

# Savio

## 2023 ANNUAL REPORT



Strengthening Families.  
Building Resilient Communities.





## DEAR SAVIO SUPPORTER,

I am incredibly proud to share our impact serving Colorado's families in 2023! Our daily focus is providing families with the best possible care to help them heal and move forward together. We do this work within a family's home, but its impact is felt far beyond. So, we've updated our mission statement to reflect that:

**Savio builds resilient communities  
by strengthening family relationships.**

Inside these pages, you'll discover how Savio, alongside socially conscious partners, provides accessible care for young people and caregivers. We invite you to meet three families that we've helped with your support. Their stories highlight how supporting families helps young people thrive, therefore improving our communities. Thank you for joining us in realizing our mission.

SINCERELY,

**NORMA AGUILAR-DAVE**  
Executive Director

## CLIENT JOURNEY

### STEP 1: REFERRAL → Savio

This is the very first step in a family's journey! After running into conflict, families with few resources can be connected to us by hospitals, the legal system, social services, or on their own if they could really use our help!



### STEP 2: ASSESSMENT + SCREENING

The anticipation of starting something new can be the scariest moment. Families often meet their first staff member with feelings of doubt, discomfort, frustration, and so on. But some things start to feel different than previous interventions they've tried. Their past mistakes and devastations don't have to be shared over and over again as they find the right-fit program. Our staff works together to be aware of their story and needs so they can start looking toward the future.

### STEP 3: SERVICES

No more wishing and waiting for things to get better. This is where the action happens. Each family is matched with a therapist who keeps them on-track with their goals each session. Kids and their grown-ups discover customized solutions that easily fit their lifestyle. Every member of the family starts to feel a sense of empowerment in knowing that change is possible long-term.



### STEP 4: COMMUNITY SUPPORT

Things are finally feeling steadier at home! But what about when a family walks out into a world full of past triggers? For transformations to be sustainable, together, we look at all aspects of life beyond a family's home base. By establishing positive connections with social supports like coaches, school leaders, positive and safe activities, wellness centers, etc., families can shift from relying on therapeutic support to thriving in everyday life.

### STEP 5: DISCHARGE

Saying goodbye feels bittersweet. Although families have bonded with their Savio team members, they feel ready to start implementing the lessons they learned independently. As the journey comes to a close, each family returns to a familiar world: not everything is perfect, external problems still exist, uncomfortable emotions can be felt. However, going forward, children and caregivers know that if a challenge arises, they can handle anything that comes their way.



### STEP 6: BRANCHING OUT

Our families have gone forth into the world expanding their horizons, but our door remains open. We check on families after a year goes by to see how they are doing. Approximately 87% of our families are still successful. However, if anyone is feeling a little less confident, we offer booster sessions to remind them what they learned and how capable they are.



# COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIP HIGHLIGHTS

It's imperative to work together with other agencies and organizations in our community to make sure we are not missing any gaps. With these partnerships, we join hands in uplifting our kids and their caregivers in the knowledge that they are active, important members of our community and have the ability to generate healing onward.

## LIFESPAN LOCAL



We are connected with Lifespan Local, a community-driven effort in Southwest Denver that focuses on fulfilling neighborhood needs and providing resources. The multiculturalism that makes this part of town so beautiful also finds itself being neglected. One of our Savio team members provides free therapy sessions throughout a 6-8 week program in Spanish for mothers with young children who need extra support during tough times.

## DENVER COLLABORATIVE PARTNERSHIPS (DCP)



We are a provider and sponsor for DCP, a city of Denver program. When kids find themselves in trouble, it can be overwhelming to have endless treatment solutions thrown their way— especially ones that could remove them from home. DCP streamlines the intervention process by utilizing community-based resources and peer advocates as they seek help. This initiative prevents kids from being displaced from their home environment and mitigates the school-to-prison pipeline.

## FAMILY INTEGRATED TREATMENT (FIT) COURT



We are a contracted service provider for FIT Court, a voluntary program for Jefferson County's Dependency and Neglect cases. When parents fight the battle to become clean and sober, they are also fighting for the chance to prove they can keep their own children safe. We help them become the parent they've always wanted to be by contributing coaching, therapeutic support, life skills education, and more.

## FOSTERING COLORADO



Foster kids face several uphill battles and this organization lobbies for their rights. Fostering Colorado works to improve policies within the foster care system so that no young person misses out on a thriving childhood; Savio's staff representation within this group ensures large-scale improvements are made. Our voice has led to continued advocacy for fair compensation, educational equity for foster youth, and implementation of the Foster Youth in Transition Program to help those aged 18-21 get the support they need in the passage to adulthood.



## FAMILY WELLNESS

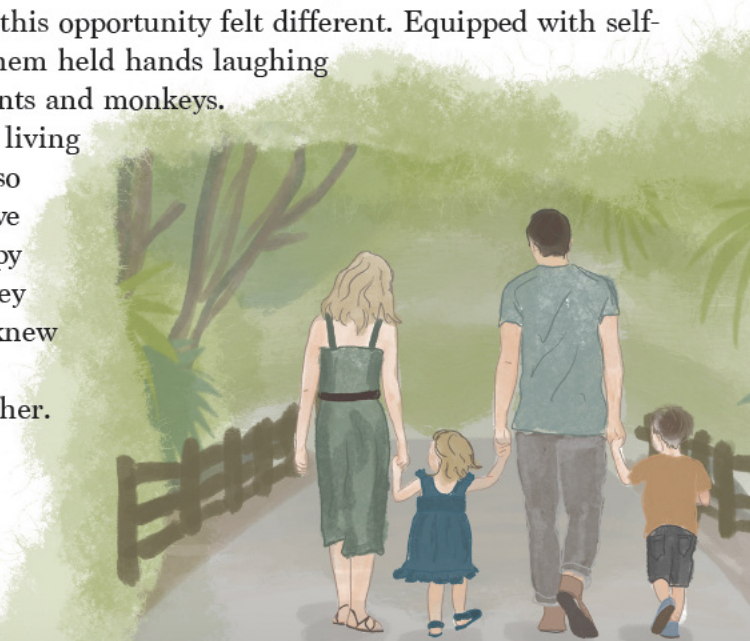
The Green family excitedly boarded the plane, ready for the journey to see Grandma and Grandpa. After saving up and planning their excursion for over a year, the reality of being together again was within reach. Mom and Dad settled 8-year-old Noah and 3-year-old Lila in their seats when a familiar panic set in: Noah's screams echoed through the aircraft. Judging eyes and scowls shot toward the family, heat rising in these parents' faces. Dad desperately tried to intervene but found himself losing his temper as he tried to stop Noah from kicking the seats in front of him with endless ear-piercing yells. They were asked to leave the plane. Disheartened, ashamed, and coping with the loss of seeing their loved ones, a thought flashed through their minds, "What if we can never do 'normal' things out in public ever again?"

Noah's mental health challenges had an unusual course for such a young age. Around when his mom left his biological father, who was an unsafe person in their lives, Noah started exhibiting symptoms of depression at three years old. As he got older, his sadness and irritability grew and behavioral problems became apparent; despite attempts at treatment, there was no fitting solution. School's attention was caught when Noah's frequent shouting, hitting, and running away interfered with his safety and participation, which all indicated developmental delays. School staff were unsure if there were larger problems of abuse or neglect happening at home, which led to the Department of Human Services (DHS) checking in on the family. The Greens felt a whole new experience of embarrassment as they desperately discussed their situation with their caseworker. "We tried it all," said Mom in exasperation, "but nothing has helped." It was clear that this little boy had loving, stable parents; they were just at a loss for how to show up for him as he struggled with his emotions. DHS knew Savio has a proven successful history of assisting families experiencing disruption with young kids and directed the Greens to our care.

Their therapist was welcomed into the family's home but saw the discouragement in yet another attempt to find a sense of wellbeing. But this time it was different. Noah was not sent off to another office with another stranger clinician. He got to stay in the familiarity of his home while Mom, Dad, and little sister Lila never left his side. Both parents were able to look at their own life experiences to see how they affected their reactions to difficulties in the present. They saw Noah's behaviors differently knowing that punishment for acting out, something they had been raised to see as the standard, was not necessarily the solution for their son's actions. And punishing themselves with feeling ashamed of their situations in public would never help them either.

Things started to brighten at home but anxiety still lingered toward the outside world. "We can't take him in public... we just don't know what he'll do," Dad shared with their therapist. Meanwhile, things at school—where Noah spent much of his time—still looked rocky. Savio knows that no child and no family is an island, and we ensure that each significant element of a young person's life is brought into the healing process. Noah's therapeutic team worked together with his school principal, teacher aides, and social workers to help them understand his behaviors and needs as well as how to bridge care into his classroom setting. Once this support was consistently there for him, everything started to change. Days grew into months without Noah having an outburst. And every once in a while, Mom or Dad would catch him smiling and giggling with Lila—a sight that was brand new to them.

As their program came to an end, the Green family bravely packed up their car and ventured toward the zoo. It had been a long time since they had tried a public outing, but this opportunity felt different. Equipped with self-assuredness, the four of them held hands laughing and smiling at the elephants and monkeys. They were immersed in a living dream that had once felt so unattainable. As they drove home, looking at the sleepy eyes in their back seat, they realized that road ahead knew no bounds; they could do anything as a family together.





Shortly after Grayson was born, his mother held him in arms of uncertainty. She was sixteen years old and had no idea how to raise a child while she was still growing up herself. Amidst fears, this mother and son had comfort that things could be okay. Mom's parents were loving and supportive; they were ready to help their daughter and grandson succeed against all the odds that many teenaged parents face. Seven years later, Grayson had grown to be a bright-eyed little boy who loved starting each day with a hug from Mom, Grandma, and Grandpa. Even though life had its ups and downs, they had each other. Mom, now in her early 20s, was discovering more about who she was all while balancing common emerging adult learning curves of job searches, financial responsibilities, and preparing to find her own place to live; having the extra parental help with Grayson made navigating this part of her journey far easier.

Everything changed one summer morning when the family was driving home from the store. In a split moment of time, an accident caused Grayson to lose his grandparents forever, and Mom lost her only support system. One day of tragedy brought with it a flood of large-scale trauma for Grayson, and tremendous lost feelings for his mother. Overwhelmed with the reality of being a sole caretaker for her son, Mom left town and placed Grayson in the care of kinship. As time passed, Grayson's struggles in response to the disaster became apparent—nightmares, tummy aches, and extreme fearfulness were all regular occurrences. With exhaustion each day from caregivers and case workers, it was clear Grayson needed help returning to the joyful little boy he was once before. Savio's Trauma Systems Therapy (TST) program helps young people heal the wounds of deeply distressing experiences of all kinds. Since Grayson's world was colored by major losses of death and abandonment, this initiative was a perfect fit.



Starting this form of therapy led to noticeable results right away. His outlook on the world around him became braver each day. As he progressed in his journey, Mom was coping with her experience of the loss in her own way and started to make

regular monthly calls with Grayson to check in. Each exchange brought brief joy but also confusion as to why Mommy wasn't there with him. As treatment entered its final stages, Grayson had the opportunity to draw out his past experiences to take back his story with the knowledge that he had a voice that mattered moving into the future. His therapist gazed upon his picture with care and asked, "What is your biggest dream?" Grayson paused thoughtfully with a crayon in hand. "I just want my family back together again," he responded before tearfully coloring again. Grayson shared his vulnerable feelings during his next mother-son call.

A couple of weeks later, kinship heard a light knock at their door and couldn't believe their eyes. Grayson's mom came back...and Grayson ran into her arms. Mom had decided to reunite with her son and finish TST treatment together, addressing her emotional wounds while supporting Grayson's final stages of healing his own. By the final session, Mom had regained custody. In their final hour of therapy, they knew that they still had a long ways to go but felt safe in the knowledge that they had gained skills to feel empowered and that by sticking together, they wouldn't have to face anything scary alone.





On Monday morning, the phone rang. It was school... again. Sixteen-year-old Marisol was in the office after getting into a fight with peers. The pattern was getting worse with her adoptive parents getting calls earlier and earlier in the week concerning her disruption at school. Marisol had already been on a long journey. After it was discovered that she was a victim of human trafficking, Marisol was removed from danger and then fostered and adopted by safe and loving parents, Ana and Marco. While this couple had two biological children of their own, having a big sister join their family made them complete. The transition was not without its challenges. Marisol had never known a healthy relationship dynamic with caregivers in her life and was clashing with authority both at home and at school. She refused Ana and Marco's requests for help around the house and her angry emotions would elevate into yelling back at them during disagreements. The family knew that help was desperately needed to prevent Marisol from getting involved in the world of legal trouble.

Savio's Youth Behavioral programs are designed to help system-involved or at-risk adolescents identify their struggles, establish coping skills, and move forward in life without the weight of shame from past mistakes. Meeting with their Savio therapist was a team effort; it soon became evident that each person in their family unit played a vital role in the healing process. Ana and Marco realized that they needed to be leaders for their kids to see what healthy responses look like when faced with frustration. They learned how to regulate their own emotions when they would arise and, in turn, would then help Marisol de-escalate and reach for her grounding tools. During her program, she was introduced to safe ways to manage anger, such as breathwork and redirecting energy towards productive activities—like doing household chores.

Before they knew it, Marisol started utilizing these routines all on her own. As their program came to an end,



Ana and Marco overheard their youngest children in a yelling match with fears washing over them of old patterns re-emerging. As they rushed over to address the conflict, they discovered Marisol had already taken the lead in guiding her siblings with calming techniques she had learned. These once-overwhelmed parents warmed with a sense of hope that things would be better not just for their oldest child, but for every member of their family.

As discharged neared, Ana and Marco noticed that the phone calls from school were no longer expected. In fact, she was forging new friendships and performing better on homework and tests. When she'd run off the bus into the embrace of her family, Marisol would no longer argue about how she could help out. As their therapist finished their last session, both parents smiled with tears in their eyes and said, "Thank you for teaching us how to understand Marisol and encourage her to know she can control her emotions. We are so grateful for what this has done for our family."



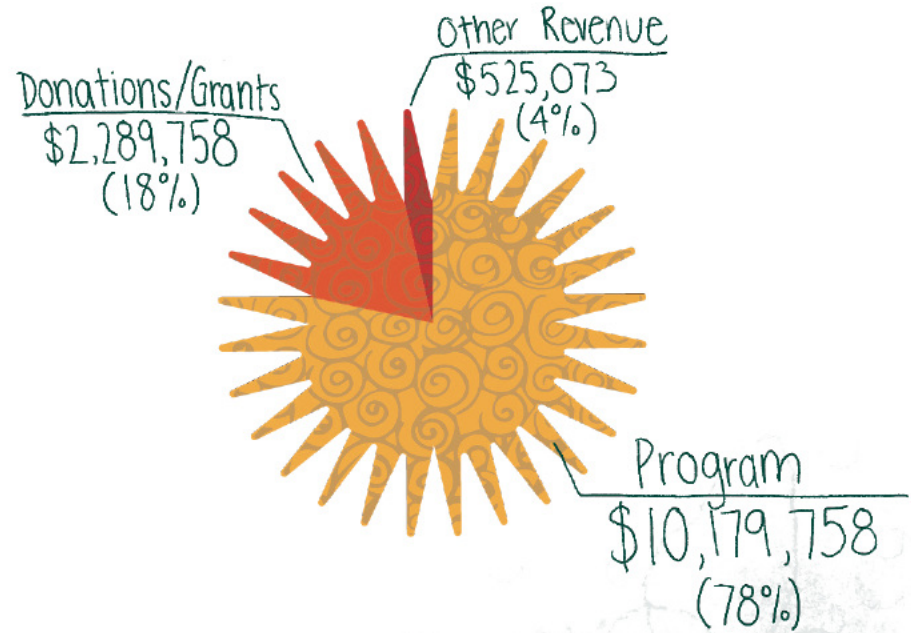
# 2023 FINANCIALS

Our programming allows **1,700 families** to receive life-changing services. Approximately 99% of our families are given access to the help they need free of cost thanks to our partners and the generous support of our donors.

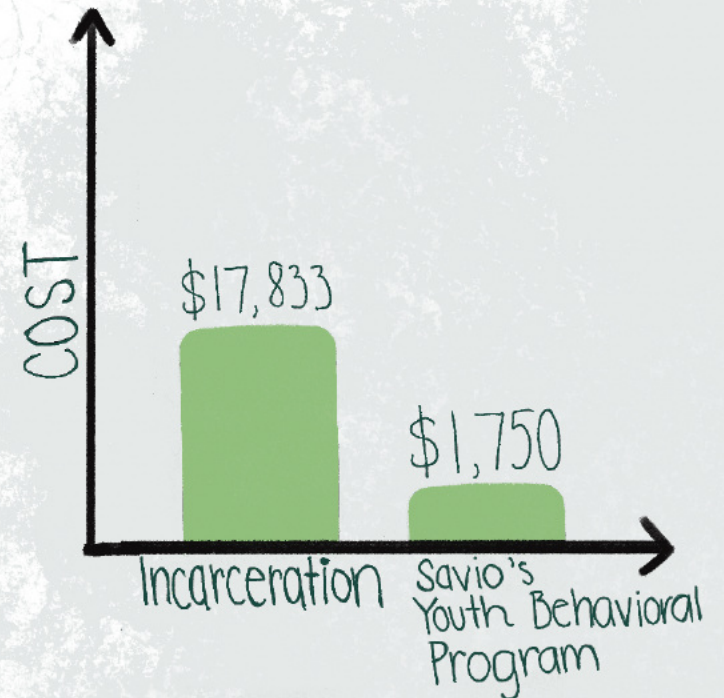
**Expenses Total: \$12,514,945**



**Revenue Total : \$12,994,191**



On average, how do the costs of these interventions to support a struggling teen per month compare?





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Thank you to the many donors who wish to remain anonymous and supporters who contributed to our Back-to-School and Adopt-a-Family drives.

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**Your support empowers us to continue making a positive impact on the lives of families we serve. Keep in touch as we share more opportunities on ways that you can help the community!**

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