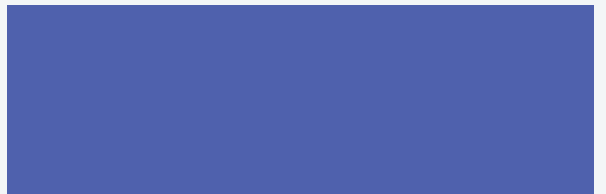




Annual Report

2024-2025



Supporting children, families, and adults since 1888



Our circle is wide, and all are included.



It's been five years since we rebranded to enCircle as our "doing business as" name*, and we continue to find new ways it resonates with our work.

EnCircle, like many other social services organizations, has been tested this year by policy changes that threaten Medicaid funding for children, families, and people with developmental disabilities.

We've also acutely felt the anti-immigrant rhetoric and policy changes designed to minimize our ability to serve them. But we have held firm to our belief in the value of all people—all races, religions, abilities, and identities—and continue to serve our communities, even finding ways to innovate.

We have expanded our **circle of impact** by opening services in new areas and building capacity:

- Our Lynchburg **Minnick School** opened its doors downtown in August 2024, at the request of the local public schools. We now work with 40 local school divisions to refer students with special education needs to our seven Minnick Schools.
- At the invitation of outside partners, we expanded our **Developmental Services** into the Northern Shenandoah Valley with new group homes and we are excited to be working again with our partner, Marian Homes.

- Our Treatment **Foster Care** program increased our impact by 30% last year, providing loving homes to 22 children and teens. And we started serving immigrant children in our Long Term Foster Care program in Tidewater, helping five teens find stability and a welcoming home.
- Given the rapidly shifting public policy climate, we **strengthened our capacity to advocate** for the needs of the people we support.

None of this important work would be possible without our strong **circle of support**: individual donors and congregations, foundations, businesses, and government agencies all play key roles in working with us to make the world a more loving place. **Our circle is wide, and all are included.** Thank you for being part of our circle.

With gratitude,



CEO Ray Ratke and
Board Chair Rev. Rick Goeres

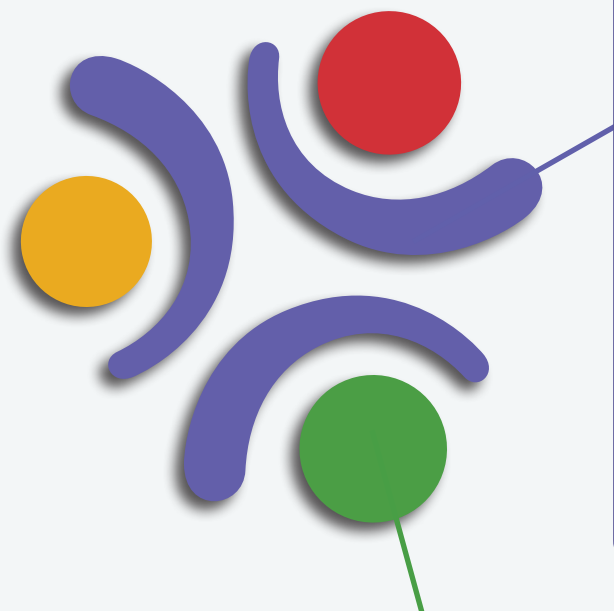
**Our legal name remains Lutheran Family Services of Virginia.*

enCircle Board of Directors

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Our logo: What does it mean?



The design features abstract images around circles that represent our people — connected but also facing outward, always seeking additional ways to serve and bring others into the circle. A circle has no end and can easily be enlarged to include more people — in fact, everyone.

The colors are the same as those used by the ELCA and Virginia Synod, signaling our Lutheran heritage. The figures in the design are different colors, representing our belief in the value of all people.

Our counselors invite sharing and growth

“What are we working on today?”

Abbie Stonelake poses this question at the beginning of each counseling session.

The simple inquiry isn't just conversation, it's an invitation to intentional work.

Together, they navigate toward growth.

Abbie is one of four counselors at enCircle, each carrying a weekly caseload of about 15 clients.

Most of these clients carry the weight of past trauma and include many veterans, adopted children and people whose mental health care is only possible through Medicaid.

Abbie has earned a reputation for connecting with teenagers, even the most resistant.

There's something about her. Likely, it's her genuine warmth and absence of judgment.

“I'm the same therapist throughout the day,” Abbie explains, “but I'm not the same therapist for each person. I meet each person where they are, and each person is unique.”

Abbie adapts her approach to each client. For some, healing



working on today?” is an invitation. It's an invitation to cross a bridge between where clients are and where they hope to be.

Abbie, and counselors like her, are walking faithfully alongside.

emerges through art therapy. For others, it's structured conversation or mindfulness techniques. The method matters less than the foundation of trust.

“Therapy is a weird space,” Abbie reflects. “And it's a very vulnerable, beautiful space.”

Her voice is soft as she speaks about one particular client. This relationship has spanned four years, from the tumultuous early teens to the threshold of adulthood. Initially, they met twice a week. Now, monthly sessions suffice, their conversations shifting toward college applications and the transition to a new counselor.

“The goal is always to discharge clients in a healthier place,” Abbie says. “One they have created themselves and one that represents a better version of themselves.”

The question “What are we

BY THE NUMBERS

- **97** adults served
- **55** children served
- **11** adoptees
- **23** identifying as LGBTQIA+
- **1,465** in-person sessions provided
- **1,322** telehealth sessions provided

45%
clients
with
Medicaid



study partners

Every day, Elizabeth and her grandma Betty settle into their shared online classroom, united by a singular hope: Elizabeth's graduation from Faith Bible Institute.

At 45, Elizabeth is making history as the first student with Down syndrome to attend the Institute. At 92, Betty is along for the ride as the most devoted study partner Elizabeth could ask for.

Elizabeth wants to become a minister, following in her grandfather's footsteps. A little over two years ago, she took out her debit card and boldly enrolled in an online Bible study.

When she showed her certificate of completion to Vicki, the director of her day program, Vicki asked if she would now like to enroll in an

accredited Bible college. Elizabeth was ecstatic about beginning the three-year, six-semester online course. Betty signed up later, drawn by her granddaughter's determination.

Their partnership works beautifully. Betty's access to the curriculum allows her to follow along as Elizabeth reads assignments aloud, and Vicki showed them how to create *Jeopardy*-style study tools to help them prepare for quizzes.

"It has been delightful watching her grow," Betty said. "When I asked her about her goals, she said, 'Oh, Grandma, I want to go back to school. I want to learn things.'"

Together, they're studying the Old Testament, New Testament and Theology. Elizabeth's favorite is the Old Testament.

"I love the book of Genesis," Elizabeth explained. "It's a start from nothing to the making of the world."

Elizabeth lives at an enCircle Group Home in Winchester where others applaud and support her efforts as well.

When she decided to take the accredited course, staff requested accommodation in case she couldn't finish exams on time. But Elizabeth finished the first test in half the allotted time. She's maintained a B/C average and is scheduled to graduate this fall.

"Grandma said I could do this and that I am smart," Elizabeth said.

And when asked, "Do you think Grandma is right?" Elizabeth smiled and quietly answered, "Yes."

People with developmental disabilities show us what's possible



We expanded in several geographic regions during the year. Partnering with Arlington County, we began operating a new, environmentally friendly Group Home this year with five residents. We were also invited to expand into the Northern Shenandoah Valley by our nonprofit partner, Marian Homes.



Throughout the state, our Family Care Providers support people as part of their families and communities, providing 24/7 care and support and fostering independence and relationships.

BY THE NUMBERS

260
supported in
Family Care
Homes

- 30 participated in Day Support
- 64 supported in Group Homes
- 72 received Skilled Nursing Services
- 26 supported through In-Home Services

From classroom success to lifelong growth, Minnick students thrive



The partnership between enCircle and Synergy Technical continues to ensure a day of fun and learning for Roanoke Minnick students who get to play ball with VCU basketball players. This year, participants from Roanoke Day Support also joined in the fun.



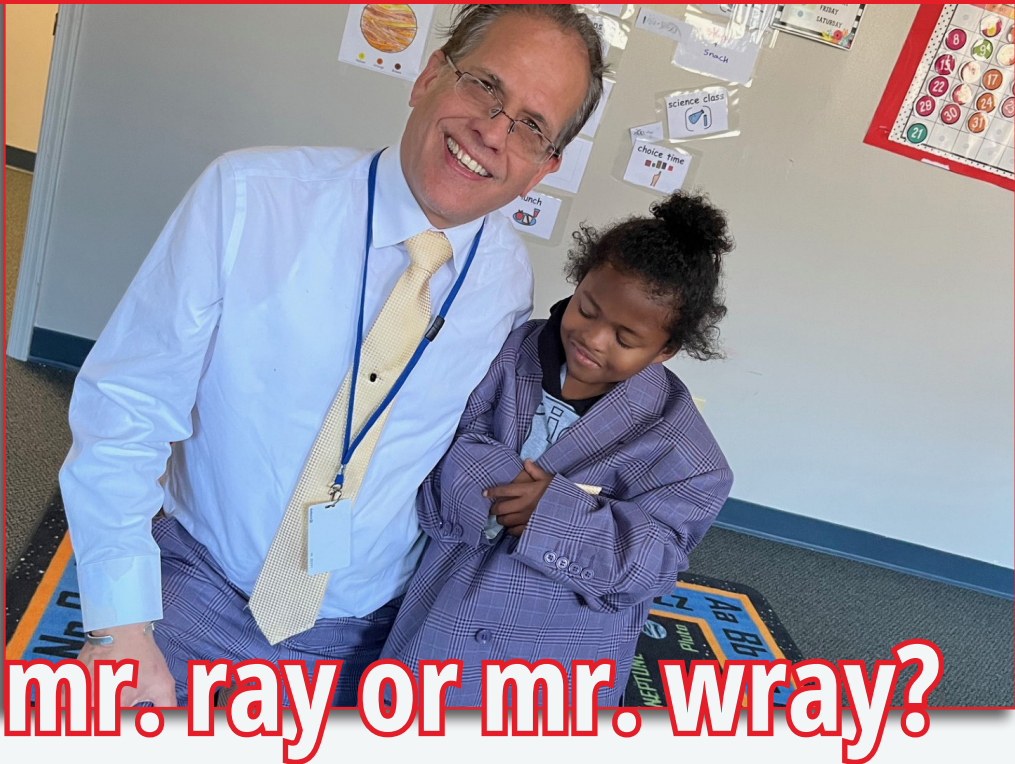
In the spring of 2025, Wytheville Minnick students were invested in planting flowers and vegetables they had grown from seedlings. The garden was funded by Julie's Abundance Project with help from Open Door Cafe, Southern States, the Wythe/Bland Region Master Gardener Association and Galax High School CTE students.



This year, Shawn and Cody graduated from Wytheville Minnick with standard diplomas. Shawn hopes to become an EMT. Cody wants to study auto mechanics. Both will transition to post-graduate work with Job Corps, a newly established relationship that will open opportunities for students.

Minnick School Locations

Roanoke • Lynchburg
Harrisonburg • Wytheville
Bristol • Grundy • Wise



Traviar Ray is a first grade student at Lynchburg Minnick School. But when he grows up, he wants to be "Mr. Wray." That's his ambition, so he is quite busy getting prepared.

Traviar has limited verbal skills but has plenty of ways to communicate. And he especially likes to connect with his principal, Brian Wray.

Maybe because Brian wants to connect with him, too.

"Brian has a remarkable gift for finding ways to communicate with students," said enCircle's VP of Educational Services, Terri Webber. "His approach centers around making a connection, whether verbal or nonverbal."

It started with Mr. Wray's name badge.

Traviar was intrigued by this plastic card hanging on a string. His eyes followed it, and he repeatedly pointed at it. Brian picked up on the

unspoken request and finally asked "Do you want to wear this badge?"

And, indeed, he did.

Next came Mr. Wray's signature colorful suit jackets. Traviar was helping in Mr. Wray's office when he spotted a purple one draped over his chair. Again, he repeatedly pointed to the jacket. And, again, Brian "listened" and asked, "Do you want to wear my jacket?" The answer was clear.

"The communication may be nontraditional," said Terri. "It's simply a heartfelt understanding of each other. It takes time. It takes investment. It takes patience. But it makes all the difference."

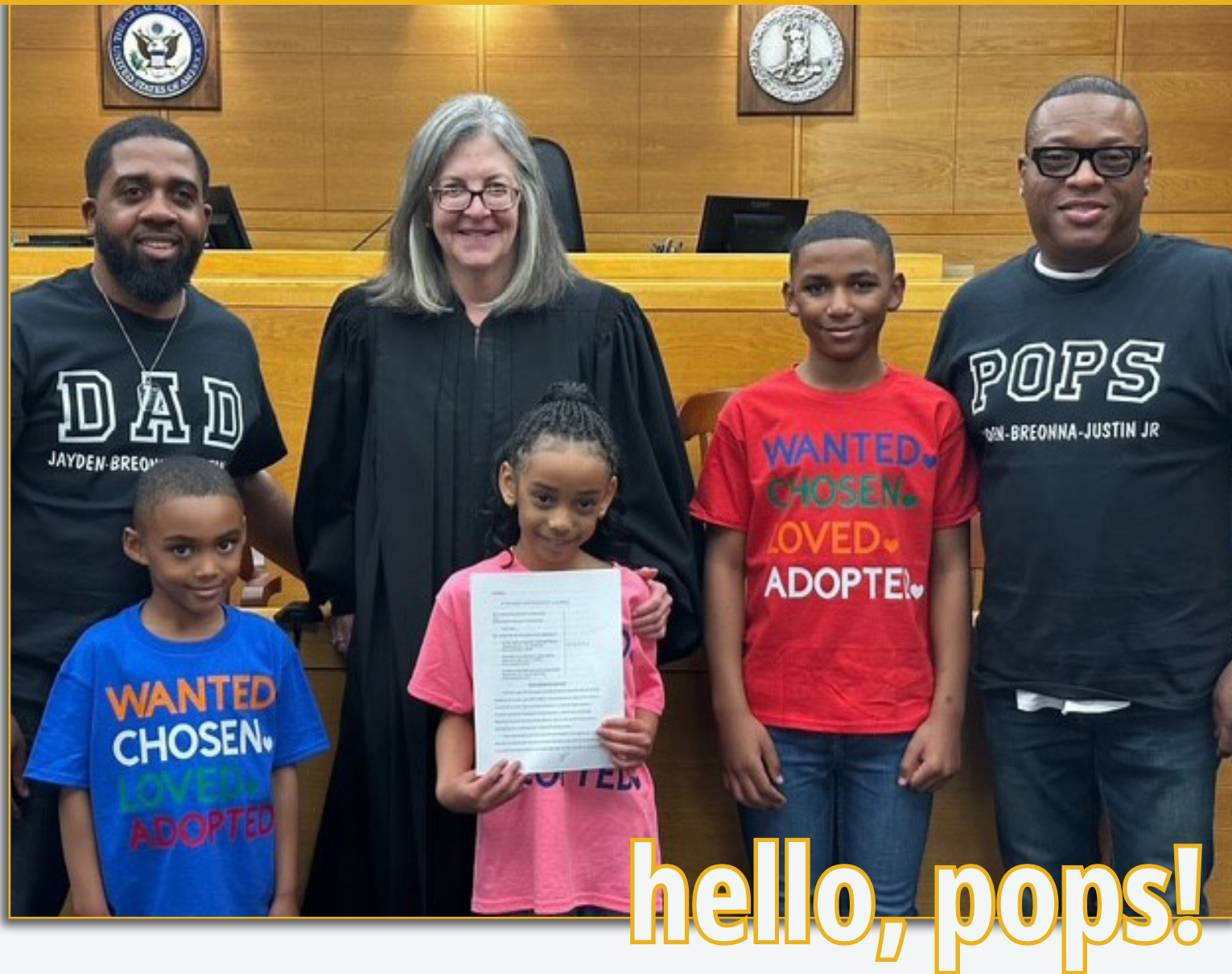
This is the Minnick way—where a simple gesture like letting a student try on a principal's jacket can become a powerful symbol of trust and understanding. These moments can turn a day around. They can turn a life around.

BY THE NUMBERS

288 students served

- 31 students returned to their home schools
- 8 students graduated
- 40 local school division partners
- 118 community engagement activities with our students as part of our Career and Technical Education program
- 17 students at our new school in Lynchburg, opened in August 2024
- 86 Roanoke students and families benefited from the Abundance Pantry, established thanks to donors Larry and Ally Schoff and Our Savior Lutheran Church in Christiansburg
- 3 schools — Lynchburg, Roanoke, and Wytheville — shifted to year-round academic calendars to combat learning loss over a long summer break

We help build safe and loving families



Wil and Justin wanted children.

"How" was yet to be determined. "When" was also unknown. "How many" became clear as the judge's hammer hit her desk, proclaiming them a family of five. The joyful strike marked a turning point for three young children — and it resonated deeply in the hearts of two new fathers.

It wasn't long ago that Wil and Justin fostered two other children they intended to adopt, but that was denied because they were a same-sex couple.

Healing took time, but when they engaged with enCircle, some hope was rekindled. That's when three siblings, ages 13, 8 and 6, entered the system needing a lasting home. Justin was open. Wil was hesitant.

"I was concerned about whether we would have enough support, what voice we would have in their medical care or if we would even know what to do for them," Wil said. "It was a huge life change for us."

His real concern, however, was humble and selfless. He knew what

the children had been through in their short lives, and he didn't want to cause them any more trauma.

So they took it slowly. It was important that everyone, especially the children, felt comfortable.

"Whether by blood, adoption or taken in, once you're family, you're family," Justin said. "You want to make sure you're going in with an open heart."

As you might guess, Wil quickly bonded.

"The first time eight-year-old Breona said she loved me is when I knew we were making a difference and we were meant to be a family," Wil said.

Every week, the family has what they call "Sunday Check-Ins" where they talk about what's going on in their lives, what goals they have, what disappointments may have occurred.

They often use this scheduled family time to reinforce their belief in education and their expectations in the home.

"You do your part, and we will do ours," they tell the children. With the help of tutors, all three have raised their grades, especially Jayden, their oldest, who is at a pivotal school age. Support and trust are evident. "Love is truly unconditional," Justin said.

For their youngest, Justin Jr., stability has been transformative.

When they first met, he wouldn't speak unless his older brother prompted him.

It was a bit of a concern, but now he is safe with Wil and Justin (now known as Dad and Pops) and they say, "he will talk your ear off."

But of all the young boy's many words, two speak the loudest to Wil, and he hears them every morning: "Hello, Pops!"



BY THE NUMBERS

22 children supported in Treatment Foster Care

- **30** children received Visit Coaching Services, helping parents prepare for visits and families connect for reunification
- **65** children and teens served through Post-Adoption Case Management services



We welcome newcomers and foster belonging

not so typical

He may seem like a typical 10th grade American boy. His favorite class in high school is PE. He sometimes needs to be reminded to do his homework. He likes to hang out with his friends and play soccer. Typical.

But Abdo has only lived in this country a little over a year, and he came as a result of war in Sudan. He started with family but arrived in the U.S. alone.

Abdo and his uncle were hoping to escape their country's violence, but his uncle was deported back from Mexico. Abdo made it the rest of the way by himself. His uncle was later killed in the war. His parents, two sisters and brother are currently in Uganda but may have to move to Egypt.

Abdo is finding his way, aware of his opportunity and resolute in his purpose.

"I'm grateful," he said. "I'm here to support my family. I'm here to make my future better."

His enCircle Behavior Specialist, Winette Rosario, speaks to his resilience and determination. "Abdo was by himself, asking questions and getting it done," she said. "At first, we didn't have an Arabic instructor, but he still overcame the language barrier in an incredible way. He is very smart."



Abdo credits music videos with teaching him the English language.

"You've got to learn through things you like," he said. "If you want to do something, do it!"

Abdo is part of enCircle's Long Term Foster Care program for immigrant children who arrive in the U.S. by themselves and whose plans for family reunification in this country did not work out through no fault of his own. He lives with an enCircle foster family, attends public school, and is supported by the Long Term Foster Care team. This support includes counseling sessions, cultural adaptation groups, medical coordination, legal guidance, school support and summer engagement with the help of behavior specialists.

"Abdo is very respectful; he gets good grades at school and has good relationships with the other foster kids," said Winette. "He always finds a way to make our day better."

After visiting a local museum and seeing a pottery exhibit, he declared, "I must be rich! I have a lot of that at home!" He explained how Sudan has numerous sculptures and joked about going back to get them to sell to the museum.

Like many 10th graders, Abdo has not decided exactly what his career path looks like, but he has proven courage, innate wisdom and inspiring hope. He has the tools. And he is far from typical.

**Name and likeness changed to protect privacy.*

Special thanks to our Richmond church partners: St. Luke Lutheran Church provided backpacks with hygiene and school supply items, and Epiphany Lutheran Church organized a food drive and provided food bags for the children and families in our immigration services.

BY THE NUMBERS

21 Children ages 6 to 13

given safe temporary homes with families in Transitional Foster Care while awaiting reunification with their families and sponsors

- **5** teens experienced safe and loving foster homes and ongoing support in Long Term Foster Care while their legal cases moved through immigration courts.
- **47** fingerprint appointments provided through Safe Release Services for family members sponsoring unaccompanied children coming to the U.S.
- **52** children and teens served in Home Study Post Release Services. Our staff provides case management after reunification to ensure they're enrolled in school and have legal support, healthcare and other resources.

We speak up for what matters



This year enCircle began a new chapter in our evolution, hiring a Director of Advocacy and Government Relations in January 2025. Jason Sawyer, PhD, joined the External Relations team at a time of significant changes to public policy affecting enCircle's programs and the people we serve.

Our history of advocacy helped inform our current approach: as a member of several statewide and national networks, **we know how vital it is to work with partners and build relationships. And that takes time.**

We learned important lessons from our extensive advocacy in West Virginia over the last

several years. While we built important partnerships and influenced the policy discussion, state leaders did not budge. The lack of adequate state funding for Medicaid resulted in making the difficult decision in the fall of 2024 to close our Group Homes in Martinsburg.

As a result of this experience and the changing federal policy landscape, we realized **the time had come for year-round, dedicated advocacy efforts for all the people we support—**students, immigrants, people with disabilities, children in foster care.

We are encouraged by the impact we've already had in just the first few months.

BY THE NUMBERS

31 meetings conducted with federal and state legislators and their staff between January and June 2025.

A major focus of our efforts this year is the ongoing "Medicaid Matters" advocacy campaign. Those directly affected by potential cuts to Medicaid funding, **like Hunter, seen here at left with his caregiver Allison,** are front and center, sharing what matters to them, and why it should matter to all of us.

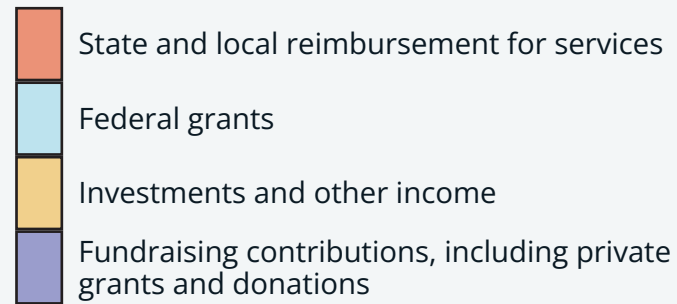


Relationship building and education with lawmakers included visits to the Capitols in Richmond and Washington, DC, as well as hosting legislators at our programs.

We invest in our people and our priorities

Revenue by source (in thousands)*

Total revenue: \$60,598

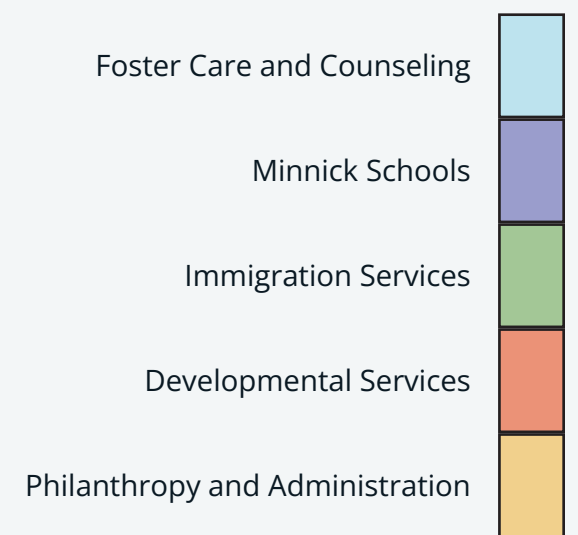


Contribution Breakdown

260	individuals donated \$395,515	27	churches donated \$30,301
17	organizations donated \$161,792	17	businesses donated \$10,010
15	foundations donated \$138,946	*Unaudited financials	

Expenses by division (in thousands)*

Total expenses: \$62,684



*Unaudited financials



**BY
THE
NUMBERS**

86%

of our expenses go toward personnel costs, allowing our staff and caregivers to serve people and communities.

To our supporters – thank you

Your generosity and belief in enCircle's mission enable us to walk alongside children, adults and families through challenges and triumphs.

Because of you, we continue to provide compassionate, life-changing support in education, developmental services, foster care and adoption, immigration services, and counseling.

Together, we are building stronger, more inclusive communities where every person is valued and supported.

Our circle is wide, and all are included.



Champions Award

For many years, Our Saviour Lutheran Church in Christiansburg has supported enCircle's Minnick Schools and Group Homes through its food collection program. It was an honor to present them with our Champions Award in recognition of their dedicated service.

EnCircle CEO Ray Ratke and the philanthropy team visited the church in October 2024 to thank the congregation and acknowledge Larry and Ally Schoff, who led the effort of gathering and distributing food.

We are deeply grateful for this church's ongoing commitment to help make the world a more loving place.

Ways to Give

Recurring Gifts

Make consistent care possible by becoming a sustaining donor. Your monthly gift provides reliable support for those we serve.

Workplace Giving

Many employers offer payroll deductions or matching gifts, making it easier to support enCircle's mission.

NAP Tax Credits

Through the Neighborhood Assistance Program, gifts of \$500 or more may qualify for a 65% Virginia state tax credit.

Planned Giving

Naming enCircle in your estate plans helps ensure your support for future generations.

Donor-Advised Fund

An easy, tax-smart way to create real change and receive immediate tax deductions.

Gifts of Stock

A donation of appreciated stock or securities may offer significant tax advantages, including avoiding capital gains and receiving a charitable deduction for the full market value.

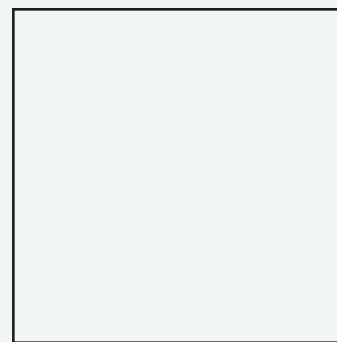


*Scan the
QR code
to give a
gift.*

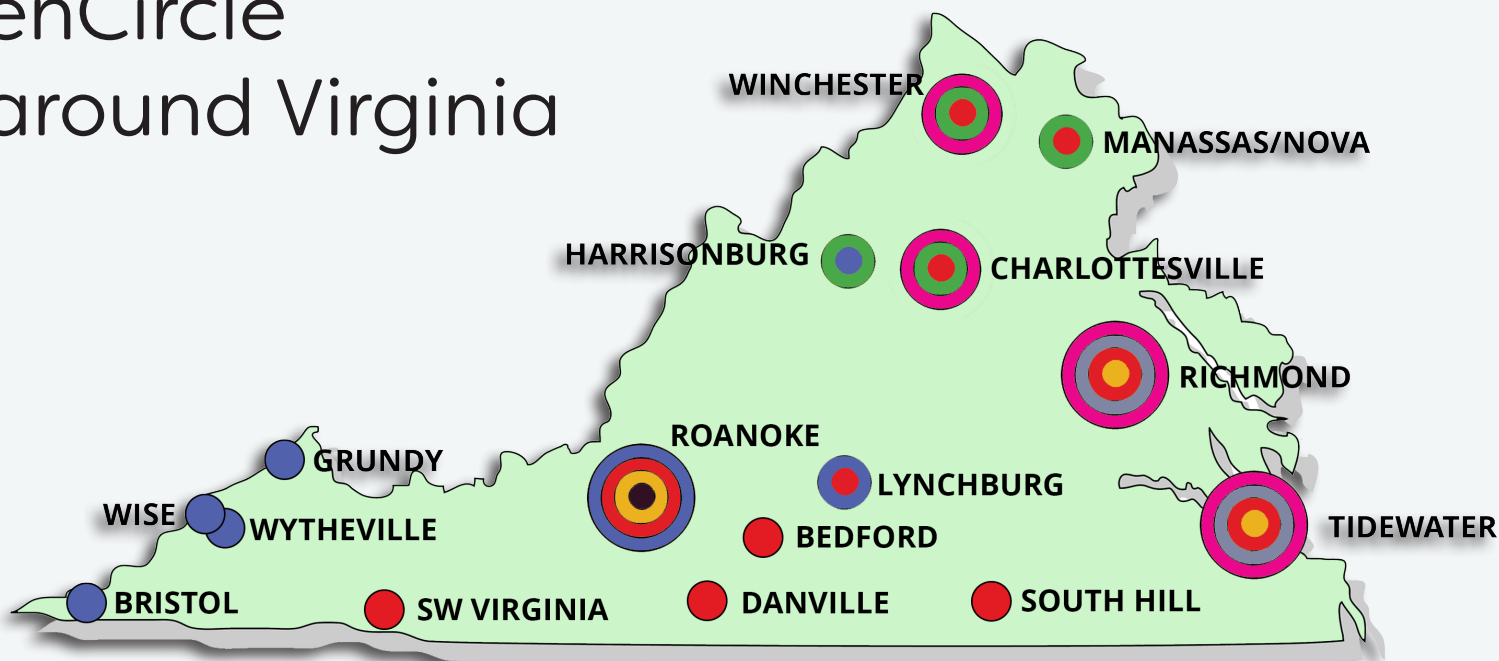


2965 Colonnade Drive, Suite 310
Roanoke, VA 24018

*Lutheran Family Services of Virginia, doing
business as enCircle, is a proud mission
partner of the Virginia Synod of the ELCA.*



enCircle around Virginia



Administration	Counseling	Minnick Schools	Foster Care
Immigration Services	Developmental Services	Post-Adoption Case Management	