



**MEDIA KIT**





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# MISSION STATEMENT

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The Austin Angels mission is to walk alongside children, youth, and families in the foster care community by offering consistent support through intentional giving, relationship building, and mentorship.

# OUR VISION

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Our vision is to ensure that every child, youth, and family in the foster care community has healthy, affirming, and lasting relationships. We do this by educating and empowering the local community and by recruiting compassionate, committed, and diverse volunteers to offer support through intentional giving, relationship building, and mentorship.

Our dream is to open National Angels chapters in every metropolitan city in the nation so every single child in foster care in the United States will be supported and empowered to succeed. We believe our programs further the greater good of local communities and provide a real and tangible role to play within the foster care system.



# OUR CORE VALUES



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**COMMUNITY  
EMPOWERMENT  
HOPE**

# HISTORY

2009

The vision to launch

2010

Filed 501(c)3 paperwork for Austin Angels

2013

Love Box pilot launched

2015

Susan quit her corporate job to focus on pushing the mission forward

2016

National Angels' piloted first chapter (Amarillo, TX)

2017

Dare to Dream program launched

2018

(8) National Angels chapters launched

2019

(8) National Angels chapters launched

2020

(4) National Angels chapters launched

2021

(2) National Angels Chapters launched





# HISTORY

In 2013, Austin Angels began a pilot of the Love Box program with a single mother fostering six teenage boys. Each month, a group of volunteers would put together a "Love Box" of items tailored to their specific needs and a handwritten note of encouragement for each child. A meaningful bond between the children, caregivers, and volunteers was formed through the process of delivering the boxes and spending intentional time together. The volunteers showed up consistently each month for the boys, took an interest in their lives, celebrated their birthdays, and attended important events. The boys went from failing in school, struggling socially, and not attaching to getting straight As, making friends, and saying "I love you" for the first time. After a wildly successful pilot program, the Love Box program was formally launched in January 2015. It has since grown to serve numerous families in the Austin area and across the country. In 2017, the Dare to Dream mentoring program was launched and began serving youth on a one-on-one basis.

National Angels launched its first chapter in 2016 and continues to expand across the country. CEO and founder Susan Ramirez believes that every child deserves the opportunity to grow up to become the person they were always intended to become, and every chapter of National Angels plays a role in making that vision a reality.

# FOSTER CARE

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Children are removed from their homes and placed in foster care due to neglect, abandonment, or because they are the victim of physical, sexual, or emotional abuse. When children are removed from the home they are confused and upset, and they need the temporary protection and nurturing that a foster family can provide. In the foster care system, children often move homes many times. This happens for many reasons and may be due in part to foster parents feeling unsupported and overwhelmed.

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In 2019, the child welfare system cost our country 5.3 billion dollars. We know we must address the poverty of social capital and its negative effects on the foster care community at the root in order to make a difference.





# THE OPPORTUNITY

**50%**

of foster homes close within the first year.



Our programs increase the support and stability of fostering caregivers, decreasing the number of children moving from home to home.

**3%**

of former foster youth will graduate from college.



We encourage our youth to "Dare to Dream" about all that they could become while providing the educational tools and mentoring they need to reach their goals.

**50%**

of former foster youth will be employed at age 24.



We provide opportunities for youth in foster care to learn tools and gain skills that will help prepare them for a successful future.

# 60%

of former foster youth fall below the poverty line despite earning an income.



Our programs provide children and youth with the resources they need to develop a strong foundation that will help them secure a job and earn a living.

# 50%

Just over half of youth in care graduate from high school, many with an equivalency diploma.



We provide educational tools and mentoring to help children and youth develop productive study and working habits.

# 1:5

More than 1 in 5 former foster youth will become homeless after age 18.



Our Dare to Dream program provides youth with the resources they need to learn life skills and secure a job as well as a place to live.



THE  
POTENTIAL



# THE HEART OF OUR PROGRAMS

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## **INTENTIONAL GIVING**

Give thoughtful and personal resources, gifts, and care packages that meet the real needs of the child and their entire family.

## **RELATIONSHIP BUILDING**

Devote time and energy to fostering healthy relationships that promote healing through connections and interpersonal bonding.



## **MENTORSHIP**

Equip and empower the youth in our programs to be prepared for independent living and to reach their fullest potential.



A close-up photograph of a woman with long, wavy brown hair smiling warmly while holding a young child. The child is wearing a dark blue, textured sweater and is also smiling broadly, showing their teeth. The background is softly blurred, suggesting an outdoor setting. The entire image is framed by a white border.

**"Austin Angels has and continues to provide a community of caring, friendly faces and resources that I, as a foster parent, would have never dreamed was possible or existed."**

- Patricia, Love Box recipient



# LOVE BOX

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We created the Love Box program to provide a sense of community and support for fostering families through intentional giving, relationship building, and mentorship.

# OUR PROGRAM THE NEED

Children are removed from their homes and placed in foster care due to neglect, abandonment, or because they are the victim of physical, sexual, or emotional abuse. Because of this trauma, they often experience PTSD at a rate more than twice that of combat veterans. When children are removed from the home, they are confused and frightened. They need the temporary protection and nurturing that a foster family can provide. The goal of foster care is to reunify children with their family in a safe, stable, and permanent environment. When that can't occur, children become available for adoption. Regardless of the outcome, we know that trauma can only be healed in the context of healthy, supportive, and unconditional relationships.

The Love Box program provides fostering families with community and the holistic support they need to continue to do the important and meaningful work of being a foster parent. As a Love Box group, volunteers will be matched with a fostering family based on location, compatibility, and scope of needs. When families are matched with committed volunteers who show up monthly, parents feel more supported and children gain a greater sense of belonging and self-confidence. Volunteers seek to build relationships with their family by spending quality time with the whole family: playing games, sharing a meal, and being intentional. They can also create and deliver personal care packages based on current practical needs. Our goal is to help sustain and build an infrastructure of support to serve the children and caregivers experiencing foster care. This program requires a one-year commitment, but the connections and impact last a lifetime.



**"One of the greatest things we have gained from the Love Box program has been a sense of community and support. There is a whole community we can reach out to that understands what we are going through. We have gained lifelong friendships through this experience."**



- The Flemings, foster parents & Love Box recipients

*Love Box*



# DARE TO DREAM

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We created the Dare to Dream program (for youth ages 15-22) and Dare to Dream Jr. program (for youth ages 11-14) to provide one-on-one mentorship to youth in care. Our mentors are advocates, guides, role models, valued friends, and available resources who guide youth in their accomplishment of developmental milestones through intentional giving, relationship building, and mentorship.

**Mentors provide guidance through developmental milestones such as:**

- Building healthy relationships
- Forming graduation plans
- Creating healthy habits
- Obtaining a driver license

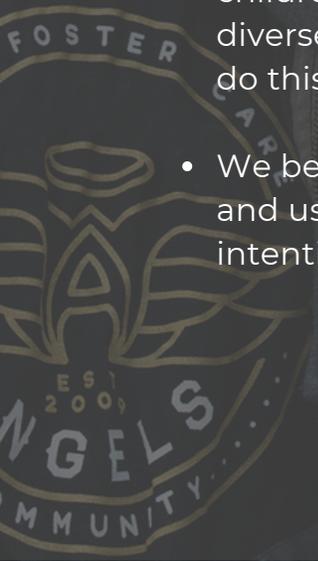
Young people who have grown up within the foster care system have experienced instability in their lives and often disproportionately suffer from learning disabilities, limited life skills, health issues, and emotional and behavioral struggles that lead to negative developmental outcomes. Youth who age out of foster care without having been adopted or reunified with their families have less financial, emotional, and social support than their peers, yet they are often expected to be as self-sufficient as those who have familial support and guidance. This lack of assistance and resources combined with the various traumas these youth have experienced negatively affects their success and overall well being. As a result of having to overcome a childhood of abuse and neglect, removal from their parents, unstable living arrangements, multiple foster placements, and weak support systems, youth who age out of care enter young adulthood without a healthy foundation upon which they can build their futures and work to break the generational cycles that affect youth in care

The Dare to Dream program provides youth with a mentor to help them navigate life's challenges and to provide relational support. Mentors build a connection and rapport with youth as they develop and hone life skills with the specific goals of achieving positive outcomes and learning independent living skills. Mentors offer advice, provide a safe and healthy positive role model, and help empower the youth to set and accomplish personal and professional goals. The youth in our Dare to Dream program need the wisdom, advice, encouragement, and community that mentors can provide. A mentor commits to meeting with the youth twice a month to be intentional, set goals, and help them achieve their dreams. These relationships will hopefully last a lifetime, but the program is a year commitment. Mentors matched with a high school student are strongly encouraged to stay with the youth until high school graduation.

# PROGRAM DIVERSITY

We serve children, youth, and families as well as recruit volunteers from all backgrounds within our local community, regardless of religion, marital status, ethnicity, age, financial status, gender identity, or sexual orientation because:

- We believe everyone deserves and can benefit from deep, meaningful relationships.
- We believe in being bridge builders, connecting over a shared passion of improving the foster care system through a community-based approach.
- We believe that every child, youth, and family experiencing foster care deserves to be fully seen, heard, and supported by healthy, affirming, and lasting relationships.
- We believe that every single one of us has a role to play in changing the way children, youth, and families experience foster care and that it will take a diverse community with varying backgrounds, experiences, and identities to do this.
- We believe in elevating the voices of those who are experiencing foster care and using their lived experiences to guide what it means to provide intentional support.



# PARTNER WITH US

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We cannot do this alone. You can make a difference through donations, monthly sponsorships, corporate partnerships, or as a volunteer in one of our programs.

## **Donations**

We rely heavily on donations from the community. Your support allows us to help change the way children experience the foster care system.

## **Monthly Sponsorships**

Your monthly sponsorship is a deeply felt contribution that is essential to sustain the support services provided through our programs.

## **Corporate Partnerships**

You can get your company involved through cause marketing, in-kind donations, or by participating in one of our employee engagement events.

## **Volunteer**

Donate your time by volunteering in the Love Box program or Dare to Dream program and have the opportunity to personally make a difference.

# GIFT MATCHING

Did you know many companies offer a matching gift program to encourage philanthropy among their employees? Some companies will even match to spouses and retirees. By simply completing a matching gift form (online or paper), you may be able to double, or even triple, the impact of your gift! Check with your Human Resources department to see if your employer will match your contribution.

# CHAPTERS

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Atlanta, GA  
Austin, TX  
Amarillo, TX  
Bakersfield, CA  
Boise, ID  
Cedar Valley, IA  
Charlotte, NC  
Chicago, IL  
Cleveland, OH  
Dallas-Ft. Worth, TX  
Houston, TX

Little Rock, AR  
New Braunfels, TX  
New Jersey  
Olympic, WA  
Salem, OR  
Seattle, WA  
Spokane, WA  
Tuscaloosa, AL  
Kansas City, KS  
Kansas City, MO  
Nashville, TN



# STAY CONNECTED



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