

History of CEDARS



1947–CEDARS began with the dream of two caring, energetic individuals. Reverend Charles and Mrs. Alberta Danner acted on their dream by contacting police and juvenile authorities requesting that children in chaotic, unstable family situations be brought into their home. They started with one boy and before long, they had a new family of 22 children.



1949–CEDARS Home for Children incorporated, and the children moved their home to a farm on East Pioneers Blvd., purchased with the help of a number of community organizations.

1952–In short time this extended family outgrew the farmhouse and kicked off a “building fund drive” to raise money for a new CEDARS Home. Construction began early in 1953 and within a year, the children moved into their new three-story brick home.

1971–Fellow Lincoln resident James Arnot began pursuing his dream of giving homeless teenagers a safe refuge. He organized the Youth Service Bureau, under the umbrella of the YMCA, to focus on helping homeless, abused, and neglected teens. Eventually, Arnot formed Youth Service System (YSS), a non-profit agency designed to coordinate services and provide assistance to teens and their families.

1981–YSS had grown from just two office spaces and a \$66,000 grant, to a staff of 40 with a budget of \$395,777. They operated the Freeway Station Emergency Shelter and two residential group homes: Boys Home and Girls Home.

1983–YSS responded to another need in the community by opening a home for pregnant and parenting teen girls. As it does today, Teaching & Learning With Children Group Home (TLC) works with teen mothers on pre-natal care, parenting skills and independent living skills. This program soon outgrew its original location, and in 1995 moved to its current location on 56th Street, allowing for more residents and an on-site child care.

1992–March marked the creation of a 24-hour crisis line in response to the needs of the community. In September of the same year, YSS assumed management of the YMCA’s Capital Child Care Center and moved it to the First Presbyterian Church.

1988–Growth continued as Family Support Services was added to CEDARS Home.

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1993–Street Outreach Services (SOS) was developed. By literally placing staff on the streets, YSS was now able to connect with and help Lincoln’s homeless youth.



1994–YSS opened a Residential Treatment Center for youth with more challenging emotional and behavioral problems.



1995–A Crisis Nursery Emergency Shelter for children from birth through 6 years of age was opened.



1996–CEDARS celebrated 50 years of helping children in need and added the Foster Care program. YSS celebrated 25 years of helping teens. The two organizations merged together in service to children, youth and their families, forming CEDARS Youth Services.



1997–At the request of the Lincoln City and County Attorney Offices, Juvenile Diversion and Teen Court programs were added. CEDARS began offering family support and counseling services in Central Nebraska.



1999–With the financial support of Broken Bow resident Harry Richardson, CEDARS responded to a service request from Central Nebraska by creating the Richardson House Emergency Shelter. In addition, the Super Kids Club was introduced to provide quality before and after school care to elementary students in Broken Bow. The Northwood Early Childhood Development Center (ECDC) opened joining Capitol and Pioneers in serving the children and families of Lincoln.

2000–CEDARS Transitional Living Program was put into action, renovations were made to the original CEDARS Home, a new facility for CEDARS Residential Treatment Center (now called Turning Point) was completed, and Broken Bow began a Family Violence Services program.



2001–Capitol ECDC moved to Centennial Mall and CEDARS assumed management of Carol Yoakum ECDC.



2002–As CEDARS assumed management of Southwest Nebraska Youth Services in McCook, construction began on CEDARS Northbridge Community Center in Lincoln. Also during this time, Crisis Nursery became one with CEDARS Home Emergency Shelter.

2003–CEDARS assumed management of the Downtown ECDC and expanded involvement with Community Learning Centers.



2004–CEDARS Northbridge Community Center opened offering services to Lincoln’s North 27th Street District, giving our Foster Care program and an ECDC a new location.



2005–CEDARS was awarded the first ever Better Business Bureau Integrity Award in the nonprofit category.