



# 2023 ANNUAL REPORT

all abilities. limitless possibilities.

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# Dear Friends,

For generations, Easterseals Midwest has been helping people with disabilities, families, and communities across the Midwest access life-changing programs designed to support them every step of their lives. Last year alone, we supported nearly 6,500 individuals by enriching education, enhancing health, expanding employment, and elevating community.

At the heart of our work is advocacy. Last year, we mobilized more advocates than ever before, creating a network of people looking to make the world 100% equitable, inclusive, and accessible. We made countless calls, wrote letters, sent emails, and met with legislators to highlight the importance of our work and our community.



**Wendy Sullivan**  
Chief Executive Officer  
Easterseals Midwest

This document is designed to celebrate all that we have accomplished in the past fiscal year. But it also illustrates the continued need for our programs as we continue to grow, helping more people each and every day. One in four Americans lives with a disability. As we celebrate the past year, we also look towards a future that celebrates and supports people of all abilities.

With our wide community of supporters and advocates leading our effort, we know we will be able to provide help and hope to more people than ever before. Thank you for your support of people with disabilities and of Easterseals.



**Greg Meier**  
Board Chairperson  
Easterseals Midwest



# 2023 at a Glance

Easterseals is changing the lives of people with disabilities by enriching education, enhancing health, expanding employment, and elevating community. Here’s a look at where that led us over the past year.

2,000  
NEW INDIVIDUALS

We supported nearly 2,000 new individuals in FY23 (that’s a 22% increase in people served since FY21).

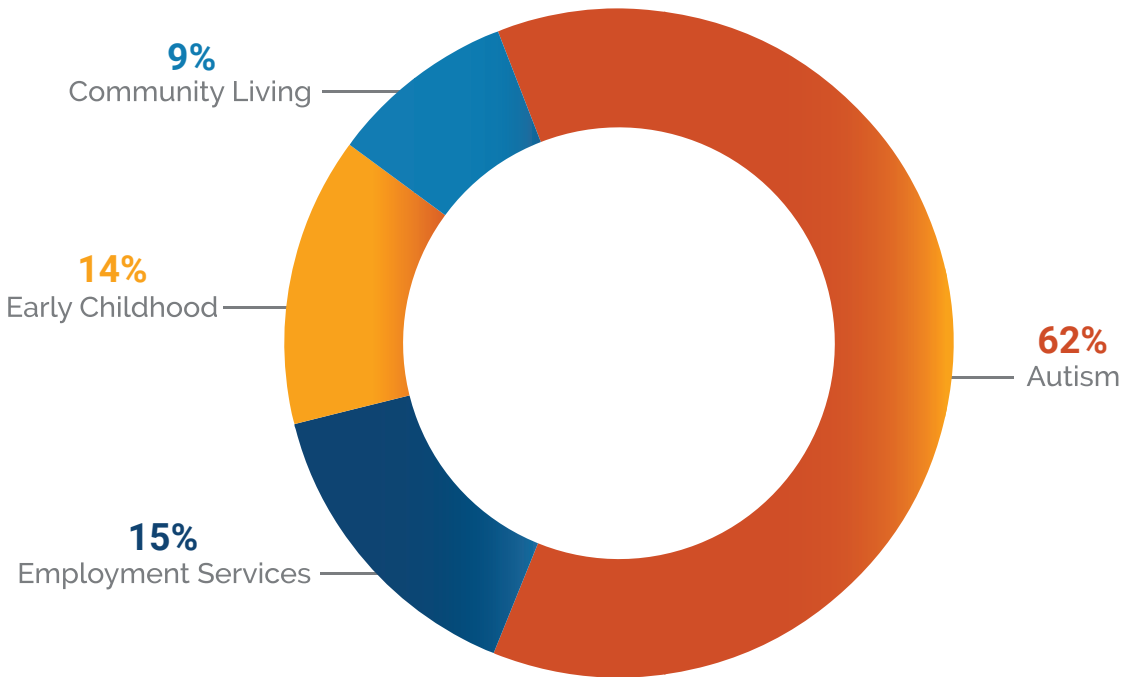
92%  
SATISFACTION RATING

Our stakeholders reported a 92% overall satisfaction rating last year.

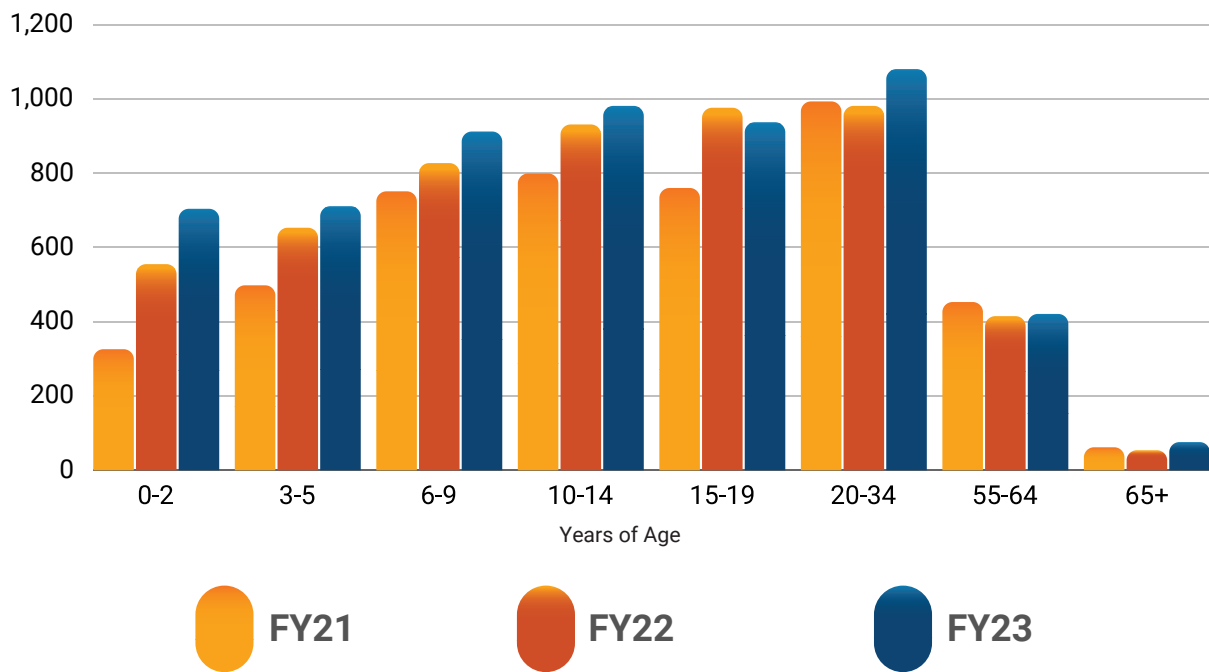
497  
CONTACTS TO LEGISLATORS

Our advocates contacted legislators in Jefferson City nearly 500 times to let them know the importance of disability issues.

## INDIVIDUALS SERVED BY PROGRAM



## AGE RANGE OF INDIVIDUALS SERVED



# Our Services

## Autism | Meet Townes

Today, one in 36 children in the United States will be diagnosed with autism. Easterseals is there for children and adults with supportive services like caregiver training and education, family navigation, therapies and assessments, respite and social groups, social skills training, and more. We offer a full scope of services designed to help people diagnosed with autism as they navigate life.

The Easterseals team tailors every person’s services to their unique needs. By creating a plan specifically designed for each person we support, we can help them thrive no matter where they are in their journey - whether they just received a diagnosis, are trying to understand autism better, or are looking to gain independence later in life.

Scan the QR code to the right to watch Towne’s journey with Easterseals’ Autism Program.

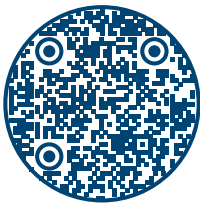


## Early Childhood - Home Visiting | Meet Kelly

A child’s environment and social experience are crucial as their brain develops within the first three years of life. That’s why we support safe, nurturing home environments for children of all abilities by supporting the entire family.

Through early intervention strategies, like home visiting, telehealth, one-on-one therapies, and parent support resources, we help create an educational foundation that promotes bright futures for entire families.

Scan the QR code to the right to watch Kelly’s journey with Easterseals’ Early Childhood - Home Visiting program.



To learn more about everything Easterseals does, scan the QR code to the left.

## Employment | Meet Devenie

Having a career you’re proud of is an important part of almost everyone’s life. It is also an important aspect of independence - a gateway to being able to support oneself. That’s why we provide an individualized approach to develop the skills, confidence, and experience necessary for people with disabilities to find and keep competitive employment.

Before gaining employment, we offer pre-employment services to help build social and job skills to prepare the people we support to enter the workforce. Once equipped with the necessary skills, we help them explore career options, apply, and interview for a competitive career they’ll love. Finally, once they have found their ideal career, we’re still there to ensure they succeed in their new position.

Scan the QR code to the right to watch Devenie’s journey with Easterseals’ Employment program.



## Community Living | Meet Mike

At Easterseals, we support people through every stage of life. For adults, this often means helping them gain the independence or to live in their own home and support themselves. Whether someone requires one hour a week or 24/7 care, we meet them where they are.

From teaching safety skills and budgeting to nutrition and meal prep - we help people thrive in their personal lives. And we’re giving people more independence than ever by utilizing new technology requiring our team to be in homes less and supporting more people from afar.

Scan the QR code to the right to watch Mike’s journey with Easterseals’ Community Living program.





# meet the pardeshis

## ENRICHING EDUCATION

When a family receives an autism diagnosis, it can be a scary time. Parents know they need to give their child the best support possible to set them up for success. Many parents often don't know where to even begin.

This was exactly how Ahbishake and Alonna felt when their sons, seven-year-old Abhi (Ahbishake Jr), and four-year-old Yushi (Ayushman) were both diagnosed with autism. However, because of a chance encounter at Ahbishake's work, the family found Easterseals.

"Our lives [were] altered drastically when we received the diagnosis of our children having autism," Alonna said. "Everything seemed to have stopped."

At the time, Abhishake worked at the hotel where Easterseals Festival Gala and Auction is held each year. He was at work when he heard the Easterseals' team speaking about our programs. Abhishake knew instantly that this was the help his family needed.

He and his family were quickly connected to the Easterseals Caregiver Training Program, an intensive course that helps parents and caregivers understand their child's diagnosis

and learn techniques to give them the support they need.

Before beginning Caregiver Training, both children had unique challenges their family wanted them to overcome. Ahbi had trouble expressing his needs and wants. When he couldn't successfully let his parents know what he needed, he would often get frustrated and lash out. For Yushi, Ahbishake, and Alonna worried about stimulating him, as he often seemed uninterested in things other children his age were interested in. But once in Caregiver Training, it all changed.

With new-found knowledge, better understanding, and a toolkit to better support their children, both kids began blossoming. The entire family's communication is better, with Ahbi and Yushi both vocalizing more and Ahbishake and Alonna able to better communicate their emotions and needs to their children. Ahbi's frustrations and aggressive behaviors have almost completely stopped.

"We learned so much about our children that we didn't know..." Alonna said. "It's brought joy and happiness; it's brought more than just peace. It's brought us closer together."



# Financials

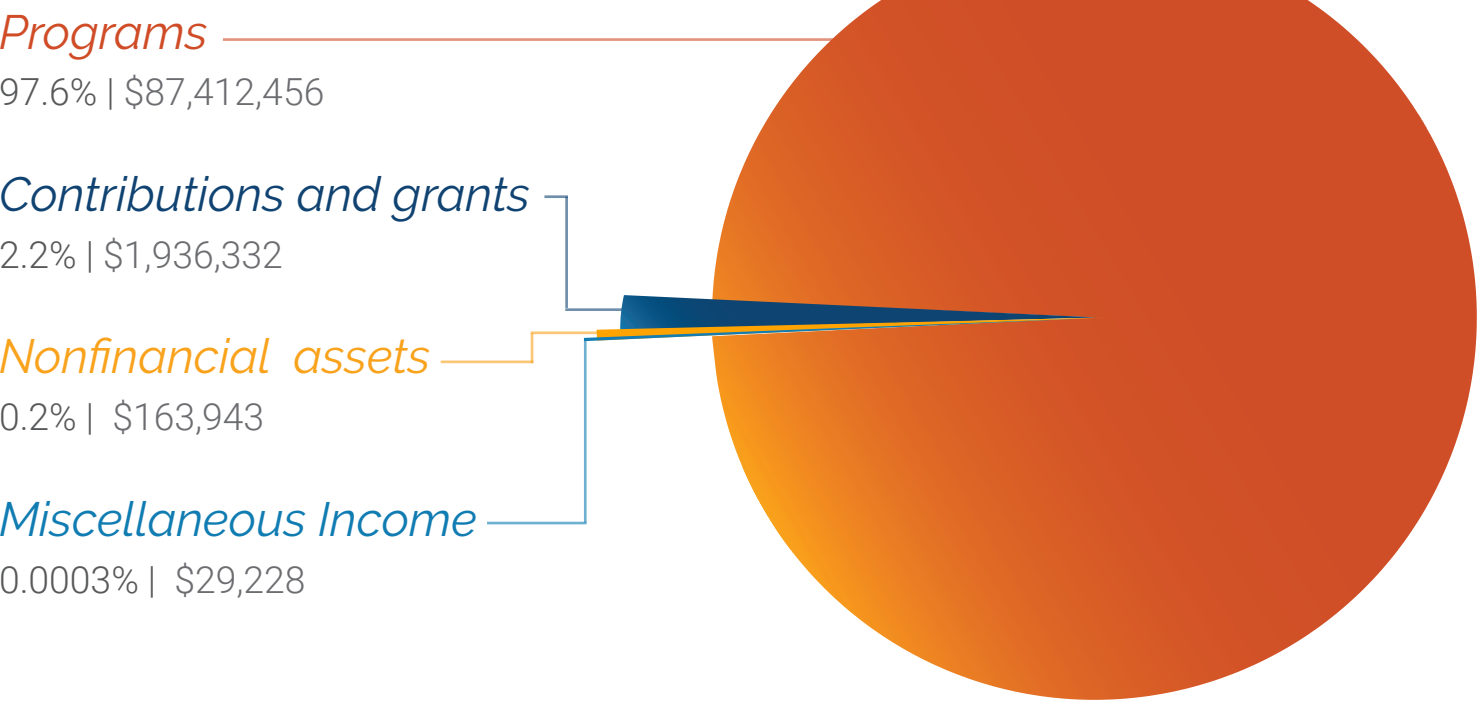
## Revenue

	%
Autism	11.9
Community Living	76.6
Home Visiting	1.7
Employment	9.8
	\$
Autism	\$10,377,245
Community Living	\$66,964,889
Home Visiting	\$1,515,198
Employment	\$8,555,124
Subtotal	\$87,412,456
	\$
Programs	\$87,412,456
Contributions and grants	\$1,936,332
Nonfinancial assets	\$163,943
Miscellaneous Income	\$29,228
Subtotal	\$89,541,959

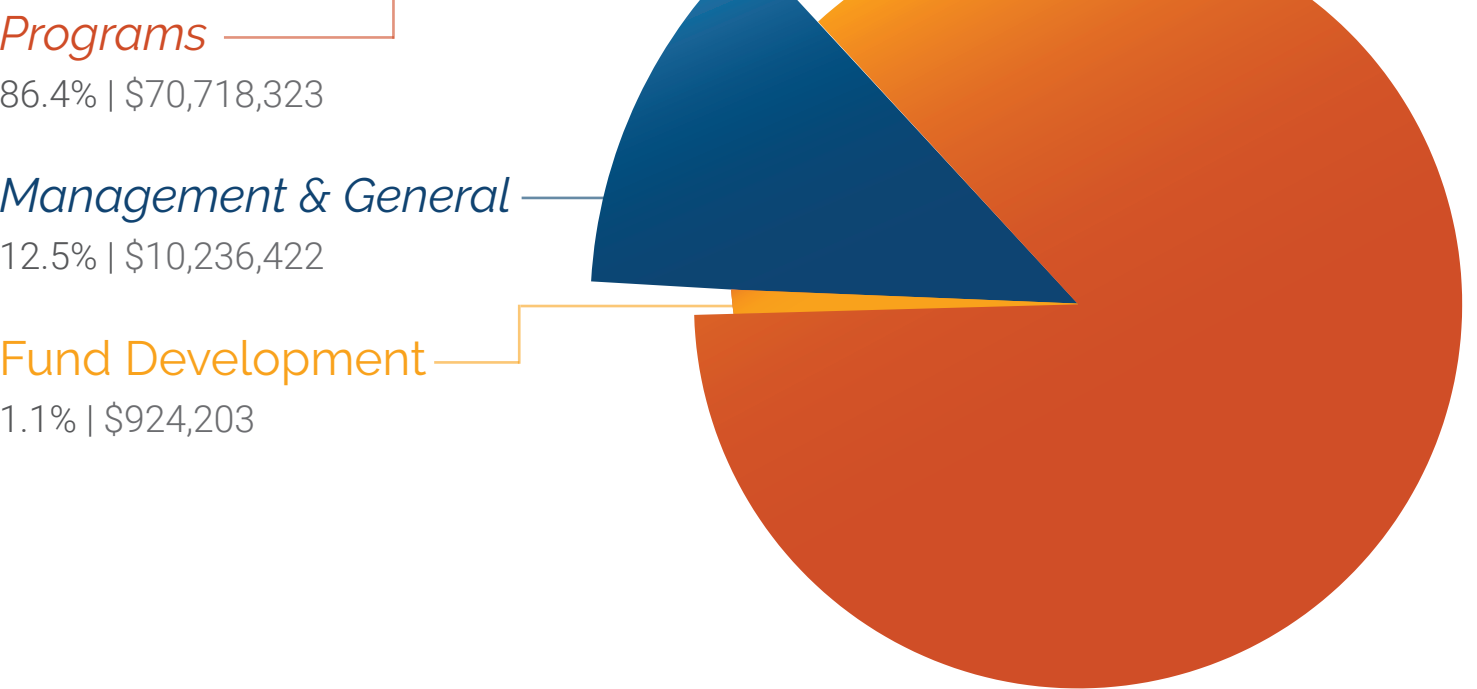
## Expenses

	%
Autism	13.4
Community Living	76.2
Home Visiting	2
Employment	8.4
	\$
Autism	\$9,445,154
Community Living	\$53,912,887
Home Visiting	\$1,389,477
Employment	\$5,970,805
Subtotal	\$70,718,323
	\$
Programs	\$70,718,323
Management & General	\$10,236,422
Fund Development	\$924,203
Subtotal	\$81,878,948

## Revenue



## Expenses





# meet denim

## ENHANCING HEALTH

Denim has been receiving Applied Behavior Analysis (ABA) Therapy in the Easterseals Midwest Columbia clinic since January 2022. He has a passion for farm animals, balloons, and running.

When Denim first started ABA Therapy, he had few words and asked to be carried by staff for the majority of his sessions. At one point, Denim's aggression, climbing, and problematic behavior were so intense he was unable to be successful in a classroom with other peers. However, as the result of ABA Therapy with focused intervention on emotion regulation and following routines, Denim is now in a classroom with two other children and participating in many group activities, such as story time and art.

Now, Denim uses sentences to communicate and makes friends with everyone he sees. When asked to share with a peer, Denim responds, "Of course!" Each morning, when he arrives, his positivity spreads throughout the office; he immediately looks for his favorite people so he can give them the best hugs.

Denim has made so much progress since his first day, bringing so much joy to others! Denim's mother has reported the most significant success is that she has taken Denim and his younger sister to the zoo and aquarium by herself without any concerns; this is a huge milestone for Denim's family! Denim has taught our staff so much about patience, love, energy, and the impact our work can have on a family's ability to engage in simple pleasures many of us take for granted. Denim's growth this year has been incredible, and he's made the lives of others brighter each day!





# Investing in our Team

The Easterseals team makes everything we do possible. We're committed to investing in, listening to, and supporting our team in as many ways as we can.



1,426  
TEAM MEMBERS

We employed 1,426 team members in FY23.

\$29m  
INVESTED

We invested \$29 million to increase the wages of our team.

98%  
STAFF RAISES

98% of staff received a raise in FY23.

641  
NEW TEAM MEMBERS

As we grow, so does our team. In FY23, we reviewed 4,700 external applications and hired 641 new team members.

# meet becky

## EXPANDING EMPLOYMENT

At Easterseals, setting people up to succeed in a new career is just as important as helping them find that job that they will love. Becky began with Easterseals' LINK Program, a program designed to help young adults with autism learn social and job skills so they can transition from school to the workforce. But it wasn't just Easterseals that helped Becky; Becky's new career opened an important partnership with the Donald Danforth Plant Science Center.

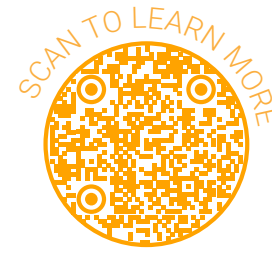
Becky went through LINK with flying colors, and during that time, she also completed college coursework to pursue her love of science. Becky worked with an autism specialist to try and find a career where she could put her passion for science to good use.

Part of Becky's college coursework took place at the Danforth Center, an independent, not-for-profit research institute dedicated to plant science located in St. Louis. Knowing how much she enjoyed her coursework there, her autism specialist arranged for Becky to complete an observational visit to the campus. During the visit, Becky met the team in the Advanced Bioimaging Laboratory.

The Laboratory uses state-of-the-art imaging technology to document plants, microbes, and their interactions. They were so impressed with her education and keen interest in their work in the lab that they persuaded her to apply for a Lab Technician position.

Becky is now a proud Lab Technician for the Center, and assists the team she met by preparing samples and tools as they complete their experiments. She is eager to have the new opportunity, work with her new team, and advance her career in the science field.

But that's not all that Becky's employment journey has done. Not only has Becky blazed a career path that she is truly passionate about, but she has also opened the door to numerous other people like her looking to begin a career in science. The team at the Danford Center were so impressed with Becky that the Easterseals' Employment team was able to forge a new partnership with the Center. Moving forward, other people with disabilities participating in Easterseals' pre-employment and employment services will have the chance to explore careers in science thanks to the Center's involvement.





# Philanthropy

*You made a difference this year!*

Thank you to all our generous supporters for helping us make a difference this year.



1,640  
DONORS

1,640 donors made a difference in the lives of people with disabilities.

\$1.9m  
RAISED

\$1.9 million was raised thanks to the generosity of our community

343  
PRESIDENT'S  
CIRCLE MEMBERS

343 people are members of our President's Circle, giving \$1,000 or more.

\$88.5k  
PROPOSAL FUNDING

10 team-submitted grant proposals were chosen and funded in full by the Women's Giving Collective, totaling \$88,500.



# meet eugene

## ENGAGING COMMUNITY

Eugene is a 36-year-old, vibrant, and outgoing gentleman. Like many adults, his ultimate goal is to live independently with minimal to no staff support. His life experiences have shaped him into a strong advocate for himself and his peers.

Since 2005, Eugene has been living in an Independent Support Living setting, where he thrives. He has developed long-lasting friendships and obtained employment as a front desk receptionist. Eugene was also fiercely independent, enjoying alone time in the community and outings on his own.

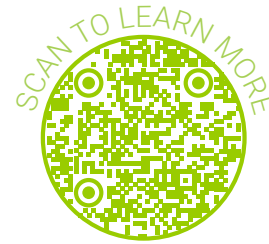
In 2017, Eugene came to Easterseals for the Community Living Program. But after supporting Eugene for a couple of years, Eugene's team noticed that Eugene was making some poor decisions that were dangerous to himself, and these were largely because of outside influences. Due to some of the unhealthy choices Eugene made, his guardian asked to approve his community interactions and requested our team accompany him on his outings. During this

time, Eugene also lost his job when the office he worked at closed due to COVID-19. While these changes were made with his safety in mind, Eugene understandably felt down about a lot that was going on. His Community Living team knew that something had to change.

The team wanted to help Eugene develop a healthy support system, gain back independence, and start making some positive changes in his life. So, with Eugene's full support, his Community Living team helped Eugene move into a new Supported Living Home in 2022. And the improvements were almost immediate.

Eugene's outlook changed. He got along great with his roommates and with this new support system, he was making better choices for himself. He was also very focused on becoming employed again. With support from his Community Living team and Vocational Rehabilitation, Eugene secured employment in May of 2023 with the St. Louis Aquarium as a front desk greeter.

Eugene's guardian also noticed the strides he



was making. They no longer felt the need to approve Eugene's community interactions, and staff no longer had to accompany him. He now enjoys frequenting places like Ballpark Village, the Delmar Loop, and attending church on Sundays.

Eugene is gaining more and more

independence every single day, with the ultimate goal of living on his own. Eugene's life journey is an excellent example of what can be accomplished with dedication, focus, and a strong support system!



# Geographic Territory



To learn more about Easterseals Midwest,  
visit [easterseals.com/midwest](https://easterseals.com/midwest)  
or contact us at 1-800-200-2119 or [info@esmw.org](mailto:info@esmw.org).

## CONTRIBUTION FORM

You can help make a profound difference  
in the lives of people with disabilities.

### DONOR INFORMATION

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_ ☐ Cell ☐ Home

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

### GIVING OPTIONS

Gift Amount \$ \_\_\_\_\_

☐ Make this a reoccurring monthly donation

**With a gift of \$1,000 or more, you will become a member of the President's Circle.**

☐ Check Enclosed (Please make payable to Easterseals Midwest)

☐ Please charge my credit card  
(Visa, Mastercard, Discover, and American Express accepted)

Credit Card Number \_\_\_\_\_

Exp. Date (MM/YY) \_\_\_\_\_ CVV Code \_\_\_\_\_

Email \_\_\_\_\_

### SEND COMPLETED FORM TO

Easterseals Midwest  
Attn: Development  
11933 Westline Industrial Dr.  
St. Louis, MO 63146

### DONATE THROUGH OUR WEBSITE



\*Please use the following information to make a gift of  
stock, and use this form to notify us of the gift:

U.S. Bank N.A. 10 N. Hanley Road  
Clayton, Missouri 63105

DTC#2803 | Account# 080017738600 | Tax ID# 43-0979927

You may receive an appeal from Easterseals National headquartered in Chicago, Illinois, which supports national advocacy programs, research, administration and international programs. A gift to Easterseals Midwest supports programs, educational programming, and advocacy in our local community.



# Leadership

## EASTERSEALS MIDWEST BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Greg Meier, <i>Chair</i>	Theresa Guest, <i>Treasurer</i>
Jacqueline Bardgett Freiderich, <i>Vice Chair</i>	Jenny Crowe, <i>Secretary</i>
Christina Green, <i>Vice Chair of Strategic Planning</i>	Judy Kent, <i>Emeritus Director</i>

Sharon Abel	Triná Owens Rogers	Christine Schlomann
Jeff Fischer	Lydia Padilla	Ed Spalty
Will Fried	Keith Petti	Luke Thompson
Corey Hamilton	Scott Ririe	Lynn Wallis
Brian Kinman		

## EXECUTIVE TEAM

Wendy Sullivan, <i>Chief Executive Officer</i>	Jeanne Marshall, <i>Chief Strategy Officer</i>
Jeff Arledge, <i>Chief Financial Officer</i>	Laurel Taylor, <i>Chief Human Resources Officer</i>
Tom Barry, <i>Chief Development Officer</i>	Maulik Trivedi, MD, FACEP, <i>Medical Director</i>
Tec Chapman, <i>Chief Program Officer</i>	



CARF International is the gold standard in accreditation and provides an objective, peer-to-peer approach to their accreditation reviews. Easterseals has been continuously accredited at the highest level possible for the past 35 years. We were the first organization in Missouri to receive accreditation for our Autism Services and have approximately 15 different service lines across every region of the state reviewed each survey. The survey process is rigorous and involves a cadre of surveyors specializing in administration and programs speaking with a wide array of stakeholders, visiting every program site, and reviewing documentation to assess evidence of more than 1,400 standards each visit.





Leading the way to **100%** equity, inclusion,  
and access for people with disabilities,  
families, and communities.



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