**Annual Report Content**

**CEO Letter** (200 words)TBD — Caroline is proposing topics to Exec.

 **INTRODUCTION TO THEME** (145 Words)

If the year 2020 has taught us anything, it is what the word essential really means: those people and resources we literally cannot live without. For many New York City families, however, Children’s Aid was essential even before the pandemic. For them, financial hardship, health disparities, food insecurity, and lack of educational resources were everyday realities. And this past year, our place in their lives became more essential than ever.

Every year, Children’s Aid provides comprehensive academic, health, and family services to help children in poverty not just succeed, but thrive. However, this was no typical year, and so, like everyone, we had to pivot. We shifted to an emergency response to focus on providing the essentials to families in poverty during the pandemic, and at the same time, ensured that the potential of all children could be realized — even during lockdowns and school closings.

**MISSION AND VISION STATEMENTS**

Same as last year.

**DEFINING THE FOUR ESSENTIALS

FOOD** (50 Words)

Access to food is an essential every child deserves, but when the pandemic and its associated economic hardship swept through New York City, it emptied grocery store shelves and kitchen cabinets. Many children and their families experienced food insecurity before the pandemic, and that insecurity elevated into a hunger crisis.

**HEALTH** (52 words)COVID-19 took a particularly harsh toll on families living in poverty, claiming the lives of some of our children’s caretakers, and causing lingering health issues for others. Beyond these tragedies, children’s mental health suffered from the abrupt closure of schools, the lack of interaction with peers, and the stressors of parental unemployment.

 **SHELTER/HOME** (51 words)Among the most essential necessities is a stable roof over one’s head. For our youth in foster care attending college, that essential was threatened when campus housing closed its doors last spring, leaving them homeless. Other families we serve grappled with eviction threats and familial instability resulting from economic hardship.

**EDUCATION** (48 words)
Keeping kids’ schooling on track continues to be a challenge facing parents and educators. While it is essential that school-aged children stay engaged, socio-economic disparities in technology and internet access, and the disruptions of opening and closing schools, have threatened to undermine the foundational education every child needs.

**CONTEXT & APPROACH

FOOD** (142 Words) **As workers lost their jobs and stores across New York shuttered as a result of the pandemic, the number requests for food assistance that Children**’s Aid received more than doubled. Parents and children felt the real pain of trying to survive on insufficient meals. Without hesitation, our food and nutrition staff responded on the front lines by increasing emergency food distribution across our sites and setting up outdoor food distribution tents.

This provided relief for many of our families, but we had to find more customized solutions for those who found themselves homebound. Some could not leave their homes because they had family members who had preexisting health conditions and could not risk contracting COVID19, or, because their immigration status left them cut off from government pandemic relief and fear of unpredictable Immigrations and Customs Enforcement raids caused them to isolate and forgo public food distributions. For these families in a untenable position, we organized and completed home deliveries of groceries and nutritious meals.

STATS:

* Our director of food and nutrition program estimates 50% of our families are food insecure.
* 83,000 pandemic hunger relief packages were provided through the end of the 2020 calendar year.
* More than 300,000 lbs. of produce were distributed from March through December 2020.
* Need one more stat

**HEALTH** (147 Words)

From the outset of the pandemic, our doctors, nurses, and therapists fought on the front lines of the biggest health crisis of our generation. For patients who needed in-person care, our clinics continued to remain operational and provide essential care. Many of our services quickly transitioned to telehealth, which included COVID-19 medical guidance, case management, and psychotherapy, ensuring both continuity of care and staff safety. The crisis also compelled our staff to go above and beyond their traditional methods of care. Many of our staff members who work helped managinge complex medical cases wet beyond their duty of care to visited homes to drop off medicine or food — despite not being required to — in oder to better support and supported families experiencing the worst of COVID-19 as they navigated the hardship. And when Governor Cuomo sent urgent requests to medical providers for extra help at understaffed hospitals, a portion of Children’s Aid medical staff volunteered at a local hospital’s COVID-19 ward.

STATS:

* In some of the lowest-income neighborhoods in New York City, 60% of the residents tested positive for COVID-19.
* XX,XXX (getting that info now) medical, mental health, and dental appointments provided from March through December 2020

* 100% of youth of high school youth who received referrals for mental health services received treatment in 2020.
* Need an additional stat

**SHELTER/HOME** (151 Words)

COVID-19 has intensified the pressures many families – and especially children – were already feeling. Children’s Aid has always worked with families at risk of entering the world of foster care to help strengthen the home and avoid removal of children. This work became even more critical when the pandemic added unique layers of familial stress. We made critical interventions to keep families together.

We transitioned our family visits to virtual, but continued in-person visits when a child’s safety was of concern. For those children who did require placements into foster care — in some cases after losing a biological parent to COVID-19 — we supported and helped our foster parents provide loving homes.

When the threat of homelessness hung over families due to illness or unemployment, we provided emergency rent relief, and worked with homeless shelters and internet providers to ensure our students have broadband access to stay connected to online learning.

STATS:

Missing the dark blue problem set up stat

* 150 domestic violence interventions were made between March and June, 2020? in response to a 33% surge in New York state.
* In the first three weeks of March 2020, our child welfare staff made 1,091 face-to-face visits, 2,757 telephone contacts, and 68 videoconference contacts. Alernative text: more visits and contacts were made by our child welfare staff in the first three weeks of March 2020 than during the same period in 2019.
* 98% of families who received one of our family crisis interventions avoided foster care placements last year.

**EDUCATION** (149 Words)

Child development experts warn that children in low-income households are disproportionately likely to fall behind academically as a result of the pandemic. In fact, research from the beginning of the 2020-2021 school year estimates that progress for students’ learning was set back as much as three months on average, and for students of color, it fell back as much as five months. In order to help families maintain stability while meeting children’s educational, social-emotional, and health care needs, we adjusted how we deliver many of our services: we converted 22 community schools and 10 early childhood centers into virtual learning programs; we leveraged app-based educational platforms to provide academic enrichment; and we distributed learning devices to our students with limited access to technology. Our staff also curated at-home activities tied to our existing age-specific curricula, so that after-school programming, tutoring, GED training, and college and career prep could continue.

STATS:

Missing the dark blue problem set up stat

* 96% of our early childhood families said they appreciate our remote learning program, which ensures our youngsters continue learning, socializing, and growing during virtual school.
* ??% of families reported that our remote learning programs exceeded their expectations
* 2,500 children successfully signed up for summer 2020 classes, receiving virtual or in-person summer programming, including paid internships, computer classes, yoga, dance, and more.
* 2,500 children enrolled in summer 2020 virtual or in-person programming, classes, and internships.
* 98% of high school graduates in our targeted programs were accepted to at least one college.

**ALWAYS ACCESSIBLE**

 **DESCRIPTION OF PROGRAMMATIC REACH** (101 Words)

Children’s Aid is an essential thread in the complex tapestry of New York City, serving 50,000 New Yorkers every year. Throughout the city, where there are the highest concentrations of child poverty, we have community centers and schools providing academic, health, and family services customized to the needs of each community. We are in foster homes across all five boroughs, and provide adoptions to all 50 states in the country. And we are at the table advocating, and providing consultation to municipalities as thought-leaders on issues surrounding child welfare to experts representing more than 75 countries around the globe.

**ADAPTIONS DURING PANDEMIC / FOCUS ON NON-TRADITIONAL DELIVERY METHODS** (100 Words)

It was the year of the pivot, of sudden shifts of focus to meet the needs of New York City’s families. At a time of great confusion and concern, Children’s Aid was a trusted resource and calming presence for families trying to separate fact from fiction. Nutrition activities transitioned into hunger relief, health care became telehealth care, and learning took place through screens at home. CEO Phoebe Boyer and EVP Sandra Escamilla-Davies sat on the mayor’s reopening committees, and for our teens navigating college during a pandemic, the counsel of our college prep staff proved critical.

STATS:

* 40% of New Yorkers lack access to home or mobile broadband.
* Throughout the pandemic, we advocated for broadband access and provided remote device access to more than 6,000 students, allowing them to learn, grow, and lead — remotely.
* Our National Center for Community Schools has hosted workshops and trainings on how to best navigate education during the pandemic, reaching more than 1,500 teachers, educators, and administrators from the government and nonprofit sectors.

**BEYOND THE BASICS

COMMITMENT TO SYSTEMIC CHANGE** (54 Words)We are primarily a direct service organization for children, providing more than 100 programs in academics, health, and family services all geared toward breaking the cycle of poverty. But we go beyond direct service, and incorporate advocacy at the local, state, and federal level, and help our nonprofit and government partners implement effective models.

 **ANTI-RACISM INITIATIVES** (100 Words)Children’s Aid’s programs are designed with an understanding that racism is the root cause of the inequities undermining the health and success of our children, families, and communities. Anti-racism has always been a Children’s Aid priority, and in 2020, we amplified that commitment. We issued public statements affirming our solidarity with racial justice efforts, and participated in multiple letter sign-ons. During times of protest, we disseminated anti-racist reference materials, offered resources for protesters, and launched petitions. We also encouraged city and state legislators to amend laws that unfairly target low-income families of color — and we will continue the momentum onward.

**ADVOCACY OVERVIEW** (106 WORDS)

A pandemic exacerbates everything, and that is especially true for low-income families. That’s why our advocacy on their behalf became more essential than ever. Prior to COVID-19, our Public Policy team routinely visited the halls of Albany lawmakers and staged lawful rallies on the steps of City Hall, all in support of our families. In recent years, our focus has been on accessing additional support for youths aging out of foster care and seeking greater funding for community schools. During the pandemic, we fought for Personal Protective Equipment for all frontline workers, promoted census responses, and held community town halls for concerned parents of public-school students.

**PROFILES**

**FOOD**

 **Anaeli**  (76 Words)

As Anaeli’s second birthday approached in April 2020, her family faced the prospect of celebrating with minimal food — both her parents lost work. They turned to Children’s Aid’s early childhood program where Anaeli is enrolled, and asked for help with the essentials. We delivered food assistance in the spring and summer, and her mom was so grateful that she sent us thepicture shown above of the very first delivery — taken the same day as Anaeli’s second birthday.

**Aidan Burgos?** (81 words)

When Marlin’s 4-year-old son was diagnosed with special needs, our health staff began creating a medical plan for him. But due to the pandemic, another need quickly emerged: Marlin lost her job and ran out of food — so her Children’s Aid case worker delivered hunger relief packages directly to their home so they could survive the difficult months. Marlin now has a steadier source of income, and we are helping her secure additional employment and continue to plan Aidan’s medical care. **Morrison Nwosu** (77 Words)

As our food box program coordinator, Morrison promotes a fruit-and-vegetable inclusive diet to our children and their families, and provides healthy foods access in areas that lack it. In the pandemic, he logged many overtime hours to scale and convert our food and nutrition services into emergency food relief, and distributed food directly to families. His upbeat personality is known for bringing light into our families’ lives, which is more valuable than ever in these dark days.

 **HEALTH**

**Ethan**  Age and age segment needed(80 Words)

Ethan attends Children’s Aid College Prep Charter School’s early childhood program in the Bronx, and before the pandemic, his teachers recommended interventions for his verbal and motor skills. Ethan began receiving twice-weekly occupational therapy, and when learning went remote, we instructed his parents through remote learning software to continue his treatment at home. In spite of these pandemic related adjustments, Ethan has made significant improvement in his speaking abilities and movement, and is on track for success in grade school.

**Leslie**  Age and age segment needed(75 Words)

In high school, Leslie’s attendance was slipping. Her mother, Silvia, worked with Children’s Aid to create an attendance plan, and dreamed of sending Leslie to college one day. But COVID-19 cut that dream short — Silvia contracted the virus in March 2020, and passed away a few weeks later. Leslie now lives with her sister and receives mental health support and grief counseling from our therapists. “Now, I’m planning on college,” said Leslie. “For my mother.”

**Tara Herlocher, Healthcare Worker, FNP-BC** (79 words)

When the pandemic began, families were scared, but had a trusted resource in which to turn: Tara Herlocher. As a nurse practitioner at our Harlem-based health clinic, Tara helps families take precautions against COVID-19, and tests youth for the virus. Today, Tara is counseling vaccine hesitant families. Tara recalled, “One patient said to me, ‘Tara, if you told me you had the vaccine, that would make a difference.’” Now she can do exactly that — Tara got vaccinated in January.

**SHELTER**

**Regina**  Age and age segment needed(75 Words)

Regina lost her parents as a child and was placed into our foster care program. Over the years, we helped her earn her GED and begin college, trained her in cooking and catering, and provided ongoing mental health counseling and life coaching. As she aged out of foster care in the midst of the pandemic, we secured permanent supportive housing for her — providing her with a safe and stable place to live during this crisis and beyond.

**Alexander** Age and age segment needed(75 words)

Alexander is in the process of aging out of Children’s Aid’s foster care program. To help with his journey into adulthood independence, we secured an apartment for him in Washington Heights. We also helped Alexander gain employment — until COVID-19 robbed him of his job. He fell behind on his bills, so to maintain his housing and stability until unemployment benefits kicked in, we provided him with emergency cash assistance to get through that challenging time.

 **Dr. Brenda Triplett** (76 Words)
As COVID-19 spread, college students in our foster care program had to vacate their dorm rooms which had become their homes, and relinquish hard earned independence to return to foster care. Dr. Brenda Triplett and her education team worked tirelessly to help students make these housing transitions and successfully secured emergency housing placements for them. She, along with her team, also provided students with supports to sustain their emotional well-being and educational success during remote learning.

 **EDUCATION**

**Matias**  Age and age segment needed(76 Words)

Remote learning is a challenge for students and parents alike, but for a child like Matias who needs speech therapy, it can be even more complex. When schools went remote, Matias could have fallen through the cracks. But thanks to his dedicated Children’s Aid staff from our Bronx Early Childhood Center, Matias’ mom and dad say he is making real progress in his speech and learning abilities because of our regular FaceTime sessions and Zoom meetings.

**Kendra**  **Age and age segment needed**(77 Words)

The first in her family to attend college, Kendra is a freshman at Clark Atlanta University. That path was paved by Children’s Aid programs, tutors, mentors, and scholarships. In high school, Kendra participated in nearly a dozen of our initiatives and activities, including college prep programs and internship opportunities. During COVID-19, Kendra gained summer job experience by staffing our pandemic relief hotline to help families, and received assistance navigating college enrollment when her freshman year went virtual.

**Courtney Carrera-Ghatan**  (74 Words)

Courtney has served Children’s Aid for 23 years, and currently oversees our college success program and career readiness initiatives. She is responsible for awarding scholarships, connecting youth to trade schools, and helping our alumni get the support they need to complete their degrees. Since the pandemic transformed so much, Courtney supports her team as they work with college students — like Kendra Crosdale — to navigate the uncharted waters of enrollment, class registration, and remote learning.

 **BEYOND THE BASICS**

**Breanna Age and age segment needed**(77 Words)

Breanna Rodriguez attends our after-school program at The Lexington Academy in East Harlem, learning about current events and engaging in other enrichment activities. Last spring, the murder of Black Americans weighed heavy on her mind. She created posters, and then went further to organize a march supporting Black Lives Matter, attracting neighbors, teachers, and Bronx community leaders. Since then, she has been invited to speak at a march in Central Park, and plans to continue her activism.

**DONOR**

**Leslie & Ashish Bhutani** (81 words)

For more than 30 years, the Bhutanis have offered personal and corporate support of our career workshops, teen health services, and other initiatives — efforts that became especially crucial during the pandemic. It all started in 1990 with a lucky event raffle ticket, which won Leslie a Swiss Army Watch. “We knew that we had to continue supporting an organization helping the next generation of children in New York City. These people are amazing heroes,” Leslie said. They are our heroes too.

Missing Narrative for Financial Pages

Missing Call to Action