



# ANNUAL REPORT FY 16-17

A YEAR OF ACCOMPLISHMENTS

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# Who We Are

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Maternity/Adoption Counselor

Jennifer Vergara, *MSW, LSW*  
Maternity/Adoption Counselor

Nicole Gonzalez, *LPC, NCC*  
Hopeful Beginnings Teen Parenting  
Coordinator

### Fundraising/Administrative Team

Jennifer Valentine, *JD*  
Development Director

Jill Panko  
Special Events Coordinator

Cathy Paglia  
Administration Manager



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# Mission

We strive to provide the best possible home for children by providing compassionate counseling, support, and educational services to women and teens experiencing unplanned pregnancies in a nonjudgmental manner. We empower them to make the best decision for themselves and their child. As an agency supporting adoption as a loving choice, we counsel and educate the individuals and couples wishing to expand their families.

# Vision

Every Child Deserves a Good Home.



## Joanne Bratta | Executive Director

*First of all, thank you for taking the time to learn more about St. Mary's Services and what we do here at the agency. I take great pride in sharing our story with you.*

*Founded in 1887 by the Episcopal Sisters of St. Mary, our dedicated social workers counsel women experiencing unplanned pregnancies who are considering adoption. They also provide preparation and placement services to families pursuing domestic infant adoption. We help both birth and adoptive families before, during and after placement. In addition, we facilitate prenatal and parenting classes and counseling to high school students in the area.*

*As Executive Director, it is my privilege to be able to work with an organization that helps build families and restore lives through unparalleled counseling and support services. I see firsthand the positive difference our counselors make to improve the lives of the clients we serve. Whether it is a pregnant woman looking for understanding, counsel and a non-judgmental, listening ear, or an adoptive parent seeking education and guidance; we meet and exceed their needs. Above all, we work in the best interest of the children we serve.*

*With the support of our local community, our volunteers, our donors, and you, together we made this fiscal year one of our best and we thank you. We hope that if you are in need of our services, you will get to know us better. We are here to help you or someone you know understand their options and learn more about the miracle of adoption.*

*Sincerely,*

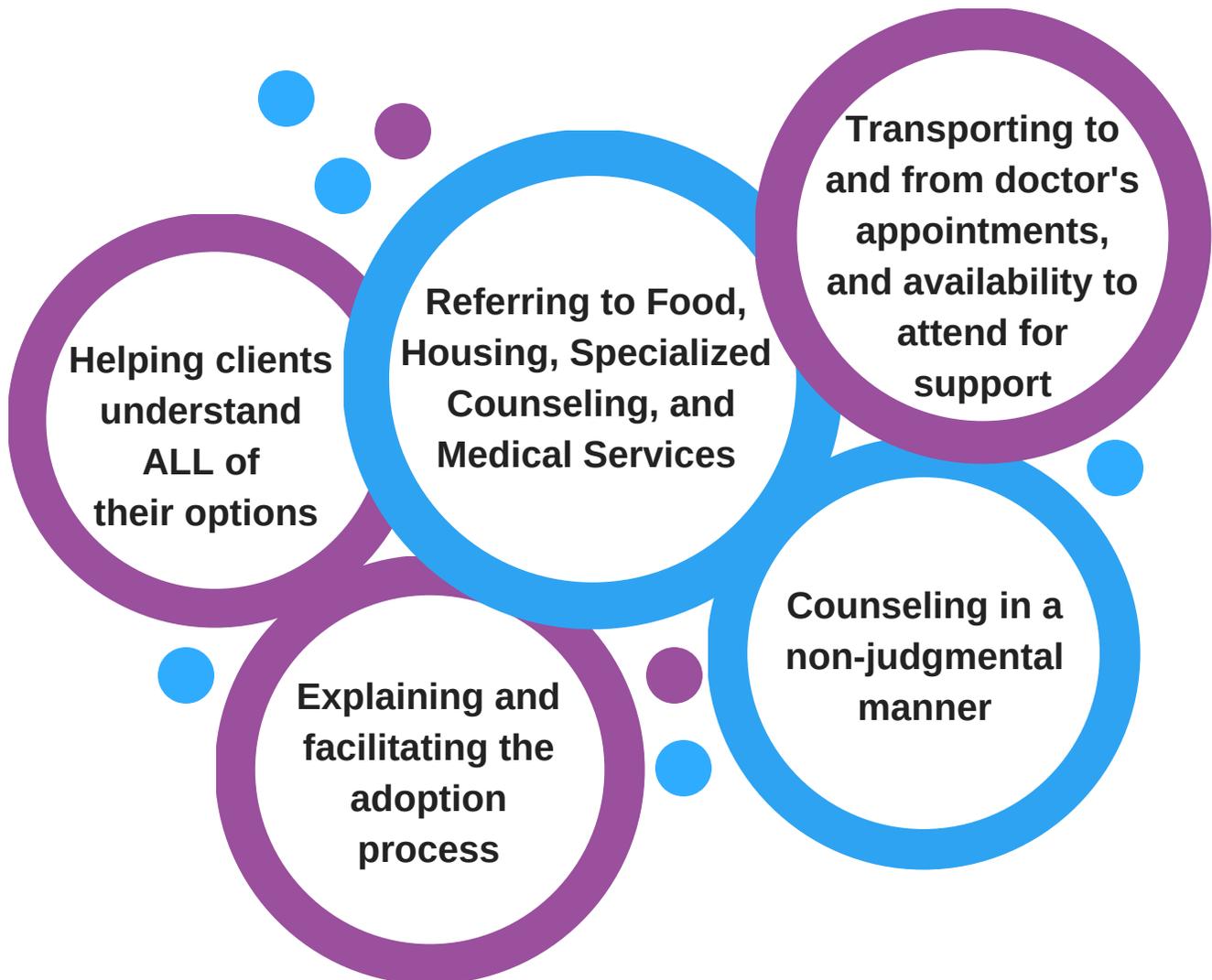
Joanne Bratta

Executive Director

# What We Do

## Maternity Counseling Program

St. Mary's services' professional counselors serve many women facing unplanned pregnancies by providing confidential support and offering many resources to help guide them through their pregnancy journeys and equipping them to make the best decision for themselves and their babies. St. Mary's also provides extensive post-placement counseling for our maternity clients; we remain as a support system for many years.



# Nowhere to Go

## Paris' Story

*“Right before I had started showing and everything, I remember days where I was walking in the snow with both of my kids and I didn’t have nowhere to go. It was just a terrible situation. **I wanted my baby but I wanted the best for him.** So what I ended up doing was that I was going to give up my baby for adoption. And that’s when Allyson came into the picture. I sent her a message and it was like instantly she sent me back a text and then she called me. **She showed me books of families, and I just felt like it was right.** You know it wasn’t like I was just going to hand her my baby and I never see my child again. It was like “okay, this child is going to have a family.” She was there when I had the baby and people in my family didn’t even know that I was having a baby. She was just there for comfort and it was very supportive, because I needed that. **The moment I got home and I was able to cry a little bit and ensure myself that I made the right decision, that’s when I knew that I had to get my life together.”***



# What We Do

## St. Mary's Services' Adoption Program

St. Mary's Services' Adoption Program has served couples and singles for many years, assisting them in creating families through adoption. To these candidates, we offer counseling, support, education, home visits, workshops, ongoing communication with birth parents, and post-placement support. If any of our adoptive family candidate's welcome a child 1-3 years of age into their homes, even greater support, care, and instruction is given in order that the adoptive family provides a nurturing, healthy environment for the child. The overarching goal is to provide good homes for the children in all situations.



# The Right Fit

## Tera & John's Adoption Story

*About three years into our marriage we were anxious to begin growing our family. We tried for about 6 months without any luck, prompting us to seek extra help. After countless doctor visits we learned that we were facing both male and female infertility issues. Although IVF was an option, we were turned off by the intensity of the treatment, as well as the mediocre success rates. After many discussions and some soul searching we realized that what we really wanted was to be parents – the path to get there did not have to be traditional.*



*We spent the spring of 2015 exploring our adoption options. **When we met with the team at St. Mary's we just knew we had found the right fit.** On June 1st, Tera's 30th birthday, we filled out our application to begin the home study process.*

*The staff at St. Mary's could not have been more supportive during the home study and waiting process. They knew we were anxious to become a waiting family and did everything in their power to speed the process along. On August 21st we got word that we were officially a waiting family!*

*We passed the wait time taking our adoption classes and searching for a few essential baby items. We decided not to create a full nursery just yet, as it could make the wait even harder. As it turned out, we were not waiting long. On November 25th, the day before Thanksgiving, we got **THE CALL!** An expectant mom had selected us, and she was due in two and a half weeks! Needless to say, we took advantage of lots of Black Friday deals at Buy Buy Baby that year!*

*We got to meet with our daughter's birth mom a week before she was born, and again at the hospital. Our social workers made the whole situation as comfortable and smooth as possible, and we loved learning about her pregnancy and her life.*

*On the day Madeleine was born we rushed to the hospital, managing to arrive just before her delivery. Soon after that we were able to meet her, and didn't leave her side for the rest of her stay. Maddie is now a bright, happy and spunky toddler and we are grateful for her and her birth mom every single day. We keep in touch using a private photo app, exchanging pictures and stories at least a few times a month. We plan to adopt a second child soon and can only hope for an experience half as amazing as we had adopting Maddie.*

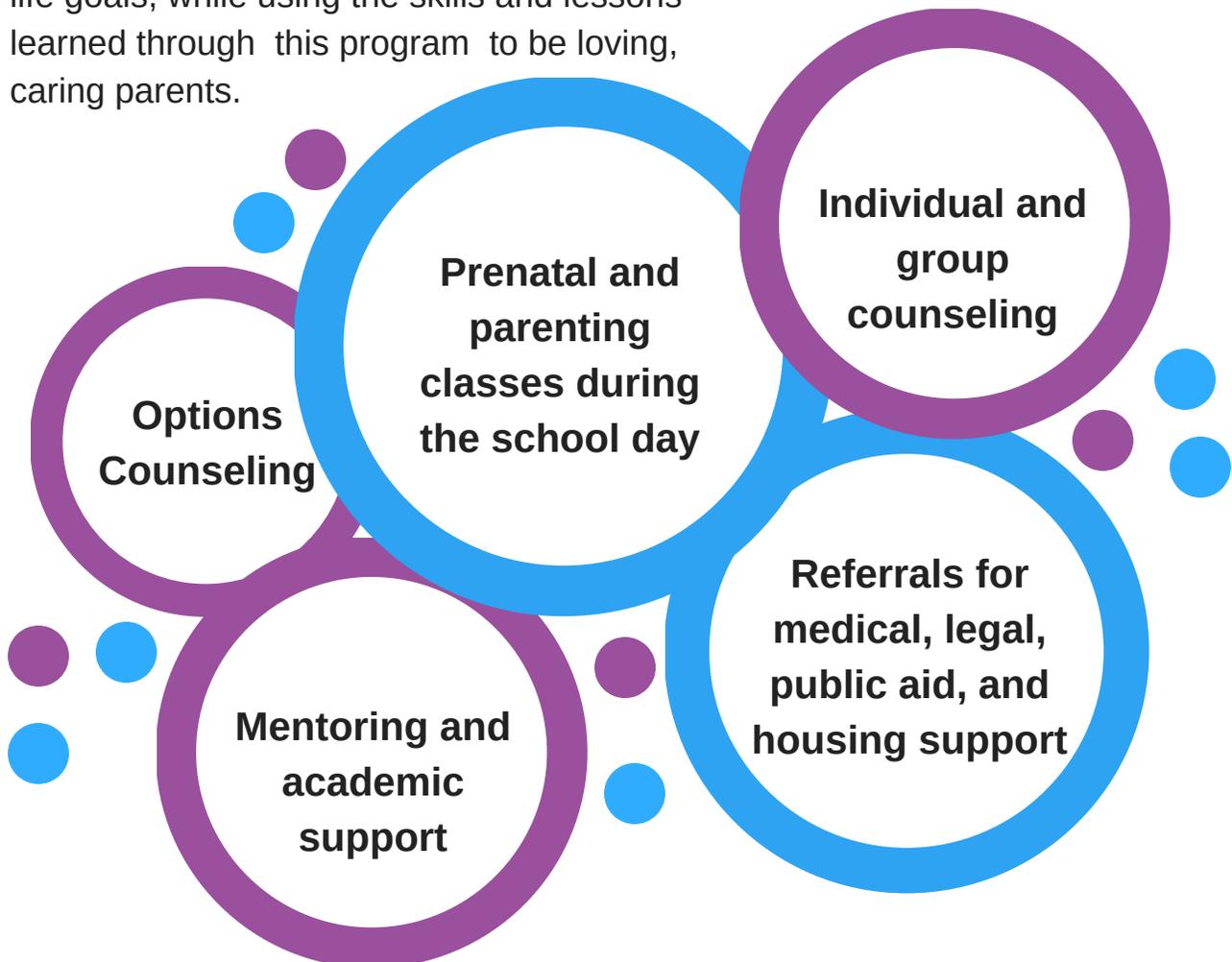
# What We Do

## Teen Parenting Program

In collaboration and partnership with Township High School District 214, which is comprised of six high schools and three alternative schools, St. Mary's Services' Hopeful Beginnings Teen Parenting Program offers a variety of support to teen girls who are pregnant or already parenting.

Our vision is for these students to graduate high school, and continue to pursue their life goals, while using the skills and lessons learned through this program to be loving, caring parents.

*"The teen pregnancy class helped me so much with making me feel like I'm not alone & I'm not the only person going through this tough transition in life. I've learned so much that I didn't even know could happen. I wish I could have been in the class longer & that everyone in my position has a chance like me with being in the same class & meeting the people who I've met in this journey." - Lesley*



# Financial Position

Fiscal year ending June 30, 2017

## Revenue

	FY2017	FY2016
Public Support	\$174,397	\$142,503
Program Revenue	\$265,222	\$303,553
Investment Income	\$417,090	\$308,678
*Change in Value of Perpetual Trusts	\$150,403	(\$47,203)
Miscellaneous	\$ -0-	\$ 1,075
<b>Total Revenue</b>	<b>\$1,007,112</b>	<b>\$707,606</b>

## Expenses

Program Expenses	\$504,983	\$523,420
Administrative and Occupancy	\$150,525	\$137,308
Fundraising	\$137,384	\$116,733
<b>Total Expenses</b>	<b>\$792,892</b>	<b>\$777,461</b>

## \*\*Net Assets

	<b>\$ 214,220</b>	<b>(\$69,855)</b>
**Beginning of Year	\$5,736,560	\$5,806,415
**End of Year	\$5,950,780	\$5,736,560

*\*Donor restricted funds*

*\*\*includes Donor restricted funds*

# Impact

With help from people like you, St. Mary's Services supported hundreds of clients during the 2016-17 fiscal year.



## 122 Expectant Women

St. Mary's Services responded to 122 clients who inquired about our maternity services and provided 485 hours of direct counseling and support to 31 clients.

Over \$4,000 was spent in order to aid these women in necessary living expenses (rent, utility, grocery, etc.)

## Helped Build 9 Families

St. Mary's Services welcomed 15 new families into our adoption programs, which made a total of 40 families that we counseled and supported throughout the many stages of the adoption process. We are proud that this support culminated in six adoption placements and three interstate placements.



## 51 Pregnant Teens

We served 51 clients from intake through counseling and education, which resulted in 502 counseling hours. One hundred percent of our participating teens graduated from high school or promoted to the next grade level.

# How You Can Help

**Donate.** As a non-profit organization, we rely on the community for resources to fund our programs and help us provide necessities for maternity clients. Donations will enable us to continue to provide free counseling services, education, and assistance to our maternity clients.

You can also donate via our Amazon Wish List; or when you shop at smile.amazon.com, Amazon donates 0.5% of the purchase price to St. Mary's Services.

Another way you can contribute monetarily, and also learn more about what we do, is by attending our fundraising events. Learn more about these events by visiting our website or Facebook page.

**Refer.** As a smaller agency, St. Mary's always benefits from conversation about our services and our passion for those who are in need. Refer St. Mary's to women in your life that are experiencing an unplanned pregnancy or are suffering from a perinatal mood disorder.

**Promote.** "Like" us on Facebook and "Follow" us on Twitter and Instagram!

**Educate.** Talk with your local schools about the benefits of implementing the Hopeful Beginnings program for their students and the teens in your neighborhood. Share our expansive pregnancy-related counseling services to women in your life.



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St. Mary's Services is affiliated with Episcopal Charities and Community Services

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