



Serving Children. Supporting Caregivers. Strengthening our Community.

Every day, children in our community face challenges that compromise their healthy development and ability to thrive.

For more than 40 years, Positive Bright Start has served our youngest, most vulnerable and life-affected children because we believe every child deserves a brighter tomorrow. Positive Bright Start offers preschool facilities, trauma-sensitive mental and behavioral health therapy for children, and resources to support families and child care providers in Douglas County.

► CRITICAL COMMUNITY NEED

Preschool

Positive Bright Start serves 22 children in two preschool classrooms for 2½ to 4-year-olds. We accept children no one else will—children who have been unsuccessful in other childcare centers due to challenging behavior. Research shows preschool children are expelled three times more often than children in kindergarten through grade 12. Children who fail elsewhere thrive at PBS because our teachers are trained to integrate early childhood education with social-emotional skill development.

Since opening our preschool classrooms, the first in 2014, the second in 2017, Positive Bright Start has served 13 children who were expelled from other programs. In just the past six months, we accepted five such children - nearly a quarter of current enrollment. Both preschool classrooms are currently full, with waiting lists. The number of children referred to Positive Bright Start hints at the magnitude of the community's need for the proactive, integrated, trauma-sensitive practices we offer.

Therapy

Positive Bright Start provides therapeutic services to young children and their families using a holistic, family-centered approach. Our Play Therapists specialize in working with children birth to age six. Our Family Advocate provides support, parenting education, and advocacy to parents and caregivers of young children.

We provide therapy to about 30 children and their families at a time, approximately 100 per year. That number drastically under-represents the community need. Nationally, one in four children suffers a traumatic experience by age four. There are at least 2,140 children in Douglas County who have experienced at least one traumatic experience. These experiences do not occur in isolation. If a child has one, there is an 87% chance he or she has two or more. For every child currently receiving therapy, there are 21 children who are not receiving the services they need. The consequences are significant. Traumatic experiences have a lifelong impact on a person's physical, mental, and social health.



"We found community. We found so many resources. It was a family. It just felt so personal. They were always in our corner."

—Former Preschool Mom



"He'd been kicked out of several home day cares. We didn't know what to do or where to go. PBS saved us. They are the kid whisperers."

—Preschool Dad



"One-on-one therapy helped my son learn how to regulate his emotions and socialize with other kids. Positive Bright Start was a godsend for our family."

—Former Preschool Mom

Positive Bright Start collaborates with other mental health providers in Douglas County, including Bert Nash Community Health Center, Lawrence Public Schools, and Hilltop Child Development Center at KU, offering services they do not, at times and locations that are more convenient for working families.

► CASE FOR SUPPORT

Our annual budget is nearly \$1.2 million. We spend virtually every penny. Revenue comes from a combination of grants, state and federal reimbursement, and tuition payments. Most of our clients are unable to pay anywhere near the cost of the services we provide. We hope to diversify our revenue streams because state and federal funds are uncertain and don't cover all our expenses.

Our most critical need is maintaining the family advocacy and community education portion of our therapeutic services. If we are to continue serving our current families while educating other families about the importance of addressing early childhood trauma, we need \$56,375.

It is important to expand our therapeutic services to include a pediatric occupational therapist to diagnose and treat young children with sensory disorders. We see more and more of these children. Treatment requires a special set of skills that our current therapists do not have. Adding a pediatric occupational therapist would cost \$60,000.

Quality early education is not cheap. We estimate a cost of \$11,000 per child, per year. We currently cover this cost with grants and tuition. Many of our students qualify for scholarships due to low family income. We recently added a second classroom at Lawrence Douglas County Housing, but both preschool classrooms are full, and we are turning away children and families who need us. The long-term plan is to build or purchase a campus that would allow us to have four classrooms, therapeutic space and administrative offices on one site. This would require a capital campaign, but we want to stabilize operations through fundraising before we undertake a capital campaign.

Our Wish List

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| \$50 | 1 hour coaching for preschool teachers |
| \$160 | Breakfast, lunch and snack for 1 child for a month |
| \$250 | 4 hours one-on-one family advocacy |
| \$500 | 7 therapy sessions for children and their caregivers |
| \$750 | Therapy training to provide cutting edge response to life-affected children |
| \$1,000 | 10 training sessions for 15 families to be trauma responsive to their children |
| \$1,200 | Concrete bike path for gross motor development and release of excess energy |
| \$3,000 | 12-month scholarship for 2 working parent household, each earning \$10/hr |
| \$6,000 | 12-month scholarship for family living in temporary housing |



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Positive Bright Start is a 501(c)(3) non-profit.
All this work is made possible by your generous tax-deductible donations.



"PBS is a family, a kind-hearted and non-judgmental involvement that works to help each family in their own needed way."

—Preschool Mom



"Quality childcare is a critical component for our families to work and attend educational programs. Positive Bright Start is an indispensable partner, providing onsite high-quality daycare."

—Shannon Oury, Executive Director
Lawrence-Douglas County
Housing Authority

- **One in four children** suffers a traumatic experience by age 4
- Preschool children are expelled **3 times more often** than children in K-12
- Every \$1 invested in early education **is worth \$11** in social benefits
- Nationwide, **5.8 million children** aren't on track to succeed when they enter kindergarten
- High-quality early childhood education has the potential to improve long-term life outcomes **for all children**