

Heartspring

DIALOGUE

Summer 2018





Our Story

Founded in 1934 as the Institute of Logopedics, Heartspring has been a leader and innovator in creating hope and opportunity for children with special needs and their families for 84 years. Heartspring provides a wide range of services and therapies through the Heartspring School, Pediatric Services, and Autism Services to meet the ever-changing challenges of children with special needs.



The **Heartspring School** is a residential and day school serving children with developmental disabilities from across the country.



Pediatric Services offers outpatient therapy services to children from birth to 21.



Autism Services provides services and resources for children and families impacted by a diagnosis of Autism Spectrum Disorder.

Heartspring is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization.



We have started our new fiscal year with hope and enthusiasm. To us, a new year means endless opportunities to change lives of children with special needs and their families – and this is what we plan to do.

This year's focus is both creative and exciting: Innovation.

By planning and executing innovative therapy and educational solutions that lead to positive results, we create endless waves of hope and opportunity for children with special needs.

We are committed to bringing more exciting ideas to life to improve the life of countless ever-deserving families in our community.

Thank you for being on board. Together we are changing lives. Together we are Heartspring.

David Stupay
President & CEO

Our Vision:

Creating hope and opportunity that changes the lives of children with special needs and their families

Our Values



Excellence



Celebration



Leadership



Service



Possibility



Integrity

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The Power of Belief: Moving from Possibility to Reality

Belief (n) - a state or habit of mind in which trust or confidence is placed in some person or thing¹

I want to tell you about a young mother being willing to drive from Hutchinson five times a week for two years so that her child could receive services from Heartspring. This is an obvious act of selfless love. Why would she do this? Belief. Belief in the hope of a better future for her child. Belief in the promise of Heartspring. Belief in the heartfelt professionalism of Heartspring staff. Belief validated by the real growth and improvement she sees every day in her child.

A couple of years ago, decisions were made to try to raise funds with which Heartspring could grow sensibly and responsibly.

Board members and Heartspring staff set about sharing our story with the community. And the community responded with exceptional generosity.

Because of the belief of the Heartspring families, staff, board members, and a group of generous donors, Expanding Possibilities has become Expanded Realities. On behalf of the board of directors, thank you to all you have done for Heartspring! As I begin my term as board chair, I welcome any comments or questions you might have.

Mike Flores
Heartspring Board of Trustees
President
Assistant Director, School of
Accountancy
Wichita State University

¹ From merriam-webster.com

SAVE THE DATE!



**AUTISM
CARE
WALK!**

Saturday, April 27, 2019

Benefiting local children impacted by autism and
Heartspring's Autism Services program
AutismCAREWalk.org



“I am proud of myself, and I know my parents are proud of me, too.”

Payton • Heartspring Student



“My favorite part was winning a medal.”

Sarah • Heartspring Student





Running with Purpose: A Heartspring Story

Heartspring School's girls learn lessons of empowerment and self-improvement through a running program.

It's a sunny day in Downtown Wichita. Hundreds of smiling faces gather around the Wichita Boathouse to cheer words of encouragement to young female runners as they cross the finish line. Some of them walk. Some of them run. Some of them frolic around with the excitement and joy that comes with experiencing something new. This is *Girls on The Run*, a running program designed to empower and encourage girls to embrace healthy lifestyles.

Among those crossing the finish line are several young girls wearing matching blue tutus and fun hairstyles. Some raise their hands up in the air and smile with enthusiasm; others hold hands and focus on crossing the finish line with determination and grit. This the Heartspring team, one of the few *Girls on the Run* teams in the United States (and the only one in Kansas) made up entirely of girls with special needs.

"I heard about this program, and how it helps girls feel better about themselves. It is all about inclusion

and helping others," said Megan Swett, Heartspring's director of residential clinical services. Megan first introduced this running program in the Heartspring School in the fall of 2016 with the hope that Heartspring female students have an opportunity to learn self-love, confidence, and respect for one another.

This simple idea then became a plan. With the help of staff volunteers, the Heartspring team started training, following a structured curriculum provided by the *Girls on the Run* board. The training took mental, physical, and emotional commitment, but after seeing the positive impact this activity had on the girls, more staff members began to volunteer.

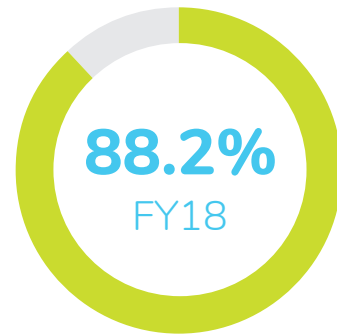
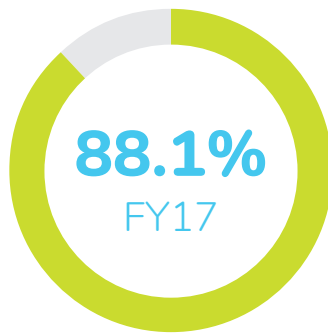
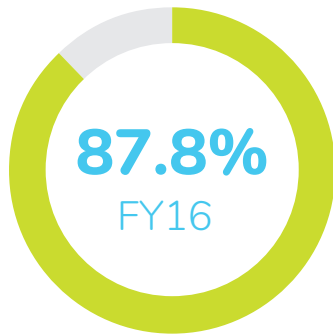
"After one season, we went from three coaches to ten coaches," mentioned Megan.

Megan's favorite memories are witnessing the girls pushing their own limits. She recalls a particular training session when Payton announced, "Today, my goal is to

run 10 laps." After the ninth lap, Payton laid on the ground, out of breath. She looked up at her coach and said, "I have one more lap to run. How will I know I can't do it if I don't try?" She got up from the grass and started jogging, repeatedly telling herself, "I can do this. I can do this."

With this same sense of intent, focus, and willpower, Payton – along with the rest of the Heartspring girls – woke up on the morning of May 12th, 2018, traveled to the heart of Wichita, and completed 3.1 miles of empowerment, confidence, and self-discovery. Each one of them crossed the finish line, excited to accomplish their goals.

For Heartspring, *Girls on the Run* signifies more than a physical achievement; it is a reminder of possibility, one of our core values. When the desire comes from the heart, the mind follows. And when, collectively, we join our hearts and minds, we overcome our differences and help one another find our own potential.



Percentage of parents/guardians **agree/strongly agree** that they are satisfied with the Heartspring School



Students and staff run together, encouraging one another. Hundreds of people showed up at the Wichita Boathouse on May 12th to cheer for Girls on the Run participants.



“It was great to see [my daughter] learn about the benefits of physical exercise and social interaction through lessons and exercises.”

Heartspring School Parent

Students take photos with their medals after crossing the finish line.
All Heartspring participants successfully finished the race.



Thinking Outside the (Therapy) Box: Camp AAChieve

Heartspring therapist adds a creative, holistic twist to speech therapy.

It started with an idea.

“What if we can bring kids together to help them with conversational repair?”, Speech Language Pathologist Jessica Smith said, as a handful of children run around the Heartspring Treehouse, laughing and playing. They are typical children. Some play hide-and-seek, others roll down the grass, and a couple of them make sandcastles in the sandbox. But they have one thing in common: All of them carry an iPad strapped around their neck – some of them have personalized straps with a variety of colors, shapes, and even cartoon characters. Every once in a while, they stop and engage with their devices.

Though it may be typical for a child to use a tablet to watch videos and play games, these children use their devices for an instrumental purpose - to communicate thoughts, feelings, needs, and wants.

This is exactly what Jessica hoped to accomplish at Camp AAChieve, Heartspring’s first camp for children who use Alternative and Augmentative Communication

(AAC) devices to overcome speech and language impairments.

And she made it happen. Over a period of five days, children met from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. to play games and participate in fun, structured interactive activities using their devices. By immersing children in controlled social settings where they feel safe and comfortable, Jessica and a team of volunteers facilitated conversational repair therapy through prompts and cues to encourage children to use AAC devices with one another.

While highly strategic and technical, Camp AAChieve was an innovative application of speech therapy, where children learned to use their devices while practicing social skills, having fun, and making friends. In just five day-long sessions, Jessica witnessed many social and communicative improvements through games. “When we were playing Duck-Duck-Goose on the first day, the volunteers had been modeling the game on their talkers, and we had children run to the table to get theirs and say “Duck-Duck-Goose” using their devices,” Jessica said.

By fostering a fun learning environment where children see other children communicate with their devices, they are encouraged to do the same. “When kids see other kids doing it without adult support, it’s easier for them to do it at home and at school,” Jessica states. And while Jessica knows that the majority of these children might not get to develop constant fluency in their verbal speech, through AAC technology, they learn to have agency in their communication so that they, too, can be understood.

“There are a lot of ways to communicate. It’s important for all kids to learn to say, ‘This is what I want’ and ‘This is what I feel.’”

Jessica Smith • Speech Language Pathologist

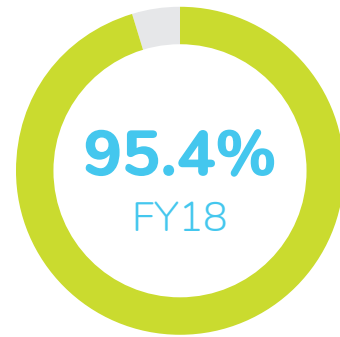
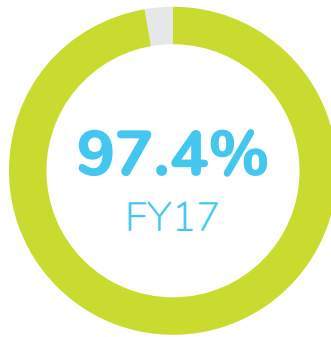
Heartspring takes pride in being a leader and innovator in improving the lives of children with special needs, and Camp AAChieve exemplifies how we further our mission through leadership and innovation. By using her knowledge and thinking “outside the box,” leaders like Jessica create hope and opportunities for growth in the lives of several children and countless family members.

Speech Language Pathologist Jessica Smith helps a camper use her AAC device.



“Camp AAChievement helped [my son] see that it was OK to wear and use his AAC device with others.”

Pediatric Services Parent



Percentage of parents/guardians **agree/strongly agree** that they are satisfied with Heartspring Pediatric Services

Camper learn to use their devices by exploring their environments through hands-on activities.



“I want to teach
others about autism.”

Lauren • Camp SSTAR peer mentor



From Camper to Mentor

**Last year, Camp SSTAR changed a camper's life.
This year, she returned to camp as a volunteer mentor.**

Most teenage girls like to spend their summer going to the movies, hanging out with friends, or splashing around in the pool. Fourteen year old Lauren enjoys all of these activities and more, but in a different setting. Lauren is a peer mentor at Camp SSTAR, a summer camp for children with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD).

Last year, Lauren was a SSTAR camper herself. This life-changing camp is designed to teach social skills, technology, arts, and recreation to children with a diagnosis of ASD. Through a structured and consistent learning environment, Camp SSTAR aims to keep children engaged in the summer months so that they maintain skills during the break from school.

Lauren enjoyed her camp experience so much that she returned as a peer mentor. "I get along so well with the people at Camp SSTAR. All my best friends are here," Lauren states. She turns to a child with a big smile and says, "Do you want me to play with you? I can play with you."

Lauren's passionate about researching ASD and helping kids on the spectrum learn more about their own diagnosis. This mission

came to her after hearing other kids claim that autism is "something that makes kids dumb."

"I want to teach others about autism," Lauren states, with an affirming look in her eyes. "My favorite part is working with the little kids and helping them learn."

"Lauren's experience at [Camp SSTAR] encouraged her to grow and mature in several ways. We are VERY proud of her!"

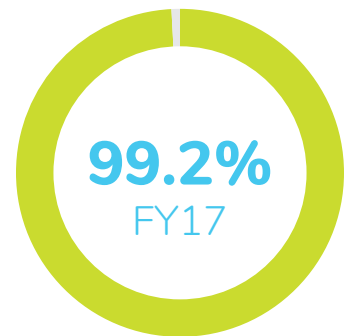
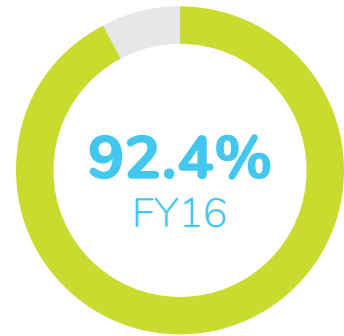
Lisa • Lauren's mom

Although she does not realize it, Lauren embodies the Heartspring vision. Through her sweet, calm, and determined demeanor, she connects with children she identifies with, helps them feel comfortable, and teaches them that there is more to life than a diagnosis. Like Camp SSTAR once did for Lauren, she now shares her own lessons, guidance, and mentorship to enable children to find the same sense of hope, purpose, and opportunity she has found in her own life.

At Camp SSTAR, *playtime is structured as a learning activity for children to practice socialization and verbal skills.*

“This program has greatly improved the quality of my son’s break from school. He stays engaged, socialized, and happy in this program. He’s a different kid during the summer because of Camp SSTAR. He feels successful there and he even wants to go there on weekends! I highly recommend this program to others.”

Autism Services Parent



Percentage of parents/guardians **agree/strongly agree** that they are satisfied with Heartspring Autism Services



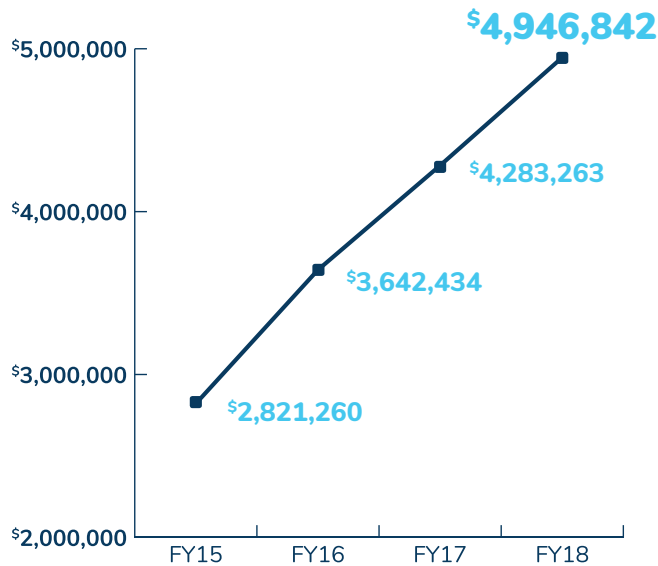
By the end of camp, campers form meaningful relationships with other campers, staff members, and volunteers.

Growth FY18

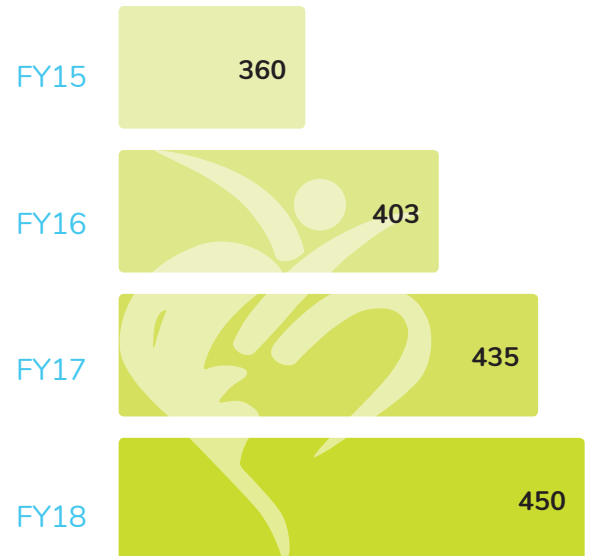
Our team is rallied around one central vision of **creating hope and opportunity** that changes the lives of children with special needs and their families. The most significant ways we realize this vision is by expanding services to meet the growing needs, providing free and reduced fee services to families that otherwise could not afford it, and delivering the highest quality services that create measurable outcomes with tremendous satisfaction.

David Stupay • President & CEO

Outpatient Therapy Annual Revenue



Heartspring Team Members



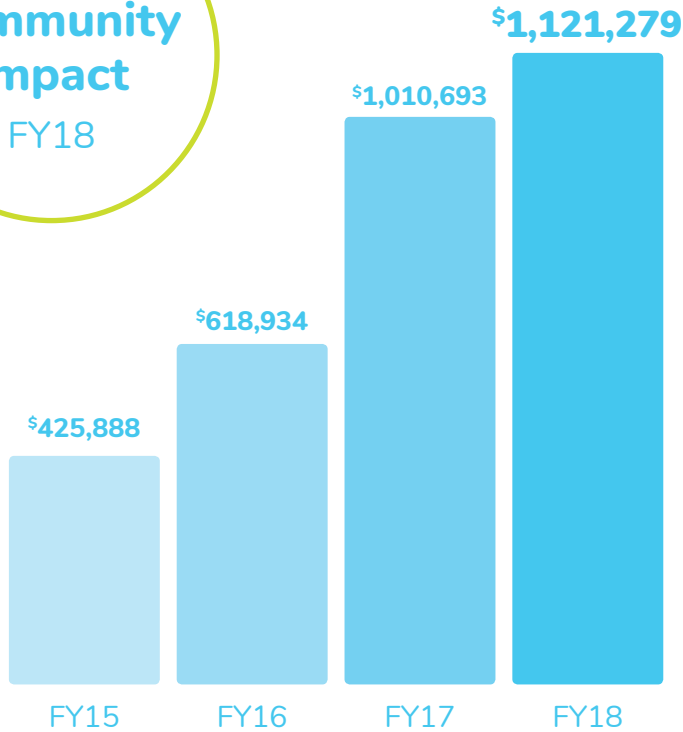
45%

increase in our
student population
since FY15

Community Impact

FY18

Free or Reduced Fee Services Provided

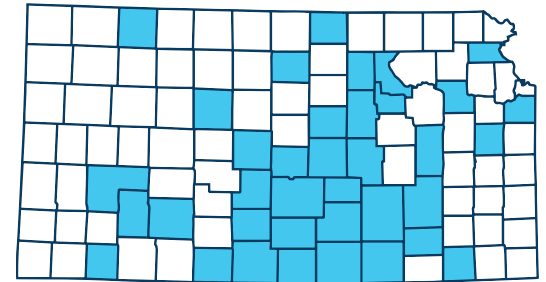


445 children received free or reduced fee services

Created hope and opportunity for

993

children and their families



36 Kansas counties served



Medicine



Community Outings



Clothing



Travel



Transition Training

Student Support

Heartspring provides additional student support funding for prescription co-pays, community outings, clothing, travel, and transition training for families who otherwise could not afford it.



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LIGHT YOUR HEART

with Heartspring

Saturday, November 3, 2018

Spend an evening celebrating the inspiring children at Heartspring
LightYourHeart.org