

# ANNUAL REPORT 2024



**Children's TherAplay**  
The Children's TherAplay Foundation, Inc.



# LETTER FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

**"To accomplish great things, we must not only act but also dream. Not only plan but also believe." - Anatole France**

It is a privilege to spend my day working with, alongside, and on behalf of some incredible dreamers! Dreams are where all greatness originates. Our dreams provide the initial spark that allows us to think big, step out of our comfort zone, and make bold moves. In 2024, inspired by our dreams, we put the plans in place for our *2025 Strategic Plan - Access and Innovation*.

Over the next five years, we will increase our ability to serve the unmet needs of children with disabilities and their families, and we will do this in a way that only Children's TherAplay can. We will bring together the healing power of horses with skilled, evidenced-based therapy disciplines to serve more school-age children than ever before. We will also increase the amount of support services we provide for families under an all-new program called Stirrup Hope. Stirrup Hope will include support groups, one-on-one counseling sessions with a licensed social worker, and social events to support caregiver mental health and strengthen the family unit. Our families face unique burdens and stress, and we know we have a team of caregivers who can arm them with wisdom and knowledge to increase confidence and peace of mind on their parenting journey.

I'll admit when you think big, doubts can creep in. At Children's TherAplay we were not immune to this reality as we laid the groundwork for our ambitious five-year plan. But fortunately for us, every day inside these walls we see children who keep moving forward in pursuit of their goals... and they will not be deterred. So, we will not be deterred, either.

The needs in our community for children with disabilities and their families are evolving, and it is incumbent upon Children's TherAplay to evolve with them. We are focused on viewing our service through a responsive lens as we have done for over 23 years. We will prioritize access and innovation so children with disabilities and their families can dream big knowing that we will walk alongside them with the plan. You, our donors and supporters, will make sure their dreams come true, and we thank you.



## MISSION + VISION + VALUES

### Our Mission

The mission of The Children's TherAplay Foundation, Inc. is to provide individualized skill development for children with disabilities and/or unique needs through physical, occupational and speech therapies using a horse as a treatment tool in a safe and caring environment.

### Our Vision

The vision for The Children's TherAplay Foundation, Inc. is for all children with disabilities and/or unique needs and their families to have access to the therapies they need to thrive.

### Our Values

**Empowerment:** We connect with others with dignity & respect while promoting each individual's growth & self-direction.

**Quality:** We deliver our best in all we do, acting with intention & holding ourselves accountable for the results.

**Inclusivity:** We foster a culture of compassion & care where everyone can feel like they belong.

**Learning:** We are dedicated to seeking and sharing knowledge that helps us deliver innovative care to improve outcomes.

**Collaboration:** We partner with caregivers, fellow team members, & the community to further our mission.



Scan to view our entire  
2025 Strategic Plan

**Kathy Pelletier**

Executive Director



# 2024 IMPACT REPORT

2024 was a year of continued growth, innovation, and deepened engagement. We expanded our occupational, physical, and speech therapy services to reach even more kiddos and saw a rise in support from our incredible donors and volunteers. We were thrilled to welcome an even higher number of total donors than in 2023, strengthening our mission and impact.

In 2024, we hosted our first-ever pickleball event, Pickle for Ponies, bringing together supporters for a fun and active way to give back. Also, our Therapeutic Animal Assisted Groundwork (TAAG) program continued to thrive with the help of miniature horses Peanut and Banana. We provided about 1,074 TAAG sessions in 2024, giving kiddos unique opportunities to work on their therapy goals in new and meaningful ways.



**11,917**

total therapy sessions provided

**97%**

average caregiver satisfaction

**84**

kids graduated after achieving their goals

**328**

unique clients served

**64%**

of families served are on Indiana Medicaid

**160**

active volunteers

*"Cici (pictured left) wasn't walking at all when we started here, and now she walks completely. She's improved in all areas of her life, and that's pretty cool, how many places can you say that about? And with the horses, it doesn't seem like work to Cici it's really something she enjoys." - Cici's Parents*

## Belonging and Access Initiatives

- In 2024 we joined the **Youth Worker Well-being Project** from the Indiana Youth Institute to provide our staff with **peer support groups, telemedicine benefits, and mental health services.**
- Our **Transportation Program** distributed **\$300** in gas and ride share cards to families experiencing transportation barriers.
- For the fourth year in a row, **Our Scholarship Fund** distributed over **\$15,000 in financial aid to families.** We awarded 100% of financial requests received.

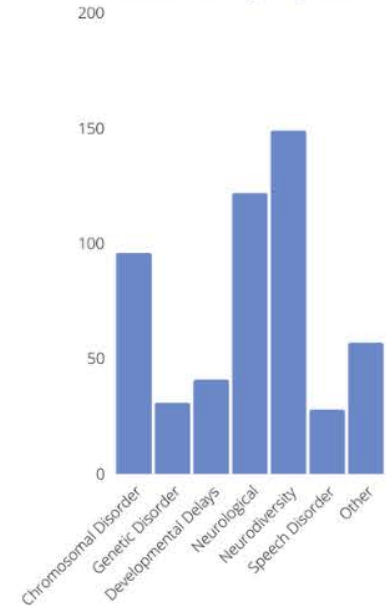
## Community Outreach

**We also connected with our community.** In 2024, Children's TherAplay established our first Equine Committee made up of community members to assist in the development of our equine team. Additionally, Our therapists hosted and coordinated educational in-services for parents and staff on topics like Rett Syndrome, and The Journey of Skilled Therapy.

Further, in Fall 2024 we, once again, hosted the American Hippotherapy Association Level II Clinic, which welcomed 19 therapists from across the country into our facility to sharpen their skills and learn best practices in the field. Community support continues to help Children's TherAplay grow!

## Who We Serve\*

\*Based on Primary Diagnoses



## Common Diagnoses Served\*

\*Based on Primary and Secondary Diagnoses

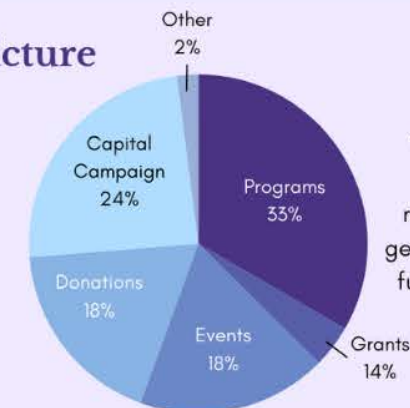
- Autism Spectrum Disorder
- ADHD
- Cerebral Palsy
- Delayed Milestones
- Down Syndrome
- Dysphagia
- Mixed Receptive-Expressive Language Disorder

## Our Financial Picture

\*Unaudited



**TOTAL OPERATING EXPENSE: \$2,719,882**



**TOTAL OPERATING REVENUE: \$3,837,103**

\*64% of annual revenue is generated by fundraising



# VOLUNTEERS

160

active volunteers

5,250

volunteer hours logged

50

New Volunteers

28

Volunteer Groups

## Sidewalking

Sidewalking is our biggest volunteer need—we require at least 10 volunteer sidewalkers every day! Sidewalkers walk alongside the horse during a therapy session and assist the therapist by providing support and ensuring client safety.

## Event Support

Individuals support our fundraising events throughout the year. These volunteers join planning committees, help to set-up or tear-down, and/or run a station during an event.

## Barn Support

Individuals help assist our barn staff care for the herd. These volunteers replenish shavings, dump and fill water buckets, help with turn-out, and perform light stall work.

## TAAG

Individuals help run our Therapeutic Animal Assisted Groundwork. These trained volunteers assist kiddos and therapists work on therapy goals off the horse by practicing grooming, leading, and other skills.



Founder's Award for Outstanding Service



## Meet Volunteer Kathy

Kathy began volunteering at Children's TherAplay at the very beginning, almost 25 years ago! She assists with grooming, sidewalking, barn support, and TAAG. Kathy is a retired RN and enjoys horseback riding, gardening, reading and working out in her free time.

"I am so impressed week after week by the goals [the kiddos] meet in the care of their therapists. The staff here is amazing." -Kathy

# EQUINE PROGRAM

## Our Four Legged Friends

Our herd is an essential part of the Children's TherAplay team. Each horse has a unique personality, gait, and tempo making it easy to match each kiddo to the horse who will best fit their therapy goals. Thank you to all our generous 2024 horse funders!



**Beau** funded by:  
Tom & Debbie Shine,  
& Mark & Janet Nelson



**Bootz** (retired) funded by:  
The Phil & Sharen Meyers Living  
Trust in honor of Ally, Livy, Luke,  
& Kenzy



**Ella** funded by:  
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**Giuseppe** funded by:  
Corbin Capital Partners



**Jade** funded by:  
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**Janey Ray** funded by:  
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**Luna** funded by:  
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& Mudsock Fest



**Moe** funded by:  
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**Nemo** (retired)  
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Kathryn Kraft



**Peanut & Banana**  
funded by:  
The Myers Family



**Pony Boy** funded by:  
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Evelyn & Isadora Dock,  
& Mudsock Fest



**Red** funded by:  
Leslie Ackerman



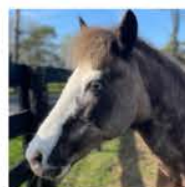
**Tash** (retired) funded by:  
Hank & Jayma Meyers in  
honor of Rylee & Coen Bauer



**Willow** funded by:  
Becky Aletto



**Zella** funded by:  
The Phil & Sharen Meyers  
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Livy, Luke, & Kenzy



**Barbie** - New to the  
herd in 2024



**Hank** - Retired



**Padre** - Retired



**Spot** - Retired



# MEET KIDDO LIAM

Kiddo Liam is a funny five-year-old who loves telling jokes and stories that make others laugh. Liam loves tractors and his family's farm; he likes the color green because that is the color of his favorite tractor! Liam also has many cousins with whom he likes spending time and laughing.

*"He's a jokester but he's rotten," laughs Mom. "Like if you ask him a question, he won't answer it straight because he wants to make people laugh and give you the wrong answer. He's been through a lot medically, but he is still just the happiest guy."*

Liam has quadriplegic cerebral palsy, meaning it affects all four limbs, and epilepsy. He spent the first month of his life in the hospital and when he was finally able to go home they thought everything was fine. Then Liam started having infantile spasms at 6 months old which led to him getting tested and diagnosed. He started in-home physical, occupational, and speech therapy at an early age and then joined TherAplay when he was 18 months old after hearing about it from another family.

*"Everything was very 'figure it out as you go' and all about who you know. TherAplay has afforded us so many connections, to families, to doctors, and equipment and has helped us figure a lot of it out," Mom said.*

Over the past three years, Liam has worked hard in physical, occupational, and speech therapy to develop his strength and skills. In PT, Liam works a lot on core control and sitting unsupported. He has tight muscles which the horse helps him stretch out. In OT, he has worked on positioning and posture, and getting his right arm

more involved in things like cutting and coloring. In Speech, Liam did an LSVT (Lee Silverman Voice Treatment) LOUD program to work on volume control. While Liam has lots of vocabulary, speaking out loud with volume is challenging because cerebral palsy affects how his brain connects with his muscles.

*"For Liam, it was also about his positioning - it's harder to get volume out if you are slouched over, but if you're able to sit up and get breath support it makes a difference," Mom explained. "He is really loud now. He will still joke around and call it LSVT quiet but he is loud!"*

Liam's volume is not the only thing that has progressed since his time at Children's TherAplay. He is taking more independent and functional steps, uses his right arm to support himself, has better core strength, and continues to make everyone at TherAplay laugh!

*"He loves the horses and he also likes talking to the people. Whenever I watch him riding he will just be laughing and turning around to talk to everyone. He'll ask me almost everyday if we are going TherAplay, he loves it here."*

- Haley, Liam's Mom

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The Bright Futures Legacy Society honors donors who have made a lasting commitment to Children's TherAplay through planned giving. We are proud to recognize our inaugural member, Debbie Brattain, whose generous support helps ensure the sustainability of our mission.

Learn More Here:





**Children's TherAplay**  
The Children's TherAplay Foundation, Inc.

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