



# ST GERARD HOUSE

2019 ANNUAL REPORT



*"Let us not grow  
tired of doing  
good, for in due  
time we shall reap  
our harvest, if we  
do not give up."*

*—Galatians 6:9*



## MISSION

“To help individuals with autism and their families experience more joy and achieve meaningful life outcomes.”

# EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR LETTER:



It's official! Our mission holds steady as we have just experienced extraordinary challenges in the first half of 2020. A mission is not just a phrase you print on a brochure, it's an attempt to put into words the passion and driving force behind an organization of people serving people. St. Gerard House has a heartbeat that lives outside of physical boundaries, and the community we serve goes well beyond people with autism. In this sense, our mission is reciprocal and fluid - It's about relationships and faith, not words on a page. This spirit combined with data and accountability drives us to be better and do more.

2019 was a year of systematic changes and program efficiencies. Our priority is growth so we can profoundly impact the greater community. Autism rates continue to grow and North Carolina, at 1 in 39 children, has the second highest rate in the country. We are now over the 50-employee mark and finally have an HR Director - I don't know where we would be without her. Strengthening our admin team has positioned us for the next level of expansion.

Our comprehensive programs continue to cover the lifespan of individuals and we focused resources towards strengthening our Feed The Need adult services. A new study reveals 1 in 45 adults fall on the autism spectrum, which motivates our team to remain dedicated to helping them thrive in our community. In this report, you will meet Eddie and his family and learn of their journey. You will also see some changes we have made to reach more families.

Looking back, December seems like years ago and I believe our hard work and restructuring during 2019 gave us the protective layer we needed to endure the blow of COVID-19. The investment you made in our mission has paid off because families are feeling supported and kids are continuing to develop. Many times, we feel like the ones being served by having the privilege to know the hearts and minds of people with autism - there's nothing like it.

Feel free to reach out with any questions or just to say hello. We miss seeing you and look forward to better days ahead.

God Bless You All,

*Caroline C Song*

Caroline

P.S. Join us for our 2020 Virtual Luncheon at noon on August 26! Check our website for more information.



# 2019 Highlights

Served a total of **409** children, youth and parents.

Provided **117** tours to families, professionals and educators.

**Launched** the after-school focused ABA program to serve additional families at our clinic by extending service hours.

Fielded inquiries from over **70** new families in our area and beyond.

Administrative offices moved to a different site to create more therapeutic classrooms. This expansion allowed us to take **7** kids off the waitlist and enroll in our Grotto Therapeutic Center!

Served over **80** students at The Mountain Community Charter School through a fun, positive and interactive social skills training.

**11** children from the Grotto integrated with Immaculata Catholic School through academics, art class, physical education, recess and other classes.

Thank you to our **311** volunteers that worked **728** hours!





*“Homeschooling went well, but Eddie lacked opportunities to socialize with peers and there were no support programs for parents like us. We knew we needed more.”*

*–Parent*



We are the Komperda family, and we moved to Hendersonville in 2019 from Upstate NY. Our eldest son Eddie is a teenager on the autism spectrum; he was diagnosed right before his third birthday.

By second grade the workload increased in the public school setting and so did his behaviors. Third grade only lasted three weeks. He was having tantrums every day, causing him to miss school work. All missed assignments and homework would be completed in the evening when Eddie was exhausted from the days' frustrations.

[Dad] was teaching in the classroom next door and endured the trauma of listening to Eddie struggle. After three weeks, everyone was miserable, and that's when we decided to homeschool.

We heard of St. Gerard House several years ago. Last year we made the decision to move down to be close to family and to participate in the programs offered at St. Gerard House. As soon as we moved, we started attending Family Group Night. Shortly after, we enrolled Eddie in the Feed

the Need programs and later in Connect Summer Camp. We were immediately impressed by the amount of time



put into the reports we received from the team leaders. Through the programs at St. Gerard House, Eddie has formed real friendships. We're grateful for him to have that opportunity. Eddie is also much more independent in the home now, making small meals and doing tasks.

This is the first program where we felt comfortable dropping him off - the whole team was fantastic. Sometimes we think back to when he was younger, and we would take him to speech therapy, but we were always just waiting for that phone call that we needed to pick him up. St. Gerard House gives us peace of mind to know we don't have to be on alert 24/7.

We are so grateful for the donors that make it possible and want to say thank you for your support!

*The Komperda Family*

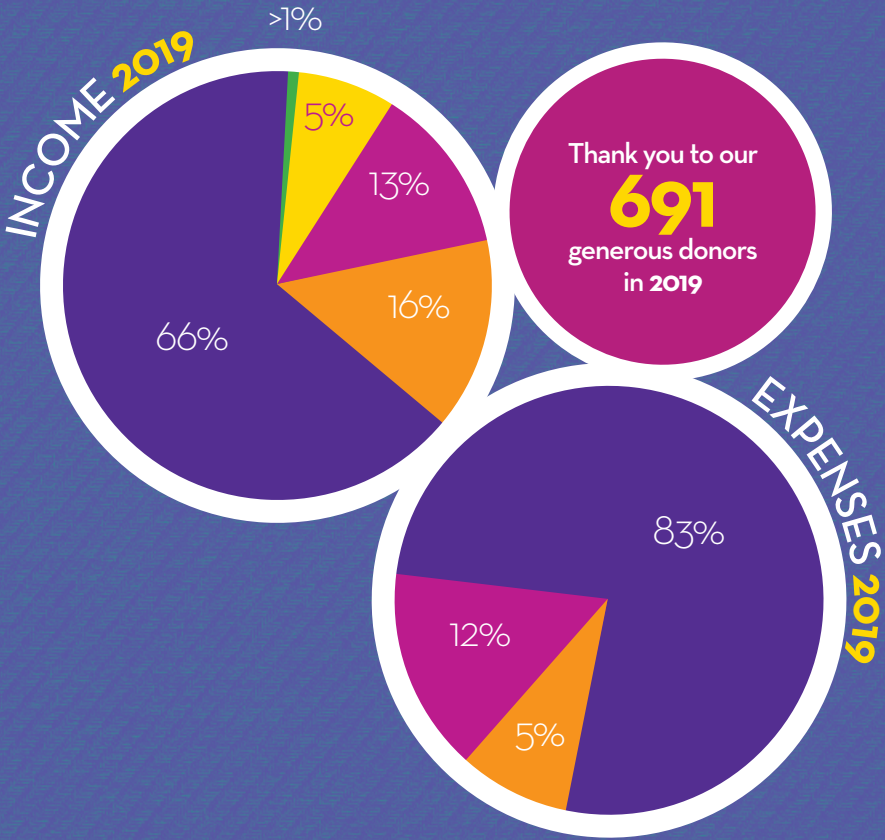
*"It's been great because we see how everyone at St. Gerard House is there to meet the needs of the individuals and the family as well."*

*-Parent*



ST. GERARD  
HOUSE  
**FINANCIALS**

<b>2019 Total Income:</b>	<b>\$2,006,586</b>
● Program:	<b>\$1,265,591</b>
● Fundraising & Donations:	<b>\$312,080</b>
● Grants:	<b>\$247,804</b>
● Gifts in Kind:	<b>\$88,450</b>
● Other:	<b>\$1,301</b>



<b>2019 Total Expenses:</b>	<b>\$2,038,983</b>
● Program:	<b>\$1,681,942</b>
● Administration:	<b>\$251,527</b>
● Development:	<b>\$105,514</b>



# GUARDIANS OF HOPE

Thank you for your commitment to changing lives!

Anonymous (3)  
Jaime & Maria Alanis  
Paul & Leone Alexander  
Sandra & Tim Almy  
Tony & Allison Amatangelo  
Ann Armstrong  
Asheville Pediatrics Association  
Sid & Catherine Baker  
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Tiffany Wigbels  
Larry & Sandra Winecoff  
Steve Wyatt  
Jane Miller

**Special Thanks to:**







The Grotto Therapeutic Center provides therapy for children, teens, and young adults, ages 3 - 21, by providing 1:1 intervention and small group instruction based on the evidence-based Applied Behavior Analysis (ABA) therapy with an individualized plan based on each client's needs and goals.

*"If it wasn't for you guys, I am not sure where we would be with my son. It's hard to believe how far he has come, and it's all because of you... I truly cannot thank you all enough."*

- Parent



**FAMILY**  
GROUP NIGHT


Family Group Night is a free, monthly gathering for families experiencing special needs in Henderson and surrounding counties. In addition to a facilitated presentation on topics that impact families,

the entire family has an opportunity to enjoy a meal, share resources, and join a peer group for fellowship.

*"A diagnosis like this can be tough on any marriage, but the ability to come to Family Group Night and feel so supported has been really helpful. We can share our feelings and our experiences and realize we are not alone."* - Parent





A young woman with brown hair, wearing a bright pink t-shirt with a white ribbon logo, is smiling and looking towards the camera. She is standing behind a grey wheelbarrow filled with dark brown soil. In the foreground, there are several yellow daisies and tall green plants with white flower heads. The background is a blurred outdoor setting with a white fence and a brick building.

*My child looks forward to going and misses it between sessions. My favorite thing about Feed The Need is that my child has a group of people who cheer them on.*



Feed the Need tackles the growing number of young adults (14 and older), who are aging out of support programs by teaching pre-vocational, self-help and social skills to foster sustainable, long-term solutions for competitive employment and productive integration into the community.

*"Feed the Need has given my child an opportunity to learn and interact with his peers in a kind environment. It is giving him social opportunities to practice skills and also to learn and practice life and work skills so he can be a productive member of society. It also gives him a feeling of confidence and self-worth." – Parent*



The Connect Program is an engaging social skills group program where group participants get to practice positive behaviors with others in their peer group. Connect strives to assist children and adolescents through interactive and age-appropriate activities, equipping them with tools to make social interaction easier and more reinforcing.

*"I have noticed an increase in my son's ability to maintain dialogue, but most importantly, he has made great friends!" – Parent*



*“This is such a valuable program. Not only for those served but also for the working families that have a safe and beneficial environment structured to meet their children’s needs.” – Parent*

## **Thanks to the following organizations and businesses for collaborating with our programs!**

Asheville Micro-Greens

Beverly-Hanks

Cason Builder Supply

Council on Aging

Fifth Season

Fresh Market

Hands On!

Henderson County Public Library

Henderson County Public Schools

Hendersonville Community Co-op

Henderson County Cooperative Extension

Immaculata Catholic School

Music lessons with Rob Tolleson

Parents for Educational Freedom in NC

Rick Merrill

Sky Top Orchard

The Society of St. Andrew’s

Sow True Seed

Special Olympics

United Way Day of Caring

Whole Body Fitness

YMCA







**In 2019, Contributions from these generous foundations and grant providers helped our programs thrive beyond expectations. Thank you all for the work you do in our community.**

City of Hendersonville

North Carolina Department of Health and Human Services Henderson County

The Community Foundation of Henderson County

Horizon Heating & Air Community Fund and Hannah Flanagan's Charitable Fund  
of Community Foundation of Henderson County, Inc.

Ireland Family Foundation

J Donald Childress Foundation

Jack & Judy Brinson Foundation

Kealy Family Foundation

The Community Foundation of Western North Carolina, Melvin R. Lane Fund

The Gumbo Foundation

Tobin Family Education & Health Foundation

State Employees Credit Union Foundation

WNC Bridge Foundation

Catholic Charities

LAMB Foundation of North Carolina

The Rotary Club of Hendersonville

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**ST GERARD**  
**HOUSE**

620 Oakland Street

Hendersonville, NC 28791

828.693.4223 • [www.stgerardhouse.org](http://www.stgerardhouse.org)