



Promises2Kids

Creating
a brighter
future
for foster
children
for over
40 years.



PROMISES2KIDS

OUR PROMISE:

To create a brighter future for foster children.

There are 3,000 foster youth in San Diego County. Each one needs you.

We all understand the importance of family. Foster children grow up without a family who can be there for them. Through no fault of their own, many grow up feeling lonely, afraid, and struggle to imagine a different future. However, with the right support, much more is possible. Promises2Kids provides these special children with the tools, opportunities, and guidance they need to address the circumstances that brought them into foster care, overcome the difficulties of their past, and grow into healthy, happy and successful adults. **Together we can do so much.**



- > **OVER 90% WILL NEVER GRADUATE FROM COLLEGE**
- > **80% EXPERIENCE MENTAL HEALTH ISSUES AS A RESULT OF THEIR ABUSE; MOST OFTEN DEPRESSION OR PTSD**
- > **27% OF BROTHERS AND SISTERS WILL BE SEPARATED IN FOSTER CARE**
- > **FOSTER CHILDREN MOVE AN AVERAGE OF 7 TIMES BEFORE THEY AGE OUT OF FOSTER CARE**

PROMISES2KIDS SUPPORTS FOSTER CHILDREN THROUGH THESE PROGRAMS

GUARDIAN SCHOLARS

Assists current and former foster youth in reaching their educational and career goals. Guardian Scholars has a 85% success rate for participating former foster youth.

8% of foster youth nationally will complete college.

CAMP CONNECT

Reunites brothers and sisters who are separated and living apart in foster care.

27% of brothers and sisters in foster care are living apart in San Diego.

FOSTER FUNDS

Provides financial support to foster youth for sports, music classes, class photos, college application fees, and the Birthday Club.

OVER 200,000 children in need have been helped and supported by Promises2Kids.

A.B. & JESSIE POLINSKY CHILDREN'S CENTER

Provides critical services, an emergency shelter and support for abused and neglected children.

The San Diego County Child Abuse Hotline receives reports of abuse for nearly 70,000 children annually. 1,000 of these children are cared for through the Polinsky Children's Center.



PROMISES2KIDS



This past year, we celebrated our organization's 40th anniversary – 40 years of growing and adapting to meet the changing needs of foster children in San Diego.

We took this time to celebrate all that has been accomplished, and today's ability to serve youth through Camp Connect, Guardian Scholars and Foster Funds. Summer camp allowed brothers and sisters to reconnect over a weekend of endless fun and memory making, and we now have the largest Guardian Scholars class to date of nearly 300 former foster youth.

We also took time to plan for the future. We engaged the community in a needs assessment, and held focus groups with youth. We brought it all back to the Board to use in selecting Promises' strategic priorities for the next 3 years:

1. **EARLY INTERVENTION:** Invest in additional services to support the healthy development of children ages five and under.
2. **HOLISTIC HEALTH AND WELL-BEING:** Increase access to holistic wellness support for Guardian Scholars.
3. **EMPOWERMENT AND EDUCATION:** Expand education and empowerment programs for youth preparing for/transitioning out of foster care.
4. **CONNECTIONS:** Create a network of connections and support for youth.
5. **ENGAGEMENT:** Strengthen outreach and engagement with the community and partners.

We have quite the task ahead of us, as the world continues to change at an ever-increasing pace. Despite all the different dynamics presented, we are encouraged by the consistent support and generosity of our community.

We will continue to support all our youth through leadership, volunteerism, and philanthropy.

Tonya L. Inosian

CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

GUARDIAN SCHOLARS

85%

of Promises2Kids
Guardian Scholars
complete higher
education compared
to 8% of foster youth
who graduate
college nationally.



OUR PROMISE: Support each foster youth with their dream of an education.

GUARDIAN SCHOLARS supports foster youth in their pursuit of their educational and career goals. In addition to the scholarship, Promises' staff and trained mentors provide the support, love, and guidance to students that a typical family would provide to ensure success.

JOCELYN (20) entered foster care at age 12. Her father struggled with addiction, and her mother was incarcerated for drug trafficking. Due to severe neglect, Jocelyn and her siblings were removed from their parents' care and taken to the A. B. and Jessie Polinsky Children's Center.

She was later placed with extended family, where she faced further abuse and neglect, even being denied food and drinking water. Jocelyn was exposed to alcohol abuse, and endured a period of repeated sexual assault.

She puts stress on herself to care for her family, and struggles with mental health issues because of her traumas. On top of being a full-time student, Jocelyn works two jobs to help support her siblings.

Today, Jocelyn leans on the support from Guardian Scholars as she works towards reaching her goals. She has built strong relationships, will soon be matched with a mentor, and is excited to be part of the Advocates for Change group to help strengthen her public speaking skills, and use her voice to share her story. Most recently, she received a well-deserved award to assist with her rent. She was about to give up on herself, but the program's support has given her hope.

Jocelyn graduated from Southwestern College with two associate degrees and a certificate of achievement, and will be transferring to a university to get her degree in child development, in hopes of becoming a psychologist or teacher.

A photograph of three children sitting outdoors under a large tree. On the left is a young boy with curly brown hair, wearing a light blue t-shirt with a palm tree graphic. In the middle is a young girl with long dark hair, wearing a light blue shirt. On the right is a young boy with brown hair, wearing a white t-shirt with a palm tree graphic and yellow shorts. They are all smiling and looking towards the camera. The background is a soft-focus green landscape.

CAMP CONNECT

121

brothers and sisters
were reunited through
Camp Connect this
past year.

OUR PROMISE: Reconnect brothers and sisters separated in foster care.

TALIA (12), TYLER (6) AND TRISTAN (4) entered foster care due to abuse and neglect, and have been living apart in different homes. Unfortunately, they rarely see one another, unlike their peers who see their siblings daily.

Through Camp Connect, they reunited at a park where they spent the afternoon enjoying each other's company, while playing on all the structures the park had to offer.

Always taking on the motherly role, Talia followed her younger brothers around the park, and kept a close eye on them. She helped them get on and off the climbing walls, pushed them on the swings, and guided them on the zipline where they spent most of their time. Tyler and Tristan took turns kindly asking Talia to push them from one end to the other. She would run from one brother to the next, pull them to the peak of the zipline, and then push them across to the other end. Talia loved hearing her brothers giggle and watching the pure joy on their faces as they played.

At the end of their visit, they took photos to remember the day. Each month, they will continue to have fun opportunities to reconnect and create new and unforgettable memories.

CAMP CONNECT

provides siblings who have been separated in foster care with an environment of fun and safety, allowing them for a short time to set aside their trauma and experience the joy of being a kid. For foster youth, these are precious opportunities to create special memories and lasting bonds with their brothers and sisters.

FOSTER FUNDS

478

foster youth were
provided financial
assistance through
Foster Funds
last year.



OUR PROMISE: To celebrate how special every foster child is.

FOSTER FUNDS


helps foster youth experience all life has to offer, which is so critical to experiencing a sense of belonging. Special circumstances often arise in a foster child's life when they need additional financial support for sports equipment and music classes. It also includes the Birthday Club — providing a gift to a foster child on their birthday.

ABIGAIL (8) enjoys being creative and expressing herself, and has always been drawn to art and music. She wanted to learn more, however it is difficult for her to meet and connect with other kids her age, as she is naturally more introverted than her peers.

For Abigail, continuing to follow her passion by attending the music and art camp at a local music studio was a dream of hers. To her surprise, her request to participate in the camp was granted through the Something Special fund, and she was thrilled to be part of this fun summer activity. She was excited to be around kids who share the same interests, as this would boost her self-esteem and help her come out of her shell.

After camp, she couldn't wait to tell everyone about her experience and how much fun she had. She felt comfortable interacting with the other students, learning from the teachers, and making new friends, all while building her self-confidence and pushing herself to grow her talents.

This truly special experience for Abigail gave her the opportunity to build connections with like-minded kids in her community, while doing what she loves most!



A.B. & JESSIE POLINSKY CHILDREN'S CENTER

60,000⁺
children have
been cared for
since 1994 at the
Polinsky Children's
Center.

OUR PROMISE: To provide a safe haven for children when they need it most.

BENJAMIN (4) was born in a homeless encampment where he lived with his parents, both of whom had mental health issues, and repeatedly exposed him to chronic substance use and domestic violence. He was eventually removed due to severe neglect, and entered foster care at the A.B. and Jessie Polinsky Children's Center (PCC). At this time, Benjamin was developmentally behind. He knew less than 20 words, threw and broke toys, could not control his anger, and had difficulty socializing.

Through PCC, Benjamin received a full developmental assessment and services through KidSTART – a program for children under 6 with complex needs.

With the help of his team, Benjamin attended a camp program with classes designed to prepare him for kindergarten. The activities were tailored to his needs and focused on academic, behavioral, and social skill building.

Through Benjamin's participation, he showed steady gains and enjoyed being with his peers. His interactions with his caregiver improved and it gradually became easier to understand him.

Since then, Benjamin has continued to participate in weekly speech therapy and continues to receive the critical services and support he needs to continue his progression.

A.B. AND JESSIE POLINSKY CHILDREN'S CENTER

is San Diego County's
emergency shelter
for children who
cannot remain at
home as a result of
abuse or neglect.
Promises2Kids raised
\$12 million to build
the 6-acre facility
and funds programs
for children at the
Center. The Center
opened in 1994.

TOGETHER WE CAN DO SO MUCH.

You can help make a difference in the lives of San Diego's 3,000 foster youth today:

DONATE

Through your generosity, you can help a foster youth receive the necessary support and services for a brighter future. Your gift of any size will make a difference.

VOLUNTEER

Become a Guardian Scholar Mentor or a Camp Connect Counselor and provide the support and guidance to students aspiring to reach their educational and career goals, and to siblings living apart in foster care who have been reunited.

ATTEND

Our fundraiser, the Dream On Concert Gala, is held annually to benefit foster children. Enjoy an exclusive dinner and a private concert featuring a major recording artist.

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PROMISES2KIDS.ORG
858-278-4400