



The Baby Fold

Impact Report



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A Message From President and CEO Clete Winkelmann

Because of you, children and families across our community are finding safety, stability, and hope — sometimes for the very first time. This past year at The Baby Fold was one of meaningful progress, and every step forward was made possible by your caring hearts.

Each day, children arrive carrying the weight of trauma and uncertainty. They are met with compassionate staff, evidence-based programs, and environments designed to help them heal and grow. Families receive not just services, but the tools, encouragement, and consistency needed to build stronger futures together.

Our staff are at the heart of this work. They show up every day with skill, resilience, and deep care for the children and families they serve. Their ability to focus on what matters most — helping young people feel safe, supported, and capable of thriving — is essential to the impact reflected throughout this report.

This year also brought important work behind the scenes to strengthen The Baby Fold for the future. Improvements to our technology and infrastructure are helping staff spend more time supporting children and families and less time navigating systems. While this work isn't always visible, it plays a vital role in ensuring care is delivered thoughtfully, efficiently, and with lasting impact.

In partnership with Illinois State University, unused space on our Oglesby campus was transformed into a child welfare simulation center — a forward-looking initiative that will better prepare future child welfare professionals before they ever step into the field. This collaboration represents the kind of innovation that helps create lasting, system-wide change for children and families.

As you read this report, know that every success story, every milestone, and every moment of healing is connected to the belief that children and families deserve support, dignity, and opportunity. Thank you for standing with The Baby Fold and for making this lifechanging work possible.

Together, brighter paths forward are being created for children and families — today and for generations to come.

With gratitude,



The Baby Fold



The Baby Fold's Mission

The Baby Fold builds positive futures with children and families while reflecting the Christian principles of love, hope, and healing.

Our Vision

Transforming children's lives through strong family and community partnerships.

The Baby Fold's Five Service Areas

Early Childhood Services

- Healthy Start (Including Doula Services)
- Caregiver Connections

Intervention Services

- Foster Care
- Intact Family Services
- Intensive Family Support Services

Academic Services

- Hammitt Schools
- Community Schools

Post-Adoption Services

- Adoption Support and Preservation
- Adoption Record Search and Support
- Respite Care

Training & Consultation Services

Our Values

Integrity | Stewardship

Diversity & Inclusion

Teamwork | Respect

Excellence



Healthy Start

Early Childhood Services

The Baby Fold's Healthy Start program is a free, voluntary program designed to build safe and loving environments for first-time or young families in McLean county.

A Support Worker meets in the home weekly throughout pregnancy and regularly during the first nine months of the baby's life. We identify family strengths and needs, establish goals, and link families to community resources. Parents can participate in home visiting services until their child is 3-5 years old.

129

Families Served

38

Family Engagement
Events Held

859

Event Participants

100%

Every child in need of early intervention services was on track or receiving support upon leaving the program

99%

of children safely remained in their homes

92%

of Healthy Start clients are low to moderate income

Doula Program

34

Clients

24

Births

(Four times more than last year!)

76

Parents screened for post-natal depression



Referrals and Self-Referrals are open for Healthy Start!



Caregiver Connections

Early Childhood Services

Serving 19 counties, The Baby Fold's Caregiver Connections Program provides free consultation, training, and support services to providers in daycares, preschools, and home care settings. Our staff identify children whose behavior or social-emotional wellbeing may be in need of further attention and trains caregivers on teaching strategies and supports.

The Baby Fold also offers training and professional development opportunities to childcare providers at their request on a variety of topics related to development and mental health in young children.

61

Sites
Served

247

Hours of child
development and
mental health
training provided

2,207

Face-to-face
contacts made
with children
and providers

83%

of children
remained in
their educational
setting after
discharge.

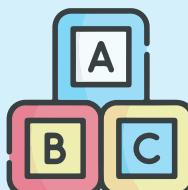
Trainings Provided:



**Addressing
Challenging Behavior**



**Trauma Informed
Care**



Child Development



**Culture and
Diversity**



**Importance of Healthy
Relationships**



Attachment Theory

"When a child presents as challenging, the provider often says they are 'failing' the child/family. We are there to support them and teach the childcare provider how to connect with the child and family to make everyone feel successful." - *Caregiver Connections Supervisor*

Foster Care

Intervention Services

The Baby Fold's foster care programs provide safe, nurturing home environments for children. The Illinois Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS) refers families to The Baby Fold at a time of crisis. Our mission is to offer a caring and stable place for these children until family reunification or another permanent living arrangement can be made.

Real Stories. Real Change.

"My caseworker and her supervisor were very understanding and worked with me during all of this. **Helped me a lot.**"

100%

of children made
progress towards their
goals

100%

of children had
improved functioning
at discharge

100%

of children remain
safe in foster homes

169

Foster Children
Served

130

Foster Families

9

Newly Licensed
Foster Families



**Interested in
Becoming a
Foster Parent?**

Contact us for more information!
Scan QR Code, Call (309) 557-1121, or email
FosterParentInquiries@TheBabyFold.org

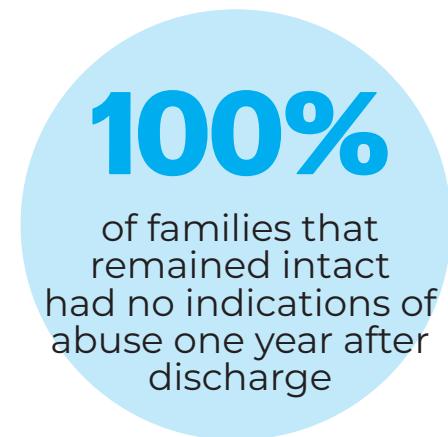
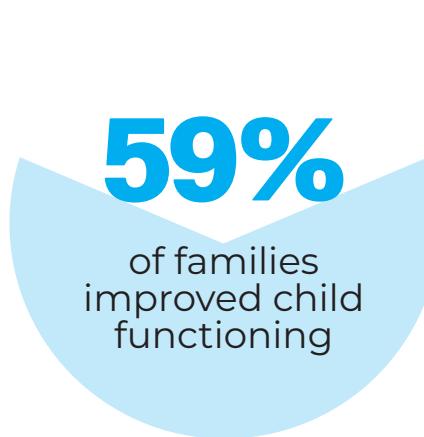


Intact Family Services

Intervention Services

Intact Family Services is a short-term in-home community-based intervention program (6-9 months) that works with families who have come to the attention of the Illinois Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS) and have been indicated by DCFS for child abuse and/or neglect.

The program is designed to assure the safety and well-being of children by assisting families in addressing the issues that gave rise to the indicated report with the goal of maintaining the children safely in the home. The Baby Fold helps families assess their strengths and needs, set goals, identify resources, learn new skills, and change behaviors that put their children at risk.



Families Receiving Care in Intact Family Services: **65**



“Our intact worker was great! She has made intact easy and comfortable.” -Intact Family Member





Hammitt School on Willow

Academic Services

The Baby Fold's Hammitt Schools serve students from over 20 school districts throughout Central Illinois. Hammitt on Willow serves students when their severe emotional, behavioral, and developmental needs exceed what their public schools can provide.

97%

of children improved
their social-emotional
wellbeing

46

Students Served

2

Students graduated
from Hammitt on
Willow

8

New Students

11

Students discharged

Real Stories. Real Change.

Students at Hammitt Schools say that adults in their school:

- ✓ “Show that they care about me”
- ✓ “Take time to get to know me”
- ✓ “Make decisions to make us feel safe”
- ✓ “Make sure we have resources needed to learn”



Hammitt School on Oglesby Academic Services

The Baby Fold's Hammitt Schools serve students from over 20 school districts throughout Central Illinois. Hammitt on Oglesby serves students when their severe emotional, behavioral, and developmental needs exceed what their public schools can provide.

84

Students Served

↑16 students from last year!

39

in Traditional Program

45

in Autism Program

6

New Students

89%

of children improved their social-emotional wellbeing



**Data collected for the 2024-2025 school year.*

Community Schools Academic Services

Community Schools is a strategy and framework that transforms a school into a place where educators, local community members, families, and students work together to strengthen conditions for student learning and healthy development and eliminate barriers to academic achievement. As partners, they organize in- and out-of-school resources, supports, and opportunities so students and their families thrive.

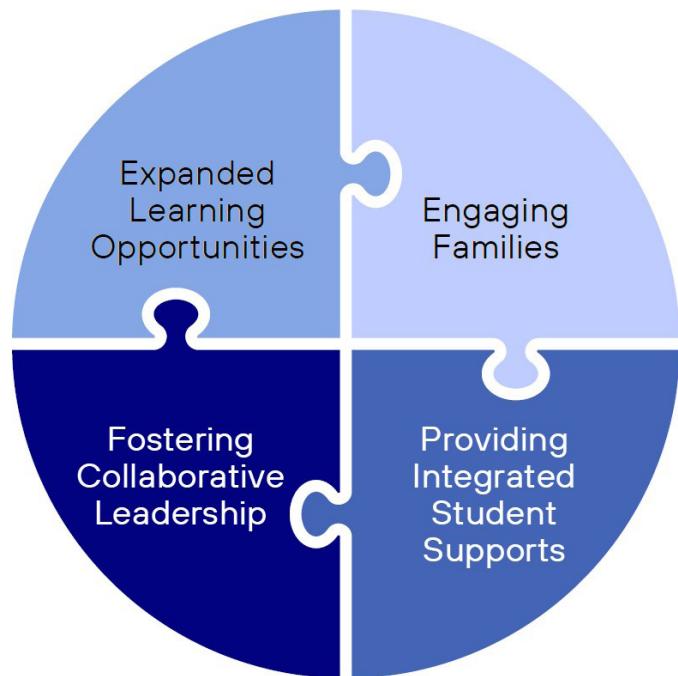
The Baby Fold's community School Coordinators are embedded within Cedar Ridge Elementary School and Fairview Elementary School.

100%

of students and families reported increased confidence, competence, and connectedness

100%

of students & families connected to services & resources



Post-Adoption Services

Adoption Support and Preservation

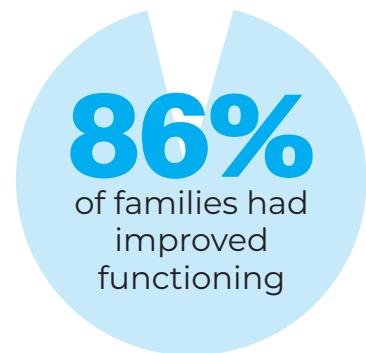
The Baby Fold's Adoption Support and Preservation program is dedicated to assisting families with adopted children under the age of 18. In times of family challenges, we provide comprehensive in-home support, consultation, resources, respite, and professional therapy—at no expense to the families. Our unwavering commitment is to help stabilize children and families, ensuring that parents can remain committed to their children.

*"It was like a **lifeline to us** during a very difficult time"*

"We saw growth in our child and in ourselves during this time"



↑1% from last year!



↑10% from last year!

Respite Care

Through structured activities and therapeutic interventions, adopted children and families are provided renewal and recovery through Camp Take-A-Break and respite reimbursement. Camp Take-A-Break offers a low camper-to-staff ratio while fostering resilience, promoting positive relational skills, and enhancing feelings of safety and belonging in their new family.

16

Camps

98

Clients

97%

of families receive relief through access to respite care

Nearly
8,000

Hours of respite

More than tripled from last year!



Training Programs

Training, Consulting, Certification

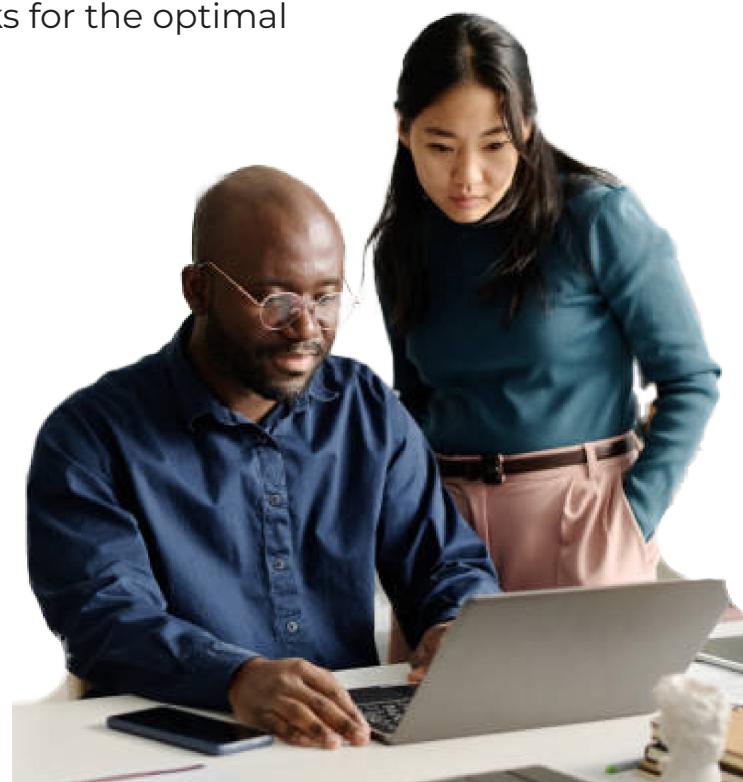
The Baby Fold offers in-service training for teachers in area school districts, and professional staff who work with children in the community.

Trainings are designed to equip caregivers and providers to cultivate therapeutic relationships, mitigate trauma, refine intervention techniques, and comprehend the intricacies of developmental frameworks for the optimal support of individuals and communities.

In-person and online training services are provided by Baby Fold experts and guest trainers.

Trainings That Drive Transformation:

- ✓ Trauma-Informed Care
- ✓ Vicarious Trauma
- ✓ Crisis De-Escalation
- ✓ Collaborative Problem Solving
- ✓ The ARC Model
- ✓ Attachment Parenting Styles
- ✓ Adverse Childhood Experiences
- ✓ Trust-Based Relational Intervention
- ✓ Trauma Informed Schools and Workplaces
- ✓ Grief and Debriefing After Loss



Agencies Empowered Through Our 2025 Trainings:

- Heartland Community College
- Tri-County Special Education
- Sheridan Elementary School
- Crittenton Centers & Crisis Nursery

Interested in training opportunities? Scan the QR code or contact Keith Brotheridge, Training Coordinator, at (309) 557-1148 or kbrotheridge@thebabyfold.org.



Join Our Mission

Since 1902, The Baby Fold has led child welfare efforts to heal children and families and develop stronger, more vibrant communities through our expansive, proactive, and trauma-informed programs and services.

For nearly 125 years, The Baby Fold has been entrusted with generous gifts of all varieties to improve the lives of children. You can make a difference today with your financial support.

Join us and change the life of a child.

"Thank you all! I am just so grateful for all that you do for these kids, your services are so needed and the job so difficult and your impact is so great!"

"Love you all! If it wasn't for you guys, [my son] wouldn't be where he is today."

"My son is on the autism spectrum. Baby Fold has been a huge blessing in our lives. We can never repay the debt we owe your organization."

For information or help with a special gift, contact Sam Guillory at sguillory@thebabyfold.org or (309) 451-7202.

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www.thebabyfold.org
EIN: 37-0673453

SCAN TO SUPPORT



THE BABY FOLD

- Stocks/Securities
- IRA Charitable Rollover
- Donor-Advised Funds
- Farmland/Property
- Estate Gifts
- Employer Gift Match



