

## COMMUNITY EVENTS

From partnering with the **YMCA, Tacoma Children's Museum, Point Defiance Zoo & Aquarium**, to local parks, A Step Ahead offered 20 field trips this year. These events provide yet another way for children to learn and grow as well as the parent/caregiver(s) to connect with others.

**Small Playgroups were expanded** which assists children in learning to play and interact well with others in a smaller setting.

## SIGNIFICANT PROGRESS

**83%** of the children we served achieved or made significant progress in their developmental outcomes.

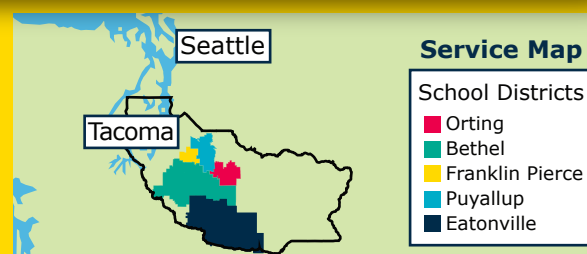
## BOOST STATS

of the children served through the BOOST Program have been drug impacted upon birth. The withdrawals and various exposures to drugs newborns experience have been proven to cause issues in early childhood development.

**90%**

## NUMBERS SERVED

**705** 705 children have been served through A Step Ahead this year.

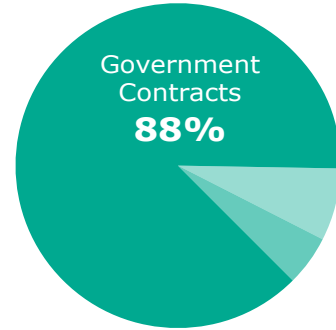


## 2019 FINANCIALS

The two graphs below show the sources and uses of A Step Ahead's funds as a percentage of total income and expenses. We are pleased that the combined total of administrative and fundraising expenses is only 14% of our total costs

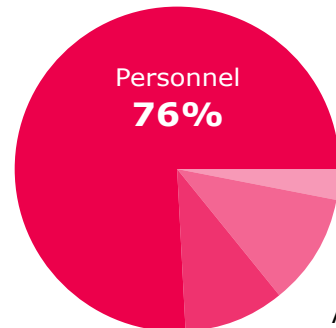
*\*The accounting firm of Mary Jane Dubbs, CPA, conducted an independent audit of the finances of A Step Ahead for the fiscal years ended June 30, 2019 and 2018. Detailed financial reports are available by request.*

Support & Revenue  
\$3,137,000



Other Revenue **7%**  
Public Support **5%**

Expenses  
\$2,928,386



Fundraising **3%**  
Operations **10%**  
Administration **11%**



In addition to our core services, **A Step Ahead is the only agency in the region to offer Infant Mental Health (IMH) care to infants and toddlers (birth to 3 years) living in foster care through our BOOST Program.** BOOST does not require children to have a developmental delay; however, BOOST is there to help support both the child and foster parent(s) in the difficult transition from a traumatic experience into safety. Specifically, BOOST targets healthy emotional development and the relationship between infant and caregiver(s) through Infant Mental Health (IMH) services. **The goal is to create a sense of safety and security for the whole family.** BOOST supports the child and the family's social emotional growth along with supporting the entire family with regular screenings and connecting the family with various community resources.

This **program is entirely dependent on donations** and grants. Without our generous donors, BOOST would not be able to operate and provide ongoing services to these families.



10824 Canyon Rd E, Ste 203  
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ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED



2019 ANNUAL REPORT

NON-PROFIT  
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Puyallup, WA  
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## FROM THE DIRECTOR

2019 has been full of exciting growth opportunities as we look to the future of A Step Ahead! Our founder, Candy Watkins, announced her retirement in January 2019 and officially stepped down as Executive Director at the end of June. Candy continues to be a driving force in Early Intervention in the region. Thank you, Candy, for your inspiration and vision!

The baton has been passed and our vision is clearer than ever! With the Board of Directors, an awesome-dedicated staff of providers and administrative support, and a new director ready to move ASAPC into the future, we are ready to set sail on the next steps in this journey of supporting families of infants and toddlers with special needs by enhancing their development and relationships both at home and in their community.

Three main areas of our strategic plan were successfully launched: regional outreach, increased community involvement, and community relationship development.

- We began building symbiotic relationships with local early intervention learning centers through workshops and site visits to provide a richer, more robust learning experience for the children we serve.
- We have increased our social media presence and are promoting the importance of Early Intervention by engaging with our families by posting relatable, informative, cutting edge information about child development, national trends, and ASAPC field trips and play groups.
- We expanded our weekly play groups to increase personal relationship building (child to child, parent to child, and parent to parent) as well as provide a safe, inclusive space to learn. We also added more community field trips to foster meaningful community relationships and provide new social and learning experiences for our families (YMCA, area parks, and the zoo)

Thank you to our community of donors, volunteers, employees, board members, and the awesome-courageous parents who continue to help us realize our vision of creating a truly inclusive community.

With sincere appreciation,



David Pozolinski, Executive Director



## HUNTER'S STORY

### Life Flipping Upside-Down

Like thousands of grandparents around our state, Debra and Bill are raising their grandchild that their son and daughter-in-law could not. An opioid addiction left the parents unable to care for their four children and their care fell to the grandparents.

Debra and Bill have been happily married for 25 years. Debra was previously married and had three children and has 8 grandchildren. Life was great! Then, in December 2016, their life flipped upside-down. Despite seeing their son, daughter-in-law and grandchildren often, they were completely unaware they were expecting a fourth child until DSHS called alerting them to his birth-Hunter had been born with opioids in his tiny little body.

Immediately they rushed to the hospital to see and comfort Hunter; however while their authorizations were being processed they were not allowed access. Debra and Bill lay sick with worry about baby Hunter's health and care. Finally, after a grueling 13 days, they were able to meet their grandson. To their surprise, Hunter was not alone; an elderly gentleman volunteered at the hospital to comfort and rock drug impacted newborns! At that moment, Debra and Bill opened their home to bring all four children in under their care.

### Identifying Hunter's Challenges

This was a sobering moment for Debra and Bill, as Hunter experienced two different sets of opioid withdrawals while in the hospital. Thrust into a complex system of social workers and rules, Debra and Bill maneuvered each movement with strength from each other. For the months to follow, it was difficult getting used to being up two to four times a night and getting back into the role of parent with a young child. It wasn't until Hunter was eighteen months old that Debra and Bill noticed he wasn't forming his words correctly. Hunter was a sensory seeker, he banged things all the time to feel vibrations, licked everything and had to be watched constantly. With his motor skills off the charts, but his speech delayed, they asked Hunter's pediatrician for a referral to speech and hearing – that's how they heard about A Step Ahead. "It was just easier with Sheryl, Amber, and Marti coming to the house and offering so many strategies to help cope with various struggles". In addition to the home visits, Debra and Bill embraced all the playgroups and community events A Step Ahead offered.

### Where He is Now

In March of 2019, Hunter has been officially adopted by Debra and Bill and Hunter's older siblings happily live on their maternal Grandfather's farm in Eastern Washington. Today, Hunter is overactive and is showing signs of ADHD. Being a sensory seeker, Hunter needs deep pressured therapy which triggers a chain reaction in the body that releases an overall sense of calm and peace. However, through various services with A Step Ahead, Hunter has improved so much. "The best thing about having Hunter, is seeing everything through his eyes!

### What We've Learned

"It is scary that with one phone call, our lives changed so much. Our life plans are on hold, we are uncertain about so many things, but mostly Hunter's future". Debra and Bill believe that a good upbringing and environment will counteract his start in life. "Raising our grandchild and experiencing each milestone far outweighs everything else and so grateful for everything A Step Ahead has done for our family!"

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## BE OUR AMBASSADORS

### Volunteer Your Time

#### Support Us

- Support us through Fred Meyer Rewards, Target, iGive, Facebook Fundraisers and make us your preferred charity on Amazon Smile.
- Hold a jeans day, team jersey, or ugly sweater day at your work; Staff donates to participate and learn more about our services, all proceeds benefit ASAPC! It's a win-win!
- Participate in our holiday giving program.
- Have your business purchase table sponsorship at our Annual Auction Gala.
- Stay up-to-date with our e-newsletter and follow us on Facebook, Instagram, Twitter and LinkedIn.

#### Give

- Participate in workplace giving! We also partner with United Way of King and Pierce County, and King County Employee Giving Program (code #9437) for easy payroll donation deductions.
- Give Financial Support, Planned Giving, and Gifts of Stock.

#### Employer Matching

- Does your employer have a Matching Gifts Program? Most employers match donations dollar for dollar, but some companies triple or quadruple the amount, which equals more families we can serve.

#### Share

- Arrange for a presentation speaker for your business, staff meeting, or service club.
- For more information on becoming an ASAPC Ambassador visit our website or contact Michelle Smith at michelles@asapc.org.

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## SAVE THE DATE

**A Step Ahead Annual Auction**


**4.18.2020**  
Hotel Murano



Presented by:  
Northwest Motorsport







# THANK YOU DONORS

**Thank you to the Parents, Friends, Board Members, Community Partners, Businesses, and Staff that financially gave to A Step Ahead in Pierce County during the 2018-2019 Fiscal year (July 1- June 30th).**

**Without the generosity of our donors, many of the life changing therapeutic services might not be available to every child.**

**If you would like to help children with disabilities, please consider donating today at [asapc.org](http://asapc.org)**

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