

# CONNECTING FORWARD



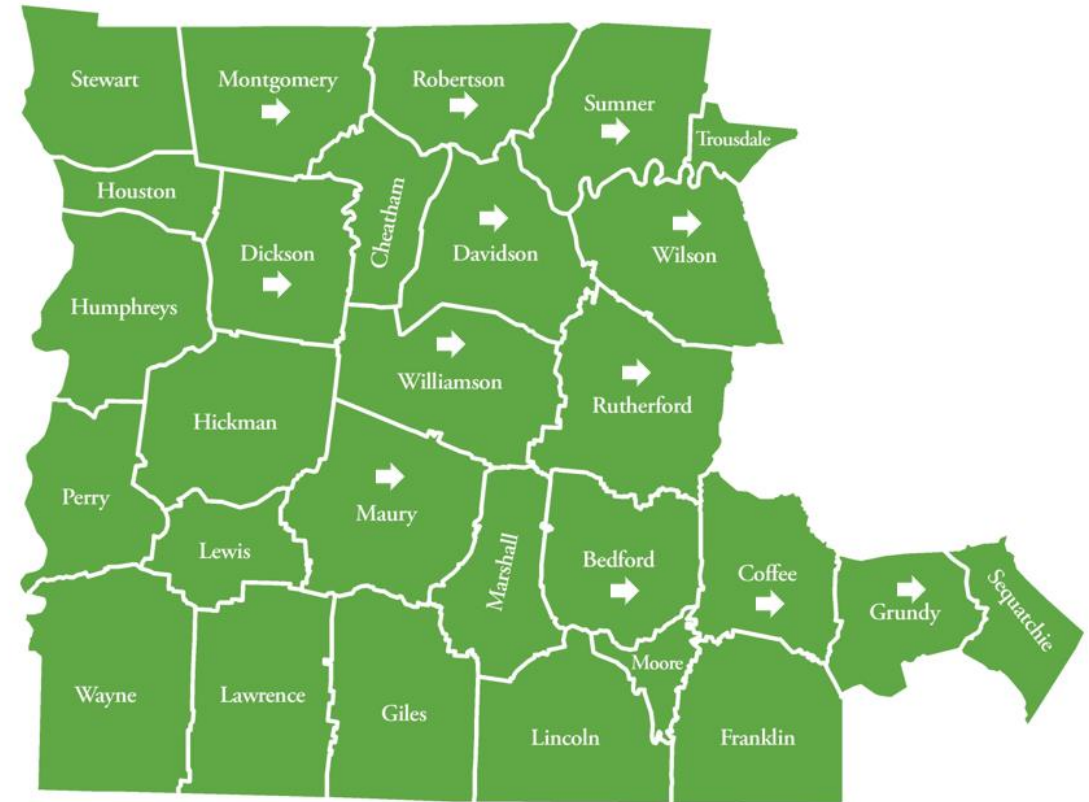
Michael McSurdy, CEO of Family & Children's Service

# Goal of Connecting Forward

Connecting Forward is a collective of 15 non-profits to serve low income families in 28 Counties in Middle Tennessee.

It's purpose is to help low-income families achieve economic independence and family stability. Clients are served with a no-wrong-door, comprehensive Care Coordination Model which includes case management, workforce development, therapy, and evidence-based interventions with wraparound support.

Clients are assessed for need and automatically connected to relevant services at all participating agencies with a visit to just one participating agency.



Grundy, Houston, Lewis, Perry, Sequatchie, Wayne, Stewart, Humphreys, Lawrence, Hickman, Dickson, Montgomery, Robertson, Cheatham, Davidson, Sumner, Troupdale, Wilson, Rutherford, Williamson, Maury, Marshall, Lincoln, Moore, Coffee, Franklin, Bedford, Giles

# Connecting Forward Partners



THISTLE FARMS

Hytch REWARDS



**The Contributor**  
*An award-winning newspaper sold with dignity by our homeless neighbors*

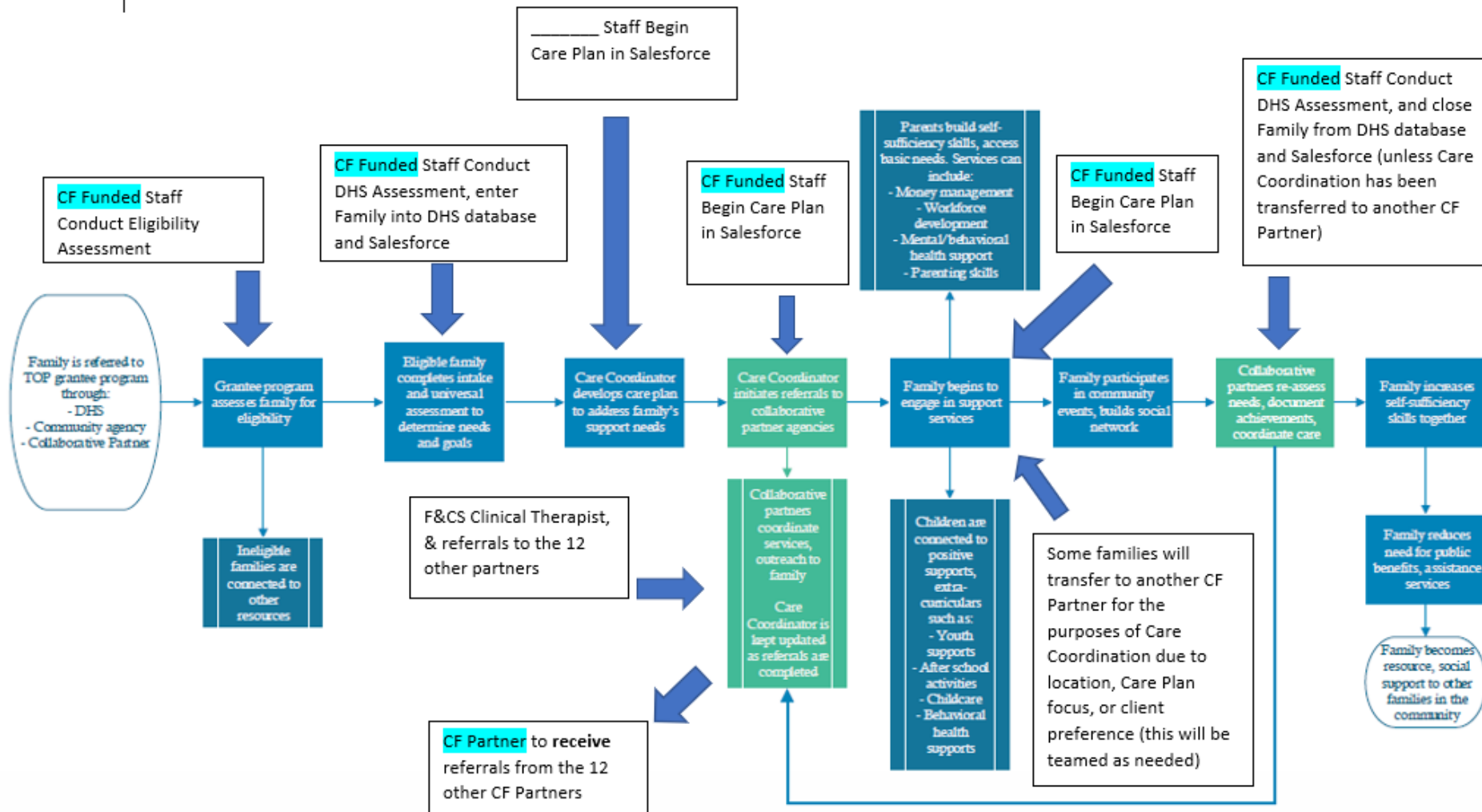
# Current Program Statistics

- Nearly 400 families served, 20-30 new families each week.
  - Over 1,000 clients currently enrolled
- Over 80 Staff that are directly funded or partnered with Connecting Forward
- 15 Primary and over 100 secondary nonprofit and government partners
- *Physical Presence with full time staff in 12 counties and growing.*

# Services in Connecting Forward

- Care Coordination (Case Management)
- Labor and Workforce Development
  - Job Coaching and Employment
- Education Advocacy
- Counseling
- Family Planning
- Health Care
- Rehabilitation
- Financial Support
- Increased Social Capital and involvement in Community

# Care Coordination



- Case Management
- Services Centered around
  - Workforce Development
  - Counseling/ Mental Health
  - Education
  - Family Planning and Permanency
- Coordinated Wraparound Services to address barriers
- Regular Teaming and Support within Connecting Forward

# Salesforce Partner Portal - Shared Database

- Real Time updates
- Uniform intake
- Central location for eligibility, ROI, Goals, data for reporting



# Collocated Counselors

- 23 Counselor and Clinical Case Managers collocated at partner agencies and growing
- Grows out of a decade of success
- Integrated into the partner agencies
- Utilizing same data systems, intake process communication, and referrals
  - Reduced duplication of administrative work and need for clients to access multiple services on their own

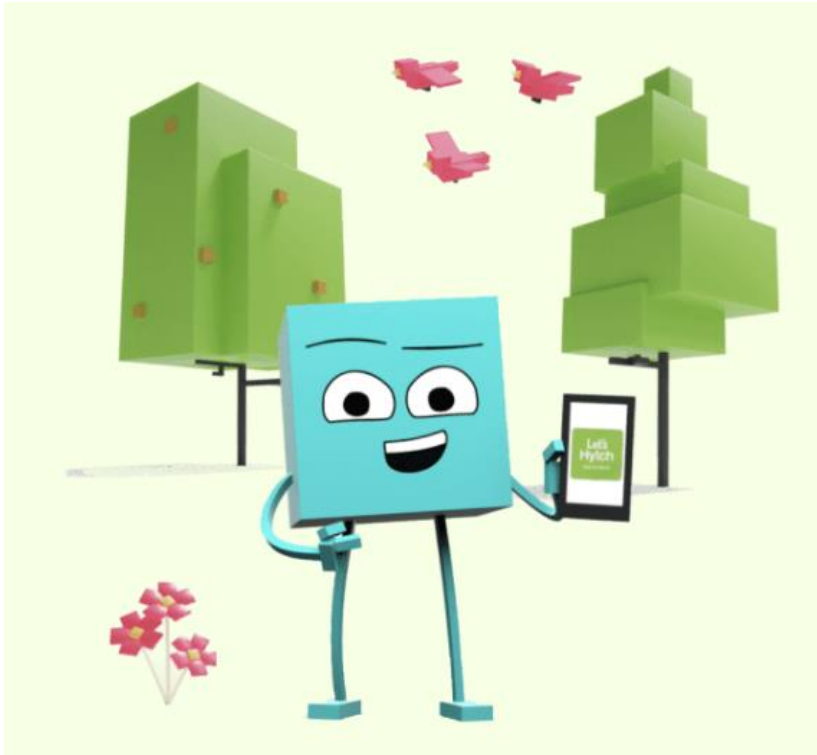


# Counseling

- Short-term Solution Focused Interventions
- Trauma Informed
- Accessible, focused, provided with clinical infrastructure
- Clinical Case Management
  - Understanding families' needs and addressing barriers to meet their goals



# Transportation with HYTCH Rewards



**Hytch** REWARDS

Using a Private Asset for Public Benefit  
Lack of Transportation options  
(especially in rural areas)

# Employment Support with Goodwill

Job Coaching

Attaining and Maintaining Employment

Professional Development & Occupational  
Training

IT Support, Programming, Web Engineering,  
Custodial, Construction, Call Centers

Milestone Payments

Wraparound Services



## Education Support with TN Voices



- Support Services from Firsthand Experiences
  - All TN Voices Staff have lived experience with children with mental health needs
- Experienced with System Navigation (homes, schools, courts, etc.)
- Education Advocacy
- Trauma Informed Care Approach
- Parenting Classes and Support Groups
- Caregiver active support and weekly visits
- Linkage with resources
- Families/caregivers support in achieving their goals

# Most Significant Barriers/Needs

- Housing
- Mental Health
- Child Care
- Transportation

# Innovative and Collaborative

- Shared Database & Mission
- Cross Sector Network Training
- Addressing Transportation
- Collocated Staff for Counseling  
(reducing barriers and increasing partnership)
- Family Planning

*Shared Database goes beyond the UA, enable care coordination and community partners*

# Connecting Forward Future

- We are bringing services to rural areas, and we are investing in those areas to support existing services and networks
- In rural areas, the connecting is difficult because of distance
- Un-silo and build networks in urban areas
- Rural Areas is about connecting resources, and resources via informal partners like churches
- Improved practices, teaming, and coordinated supports, and communication

# Success Stories

- **TCAT** – The client is a nursing student at TCAT in Dickson, TN. She had decided to exit school due to feeling overwhelmed. She has four children under the age of 18, she is in, based on her description, a domestic violence relationship, and she was facing eviction. Connecting Forward entered into an agreement where we could be a support and therapeutic resource, and she would continue in her last semester in school. About 3 months later, she is in stable housing with her four children, she is completing school and securing a job placement once she finishes. She continues to struggle in the abusive relationship, but she is making plans to end it and move forward. She will continue with Connecting Forward supports after she graduates.
- **TN Voices** - The client was referred by her Safe Baby Court case manager. We worked with the client to set up mental health services, improve her employment, and locate permanent housing. The client was incarcerated in the fall of 2022 and also needed help accessing community resources. FCS has provided counseling and housing assistance. She is scheduled to move into her new apartment on 7/21. She started weekly therapy in May 2023. She also has a new, better paying job with hours that are better for her family. She has regained custody of one of her children and is on track to regain custody of her other child by the end of the summer.