



# ON YOUR FEET FOUNDATION

## 2023 IMPACT

*“I am who I am and where I am because of On Your Feet. They helped me go back to school, helped me get into therapy, helped me get into the career field I have had success in for 7 years, and helped me come to terms with my story and feel comfortable sharing it to help others. I am eternally grateful.”*

### Create! Birthparents Art Grant

We started our Create! grant because we know the power of making art as a catalyst for healing, and this year’s winner, Tiffany, proposed a project that provides birthparents an opportunity to do just that. Her winning submission, *More Than Art*, coming in early 2024, is a four-session intentional art-making group, led by Tiffany – an artist, social worker, and birthmother - designed to give other birthparents a space to process and create art to help them heal.



### SOX GIVE GRANT

We couldn’t provide the comprehensive case management support and services birthparents need (and deserve) without the help of our incredible community. We are so grateful to Joe Mallet, the community member who nominated us for a Sox Give grant. On Your Feet Foundation is one of the few places birthparents can turn to when they are in need, and because of Joe’s help, our birthparents able to access the help they deserve, when they need it.



*“When you can’t hold yourself up, OYFF will. Whether it be an employee, another birth mother you meet, or a group that is here, all these things help you live with adoption and the role it played in your life.”*

### 2023 BY THE NUMBERS

In 2023, On Your Feet Foundation served **582** birthparents - a **40%** increase from last year - including **102** new clients in **46** states and **2** countries.

### THIS YEAR'S HIGHLIGHTS INCLUDE:

Hosting **67** BirthmomsConnect Calls, providing support to over **280** women

Connecting more than **325** birthparents through closed Facebook groups, including our birthfathers support group

Having **12** women participate in our birthmom-to-birthmom mentoring group

Welcoming **36** birthmoms at either an in-person or virtual retreat

Having **6** women participate in our BirthmomsToday Cohort, led by Kim Noeth

Reaching **46** birthmothers at special events such as our Vision Board event and holiday gathering

Mailing pocket heart hugs to more than **30** birthmoms and hosted a virtual gathering to honor them on Birthmothers' Day

Providing **27** birthparents with grants

Providing ethical adoption education to more than **80** members of the adoption constellation, via Activism in Adoption

### BIRTHPARENT SUPPORT ALLIANCE

We’ve made some exciting changes to the Birthparent Support Alliance! In order to provide more adoption agencies with the opportunity to make post-placement as accessible as possible, we’ve cut the membership costs nearly in half for 2024. This year, 21 birthparents came to us as a direct result of their placing agency’s membership in the Birthparent Support Alliance, providing them with the tools and community they needed in order to thrive.



*“Thank you to the On Your Feet team for showing up for us so we can learn to recognize we're worthy of showing up for ourselves.”*

### Junior League Grant

In 2023, On Your Feet Foundation was awarded a \$10,000 grant by the Junior League of Evanston-Northshore (JLE-NS) through their Community Assistance Grant Fund, to provide help to parents who have placed a child for adoption and require support and services after placement in order to thrive.



### Kim Noethe | Post-Adoption Journey Cohort

This year, we partnered with Kim Noeth, a birthmother and coach, to give six of our birthparents an opportunity to be in a Birth Moms Today cohort. This experience was a one-year deep-dive into healing and growth, and as a group, they have worked together to understand the natural process of grief, how to deal with it, and how to grow through it and come to a better place of healing.



### Holiday Assistance Program

We know that the holidays can be chaotic and stressful for birthparents, especially when experiencing financial hardship; that's why we created the Holiday Assistance Program - the only program of its kind - to help birthparents provide thoughtful, carefully chosen holiday gifts for both the children they are parenting, and those they placed. Last year, we provided presents for 69 children; to date, we have awarded \$3,575 in Holiday Assistance grants.

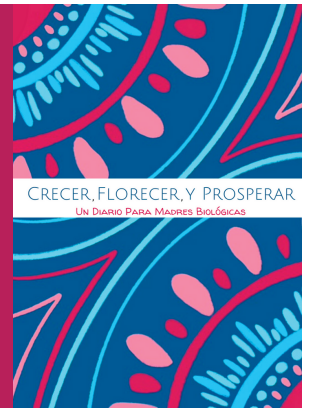
*“It's been a tough year financially and I was so grateful for the Holiday Assistance Program and how it helped out my kids, thank you so much.”*

### Birthmom Mentoring Program

This year we welcomed 12 birthparents into our Birthmom Mentoring Program, providing them with one-on-one support to birthmothers by birthmothers in the On Your Feet community.

*“The support that is available was unbelievable to me. The emotional and mental support I've personally received is truly life changing. I have met women that have come alongside me and shown me it's possible to heal and still honor my child. I believed I had to be in pain and hurt and didn't deserve to heal from my self-inflicted judgment. I have learned to ask questions instead of passing judgement on myself. There was pain in telling my story but that is also where the healing began. This is self-care and self-love in action and you deserve that.”*

There are very few resources for Spanish-speaking birthmothers, which is why in 2023, with the help of translators Daniela Johnson and Marcia Uchida, we launched the Spanish language version of our therapeutic birthmom journal, *Crecer, Florecer, y Prosperar: Un Diario Para Madres Biológicas*, to help address that gap and help more birthmothers heal.



## LOOKING AHEAD TO 2024

### BIRTHMOMSCONNECT

**Moderated Calls:** 1st Tues & 2nd Thurs of each month  
**Closed/Reunion Calls:** 3rd Wed of each month  
**Open Calls:** 1st, 3rd, & 4th Thurs

### 2024 RETREATS

**SPRING:** In-person: May 3-5 | Virtual: May 18  
**SPECIALTY RETREAT** In-person: June 7-9 | Virtual: June 20  
**FALL:** In-person: September 27-29 | Virtual: October 19



# GATHER!

*With us to celebrate!*

Thank you to this year's Gather sponsors, whose generosity helps ensure that birthparents can access the help they need at no cost to themselves. And, thank you so much to everyone who donated, bought tickets, and came out to support birthparents. It takes a community, and we have the best community there is!

Mark your calendars for Gather 2024 | Friday, Aug 23, 2024

