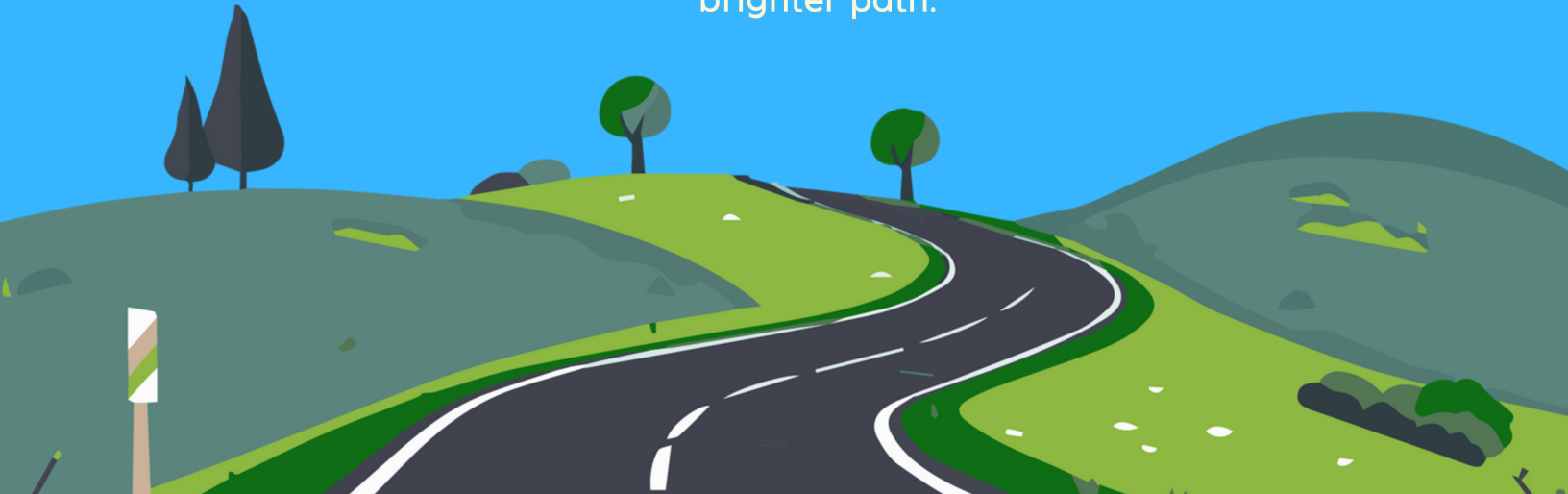




# ADVOCACY UPDATE

## FALL 2025

Helping foster children navigate challenges towards a brighter path.



### ***Helping the Johnson siblings get back on track***

Sandra (13), Kayla (8), and Mark (4), a trio of resilient siblings, have faced many challenges this year. They came into foster care after their mother was sentenced to eight years in prison. She had neglected their needs, resulting in academic setbacks and missed medical appointments. Sandra is non-verbal, has autism, and has severe physical disabilities. Kayla, due to trauma, struggles with emotional regulation and depression. Mark is non-verbal, has autism, and is not toilet-trained.

Their grandmother became their primary caregiver, but she was struggling to meet all of the children's complex needs and quickly became overwhelmed. KidsVoice stepped in to help the family access resources to address the children's wide-ranging health and education challenges. We also connected the grandmother with community services to support the whole family. Now, the children are back on track with their health needs, are making progress with socialization at school, and are connected with the disability supports they need now and for the future.



**Disability Advocacy** - With Sandra's significant disabilities, she will not be able to care for herself as an adult. KidsVoice helped the grandmother enroll Sandra with the Office of Development Supports (ODS), which will be able to provide resources for care and housing once Sandra turns 18. Mark was also successfully enrolled with ODS.



**Education** - KidsVoice helped enroll the children in appropriate schools and ensured that occupational and speech therapy, as well as behavioral and emotional support services were in place as part of each child's special education plan (IEP).



**Health** - KidsVoice worked with the grandmother to ensure that an approach was in place to address all untreated medical conditions. We also gathered medical records and histories in preparation for appointments with specialist doctors.



*"We never know what a child is experiencing each day of their life. Taking time to listen to a child, to ask them how they are doing or if they need anything, can go a very long way in determining the best ways to support them."*

**Arianna Ordway**  
Child Advocacy Specialist

**Save the date: 12/2/2025!**  
**Give Big Pittsburgh**

A 24-hour online fundraising campaign that offers individuals the opportunity to support local nonprofits they love on Giving Tuesday.

