



2022

Annual Impact Report

Prepared by:

Melanie H. West
Executive Director

FEAT (Families for Effective Autism Treatment) of Louisville, Inc.

MISSION:

Families for Effective Autism Treatment (FEAT) of Louisville is a non-profit organization that actively supports and funds autism programs for the entire family. Created for families by families, FEAT of Louisville is dedicated to "easing the autism journey" through ongoing support, education and programs.

VISION:

To be the largest provider of resources, support and education that empowers Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) individuals and their family on their autism journey.

VALUES:

- Inclusion
- Collaboration
- Education

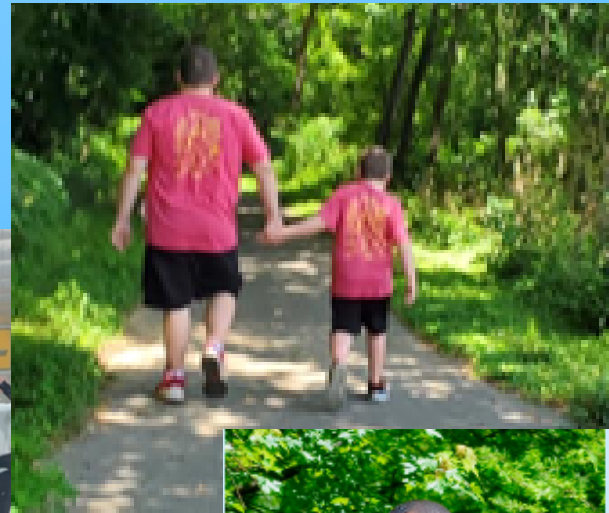


2022 at a Glance

Autism Awareness and Education

FEAT was founded in 1999 with an emphasis on supporting autism awareness and education for families – this continued to be a major focus in 2022 with the rate of autism being 1 in 44 diagnosed. Throughout the year, FEAT sponsored in-person monthly parent meetings, programs for children, special events or training opportunities. We offered two new programs in 2022, Open Net, an all abilities soccer camp and Frozen FEAT, ice skating camp.

FEAT continued to expand it's social platforms to promote autism awareness as well as the programs FEAT and collaborative partners provide in the community. Our FEAT social media pages continue to add to the overall impact of these efforts being that families facing the challenges of autism are able to learn more about FEAT and services available in the community.



Community Support

Sensory Friendly Trunk or Treat

In October, FEAT partnered with Autism Friendly Business Initiative (AFBI) member, Park Community Credit Union to host the 4th annual Trunk or Treat. Over 400 families participated, they were welcomed with over 50 spooktacular creations. Park Community Credit Union and FEAT were positioned at the exit and handed out prepackaged goodie bags to all the children.

The children loved the experience and the parents were so thankful for the opportunity to do something to experience trick or treating in a friendly, compassionate atmosphere. We saw lots of smiles and great costumes!



Community Support

Sensory Friendly Santa

In December, FEAT hosting it's annual special needs Christmas party. Over 125 children attended in addition to 150 parents/caregivers. Parents were so grateful for this much needed event, stating how isolating and disconnected they feel being on the autism journey. This event is an opportunity to connect to autism resources and other parents on the same journey. We saw lots of smiles and even some tears of happiness.



Parents shared their stories of how difficult the 'usual' trip to deliver the "wish list" and getting a picture with Santa was normally. One family was especially touching, mom and dad were both in tears because they had never been able to get a picture of their 10 year old autistic son with Santa. The Sensory Santa creates an environment that parents experienced the joy of seeing their son (above photo) sit with Santa!!

"Thanks to FEAT, I have my first picture of my son with Santa"
~ Shannon Block. FEAT parent/supporter

FEAT Programs

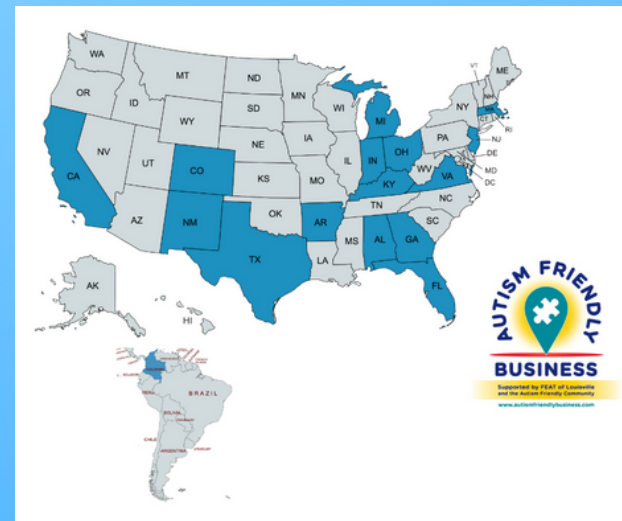
In 2022, FEAT continued to focus on collaborative efforts with other local agencies to help families. Through highlighted partnerships and the leadership of the Autism Friendly Community and a group of local autism service providers we provided much needed support.

Get Your FEAT Wet Swim Program

In collaboration with All About Kids and Home of the Innocents, children with autism learn to swim with one-on-one instruction with behavior support as needed. This program improves the health of children with autism by teaching them the lifelong skill of swimming, which provides them not only with safety and enjoyment, but also with the means for physical exercise. Approximately 75 children participated in 2020 with many on a wait list.

Autism Friendly Business Initiative - AFBI

FEAT began the Autism Friendly Business Initiative (AFBI) in 2011 with 40 local providers who were also looking to close the gaps and prepare the community for autistic individuals as they aged out of the “system.” The mission of AFBI is to build a community of businesses dedicated to the inclusion of people with autism spectrum disorder (ASD) in all aspects of life. It is our goal to raise awareness, appreciation, acceptance and value to employment of ASD individuals. At the conclusion of 2022, we had over 400 AFBI certified businesses in 15 states. Carlissa Brown, FEAT parent, and autism advocate and Compliance Officer at Park Community Credit Union stated, “AFBI means the world to my family. It helps spread awareness of autism across the city, it promotes inclusion of all people and gives families like mine hope for the future. The hope of acceptance and the promise that the AFBI program will lead to jobs for the autism community.”



Republic Bank was recognized as the Autism Friendly Business of the Year at 2022 FEAT's annual Create A Stir About Autism Gala.

Republic Bank sponsors FEAT events, volunteers and became an AFBI in 2019. They offer sensory bags at all their location for the community. We are humbled by their commitment to the autism community.

New & Ongoing Programs

In addition to FEAT directly managed programs, we continued to support our ongoing partner programs:

Endeavor Program

This collaborative program with Carriage House Educational Services utilizes a strong applied behaviour analysis (ABA) approach to help children develop the verbal, social, emotional, and self-help skills required for younger children with autism to become successful when placed in a typical preschool or elementary school classroom. The skills learned in the Endeavor Program increase school readiness for young children with autism. The 2022 enrollment was 100 children with 12 scholarships provided.

Dreams in Motion

This 8 week therapeutic and recreational summer day camp for children ages 7-21 with autism is a collaborative effort between FEAT and Dreams with Wings. The program typically offers onsite and community-based education and life skill activities as well as recreational summer outings. In 2022, Dreams in Motion summer camp welcomed 50 eager campers to participate in the week long camp.

Bluegrass Center for Autism Vocational Job Coach Program

Within their campus uniquely located in Mid City Mall, students are prepared to develop communicative, daily living and job readiness skills required to function as independently as possible. These skills are taught in a “school-like” setting and through community-based instruction that extends into surrounding stores. The mall has become an extension of the classroom where lessons are not taught in isolation and are more easily generalized. Approximately 19 children participate in this program and worked over 120 vocational hours.

Through collaborated efforts, FEAT helped provide funding for these new programs:

- Expanded Get Your FEAT Wet Program” to include additional hours and locations with All About Kids and Aqua-Tots. The program is offered in Jefferson and Oldham counties.
- Partnership with Jeffersontown Police Department’s for FEAT Watch Program.
- Collaboration with Leadership Louisville’s Ignite team to grow the Autism Friendly Business Initiative (AFBI), a project that enables any businesses in our community to become more autism friendly through training materials, workshops, training video and accommodation/employee training manuals.
- New partnership with Bernheim Forest to develop a Sensory Garden for ASD individuals and their families.
- Marty's Orchid House partnership to provide necessary therapeutic and health services to West Louisville preschoolers on the spectrum.

Fundraising

FEAT remains active in its fundraising efforts in order to provide the mentioned programs and services to its members. The two major events held this past year included the following:

17th Annual Run for Autism 5K

FEAT 5K Race and 1 Mile Fun Walk was held May 21. It has grown to over 1300 participants and 100+ volunteers participate in the largest autism event of this type in the community. In 2020, Outrunning Autism ran virtual due to COVID-19. We saw a significant decline in registered participants and dollars raised. Funds raised by this event went to support our collaborative programs, the Autism Friendly Business Initiative and some new program initiatives. In 2022, we saw a tremendous increase in support for the race with over 1,000 people in attendance.

Annual Create A Stir About Autism Gala

FEAT's longest running event was held September 15 which included dinner, live and silent auctions and dancing. We were able to break a record for the 2nd largest fundraiser in FEAT's history. Funds raised from this event support a variety of FEAT activities including direct program funding for Bluegrass Center for Autism Vocational Job Coach Program, Get Your FEAT Wet Swim Program and Carriage House Endeavor Program, scholarships and parent workshops.

FEAT is excited about hosting these same events in 2023 and hope that their continued success will enable FEAT to support and grow existing and new programs in 2023.

2023 Events

- Run for Autism 5K
Saturday, May 20, 2023
The Parklands
- Create A Stir About Autism Gala
Friday, September 29, 2023
The Olmsted

Financial Highlights

TOTAL REVENUE AS OF Q4 2022

BUDGET BREAKDOWN

38%- Direct Program
Support

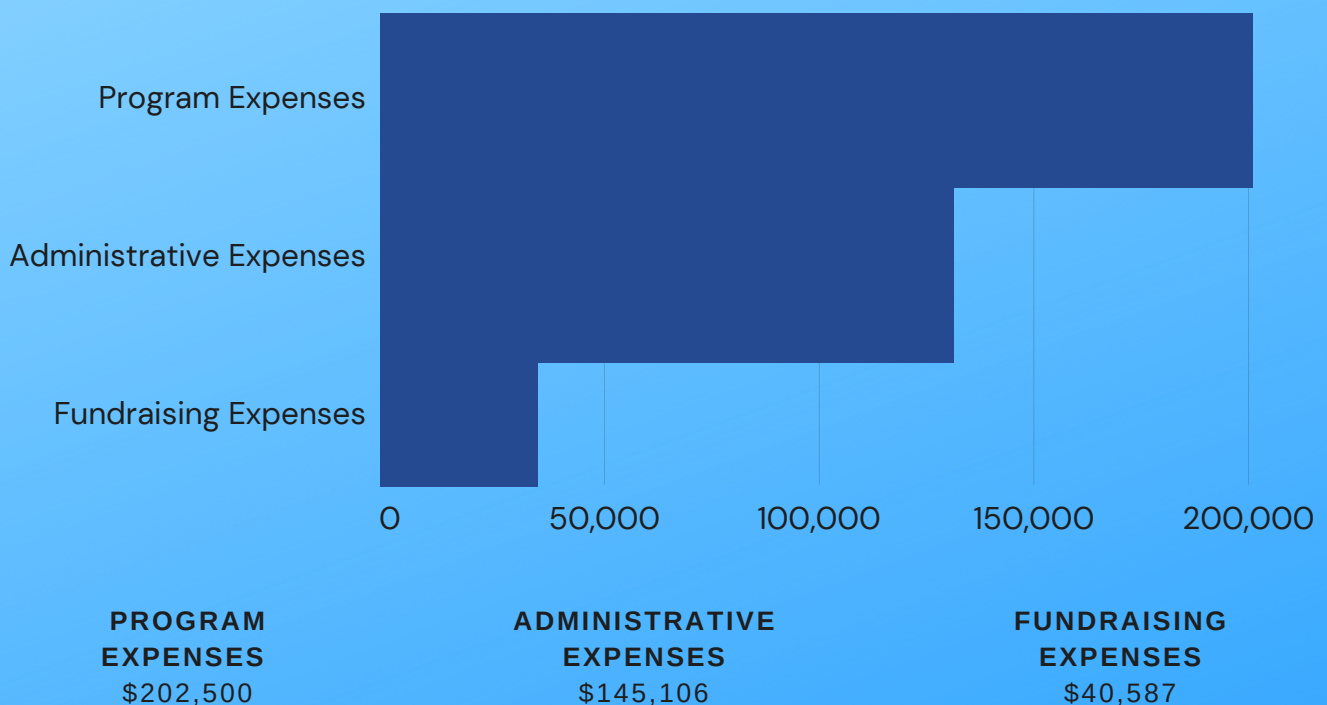
32%- Autism Awareness

30%- Administrative
Support

MAIN SOURCES OF REVENUE

Fundraising Events
Grants & Donations
KY Autism License Plates

PRIMARY EXPENSES



TOTAL YEAR - END NET INCOME
\$14,661

Volunteers

During 2022, volunteers stepped up again to make each FEAT event a success.

The completion of these events would not have been possible without the commitment and dedication of our AFBF partners and countless volunteers. Your service in terms of support for FEAT benefited our programs throughout the year and have a profound impact on our organization. We had approximately 50 volunteers contributing over 200 hours for our fundraising events and overall program support.

Thank you to our Donors, Volunteers and Partners.



Makayla Giles, 2022 Volunteer of the Year Recipient



Winters Family



Donna McGraw, FEAT supporter/volunteer



Open Net Soccer Camp

FEAT of Louisville Leadership

MELANIE H. WEST, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR



Melanie earned her B.A. in Communications from the University of Louisville. After a career in the banking industry, she took a different career path to become the CEO of her family. Melanie joined FEAT of Louisville in February 2018 becoming the Autism Friendly Business Initiative Program Manager. Being a Louisville native, she is passionate about this city and directly impacting families. She has been part of the FEAT community for over 13 years when her 1st nephew was diagnosed with autism. Melanie is married and has two children.

MONICA COOPER, COMMUNITY OUTREACH COORDINATOR



Monica is married to Brandon and they have three boys, Isaac, Ian and Elijah. Isaac and Ian both have Autism. She has over 13 years of personal experience in the area of advocacy for individuals on the spectrum. Her experience includes Medicaid waivers, respite care, CLS, First Steps and IEP planning. Monica is devoted to providing families hope, a sense of belonging and acceptance.

MELISSA GERALDS, COMMUNICATION SPECIALIST



Melissa has a passion for serving in the non-profit world. She has helped Cedar Lake with their special events over the years and has worked for Big Brothers Big Sisters for 6 years as their Special Events Coordinator. She is married to Todd and has two daughters, Morgan, who is currently serving in the United States Navy and Lexie.

Erinn Blatt, AFBI PROGRAM MANAGER



Hi, my name is Erinn, and I am the Autism Friendly Business Initiative Program Manager. I earned my B.A. in Education in 2007 from Marshall University, after which I relocated to Louisville. I have spent my professional life as an educator, program manager, and project coordinator. I discovered FEAT of Louisville after my child's diagnosis in 2016, and was immediately impressed with the organization. I feel incredibly fortunate to have the opportunity to continue working towards acceptance and appreciation within our community. In my spare time I enjoy time with my family, walking trails, trying new coffee shops, and exploring local art fairs. I enjoy meeting new people and look forward to expanding the Autism Friendly Business Initiative throughout our community.

2022

Board of Directors

Stuart Baird, Chairman

Frankie Hilbert, Vice Chair

Jeff Gregory, Treasurer

Lindsey Meares - Secretary

David Cosby Jr.

Jennifer Glassner

Joann Jolgren

Jarrold Carnahan

Carlissa Brown

Katie Butsch

LaStacia Dalton

Becky Jones

Rachel E. Buehner, PH. D.

Debra Barmore, Ex-offiio

Henrietta Pepper, Ex-officio

Janet Pope, Ex-officio

Stacy Trinkle, M.D., Ex-officio

2022 Partners & Supporters

