it is especially meaningful to the agency knowing adoption services have served our communities since the organization's establishment. The **Adults Adopting Special Kids (AASK)** program was formally developed in 1993 and has been a vital program to children in the foster care system since then. Services continue to be provided through a contract with the North Dakota Department of Health and Human Services to both children and families across North Dakota.

As we honor the longevity of adoption, we also celebrate new innovations that enhance the challenges of life after permanency. The North Dakota Post Adopt Network was founded in 2016 and supports all families who have adopted in North Dakota (foster care, infant, domestic) and also provides support to families who have guardianship of a child in their home.



Services are voluntary and are free of charge. Support groups, family camps, parent retreats, monthly activities, mentorship, referrals, and supportive service planning are just a few of the services provided to family units.

As we look forward to many more decades of adoption services, providing adoption and post-adoption supports to children and families through a quality, family-focused, and trauma-informed lens remains at our forefront. Cheers to another 100 years!

226	Adoptive Placements
232	Adoptive Finalizations
124	Home Assessments
10	Degree of Difficulty (Recruitment Cases Finalized)

Picture from Post Adopt Camp Connect 2023



The **Counseling Services** program has many reasons to celebrate this year! This year CCND celebrated our 100th year serving North Dakota. Counseling Services at CCND are celebrating our 20th year of offering this needed service. Providing the best, evidence-based counseling services possible remains our focus.

Counseling Services continues to utilize empirical data to track progress from session to session. This data comes directly from the clients utilizing the Outcome Rating Scale (ORS) and Session Rating Scale (SRS).

The Outcome Rating Scale is a rating of the client's well-being by the client. The ORS rating occurs during the first session with the therapist and every session (up to once per week) thereafter. The ORS is a much more sensitive scale to client well-being and provides insight into how the client perceives they are doing from week to week.

The Session Rating Scale (SRS) is a measurement tool that began to be utilized in 2022 and has been continued throughout this past year. The SRS asks the client on a 4 question scale how the session went for them. It asks:

1. Whether the client felt heard, understood, and respected
2. Whether the goals and topics discussed were what the client wanted to discuss
3. Whether the therapist's approach feels right to the client and
4. Whether the session overall was right for the client.

Over the past year, 4 out of 5 clients report reaching their goals for therapy. A couple client comments gleaned from client surveys during the past year reflect the care of our therapists. These comments include: therapy "brought clarity and peace" and the therapist's "kindness, understanding and emotional and spiritual guidance was priceless."

We have a small, but dedicated staff:

Alissa Demke, LMSW (Licensed Master Social Worker), joined Catholic Charities ND as the Bismarck therapist in May 2023. She is providing individual, couples and family therapy in Bismarck as a full-time therapist. She is working on getting her LCSW (Licensed Clinical Social Worker). Alissa graduated with a master's in social work (MSW) from Florida State University in July 2022. She recently worked as a mental health therapist-lead at St. Alexius Medical Center in Bismarck. We welcome Alissa to Catholic Charities and to the counseling department.

Barb Boesl, LPC (Licensed Professional Counselor), just started her fourteenth year with Catholic Charities ND and continues at the site in Langdon, ND. Barb continues to provide individual, couples and family therapy 20 hours per week. She also completes premarital and annulment work in Langdon. Barb is a very independent and skilled counselor. She has good judgment, is well respected in Langdon and the surrounding communities, and is always in high demand. Barb Boesl collaborates services with St. Alphonsus Elementary School for 8 hours per week during the school year. In doing this she is able to help children struggling in school and in personal areas of their lives as well as help teachers working with difficult situations.

Ken Scheller, LCSW (Licensed Clinical Social Worker), joined Catholic Charities ND January 2022 as the Director of Counseling Services. Ken splits his time between 60% administrative and 40% clinical counseling. Ken provides counseling services for couples and individuals. Ken has licensure in North Dakota as an LCSW and recently obtained licensure in Minnesota as a LICSW (Licensed Independent Clinical Social Worker) in May 2023.

205	Clients Served
110	New Clients
1366	Counseling Sessions Conducted

The Guardianship Division – Intellectual Disabilities (GDID) has much to celebrate from the past 12 months!

In August, the agency and GDID services were reaccredited by the Council on Accreditation (COA). GDID staff must be commended as COA sets the highest standard of practice and our successful reaccreditation reflects the quality services we provide on behalf of the individuals we serve.

In September, all programs at the agency began the intense process of moving to an electronic health record system with the end result being that all client data will be electronically protected and paper files will be a thing of the past. GDID staff are very excited about this transition to electronic files as information will be at our fingertips which will positively and directly impact our services to the people we serve.

In January, the 2023 Legislature began and GDID worked very closely with legislators, the DD Division, the ND Catholic Conference and the ND Association of Community Providers, advocating for funding for additional slots/openings due to the long waiting list for guardianship services for people with intellectual disabilities. As of 6/30/23, our waiting list for services included the names of 130 people. The legislature responded to this need by providing additional funding for 30 new slots/openings which will greatly reduce our waiting list for services. We are also extremely grateful to legislators as they approved a much needed increase to our daily rate for services and an increase in the amount of funding for petitioning costs.

The events that we are celebrating – COA reaccreditation, transitioning to electronic health records, legislative funding - translate into real life impacts of our guardianship services for people in need. For example, GDID is only able to accept guardianship referrals regarding adults with intellectual disabilities who do not have family or friends who are available or appropriate to serve as their court appointed decision maker. During the past 12 months, GDID admitted 34 individuals of which six were emergency cases. The circumstances surrounding the emergencies varied but they show a key reason why

our guardianship services are vital:

- Two people had extremely critical medical emergencies and they were unable to make medical decisions. No family members were available to serve as guardian.
- A person who was homeless and had several pending legal issues.
- Three people were experiencing abuse and neglect by their guardians who were family members.

Once we were appointed by the courts to serve as guardian in these emergency cases, our GDID Workers were able to intervene and help assure that each individual was receiving the needed support and services.



130.....Individuals on the waiting list
528.....Individuals served by our guardians
2,554 Meetings on behalf of the clients
.....we serve
9,323....Visits with the individuals we serve
80,657.....Miles driven by workers to
.....30 cities
24,851 Collateral contacts on behalf of
.....the individuals we serve

This past year **Guardianship Services for the Vulnerable (GSV)** is celebrating our amazing, dedicated staff as they work with the most difficult of guardianship cases. Guardianship programs provide the specialized service of being the decision maker for elderly persons with Dementia/Alzheimer's, individuals with mental health disorders, or persons with other vulnerabilities. These workers must have the knowledge to navigate complex issues such as long-term care support, accessing home and community-based services, financial support to use assets effectively, housing, Social Security assistance, and Medical Assistance.

In GSV our mission is that by helping people, we are changing the lives of the most vulnerable citizens of North Dakota. After completion of my budget in 2022, it was my goal to find a way to help the legislature understand the budget crisis that corporate guardianship was facing and the fact that if something did not change, programs to help these individuals would not be sustainable into the future.

In July of 2022, we began meeting with Senators and House of Representatives members in North Dakota to tell our stories. Providing these much-needed services is no small feat. This is a hard job that requires much dedication and care, from the staff completing case management services to those managing individuals' finances, all of this work was supposed to be completed in 3 to 4 hours for \$300/month under the previous state funding. Agencies must cover the cost of mileage and meals for staff. If truth be told, on average a guardianship staff spends double this time each month on each case.

We accomplished another 4 years of accreditation under the Council on Accreditation (COA). Being accredited means that a third party has determined through a rigorous assessment of evidence that our agency and programs meet each of the most important standards and that we are following best practices and providing quality services. This is a badge of honor to be worn by our staff as they do their work.

We began the arduous process of setting up an electronic health record to manage our data and files and went live in that system as of July 1, 2023. This will assist us in managing our data and files more efficiently and effectively.

In the end, the state legislature showed that they understood the importance of helping the most indigent citizens of North Dakota by increasing the funding to support them. We are doing the hard work to meet the best standards possible and are managing our data to show the important work that we do. I could not be more proud of the hard work of our staff and all other people involved. It is because of them that we can celebrate our program and how far we have come. Thank you so much!



18.....	Individuals pending
113.....	Individuals served by our guardians
156.....	Meetings on behalf of the clients we serve
2,205....	Visits with the individuals we serve
30,337.....	Miles driven by workers to 30 cities
8,119.....	Collateral contacts on behalf of the individuals we serve

This year was a year full of celebration throughout Catholic Charities North Dakota (CCND) and specifically in the **Pregnancy, Parenting, and Adoption Services (PPAS)** Program. Adoption is the cornerstone that present day CCND was built on. Catholic Charities North Dakota has been helping birth parents, adoptive parents, and children through our pregnancy and adoption program for 100 years. Wow! Just imagine how many lives have been changed over those 100 years, how many parents have celebrated new life, and how God has worked miracles through those family's connections with CCND.

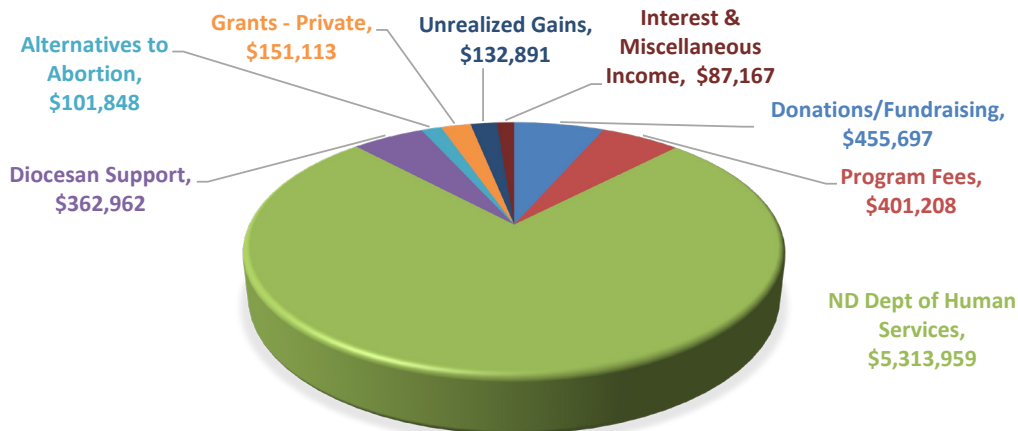
I feel very honored and humbled to be a part of this 100 year tradition of providing compassionate and life-affirming care to those in need. I get a front row seat to witness God's miracles. We often say in the PPAS Program that once you receive pregnancy counseling or adoption services through the PPAS Program, you are part of our family forever. We have a huge family! And I'd like to take it one step further and include each of you in our family. We couldn't do the good work we do without your prayers, your financial support, and your word of mouth that guides those in need to our door. Thank you for being a part of this 100 year tradition that empowers women to choose life and helps to establish stable, loving families, both birth and adoptive.

Let me introduce you to one of our family members who has a lot to celebrate this year. Destiny delivered a beautiful baby girl in May 2023. When she found out she was pregnant, she took on the painstaking task of determining how she could give her daughter the very best life, the life she knew her daughter deserved. Ultimately, she decided that making an adoption plan was the best decision for her and her daughter. Destiny describes it as the hardest thing she has ever done, but the best thing she's ever done. She has a beautiful relationship with her daughter and her daughter's adoptive parents. Just like watching Destiny's caricature form on paper, watching Destiny draw on her inner strength and develop into a confident young woman through her pregnancy and adoption journey has been absolutely amazing. We are so glad to have Destiny as part of our PPAS family and we are so thankful for the opportunity to support women and families in North Dakota each and every day!

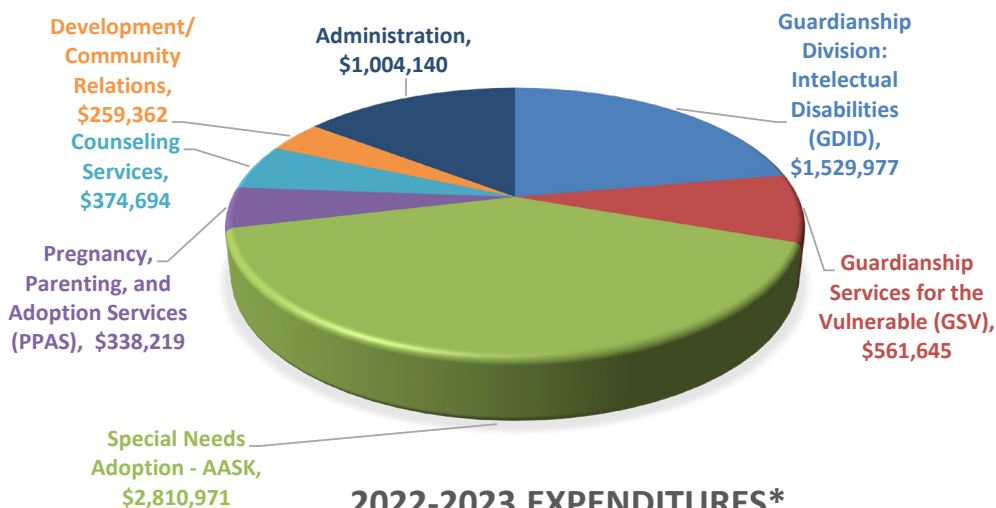
DESTINY CELEBRATING WITH
CCND BY GETTING HER
CARICATURE DONE AT THEIR 100
YEAR CELEBRATION IN FARGO



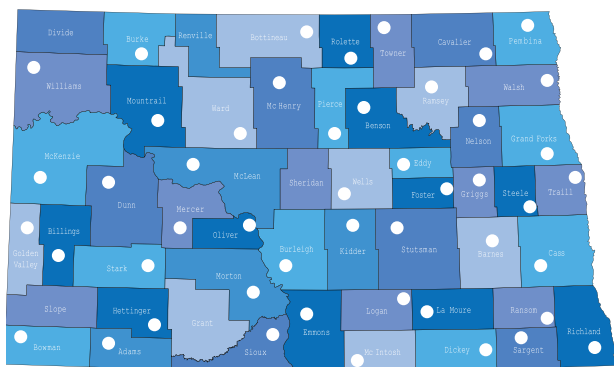
- 4.....Bundle Up Your Baby Bump Events
- 1000+.....Participants at these events
- 10.....Babies born to PPAS moms
- 7.....Identifying searches
- 23.....Pregnancy clients served
- 3.....Non-Identifying searches
- 4.....Forever Families made through adoption
- 1.....1 International, 1 ND Infant, 1 Identified, 1 Out of State



2022-2023 REVENUES*



2022-2023 EXPENDITURES*



More than 2,700 clients served and countless more reached.

Dots signify the 48 of 53 counties in North Dakota where people received direct services from us in 2022-2023.

***Preaudited Numbers**

Catholic Charities North Dakota

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Catholic Charities North Dakota
serves people in need
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216 S Broadway, Ste 202
Minot, ND 58701
701.852.2854

Bismarck Office

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Bismarck, ND 58504
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Or visit us online at **CatholicCharitiesND.org**