



So here's the thing... this whole newsletter theme was supposed to be centered around "Back to School.." And my team has provided some relevant and needed resources beyond my letter.. But I had to rewrite my part for what is really on my heart...

A LETTER FROM THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

Last week, I sat in a hospital room with a teen who didn't have a family to go home to. She was medically discharged but being "housed" at the hospital because there wasn't a place for her to go.

For the past two days, I've sat through San Antonio emergency hearings for 24 youth who also have no family they can go to. They've been sleeping in CPS offices and hotels. That is just a fraction of the 524 youth across the state of Texas who currently have no alternative.

I don't want to call it a crisis because frankly, the word "crisis" is so common, it has lost its weight. It is common because we live in a world with deep brokenness, and devastation is everywhere.

"Foster care crisis" is so common, it too has lost its impact to really gain attention. So I'm sounding the alarm bells. □ This isn't about politics or pointing fingers. It is about caring for the **most** vulnerable

who cannot take care of themselves.

As I sat in the hospital and listened to these youth speak for themselves in court today, I couldn't help but think about my own children - 16, 14, 13, and 11. All of their ages were represented. These youth have been victimized, trafficked, abused, neglected, abandoned, shamed, rejected and utterly traumatized. Their brains have been shaped by the harm done to them. Despite the "front" we may see, they often live in a state of fight, flight or freeze as cortisol courses through their bodies because of that damage.

The adults that were supposed to love, nurture, care for and protect them have violated the most precious relationship between a parent and child. Youth in care have no reason to trust adults and often marred decision making ability due to that harm. Their strategies have been shaped by survival mechanisms, *even if* that damage was done in very early childhood (0-3). In fact, the earlier the damage, the worse it is for a child. You can learn all about that in this incredibly digestible, **must-read release** on trauma.

The stories I heard at the hospital and in court are heartbreaking. As a person of faith, I believe that we are all created in the image of God. These rejected youth bear the image of God. Their suffering and subsequent vulnerability is great. **I am asking** that if you are a person of faith, you will **pray** with me. Pray for their safety and healing. Pray for heavenly transformation in our system. And pray for those of us on the front lines who are fighting for them.

I want you to know that your financial help is not token - no amount is too small to help. The reality is that Medicaid doesn't pay for the majority of the services we provide for this hurting population. Their lives matter. And as a community, we all have a part to play in their healing — so that their beginnings will not write the end of their stories.

With hope,



Jenni Lord | Chosen Care
Chief Executive Officer



Only a little more than a month away from [The Big Give SA](#) and we're counting down the days until

September 23!

Will you join us in the countdown?

Mark your calendar and [visit our page today!](#)

Back to School Tips

At Chosen, when compiling our Trauma-Informed Action Plans ® and conducting parent coaching sessions, we reference great work by peers, like Seth Perler's back-to-school tips.

In his [YouTube video](#), Seth gives four tips for a successful school year transition for kiddos with executive functioning challenges. However, these tips are great for all families!

Help your child hit the ground running

Get ready for school as soon as possible:

1. Design a study space at home
2. Organize a planner & have a backpack ready
3. Label folders for each subject

Make a weekly plan and post it on the wall

Make sure your kids help create the plan:

School: 7:00 AM - 3:30 PM

Play or Relax: 3:30 PM - 5:00 PM

Dinner: 5:00 PM - 6:00 PM

Read or Homework: 6:00 PM - 7:00 PM

Unwind or Bed: 7:00 PM - 8:00 PM

Advocate early

If your child struggles with certain things, send an email:

Hi (Teacher Name), my son/daughter often struggles with (Insert Information).

Here are three things you can do to help them overcome!

I will follow up with you in a few weeks because I know you're busy!

Build relationships

Remember, building a relationship with your child is important:

1. Plan weekends and fun trips you will do together
weeks in advance
2. Plan quality time with your child where you have fun
and don't talk about school

[Watch Seth Perler's Video Here](#)

Back to School Blog

By Staci Thomas, Chosen Chief Program Officer



Back To School!

Preparation For A Successful Year

[READ FULL BLOG](#)



17th ANNUAL GOLF TOURNAMENT & AFTER PARTY

October 7, 2021



Registration & Lunch: 10:00AM
Shotgun Start (scramble format): 12:00PM
Happy Hour, Dinner & After Party: 5:00PM

EARLY BIRD PRICING ENDS AUGUST 26th!

Chosen is honored to be selected as the beneficiary for the 2021 **Hearts and Hands Golf Tournament** hosted by Keller Williams on October 7, 2021 at The Quarry Golf Course.

Proceeds from the tournament, after party, and auction will allow Chosen to continue fulfilling our mission of **helping children heal by strengthening their families.**

[Be a Part of the Event](#)

Join us in welcoming Chosen's newest staff members!

Kimber Graves

Care Manager, TBRI Practitioner



With over 17 years of child welfare experience and lived experience as an

John Martinez

Bilingual Care Manager



John has spent his career serving children and working with parents from different

adoptive parent, Kimber has develop a passion for empowering parents, caregivers, and communities to create nurturing and safe environments where children can heal.

Learn more about Kimber [here](#).

Blake Taylor

Care Manager



Blake has experience in child welfare investigations, with an adoption agency with both birth and adoptive parents, and in an urban city hospital on the Mother/Baby, Labor & Delivery, and Pediatric units. Her experience has allowed her to work with diverse populations throughout various stages of life.

Learn more about Blake [here](#).

backgrounds. He has helped families in the New York foster care system create action plans to fit their specific needs, develop safety plans, and guide them.

Learn more about John [here](#).

Chelsea Polanco

Administrative Assistant



Chelsea's experience is diverse, due to regular relocation during her family's time in the military, but Administration and Human Resources has always been at the forefront. In the Army, she gained strengths in Human Resources while learning the most important part of the military — integrity, selfless service, respect, and duty.

Learn more about Chelsea [here](#).

Welcome, Allison Billodeau!

Allison has joined Chosen's Board of Directors.



Allison Billodeau has served in the Texas government for nearly 19 years, most prominently as the Chief of Staff for several members of the Texas Legislature. In 2017, she worked for Governor Abbott's Budget and Policy Office on health and child welfare issues and became his appointee to the Supreme Court of Texas Children's Commission and the State Child Fatality Review Committee.

Read more about Allison [here](#).

Have You Committed to Being Part of the Healing in 2021?

HAVE YOU COMMITTED
TO CHANGING LIVES IN 2021?



PLEDGE HERE

We are 8 months into 2021, but you still have 4 months to sign up and make a difference in the lives of the families we serve!

Today, you can join our community of monthly donors, who support Chosen with an automatically recurring gift of ANY amount.

Whether you sign up to give \$10, \$25, or \$100 a month, you are making a difference to families who are on their journey toward healing!

Monthly commitments of **any amount** can be made [here](#).

connect with us



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STRENGTHENING FAMILIES | HELPING CHILDREN HEAL | CHOSEN CARE