



Our 2026

Impact Report

Celebrating 10 Years + New Results from Group 1



This year is doubly exciting for us to present to our community our annual results. Not only are we celebrating 10 years since our founders began the work to create Families Flourish, but we have our first complete data of a group of graduates since the Pilot!

Scan to hear
Adrienne's story



“ Your goal was to show that you can scale the success of the Pilot - serving up the same results but for more families. These numbers show you can.

— Jason Reece, PhD, Lead OSU Evaluator

Key Insights

13 of 13

Completed additional education while in program

\$13,868 | 47.2%

Median income increase*

*Among those graduates employed at program end

77%

In housing that meets their needs

9

living in higher resourced neighborhoods

1

living in moderate neighborhood

87%

Graduation rate

Pilot vs. Group 1 Results

Metric	Pilot	Group 1
Program Years	July 2018- July 2022 (4 yrs)	July 2018- July 2025 (3 yrs)
Number of Participants	10	15
Retention Rate	90%	87%
Income Increase (\$)*	\$17,000 (4 yr avg.)	\$13,868 (median)
Credit Score Increase	100+ points	62 points
Living in Higher or Moderate Neighborhoods	8	10
Joined from Homelessness**	5 of 10	9 of 15
Avg. Age of Children at Entry***	9.2	5.2
Avg. Age of Parents at Entry	32 (range 26-53)	29 (range 20-38)

*Group 1 families were in the program 3 years; pilot families were in for 4 due to the pandemic. Income figures compare a pilot average to a Group 1 median - read as directional, not exact. Group 1 families finished on pace with the income improvements seen in the pilot program in 3 years. The income increase for Group 1 families are for those employed at program end.

**On or within the 5 years preceding program participation for the pilot families.

***Group 1 children ranged from 6 months to 12 years old at entry (3 born during the program, 9 age 1 or under); pilot children ranged from age 3 to 13.

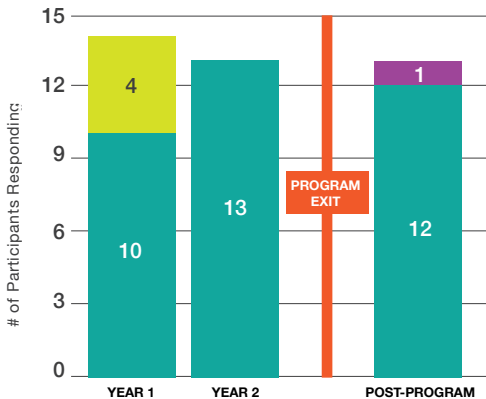
Improved Mental Health

The most profound outcome for Families Flourish households is the reduction in chronic stress. The **improvements in mental health are foundational to the other educational and economic benefits** that follow, according to Dr. Jason Reece. In each of these charts, note the year-by-year responses can vary showing that growth is not always a straight-line process.

How has your mental health changed since relocating?

(Year 1 n=14; Year 2 n=13; Post-Program n=13)

- Positive/Very Positive Change
- Negative/Very Negative Change
- No Change
- No Response



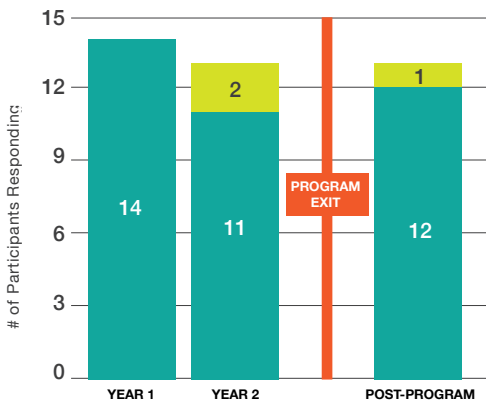
Goal Setting and Achievement

In Year 1, all participants reported that Flourish helped them achieve their goals. In Year 2 and the post-program survey, most participants reported that Flourish helped them achieve their goals, while two participants in Year 2 and one participant in the post-program survey reported being “Not sure.” The post-program survey indicated that the most commonly achieved goals were educational goals (e.g., graduate school, returning to school), followed by career goals, financial goals, and goals related to their children’s education.

Has Flourish helped you achieve new goals?

(Year 1 n=14; Year 2 n=13; Post-Program n=13)

- Yes
- No
- Not Sure



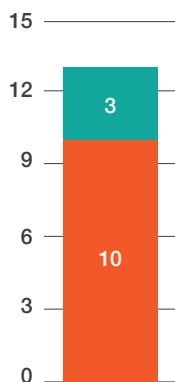
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I have to state that, unfortunately, the rent is very expensive; however, it is an overall better experience for my family and me.

—Families Flourish Participant

Housing Changes

- Living in a higher resourced or moderate neighborhood at program end
- Moved to a lower-resourced neighborhood



*6 stayed in their Families Flourish unit

Group 1 Education Gains

100%

of graduates completed additional education while in the program

69%

(9/13) received one or more promotions

0%

of parents reported children's grades dropping in their new schools —
5/8 said the grades rose

Program Demographics

77%

African American

15%

2 or more races

8%

White



Families from Pilot through Group 8



145

Families welcomed into the program



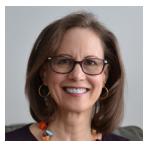
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Children



April 2016 marks the date of the first “official document” we can find for what was, at the time, called “Housing Opportunity Pilot.” The meeting notes dated April 25, 2016, did not include an attendance record, but they show that the group was already discussing key program elements – such as helping participants understand tenant and landlord rights and responsibilities, how credit scores, savings and income would shape program criteria, and much more.

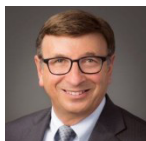
This publication, in part, honors the 10-year milestone in 2026 of our founders’ and collaborators’ decade-long dedication to serve low-wage earning families and give them the tools to improve their children’s lives. It’s a snapshot of everyday life at Families Flourish – assessing what we’ve learned through data, conversations with parents and graduates, the team at Ohio State University, and Families Flourish team knowledge – with an all-hands-on-deck determination to serve more families, and to serve them even better, over time.



Amy Klaben,
President,
Co-Founder & CEO



Rachel Kleit
Co-Founder &
OSU Associate Dean



Steve Heiser,
Co-Founder and Retired
Commercial Real Estate Professional



How do we open doors to opportunity for ALL children living in our region?

That was the question that launched the Families Flourish you know today.

Co-founder and commercial realtor Steve Heiser asked of Amy Klaben, who had recently left the CEO position at Homeport to work on policy. “Interesting idea,” she replied and then went silent. Amy often takes long pauses while she thinks.

But she moves very quickly, and soon she and Steve were taking Bill Riat from CASTO and Michael Kelley from Kelley Cos. to lunch. The two companies own a lot of multifamily units in Central Ohio, and were crucial early partners. It wasn’t long after meeting that Dr. Rachel Kleit, OSU Professor and Associate Dean for Faculty Affairs, was invited to talk about how to evaluate this brand-new program.

“I remember thinking that, wow, this is a really cool idea,” Rachel said. “As a result of the literature review we were doing and these people coming to ask us questions, we came up with a preliminary logic model for how the program would work.” They gathered – almost weekly – with different experts and thinkers for nearly a year. Soon, they were getting the approval to create a pilot with 10 families under the Ohio State umbrella.

In August of 2018, 10 families were welcomed into a unique program with just 3 basic ingredients: coaching, workshops and rent support in higher-resourced neighborhoods.

“I thought at the time if we graduated 5 of those families we had a successful formula,” Amy and Rachel agreed. Nine graduated! The tremendous success of those first families fueled the co-founders’ initial fire to – first, prove the model works – and then move full-speed ahead to serve MORE families. In May 2025, the goal to expand the program to serve 100 Central Ohio families was met, and just four months later, the goal to expand across Ohio planted its first flag in the Miami Valley Dayton area.

Investing in Families?

It really pays off.

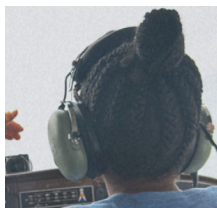
Over the years, we have seen countless reasons to celebrate the successes of our families. Here are just a few:



One participant entered the program carrying \$4,000 in credit card debt and was struggling to cover everyday expenses. With the help of her coach, she developed and followed a financial plan and budget that allowed her to pay off her debt entirely. She's now building her savings toward the goal of buying a home.



Another participant shared that her son entered the program in second grade at a kindergarten reading level. With support from his new school, he was brought up to grade level and has since thrived. He's not only reading, but has even published his own book.



For some participants, the Families Flourish program provides support to pursue an entirely new career path. One mother worked with her coach to land a job in aviation, and she's not the only one with her sights set on the sky. She and her 10-year-old daughter are now logging flight hours together to become licensed pilots.

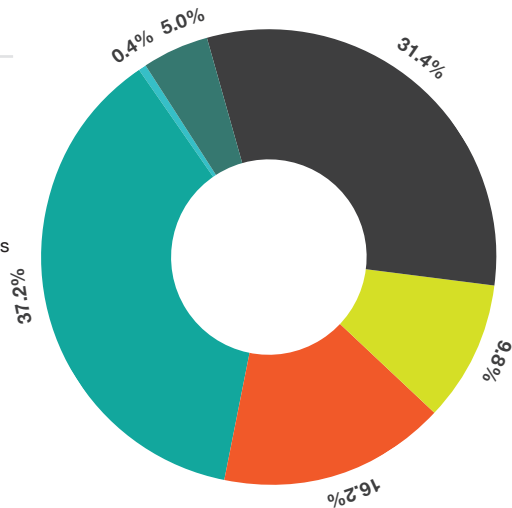
“ This has been a life changing and transformational experience. ”

— Families Flourish Participant

+ Revenue

2025 | \$2,470,782

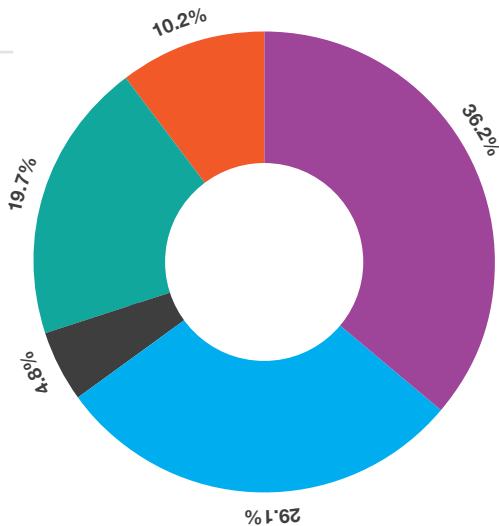
- Individual
- Foundations
- Corporations
- Events
- Government
- OSU/OCCH
- Landlords
- Interest
- Other/ Application Fees



- Expenses

2025 | \$1,575,351

- Coaching & Program
- Rent Support
- Outreach
- Administration
- Fundraising



Board policy requires a group's entire 3-year stay to be funded before applications for that group open.



Volunteer Spotlight

Vinny Stocco

Vinny Stocco is only 17 years old but he's been volunteering at Families Flourish since we welcomed the first families in 2018. He was 8 years old, helping set up a meeting room at St. Charles Preparatory School where Pilot families used to meet. Up and down the stairs, he'd help the team move food, tables and chairs, and sometimes he helped out with kids' programming.

His mom, Chris Blakely, is Volunteer No. 1 at Flourish, having stepped up to help during the research period that began in 2016. Vinny was soon on board, too. While Vinny has served several roles for Flourish, he's most proud of his video editing.

"I'd gone on some video shoots of the families and I asked my mom what that was costing Families Flourish. When she told me, I said – well, I could do that for free!" So he undertook some training, including from a family friend. He has, at minimum, saved Flourish tens of thousands of dollars and his videos are shown at annual fundraising events, where they have helped raise hundreds of thousands of dollars.

But Vinny isn't a stranger to volunteering. He's been active with Scouts – achieving his Eagle Scout – for longer than he's been with Families Flourish. Most Sundays, he volunteers at Faith Mission's kitchen downtown.

What is Vinny's inspiration?

"Working with Families Flourish, I feel like I've seen a need for people to have help and I want to help them, I want to help make their lives better – even if just a little bit," Vinny said.

Why Neighborhoods Matter

Families Flourish is, in part, based on the work of Harvard's Raj Chetty and his research organization, Opportunity Insights. His basic premise is that economic mobility in America is profoundly shaped by the neighborhood and childhood environment in which a person grows up — and that these place-based differences are largely causal, not just correlations.

At a region-wide level, Chetty's team has found Columbus ranks in the 12th percentile nationally for economic mobility among children from low-income families. On average, these children earn \$27K as adults— but outcomes vary by neighborhood, from \$9.7K in some areas to \$58K in others.



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Save the Date

Join us on Thursday, Dec. 3, to celebrate 10 years of Families Flourish during our Power of Opportunity event. This year's Steve Heiser Award winners are KEMBA Financial Credit Union and Michael Wilkos, who will also serve as our keynote speaker.

Join Colleen Marshall, our families, friends, donors and volunteers for a night of food, drinks and stories of transformation.

More at familiesflourish.org/events

Address:
65 Jefferson Ave., Columbus, OH 43215

