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Sheltering Arms Foundation announces 2025-26 slate of grantees, awards \$546,000 to 57 Minnesota nonprofits serving children

MINNEAPOLIS, August 21, 2025 — Today, Sheltering Arms announced its 2025-26 financial support of 57 nonprofit organizations working hard to deliver high-quality programming to our state's most vulnerable children. Sheltering Arms will invest \$546,000 in innovative direct service programs in early childhood and out-of-school-time youth development and statewide advocacy campaigns designed to improve Minnesota's policies that impact children and their families.

"This year we are funding 57 amazing Minnesota nonprofits, the most our foundation has ever funded in a single year," stated Diane Grossman, executive director of the Sheltering Arms Foundation. "We are seeing that no matter what kind of programming an organization is providing to children and families, across the board, a common theme is the need for mental health support. We know how vital mental health is in building a strong foundation for a child's growth and future success, and for the strength of their family and ultimately their community. So this year at Sheltering Arms, we continue to increase our focus on mental health within our early childhood and youth development funding areas."

One such grantee that is new to Sheltering Arms' in the early childhood funding area is **Ellison Center** in St. Cloud. Ellison Center was founded in response to the lack of mental health services and resources available for young children in the area, and it developed out of a dream of what could be. The Sheltering Arms grant supports training staff in two evidence-based models, one that is a brief in-home intervention model and the other is a trauma-focused therapy model. Together, they offer a continuum of care that promotes healing and resilience in young children and their families. Ellison Center's experienced internal training team will provide comprehensive, year-long training and supervision to its therapists, helping them build their expertise and strengthen outcomes for children and families across Central Minnesota.

"Sheltering Arms' investment is helping Ellison Center expand access to high-quality, culturally responsive mental health care for Minnesota's youngest children," said Tracy Schreifels, executive director of Ellison Center. "Through training our team in Attachment and Biobehavioral Catch-up and Child-Parent Psychotherapy, we're equipping providers with tools that help caregivers strengthen bonds with their children, heal from trauma, and create secure, nurturing relationships. These interventions have a lasting impact—children are better able to regulate emotions, feel safe, and build resilience, setting the foundation for lifelong mental health and well-being. This support not only changes the trajectory for each child we serve, but also strengthens and heals entire families for generations to come."

Another newer Sheltering Arms grantee, **Watercourse Counseling** in south Minneapolis, is providing culturally specific psychoeducation and social skills programming to children and families who are new to this country. Founded in 1999, Watercourse serves the mental health needs of people of all ages and is committed to ensuring the staff, agency leaders, and board reflect the community. The Sheltering Arms

(more)

Sheltering Arms Foundation Invests \$546,000 Statewide in 2025-2026

grant supports the CIRCLE program, a program dedicated to healing from trauma and resettlement stress among children and their families in Minneapolis who have moved here from other countries. It is carried out in partnership with the help of “cultural brokers” who assist with family engagement, promote self-advocacy, and help improve understanding of the family’s specific situation, needs, cultural factors, and societal pressures.

“With the generous support of Sheltering Arms, Watercourse has been able to expand the CIRCLE Program, which delivers vital mental health care to youth in Minneapolis,” said Ashley Trepp, executive director of Watercourse Counseling. “With this funding, our therapists and cultural brokers work together to help students build coping skills, strengthen emotional well-being, and develop a sense of belonging in their school community. This investment has helped advance our mission to provide accessible, culturally responsive mental health services to young people, which are needed now more than ever.”

Northeast Youth and Family Services (NYFS), based in Shoreview, another new-to-Sheltering Arms grantee, is launching early childhood mental health services at its clinic sites. Founded in 1976, NYFS is a nonprofit, community-based, and trauma-informed mental health and community services organization serving the northeastern St. Paul suburbs. The Sheltering Arms grant will support development of the new programming, addressing the urgent mental health needs of young children in Ramsey County, a region where services for this age group are scarce.

“With Sheltering Arms' generous support, NYFS is thrilled to be realizing a long-time dream of offering mental health services for the youngest and most vulnerable among us – infants and children birth through five years of age,” said Angela Lewis-Dmello, president and CEO of Northeast Youth and Family Services. “We know the profound impact mental health care for these children and their families can have on their whole lives, many of whom are recovering from unexpected early traumas. This funding enables us to provide effective services attuned to the developmental needs of infants and young children, filling a critical gap in care in our community. We can now say we truly serve all family members across the lifespan at NYFS!”

In Sheltering Arms’ early childhood funding category, 27 grantees received a total of \$263,000. In the advocacy/public policy category, \$40,000 went to 4 grantees, continuing the foundation’s work to improve systems and policies that affect Minnesota’s children. In the youth development funding category, 26 programs received a total of \$243,000 in grants. Areas served by the 57 Sheltering Arms grantees include Aurora, Babbitt, Brooklyn Center, Brooklyn Park, Chisholm, Cimarron, Deer River, Duluth, Edina, Eveleth, Golden Valley, Grand Rapids, Greenway, International Falls, Keewatin, Landfall, Maplewood, Minneapolis, Minnetonka, Moorhead, Mountain Iron, Nashwauk, Northfield, Richfield, Shoreview, St. Cloud, St. Louis Park, St. Paul, Stillwater, Virginia, Winona.

The 57 grantees supported by Sheltering Arms in 2025-2026 are:

- 826 MSP (Minneapolis)—\$10,000 (youth development)
- A Chance To Grow (Minneapolis, serves Twin Cities metro)—\$10,000 (early childhood)
- ACES, Athletes Committed to Educating Students (Minneapolis, serves statewide)—\$10,000 (youth development)
- Banyan Foundation (south Minneapolis)—\$10,000 (early childhood)
- Big Brothers Big Sisters Twin Cities (St. Paul, serves Twin Cities)—\$9,000 (youth development)
- Boys and Girls Clubs of the Twin Cities (St. Paul, serves Twin Cities)—\$8,000 (youth development)
- Centro Tyrone Guzman (south Minneapolis)—\$10,000 (early childhood)
- Change Inc. (Minneapolis, serves Twin Cities and southern Minnesota)—\$7,000 (early childhood)
- Child Care Aware of Minnesota (St. Paul, serves statewide)—\$10,000 (advocacy)
- Children's Theatre Company and School (south Minneapolis)—\$8,000 (early childhood)
- CHUM (Duluth)—\$10,000 (early childhood)

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- CommonBond Communities (St. Paul, serves 52 cities in Minn., Wisc., and Iowa)—\$10,000 (youth development)
- ComMUSICation (St. Paul)—\$8,000 (youth development)
- COMPAS (St. Paul, serves statewide)—\$9,700 (youth development)
- Domestic Abuse Project (Minneapolis)—\$10,000 (early childhood)
- East Side Neighborhood Service, Inc. (Minneapolis)—\$10,000 (youth development)
- Ellison Center (St. Cloud)—\$10,000 (early childhood)
- Emma Norton Services (St. Paul, serves St. Paul and Maplewood)—\$8,000 (early childhood)
- The Family Partnership (Minneapolis)—\$10,000 (early childhood)
- FamilyMeans (Stillwater, serves Twin Cities metro, southeastern Minnesota, and western Wisconsin)—\$7,500 (youth development)
- FamilyWise Services (Minneapolis, serves statewide)—\$10,000 advocacy
- Fred Wells Tennis and Education Center (St. Paul)—\$8,000 (youth development)
- Friends of the Children Fargo-Moorhead (Fargo, serves Fargo-Moorhead region)—\$7,500 (youth development)
- Greater Minneapolis Council of Churches (Minneapolis, serves Twin Cities metro)—\$10,000 (youth development)
- Greater Twin Cities Youth Symphonies (St. Paul)—\$10,000 (youth development)
- Interfaith Action of Greater St. Paul, Department of Indian Work (St. Paul)—\$10,000 (youth development)
- Itasca Area Schools Collaborative (Grand Rapids, serves the 7 area school districts)—\$10,000 (early childhood)
- Jewish Family and Children's Service of Minneapolis (JFCS) (Golden Valley, serves statewide)—\$8,000 (early childhood)
- Keystone Community Services (St. Paul)—\$10,000 (youth development)
- Mentor North (Duluth)—\$13,000 (youth development)
- Minnesota Coalition for Family Home Visiting (fiscal agent: St. David's Center) (Minnetonka, serves statewide)—\$10,000 (advocacy)
- Montessori American Indian Childcare Center (St. Paul)—\$10,000 (early childhood)
- Morning Glory Montessori (Minneapolis)—\$7,500 (early childhood)
- Northeast Youth and Family Services (Shoreview, serves northeastern metro)—\$12,000 (early childhood)
- Northfield Healthy Community Initiative (Northfield)—\$10,000 (early childhood)
- Northland Foundation (Duluth, serves northeastern Minnesota)—\$12,000 (early childhood)
- Northside Achievement Zone (north Minneapolis)—\$7,500 (early childhood)
- Nurse-Family Partnership (Denver, CO, serves nationwide; in Minnesota serves in 32 counties and 2 tribal nations)—\$7,500 (early childhood)
- The Park Place (Minneapolis)—\$8,000 (youth development)
- Pillsbury United Communities (Minneapolis)—\$10,000 (early childhood)
- Plymouth Christian Youth Center (north Minneapolis)—\$10,000 (youth development)
- Project FINE (Winona)—\$12,000 (early childhood)
- Project for Pride in Living (Minneapolis, serves metro)—\$10,000 (youth development)
- Relentless Academy (Brooklyn Center)—\$10,000 (youth development)
- Rise Early Learning Center (St. Louis Park)—\$10,000 (early childhood)
- Simpson Housing Services, Inc. (Minneapolis, serves metro)—\$12,000 (early childhood)
- Southside Family Nurturing Center (south Minneapolis)—\$10,000 (early childhood)
- Think Small (St. Paul, serves statewide)—\$10,000 (advocacy)
- United Way of Northeastern Minnesota (Chisholm, serves the Iron Range and Koochiching and Lake of the Woods counties)—\$7,500 (youth development)
- Urban Strategies, Inc. (St. Louis, MO, serves north Minneapolis)—\$9,000 (youth development)

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- Urban Ventures Leadership Foundation (south Minneapolis)—\$10,000 (early childhood)
- Washburn Center for Children (Minneapolis, serves metro)—\$12,000 (early childhood)
- Watercourse Counseling Center (Minneapolis)—\$10,800 (youth development)
- Way to Grow (Minneapolis, serves metro)—\$9,500 (early childhood)
- Wilder Foundation (St. Paul, serves east metro)—\$10,000 (youth development)
- YMCA of the North (Minneapolis, serves metro)—\$8,000 (youth development)
- YWCA of Minneapolis (Minneapolis)—\$9,000 (youth development)

EDITOR'S NOTE: For information about each grantee and what they are using the Sheltering Arms' grant funds to do this year, a fact sheet of the annotated list of 2025-2026 grantees is available here:

<https://sheltering-arms.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/08/Grantee-FactSheet-2025-26.pdf>

About the Sheltering Arms Foundation

The mission of the Sheltering Arms Foundation is to invest in the lives of children and help them reach their full potential. Based in Minneapolis, the foundation funds nonprofit organizations and supports policies that benefit Minnesota children and their families who have the least access to resources. Since its inception as a grantmaking foundation in 1983, the foundation has provided more than 1,530 grants totaling just over \$19.4 million. The next deadline for grant applications is in January 2026. For information about submitting a grant request, volunteering, or donating to the foundation, visit <https://sheltering-arms.org/> or call 612-871-9210.

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