nurture.
inspire.
empower.

The **Growing Together** Campaign

Case For Support
C.A.S.E. provides the specialized counseling, training, and education that helps adoptive and foster families succeed and children thrive. We have grown to become a national and international resource, not only for adoptive and foster families, but also for the professionals who support them.

As a kick-off to our 20th anniversary celebrations, we are embarking on a campaign to broaden the reach of our services. The Growing Together Campaign will advance C.A.S.E.’s vision to serve as a national leader in mental health services for the adoption and foster care community. Please join us as we raise $5 million by 2020 in growth capital, endowment funds, and planned gifts so that we can expand our services to more children, families, and professionals and deepen our impact. Read on to learn more about our work and our plans for transformational growth in the years to come. More details about the Growing Together Campaign can be found on page 11.

We are guided by our core values:

- A Commitment to Empowerment and Collaboration
- A Culture of Innovation and Excellence
- A Dedication to Inclusivity and Accountability
**Our Mission:** Improving the lives of children who have been adopted or in foster care and their families through counseling, lifelong education, and a growing national network of trained professionals.

**Who We Serve**
- Children in foster care and their families
- Children adopted domestically and internationally and their families
- Prospective adoptive parents
- Expectant parents considering placing their child for adoption
- Birth parents
- Adult adopted persons and their families
- Kinship families
- Mental health and child welfare professionals
- Educators and school counselors

**Adoption-Competent Services**
We believe every family should have access to “adoption-competent” mental health services. An adoption-competent professional is one with training in the unique issues connected with foster care and adoption. Working from a trauma-informed perspective, these clinicians have the skills and understanding to address permanency and loss issues. They understand how adoption and foster care affect people at different ages and stages, and have the knowledge and training to help children and families navigate relationships with birth families.

“**For one of our children, we were the fourth home that he lived in before he was 2 years old. He couldn't talk. He couldn't communicate. Now he laughs and is so happy. What an incredible reminder of how far we can go as a family by working together.”**

Adoptive parents of four children from foster care

---

**1.4 million** children have been adopted in the U.S.

**437,465** children were in the foster care system in 2016

**267,098** children adopted internationally since 1999

---

---
The Unique Challenges Associated with Adoption

Nearly half of ALL children, particularly teens, have struggled with mental, emotional and behavioral disorders.\(^1\) Children who are adopted may be at an even higher risk. As a result, adoptive families utilize clinical services at TRIPLE the rate reported by families formed by birth.\(^2\)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Why might children who are adopted or in foster care be at higher risk?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Poor prenatal care</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prenatal exposure to toxic substances</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Early childhood breaks in attachment</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Adoptees are about 4\(^x\) as likely to attempt suicide than non-adoptees, according to a 2013 study of adoptees published by the American Academy of Pediatrics.\(^3\)

The prevalence of substance abuse was 43\(\%\) higher among adoptees than non-adoptees, according to a 2012 study published in the journal PLOS One.

All children who are adopted are affected by loss and grief as a result of the process.

80\(\%\) of youth involved with the child welfare system require mental health intervention and services due to developmental, behavioral, or emotional issues.\(^4\)

Teens who are adopted are twice as likely to be diagnosed with a behavioral disorder as non-adopted teens.\(^5\)
Protecting the Kids Who Need Us Most

Children Who’ve Experienced Foster Care

Research shows that 10-25% of pre-adopt placements disrupt prior to being finalized, and up to 5% of finalized adoptions are dissolved. When that happens, and a child (re-)enters the child welfare system, feelings of profound loss and grief retrigger traumas associated with past separations, further exacerbating any mental health issues. Children in foster care are three times more likely to have a diagnosis of Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD), which is often accompanied by depression, anxiety, or oppositional defiant disorder. Children who re-enter care at older ages are often perceived as “unadoptable.”

About 26,000 young people between the ages of 18 and 21 (depending upon the state where they live) must leave foster care each year. Young people who age out of the system are much more likely to drop out of high school and to experience early parenthood. They often have very poor life outcomes:

- Approximately 25% of youth who aged out of foster care nationwide reported that they had been homeless within 2 to 4 years of exiting foster care.
- Only 50% reported gainful employment by the age of 24.
- 30% reported being arrested, 29% incarcerated, and 15% convicted of a crime.

The failure to find a permanent home not only negatively impacts the child, but also burdens an already strained system.

Each young person aging out of foster care requires an estimated $300,000 in taxpayer-funded costs such as public assistance, incarceration, and lost wages. Annually, that is $7.8 billion in total costs.

Children Adopted Internationally

Children adopted internationally also face challenges; separated from birth families, placed in orphanages and not having the opportunity to form a relationship with a consistent nurturing caregiver. These compromised beginnings, combined with potential abuse or neglect, too often create attachment challenges in their adoptive families, educational issues related to early deprivation, and unresolved loss issues. Navigating the international adoption journey may include complexities related to transracial adoption and cultural identity. Today, children adopted internationally tend to be much older or to have more severe medical issues.

C.A.S.E. plays a vital role ensuring that children and youth remain in permanent, safe, and stable homes by providing the community of support necessary for them to thrive and their families to be successful.
Need for Adoption-Competent Services

Adoption and foster care alter a child’s perception of herself, her identity, and her relationships. Finding mental health professionals who understand the complexities of adoption can seem nearly impossible for adoptive and foster parents. They face a range of barriers including limited adoption competence among providers, limited availability of clinicians with adoption expertise, and affordability.

Although nearly every therapist says they work with adoptive and foster families, very few possess the specialized training to provide quality mental health services to effectively meet these families’ needs. In fact, 65% of clinical psychologists report being unable to recall any training course at all that focused on adoption-related issues.\(^9\) In a 2016 survey,\(^10\) 26% of adoptive parent respondents said none of the mental health providers they saw knew much about adoption. Sadly, some respondents reported experiences with therapists that damaged their families.

How C.A.S.E. Helps

“When the therapist that I was interviewing to work with one of my daughters asked if my two daughters were ‘real sisters,’ it became very clear to me how hard it was going to be to find a professional who would do more good than harm.”

Mother of two children adopted internationally

C.A.S.E. combines best practices and innovation to provide specialized therapy, training, and resources to support permanency for children and promote the healthy growth and development of families, both locally and nationally.

We help clients address the clinical issues associated with separation, loss, grief, and attachment, as well as developmental challenges. C.A.S.E. clinicians use a family systems, adoption-competent, trauma-informed approach, along with a range of therapeutic tools to help adoptive and foster families overcome the unique challenges that stem from pre- and post- adoption experiences. The most prevalent mental health issues C.A.S.E. treats are Adjustment Disorders, Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD), ADHD, and Anxiety Disorders. Approximately 40% of the clients we serve are adopted internationally and 30% have experienced foster care.
We were frustrated and in despair. We were willing to try anything. We tried this. We tried that. But those things didn’t work. Then we came to C.A.S.E. [for family therapy] and all of a sudden it changes how you interact with your child and how your child interacts with you. It’s the best feeling in the world.

Adoptive parent

Clinical Services

C.A.S.E. family therapy normalizes the adoption experience and helps parents:

- adjust to becoming a family with a new member
- examine the neurological implications of early childhood trauma
- acknowledge that adoptive parenting is different from biological parenting
- understand the significance of loss in adoption, share age-appropriate information related to the adoption story, and validate their children's feelings about adoption

Recruitment and Case Management

Through a grant from the Dave Thomas Foundation for Adoption®, C.A.S.E has two Wendy's Wonderful Kids recruiters on staff. They implement a proactive child-focused recruitment model targeted exclusively on moving Maryland's longest-waiting children from foster care to adoptive families.

In Virginia, C.A.S.E. leads a collaboration to provide case management services to families who have finalized adoptions from foster care. The team helps families access appropriate community-based services and resources through referrals, education, advocacy, support and connection to support groups.

Access to Meaningful Training

Training for Adoption Competency (TAC) – A post-Master’s curriculum that includes classroom and remote clinical case consultation, TAC is now the premiere national program to train mental health practitioners in adoption-competent skills. C.A.S.E. has grown our TAC network to 16 national training partners, including universities and child welfare agencies. Over 1,000 clinicians across the country have completed the 72-hour curriculum since 2009. Our free online directory of trained therapists points families to the skilled help they need.

National Adoption Competency Mental Health Training Initiative (NTI) – Through a cooperative agreement with the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Administration for Children and Families, Children’s Bureau, C.A.S.E. will reach even more child welfare and mental health professionals through web-based training. With 8 pilot states and The Cherokee Nation, NTI is developing and testing two state-of-the-art web-based curricula for use on a national basis. So far, nearly 7,000 child welfare workers have enrolled in the 20-hour training with an astounding 75% completion rate.
Resources – Publications and Educational Programs

Our workshops, webinars, books, and training manuals are highly-effective tools to help families, school counselors, and mental health professionals navigate the challenges of adoption.

Workshops and Trainings – C.A.S.E. offers more than 20 educational trainings for parents, educators, and mental health and child welfare professionals. Our most popular workshops include:

- **W.I.S.E. Up!SM**: Tools to help children choose what they want to share about their story, if anything.
- **School Support for Adoptive Families**: Strategies for teachers and school counselors to create a positive, adoption-sensitive environment.
- **Kids’ Adoption Network (KAN) Conference**: An opportunity to share common adoption questions, experiences, and challenges in a safe, supportive environment.

Webinars – Through a partnership with Jockey Being Family®, C.A.S.E. staff, and prominent guest speakers educate 400 registrants per month.

Publications – Popular titles include:

- The W.I.S.E. Up! Powerbook
- Beneath the Mask: Understanding Adopted Teens
- The Whole Me

Public Awareness and Advocacy

C.A.S.E. works in partnership with national organizations to influence legislation that impacts foster care and adoption and to advocate to Congress on important issues including federal funding for expansion of quality post-adoption services and supports.
Our Impact

C.A.S.E. has developed a national reputation for excellence in meeting the needs of the adoption and foster care community by providing early intervention and ongoing support that significantly impacts the lives, stability, and permanency of adoptive families.

With five offices across the Washington, D.C. metro area, we have become the leading regional provider of pre- and post-adoption support serving more than 6,000 clinical clients to date.

Supported and Thriving Adoptive and Foster Families

C.A.S.E. is committed to demonstrating our success with measurable results. We measure our family outcomes using two tools, the Child and Adolescent Needs and Strengths (CANS)-Comprehensive and the Family Adaptability and Cohesion Scale (FACES IV). The CANS-Comprehensive is used nationally by private mental health organizations and child welfare agencies to identify the mental health needs of children and families who are accessing services. The FACES IV scale was developed to evaluate adaptability and cohesion in family interactions.

C.A.S.E. is also expanding our use of a standardized client satisfaction survey as another measure of our effectiveness. We are pleased that 91% of the parents surveyed in 2016 were very satisfied with our services.

Trained Professionals Employing Adoption-Competent Practices

Graduates of our Training for Adoption Competency (TAC) program scored 43.4 points higher on post-tests for adoption competency than comparison groups. To more effectively meet their clients’ needs, all participants surveyed reported changing at least two aspects of their clinical practice to integrate adoption-competency techniques. 58% of respondents reported improvements in all five aspects of their clinical practice measured by the survey.

“We floundered and no one could really help us with her trauma issues and it wasn’t until we came to C.A.S.E. that we got the help we needed.”

Adoptive parent
Growing Together to Help More Families

As leading experts in our field, C.A.S.E. is poised to expand our unique collection of specialized services, trainings, and products. Our services reduce the number of disrupted placements and failed adoptions, which results in fewer children languishing in foster care or reentering care, as well as lower mental health costs over time. Our network of partners and excellent relationships with stakeholders, including families, public agencies, private providers, research institutes, universities, and donors have allowed us to provide services in 21 states nationwide. However, there remains a need to support more families by providing more accessibility to our high-quality services.

C.A.S.E. aspires to be a leading source of support for the adoption and foster care community nationwide, offering cutting-edge services and innovative products for children, families and professionals. We strive to serve ALL families regardless of ability to pay. We envision building an adoption-competent workforce in every state and raising the national conversation about adoption and foster care issues through increased awareness and education.

We will expand our reach to achieve two overarching results:

1. Adoptive and foster families are supported and thriving, and
2. Trained professionals are employing adoption-competent practices.

We will focus on the following four priorities:

- **Build Capacity for Growth**
- **Extend Reach of Direct Services**
- **Elevate Our Brand Nationally**
- **Ensure Sustainability**

Endnotes

2. Howard, Smith & Ryan, 2004; Vandivere, Malm & Radel, 2009
3. Risk of Suicide Attempt in Adopted and Nonadopted Offspring, Margaret A. Keyes, Stephen M. Malone, Anu Sharma, William G. Iacono, Matt McGue
6. Center for Disease Control presentation to American Academy of Pediatrics 2015 National Conference & Exhibition
7. Studies by Jim Casey Youth Opportunities Initiative, National Alliance to End Homelessness, Chapin Hall Midwest Study, and Northwest Foster Care Alumni Survey.
10. Atkinson, Gonet, Freundlich and Riley, 2013
The Growing Together Campaign

Twenty years ago, the vision of one woman, Kathleen Dugan, made C.A.S.E. a reality. The support of many made C.A.S.E. successful. Your investment in the Growing Together Campaign will secure C.A.S.E.’s sustainability and expand our reach and impact over the next several years.

The Growing Together Campaign will expand C.A.S.E.’s:

- Impact
- Visibility
- Capability to serve more families
- Geographic reach of direct services and scale of training
- Field-level thought leadership

These ambitious, but achievable, strategic goals for growth require financial resources that will be raised during the three-year Growing Together Campaign. Launched during the celebration of C.A.S.E.’s 20th anniversary year, the campaign aims to raise $5 million by 2020.

To ensure sustainability and financial health, we will raise:

- **$2 million** for an Endowment Fund
  - Includes a generous gift of **$1 million** already committed to the Endowment Fund to launch the campaign
- **$1 million** in Planned Gifts, with **$500,000** already pledged, in the form of long-term gifts, such as wills and trusts, that continue to grow the endowment into the future

To fuel expansion, we will raise **$2 million in Growth Capital to:**

- Open counseling offices in new local markets
- Expand nationally through NTI and TAC sites
- Build capacity and retain top talent
- Provide innovation and technology (tele-therapy, web-based training)
- Conduct next generation research on adoption (i.e., evidence-based practices, long-term research, etc.)

---

$5 million

$2 million
Growth Capital

$1 million
Planned Gifts

$2 million
Endowment Fund

$1.5 M raised
Board of Directors

Officers:
Kiran Dixit, LCPC, Chair
Mike Battle, Vice Chair
Lois Fried, Treasurer
Kathleen Cook Ravenscroft, Secretary

Chief Executive Officer
Debbie Riley, LCMFT

Members at Large:
Maria Garcia Anderson
Patricia Beares, MSW
Kathleen Dugan
Michael Dugan
Jelani Freeman
Sara van Geertruyden
Pamela Krooth, LCSW-C

Lilliam L. Machado
Tracie Peschke
Heather H. Quinn
Josh Shapiro
Carol J. Shoemaker
Daniel G. Swanson

Headquarters
4000 Blackburn Lane, Ste 260
Burtonsville, MD 20866
www.adoptionsupport.org
P: 301.476.8525

Additional Locations
Riverdale Park, MD
Bethesda, MD
Annandale, VA
Sterling, VA

Contact:
Tamara Arsenault, Director of Development
arsenault@adoptionsupport.org