



2023 & 2024 IMPACT REPORT



**Engage Families.
Cultivate Hope.
Build Confidence.**



VISION

Families are the safe place for children with unique needs to find love, belonging, guidance, and support.

MISSION

Exceptional Parents Unlimited guides and strengthens families and children with unique needs through early intervention and supportive services that cultivate hope and resilience.

PURPOSE

Primary Purpose: Young children (age 0-5) with unique needs and their families can thrive with early intervention and support:

- Investment in young children significantly improves outcomes.
- Focusing on young children reduces the need for intervention with older children.

Secondary Purpose: Parents and caregivers with training and support can help older children with unique needs achieve the best possible outcomes.

- Early intervention may have been unavailable, insufficient, or unknown.
- Educational and long-term systems of care can be difficult to navigate successfully without support.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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Claudia Plascencia, Director of Parenting Services

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LETTER FROM THE CEO

Dear Friends and Supporters,

As we reflect on this past year, I'm filled with a profound sense of pride and gratitude for the remarkable growth and progress we have achieved since the pandemic. Our dedicated team at Exceptional Parents Unlimited (EPU) has worked tirelessly to adapt and expand our services, ensuring we continue to meet the needs of families and their children with unique developmental, physical, behavioral, and emotional challenges in these evolving times.

Engaging Families

At EPU, we believe in the power of community. Our physical office expansion in Mariposa, Madera, and Merced along with emerging efforts in rural areas across the Central Valley has allowed us to bring our services closer to families. This growth enables us to engage with more parents and caregivers, providing them with the guidance and resources they need. Our 10% increase in staff has further bolstered our ability to reach and assist more families, ensuring that we meet them where they are and that no one feels alone in their journey.

Cultivating Hope

We have made significant advancements to our programs and facilities, creating a more welcoming and supportive environment for the families we serve. The expansion of EPU's children's onsite playground provides more sensory experiences and space for social interactions with other children. Additionally, the implementation of a large photovoltaic carport, drought-tolerant landscaping and the installation of electric car charging stations are steps towards sustainability and the well-being of our constituents. These are just a few examples of how we are cultivating hope through EPU and leading within our community.

Building Confidence

Our Speak Up Self Advocacy Conference is just one example of how EPU has extended its service through digital outreach, focused on individuals aged 14-26 with disabilities. By empowering young people to speak up for themselves, we are building a generation of confident and self-reliant advocates. This initiative, along with our continued efforts to provide tangible support during times of need, exemplifies our dedication to building confidence in the families and children we support.

Our collective efforts have enabled us to grow and adapt in the face of unprecedented challenges and likely, more will come. I am immensely proud of our team's resilience and dedication, and I am deeply grateful to our supporters and partners who have stood by us every step of the way. Together, we are building a stronger, more inclusive community where everyone has the opportunity to thrive.

Thank you for being an integral part of EPU.

ENGAGING FAMILIES

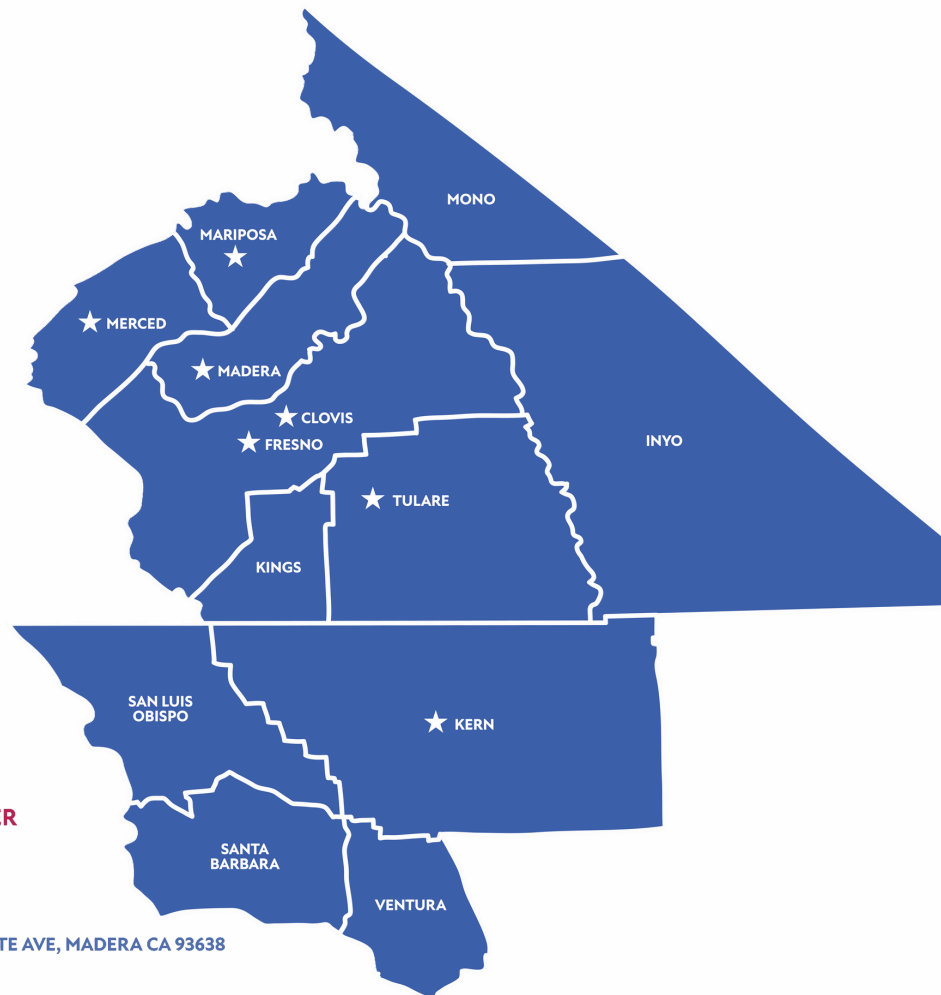
Spanning across California, EPU is accessible to families from all socio-economic backgrounds in the twelve counties we serve. United by their connection to EPU—a place where seeds of hope are sown, and confidence is nurtured—families find a lifeline through our Neighborhood Resource Centers and various offices in Fresno, Madera, Merced, and Mariposa. Serving over 4,000 children and families annually, EPU offers services in multiple languages, establishing itself as a national leader in comprehensive, family-centered care. Our dedicated team of more than 125 employees, including early childhood therapists, speech and physical therapists, mental health clinicians, case managers, and home visitors, rises to the challenge every day to support families and children facing a myriad of obstacles. With access to specialized care, resources, and opportunities, families have come to know and value that *hope grows* at EPU.

EPU Counties Served



STAFFED COUNTIES

Counties with at least one staff expert or more living and serving in the community.



■ EPU MAIN OFFICE & CHILD DEVELOPMENT CENTER

- 4440 N FIRST ST, FRESNO CA 93726

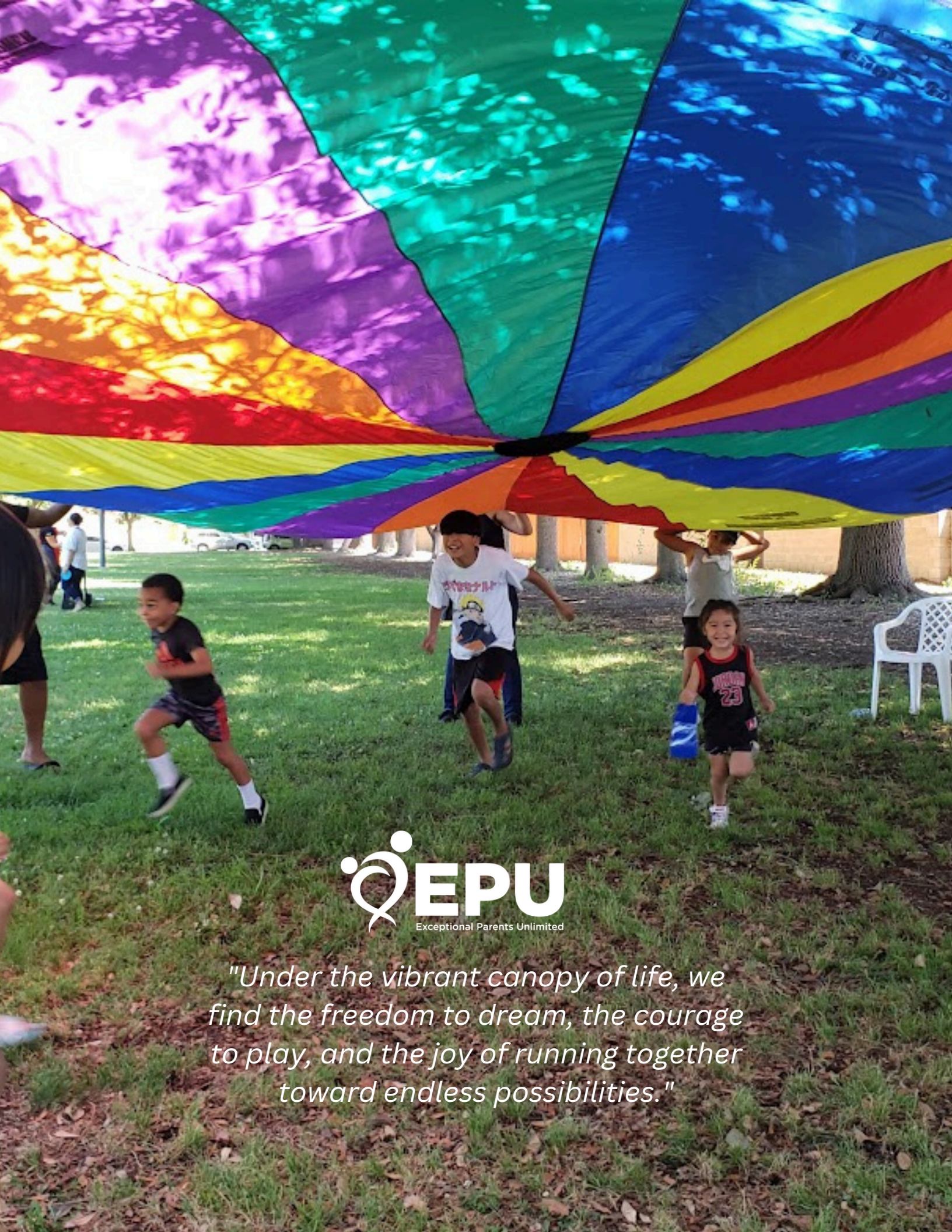
■ EPU LOCATIONS

- EPU OFFICE - 1960 P ST, MERCED CA 95340
- EPU OFFICE AT FIRST 5 MADERA COUNTY - 525 E YOSEMITE AVE, MADERA CA 93638
- EPU OFFICE - 4990 6TH ST, MARIPOSA CA 95338

■ EPU NEIGHBORHOOD RESOURCE CENTERS

- WILLOW CENTER AT WILLOW AVENUE CHURCH - 2529 WILLOW AVE, CLOVIS CA 93612
- SHIELDS FAMILY CENTER - 3012 N FRESNO ST, FRESNO CA 93703
- KINGS CANYON FAMILY CENTER AT UNITED WAY - 4949 E CESAR CHAVEZ BLVD, FRESNO CA 93727





*"Under the vibrant canopy of life, we
find the freedom to dream, the courage
to play, and the joy of running together
toward endless possibilities."*



CULTIVATING HOPE

When Silvia began her journey with Exceptional Parents Unlimited (EPU), she felt overwhelmed by the challenges of parenting her seven children and three stepchildren. She feared being stigmatized, categorized, and judged. However, her apprehensions began to fade soon after meeting her case manager, Sharita. Silvia discovered that the staff at EPU's Parenting Services Department approach every client with compassion and understanding, meeting them where they are without judgment. They assessed her current skills and helped her build a personalized parenting toolbox.

Silvia quickly became comfortable with the EPU staff, seeking their one-on-one guidance, connecting to resources, and attending classes at our Neighborhood Resource Centers. She enthusiastically participated in group classes to improve her parenting skills, nutrition, financial planning, and trauma healing.

Through her involvement with *Project Hope*, Silvia began to realize that her parenting style needed adjustment. Instead of being responsive to her children, she often found herself being reactive. With the support of EPU staff and fellow parents, Silvia learned to become more responsive and to embody the parent she aspired to be.

Implementing the knowledge and skills she gained at EPU, her relationships with her children began to transform. She learned to wait for them to seek advice rather than imposing it, which led to her children approaching her proactively to share their problems.

Silvia regrets not acquiring these skills earlier, especially seeing the positive impact on her younger children compared to her older teens. She wishes her own parents had passed on the skills she gained through EPU's Parenting Services Department. Nonetheless, Silvia is grateful for her progress and is committed to ending the cycle of trauma in her family. Determined to cultivate these skills continuously, she aims to be a role model for her children.

After participating in several Family Cafés, Silvia became a Parent Lead, guiding Parent Café classes and encouraging parents facing similar challenges. She helps them learn the skills needed to become the parents they want to be, just as she has.

Silvia's dedication to EPU extends beyond her personal success. She has become EPU's unofficial recruiter, inspiring her husband, Joel, to join the 24/7 Dad's group and Incredible Years, and bringing family members and friends to EPU classes and Neighborhood Resource Centers. Silvia even encouraged her teenage children to enroll in EPU's Teen Anger Management Class. Though initially reluctant, they soon enjoyed the class and did not want it to end. Her younger children eagerly accompany her to classes and participate in the childcare offered.



Joel joined Silvia on her journey at EPU by participating in parenting classes too.

Through the classes she attended, Silvia made many friends with other parents, fostering a strong sense of community. This connection fills her with joy, as she explains that while moms often lack time for themselves, taking care of oneself is essential to caring for others. Having a support network and a community that accepts and cares for her family brings Silvia immense delight.

Silvia wants all parents to know that -

*“You can
always learn,
and you can
always try to
be better.”*



2024
5,543
Families served

35,319
Services provided



*Silvia and her daughter with
members of the EPU team.*

EPU PARENTING SERVICES

BIG PICTURE

Since its inception in 1992, EPU's Parenting Services Department has been a cornerstone of our agency. Providing a wide array of essential services to families, our dedicated EPU team offers case management, home visitation, parenting classes, and connects families to resources both within our organization and through community partners. EPU staff often engage with families during challenging times, leading with empathy and non-judgment as they assess each family's unique needs and work collaboratively to achieve their goals.

Families like Silvia's, who come through our Parenting Services Department, often face complex and generational barriers. EPU staff provide guidance and coaching along with vital resources that families might not discover on their own. These tools and services empower parents to build their confidence with a reliable support system by their side.

While some might wonder how Parenting Services aligns with EPU's original mission, it is crucial to understand that this department is integral to removing barriers so families can effectively meet their children's needs. Our Neighborhood Resource Centers, for example, offer Ages and Stages Questionnaires (ASQs) funded by First 5 Fresno County, helping families screen for developmental milestones. Many families receive their first ASQ through our services, benefiting from the trust and relationships our staff build.

Our CalWORKs Department also supports parents of young children, enhancing school readiness and educating parents about child development to ensure the well-being of both children and families.

Families engaging with EPU's Parenting Services Department frequently find a welcoming community among staff and fellow participants. This fosters informal support networks, ensuring that no one feels alone on their journey. Many parents encounter similar challenges and connect over shared solutions. Our Parenting Services Department is dedicated to offering tangible support during times of need, nurturing an environment where both parents and children can flourish.

EPU Services for Parents & Caregivers

- Case Management
- Parent Training
- Mental Health Support/Therapy
- Whole Child Care (see pg. 11)
- Parent & Family Support
- Resources & Referrals



Claudette Plascencia
Director of Parenting Services

BUILDING CONFIDENCE

Jason was born prematurely at 32 weeks' gestation. His parents, Jessenia and Javier, were overwhelmed knowing their son needed immediate medical care and extra support for his development. Jason spent a month in the Natal Intensive Care Unit. Doctors told Jason's parents that because he was born so early to expect him to be delayed in reaching his milestones. The doctors explained that Jason had until about the age of two to catch up with his peers developmentally.

After Jason's stay in the hospital and a few surgeries, Jason's parents could clearly see that their now six-month-old son was not meeting his milestones. Jason was not able to roll over and did not always respond to his name. Understanding that the first two years are the most critical for development, his parents sought the services of EPU in Merced County.

Jessenia explains that EPU was new to Merced and that she did not know much about its reputation. Jason became EPU's first referral to *Engage, Play, Inspire, Connect (EPIC)* in Merced County. Kimberly, Supervisor of Early Intervention Services, with six years of experience at EPU, was well-equipped to help Jason gain his essential skills and put his parents' concerns at ease.

Kimberly was well aware that she was taking on a child that had already faced many challenges in his short life, but she quickly recognized that Jason had a family that was determined to help him meet his milestones. The family implemented everything they learned from Kimberly, while continuing to strengthen Jason's innate skills and build new ones...they were so happy to watch him progress.

During their weekly visits to EPU, Kimberly would point out ways in which Jason had developed



2024

19,324

Early intervention
services

1,153

Children impacted



and grown his skills from the week prior giving Jessenia and Javier the encouragement and confidence they needed to know their efforts were paying off. Being parents of a child struggling to meet milestones can be discouraging and skill-building can be slow. Kimberly made certain Jason and his parents understood how much they were achieving and how far they had come.

EPU has been providing Early Intervention services in Merced County for over a year. Jason, our first Merced referral, is now two years old and has met all his goals. He is at age-level for all his milestones, and even ahead in a few! We could not be prouder of Jason, his parents, and the staff that made this all possible.

“Jason can now run, climb, spoon feed, blow bubbles, play T-ball, match shapes and loves to be the center of attention.”

EPU Whole Child Care

- Case Management
- Child Assessment
- Early Intervention
- Child Socialization
- Behavioral Health
- Resources & Referrals



FAMILY FEEDBACK

“You have been so informative and have truly helped us through this process.”

“It was a great experience!”

“You have been a Godsend.”

“Thank you for helping us with clarifying the potential issues our son may have.”

HELP ME GROW

Help Me Grow Merced is another EPU program that has made an impact in Merced County over the past two years. *Help Me Grow* is a system for families and community partners to help young children ages 0-5 achieve optimal development and well-being. The program provides access to early intervention developmental screenings, child development/milestones, care coordination, buffering resources, and parent support.

In the last year, we have developed many new partnerships with community agencies and as a result have seen an influx of new referrals. The referrals have resulted in children receiving early interventions and connections with community services. *Help Me Grow Merced* staff refers to community agencies such as Central Valley Regional Center, Department of Behavioral Health, local school districts, childcare, play groups, and parent workshops.

The Merced office has recently moved to a permanent new location at 1960 P. Street in Merced. *Help Me Grow* has been graciously welcomed by so many Merced families. We are humbled by their appreciation of the services we offer.

1:17

**Child to number of
services utilized**

**EPU expanded to
provide Help Me Grow
services in Fresno
County in Nov 2024**



2023 & 2024 STATEMENT OF ACTIVITIES

Revenue

	FY 2023	FY 2024
Contributions & Grants	\$ 6,981,440	\$ 6,328,155
Program Service Revenue	\$ 1,784,233	\$ 4,613,770
Investment Income	\$ 30,816	\$ 218,037
Other Revenue	\$ 1,685,029	\$ 1,731,310
Total	\$10,481,518	\$12,891,272

Expenses

Salaries & Benefits	\$ 6,906,855	\$ 8,384,701
Fundraising Expenses	\$ 188,947	\$ 217,110
Other Expenses	\$ 2,208,700	\$ 2,082,137
Total	\$ 9,304,502	\$10,683,948

Revenues less Expenses

	\$ 1,177,016	\$ 2,207,324
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Total Assets	\$ 6,173,168	\$ 8,658,190
Total Liabilities	\$ 1,965,571	\$ 2,243,269
Net Assets	\$ 4,207,597	\$ 6,414,921

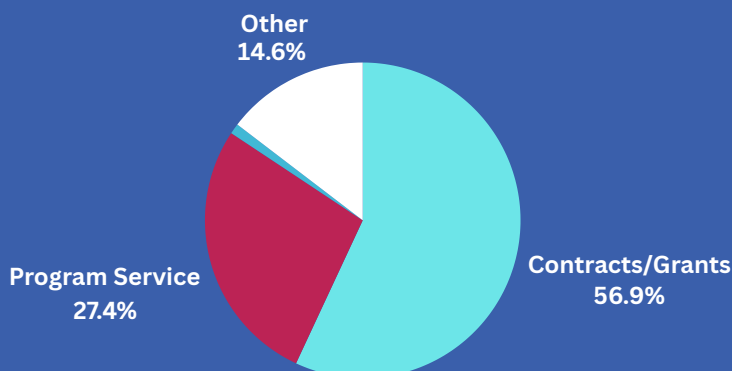


ISNARDI FOUNDATION

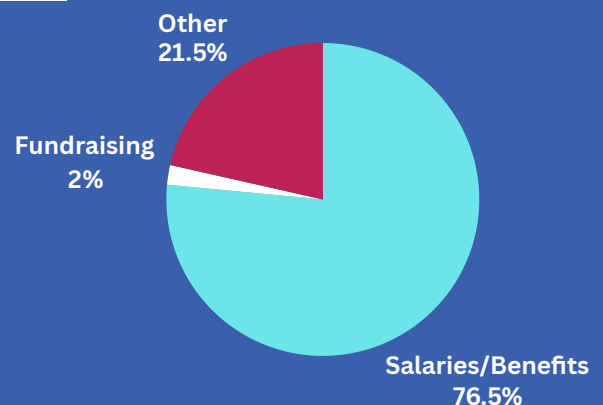
The Isnardi Foundation has been a collaborative partner with EPU for 10 years supporting a variety of projects through annual financial giving. Many of their gifts have helped fund capital infrastructure needs such as vans to transport families, vehicles for daily home visits, HVAC unit upgrades, roof repairs, and fencing to protect our property.

The Isnardi Foundation was established by Vincent Isnardi in 2006 to give back to Fresno where he was born and raised. His legacy is carried on today through each generous contribution towards the health and well-being of the people who live here. The Isnardi Foundation's trust in EPU brings hope and support to families and children ensuring a brighter future for us all.

Revenue



Expenses



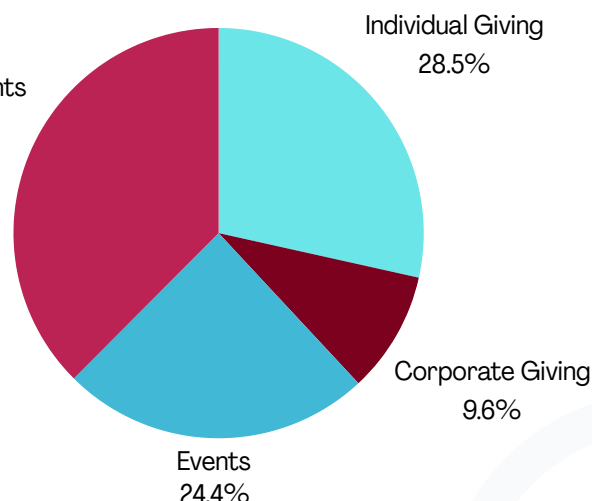
PHILANTHROPY HIGHLIGHTS

EPU SIGNATURE EVENTS



Fiesta de los Niños is an evening filled with music, mission, and memorable moments. Each year, we celebrate an EPU family that has overcome tremendous odds and thanks to our partnership with you now has the tools and know-how to plan for their future with confidence.

2023 & 2024 Sources of Philanthropy



Total Gifts: 830

Total Donations: \$606,959

Total Dollars Raised: \$1,147,738



The Gala of Light brings our community together to shine a light on the families EPU serves and those that bring hope to others, like *you*!



The evening sparkles with laughter and love and big dollars are raised!

IMPACT

Thanks to you!

Because of your generosity and unwavering support, EPU has been able to make a profound impact on the lives of countless families and individuals in our community. Your contributions have fueled our growth, expanded our reach, and enhanced the quality of our programs and services. We are deeply grateful for your commitment and dedication, and it is with immense gratitude that we recognize and honor our donors, whose support has been instrumental in EPU's success.

All Valley Compliance
Anthem Blue Cross
Lori and Steve Antonino
Art of Masculinity
Kris and Mike Aubry
Matthew Bahr
Nancy Baker
Balance Health Plan & CHP
Ernie Balleste
Amy Balmano
Bank of America c/o CyberGrants
Bank of the Sierra
Beneficial State Bank
Bay Alarm
Joyce and Gary Bedrosian
Hank Bellina
Beneficial State Bank
Richard Bonner
Sean Borchardt
Virginia R. Boris Elementary
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Leticia Campos
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Lisa Casarez-Austin
Amanda Casqueira
Central Valley Community Foundation
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Citizens Business Bank
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Domino's Pizza
Dr. Erika Egerton
East Fresno Kiwanis
EECU
Dr. W. Eugene Egerton
Empower Speech Therapy & Life Skills Center

Melissa and Lowell Ens
Everi Payments
Family HealthCare Network
Dr. Norma Figueroa
Jillian Balubar and AJ Flores
Fred Ford
Fresno Coin Gallery
Fresno County Public Health Department
Fresno County Superintendent of Schools
Fresno EOC
Fresno Immigrant and Refugee Ministries
Fresno Lexus
Fresno Unified School District
Dr. Jill Friebele
Cassabon Fung LLP
Victor Fung
Suzanna Gámez
Maribel Garcia and Paul Peschel

WITH SPECIAL THANKS TO OUR GENEROUS MAJOR FUNDERS & FOUNDATIONS

CA Department of Developmental Services
CA Department of Health Care Services
CA Department of Social Services
CalViva Health
Central Valley Regional Center
County of Fresno
Fansler Foundation
First 5 Merced County
First 5 Fresno County
Isnardi Foundation
U.S. Department of Education

GSF Properties
Kimberly and Michael Goldring
Jessica Gomez
Tracy and Marshal Gong
Rebecca Gonzalez
Grill Masters BBQ
Groppetti Automotive Family
Neil Grossman
Reva and Jerome Guimont
Chris Hagans
Rachel and Mike Hagans
Coke Hallowell
Jeanne Hatfield
Nancy and Andrew Head
Hedrick's Chevrolet
May Gnia Her
Hicks Pension Services
Robert Horacio
Irwin, Jackson, Hathcoat, & Wang
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Kaiser Foundation Health Plan
CSU Fresno Kappa Kappa Gamma
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Becky Kramer
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Rotary Club of Tulare
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Brian Weber
Westly Foundation
Whitney, Thompson & Jeffcoach Law Firm
Thomas Wong
Jessica and Brett Woods
Erica Ybarra

Gifts listed are at the \$250 level and above.



Together, hope grows here...

- Make a tax-deductible donation, stock transfer or estate gift so more children with unique developmental, physical, behavioral or emotional needs can be served by EPU. Give online or contact development@epuchildren.org.
- Make a recurring donation online of \$10, \$15, or \$20 per month to give EPU families the tools and confidence to navigate their future.
- Join EPU's social media network on [Facebook](#), [Instagram](#), [LinkedIn](#), and [YouTube](#).
- Align your passion for service by becoming an EPU volunteer. Contact canderson@epuchildren.org to learn more.

epuchildren.org/make-a-donation





32nd Annual FIESTA DE LOS NIÑOS

Saturday, May 31, 2025
6-10pm

The Grand on the Bluffs
7855 N Palm Ave, Fresno CA 93711



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