

## Agape Child & Family Services Memphis, Tennessee



***“Penelope allows Agape to be client-centered in our service delivery, as well as our data collection and analysis.”***

### **About Agape Child & Family Services**

Agape Child & Family Services is a Memphis-based nonprofit that holistically serves nearly 3,000 children and families each year from a two-generation paradigm in an effort to keep them safe, smart, and successful through school-based and site-based services in under-resourced communities. Agape breaks down barriers for families in hard places so they can build the life they desire and deserve. Agape provides the connection, skills, and encouragement families seek in order to thrive.

### **Reasons Penelope was selected by Agape**

- Scalable case management software that can grow with organization
- Flexible and user-friendly system that provides access to real-time data
- Configurable solution with automated workflows and alerts

### **Benefits from Penelope**

- Increased data security and client confidentiality, while improving cross-team care collaboration
- Flexible system that can smoothly accommodate tracking multiple services and growing client base
- Built-in action triggers and automated workflows help staff stay up to date on key service delivery milestones

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## **Introduction**

Agape is a nonprofit organization based in Memphis that serves parents and children with holistic, wrap-around services that include community-based services, school-based support, homeless services, workforce readiness, counseling services, and foster care support, while also providing opportunities for faith development.

In partnership with the Tennessee Department of Human Services, Agape and its community partners offer services via a two-generation model, serving both children

and parents across Memphis by providing support, permanency, and sustainability in an effort to reduce poverty.

In early 2019, Agape selected Penelope to replace their existing client management system. We recently heard from **Jermaine Shorter, Director of Performance and Quality Improvement** at Agape, about how Penelope is helping to accommodate the organization's rapid growth and their move toward a data-driven culture.

### **What system(s) was Agape using to track client information prior to Penelope?**

We were using Social Solutions through an external vendor for about four years. We began providing social services in one school and one apartment community, and the system helped us capture and track data on those participants. As we listened and responded to the voices of the families we served, we increased the number of services and formed deeper partnerships alongside other community and government entities through a cradle-to-career-and-beyond model.

### **What was the main problem your organization was trying to solve with a new case management system?**

In 2018, during a pivotal point in our growth, we realized we had outgrown our current Case Management Solution (CMS). We needed a CMS that would accommodate our expanded services and foster deeper relationships and interoperability amongst our community and government partners, as well as allow us the space to grow and the flexibility to change. We also needed a system that would allow us access to real-time data to produce performance and quality dashboards in our efforts to grow towards a data-driven culture.

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### **What factors did you consider before making your decision?**

There were several factors under consideration when making this decision. Some of the major factors were the history and reputation of the developer, previous work with faith-



based non-profits, internal security and user roles, system alerts, form customization, and reporting capabilities.

### **Why did you choose Penelope?**

Our agency decided to go with Penelope because the system appeared to meet our agency requirements, allowing us the greatest flexibility and room for growth with a user-friendly environment that could be built within a shortened timeline for implementation.

### **What was your implementation experience like?**

Our implementation experience was like nothing our agency has ever experienced. Through our initial conversations with the Athena team, we informed them of the shortened timeline for implementation. Athena was honest about the amount of work and commitment necessary to pull off such a tall order. Athena, as well as the Agape team, devoted resources to deploy Penelope in a six-week timeframe.



*Agape assists 3,000 children and families each year in under-resourced communities across Memphis by providing wraparound services that help reduce poverty and increase opportunity.*

### **What issues has Penelope helped your organization solve?**



Penelope has helped Agape solve our scalability concerns and increased our ability to leverage available technology. As we continue to expand our services, go deeper with our families, and form new partnerships, we will be able to scale within Penelope regarding data collection and analysis. We also have the ability to leverage technology through alerts, triggers, and reminders to help our staff stay up to date on key service delivery milestones.

### **How would you explain Penelope to someone who has never used it?**

Penelope is a CMS that allows Agape to be client-centered rather than service-centered in our service delivery as well as our data collection and analysis. We have increased client confidentiality while also increasing case collaboration across teams.

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***“We have increased client confidentiality, while also increasing care collaboration across teams.”***

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### **What measurable benefits have you seen since implementing?**

Due to our non-standard implementation timeline, a measurable benefit has yet to be realized. Our agency leaders have reported that staff morale is higher and a sense of hopefulness for the future of our data collection and analysis efforts has been restored.

### **Would you recommend Penelope to other organizations? If so, why?**

We would recommend Penelope to other organizations because it offers flexible options for all aspects and phases of development, training, and implementation. The ability to tailor the system to meet your agency’s needs make Penelope good for an organization of any size.

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<https://agapemeanslove.org>

