



PRESIDENT'S REPORT



From Top:
Judge Michael Gotsch;
Amy Simeri (Martin's Super Markets);
Nan Tulchinsky (Camps 4 Champs.)

Dear Friends,

"It was the best of times, it was the worst of times." Dickens could have been writing about 2010.

2010 was a year of continued rapid growth for Family & Children's Center; numbers of clients served, improved clinical outcomes, as well as a substantial increase in the challenges brought about by a sharp reduction in state and federal funding. Indeed, it was the best of times, the worst of times. In 2010 we also benefitted from an increase in the number of volunteers working with our staff to make others' lives better and an increase in the amount of community support from generous people like you.

The good news is that, for over 125 years, Family & Children's Center continues to rise to the challenges of the day, lifted by our community partners, volunteers and donors. And while Dickens reflected on the "best of times and the worst of times," he also reflected that "to those who contend for the gradual degeneration of the human species, that every baby born into the world is finer than the last."

Family & Children's Center is honored to have been awarded the 2011 Leighton Award for Nonprofit Excellence. This prestigious \$100,000 matching gift award will create a permanent endowment at the Community Foundation of St. Joseph County to provide ongoing financial support to the Boys & Girls Clubs of St. Joseph County, Prevent Child Abuse, The Children's Campus, and Family & Children's Center Counseling and Development Services in perpetuity.

In celebrating the good news of 2010, we held our annual Spirit of Giving awards on January 28th. Our affiliates honored:

- Martin's Super Markets - awarded for their work with the annual Roofsit campaign by Prevent Child Abuse.
- Judge Michael Gotsch - awarded for his commitment to children and families through his work and board affiliates by Counseling and Development Services.
- Camps 4 Champs - awarded for offering over 200 summer camp placements to disadvantaged youth by Boys & Girls Clubs.
- Foster parents Doris and George Wright - awarded for providing a safe and stable home for children with special needs by The Children's Campus.
- Toys 'R Us manager Randy Davis - awarded for his commitment to bringing the simple joys of childhood in the form of toys for children who need it most by Family & Children's Center.

These five individuals and businesses embrace the Family & Children's Center mission: Building strong families and healthy children. With your support and the support of individuals like these, I know that some fine babies will be born to this generation.

Bruce L. Greenberg
President and CEO



APRIL IS CHILD ABUSE PREVENTION MONTH

April is National Child Abuse Prevention Month, a time to raise awareness about child abuse and neglect and encourage individuals and communities to support children and families. This month and throughout the year, Prevent Child Abuse St. Joseph County encourages all individuals and organizations to play a role in making Michiana a better place for families. By ensuring that parents have the knowledge, skills, and resources they need to care for their children, we can help prevent child abuse and neglect by strengthening families and communities. Here's how you can help:

- Be a nurturing parent, grandparent, aunt/uncle or neighbor.
Children need to know that they are special, loved and capable of following their dreams.
- Help a friend, neighbor or relative.
Being a parent isn't easy. Offer a helping hand to take care of the children, so the parent(s) can rest or spend time together.
- Help yourself.
When the big and little problems of your everyday life pile up to the point you feel overwhelmed and out of control – take time out. Don't take it out on your kid.
- If your baby cries...
It can be frustrating to hear your baby cry. Learn what to do if your baby won't stop crying. Never shake a baby – shaking a child may result in severe injury or death.
- Get involved.
Help community leaders, clergy, library and schools to develop services to meet the needs of healthy children and families.
- Help to develop parenting resources at your local library.
- Promote programs in school.
Teaching children, parents and teachers prevention strategies can help to keep children safe.
- Monitor your child's screen time.
Watching violent or graphic films, TV programs and websites or playing video games with violent or adult subject matters can harm young children.
- Volunteer at a local child abuse prevention program.
For information about volunteer opportunities, call Jennifer at (574) 968-9650.
- Report suspected abuse or neglect by calling (800) 800-5556.

TURNING TRAUMA AROUND

Every day we hear stories of typical family struggles, or we live them ourselves. An autistic child. Sibling rivalry. Learning disabilities. Anger issues.

The clients we serve suffer from these issues as well. Often mom or dad will contact us for help and their insurance pays for the therapy. But the reality for a significant segment of our community is that some kids have additional challenges to meet and overcome.

Eric and Katie, siblings aged 4 and 6, do not have an easy life. Eric has been diagnosed as autistic, and also has behavioral issues of hitting and kicking, poor social skills and an incredibly short attention span. As one might imagine, Katie often feels left out. Katie is aggressive towards Eric, and she suffers from extreme worry and anxiety. She is emotionally detached from others and has her own mental disability challenges.



That sounds like more than most children should have to deal with, and it is. But then, last year Eric and Katie went to their mom and disclosed that their father had been repeatedly abusing them sexually. You would think that was simply too much, but then on top of this, Mom did not believe them. They found themselves in foster care. Trauma upon trauma is the reality for Eric and Katie and for many of the kids referred for treatment to Family & Children's Center Counseling and Development Services.

Through the use of play therapy, both Eric and Katie were able to heal the wounds of abuse and the grief and loss surrounding their biological family. They successfully completed family therapy with their adoptive parents and both children are functioning significantly better. They were emotionally stable when discharged from therapy after one year.

Eric and Katie are, unfortunately, not unique. They are challenged by multiple issues and enter a system of care crippled by state and federal funding cuts – cuts so deep that few providers are able to offer assistance to those most in need. Like Eric and Katie, many of the children who come to us have nothing but the state issued Medicaid which very few providers can afford to accept.

It is a shame that children suffer when their parents divorce. It is a shame children have trouble focusing in school and are unable to take advantage of learning opportunities. It is a shame when children like Eric and Katie suffer from grief, loss and trauma. But to deny help or offer sub-par assistance makes it more than a shame; it makes it a crime. And kids like Eric and Katie are anything but criminals....they are innocent victims.

For over 125 years Family & Children's Center has, with community support like yours, helped children and families like Katie and Eric. They need the best care possible..and we can provide that.

It would be a crime not to be able to provide the best services for the least among us.



www.fcccds.org

BOYS & GIRLS CLUBS POWER HOUR

Let's face it: No one likes homework. Teachers must assign it; students must complete it. It is an essential discipline in education.

At the Club, Power Hour is a program for members to complete their homework with the help and guidance of volunteers, Club staff and certified teachers. Power Hour is held Monday through Thursday, from 3-4 p.m. If the members' workload is particularly heavy, the Club extends Power Hour. Club staff check homework



thoroughly. Staff sign the completed work so teachers and parents are aware that the members completed their homework at the Club.

Sondra, a second-grade member at a school-based Club site, had recently been telling Club staff that her homework was done in class or that her teacher didn't give her homework. However, the second-grade teacher's assistant came to the Club staff to show us the member's homework; Sondra had done a math worksheet with every answer wrong. Sondra told her teacher that she did her homework at the Club and that it had been checked by staff.

Disappointment in Sondra quickly grew into concern. A meeting was held at the Club with her teacher, Club Staff, Sondra and her mother. Everyone wanted Sondra to succeed, and a plan was put in place to insure Sondra understood her assignments and completed her homework.

Sondra has since been successfully completing her homework regularly at the Club. Because her assignments are complete and checked by staff, her grades have improved. Sondra is on her way to Honor Roll!

To Learn how you can become a Power Hour volunteer, contact our volunteer coordinator, Vicki Geschke, at (574) 220-4095 or vgeschke@fccin.org.



Did you know?

- Our Clubs are open five days/week, after school and throughout the summer during hours when parents work.
- We serve 3,000 children annually at eight Boys & Girls Club sites in South Bend and Mishawaka.
- 68% of our Club Members are from homes at or below the poverty level (more than 3x the local average).
- Less than 1/3 of children we serve live in two-parent households.
- Our Club members' ISTEP passing rates improved between 8% and 30% at our 21st Century Community Learning Center sites (comparison of 2009 and 2010 test results).
- The greatest impact of our Club's academic programming is among the most struggling students who we recruit purposefully.
- Membership at the Club is \$40 for an entire school year. The actual cost of programming per YEAR per child is approximately \$800.
- If families are unable to pay this fee, we waive it. No child is ever turned away from the Club due to lack of financial resources.

Children are always the only future the human race has; teach them well.

The 4kids Project Read initiative is seeking volunteers who enjoy children, understand the importance of early literacy, and are willing to commit one hour a week to provide reading enrichment activities to Club members at the O.C. Carmichael, Jr. Youth Center on Sample Street in South Bend.

Becoming a reading partner is easy!

Contact our volunteer coordinator, Vicki Geschke, at (574) 220-4095 or vgeschke@fccin.org.

THE PROGRAM

As a volunteer, you will:

- read with a child or a small group of children in a ratio of 1:1 or 2:1,
- engage Club members in the reading process through discussion,
- facilitate paired reading groups,
- assist Club members in selecting pleasure reads to match his/her reading level, and
- build significant relationships with children who are in need of positive role models.

Volunteers are needed Monday through Thursday from 4-5 p.m.



BOYS & GIRLS CLUBS
OF ST. JOSEPH COUNTY

www.bgcsjc.org



Some affiliate programs of Family & Children's Center are funded in part by United Way of St. Joseph County

MENTOR OR CHURCH FAMILY PARTNER

It is surmounting difficulties that makes heroes. ~Louis Kossuth



While The Children's Campus is not a faith-based organization, we offer opportunities for residents interested in exploring their spirituality or practicing their affiliated religious denomination.

As a mentor or Church Family Partner, you give the greatest gift to a child: You give them opportunity to live out any future they have the imagination to choose.

There is a great need for mentors and Church Family Partners. Mentors serve as positive adult role models and provide opportunities for residents to experience life off-campus. Activities include going on walks, visiting museums, attending sporting events and movies and sharing meals.

Church Partners assist children in developing individual spirituality and understanding the benefits of fellowship that can be attained from local congregations and religious communities. Church Family Partners are responsible for transporting children to and from church and supervising and interacting during the worship service.

At The Children's Campus, we serve approximately 200 children each year. These children have endured a lifetime of sorrow that most of us cannot even imagine. There are many kids in need of your support.

If you have the capacity to help, please contact Chaplain Greg Fry at (574)259-5666 extension 276 to learn about how you can make the difference in the life of a child.

MY HERO

*My Hero is brave from her head to her toes. At times, when I am not brave, she is brave for me.
~ Dianna, 16-year-old resident at The Children's Campus*

At our Spirit of Giving awards held in January, one of our employees was honored by a Children's Campus resident. Dianna, age 16, read her essay "My Hero" to an audience of 200 guests. With poise and grace, Dianna spoke about Betty Hancock, a Youth Treatment Specialist at The Children's Campus. We are proud of the accomplishments residents like Dianna achieve with the help of our staff.



Betty Hancock watches Dianna read her essay at the January Spirit of Giving Awards.

Today we ask what is a hero, how can I become one and do I have to save someone's life? My answer would be "no." My hero is not a firefighter or a policewoman. She is an average person like you and me. You may ask who my hero is. Her name is Betty Hancock. There are five strong characteristics that make her my hero.

Determination is one that stands out more than her other five characteristics. Betty is always determined to help teens like myself. As she says, "It is a calling from God that I work all day so that I will make a good purpose in the world."

Her second characteristic is **valor**. She is the definition of the word. She has courage and boldness inside of her. Betty encourages me every day to do the right thing. Sometimes, I do not listen. When I turn the other cheek, her feet are planted and on solid ground.

Strength of mind that allows one to endure pain or adversity with courage is the definition of **fortitude**. My hero has been through a lot. Just because you drive a fancy car does not mean your past is the greatest. That is why we follow the LLP program: Learn from your past. Live in the present. Plan for your future.

You have to be **strong**. Betty may not look strong physically, but mentally she has it. When I am not strong, she will be strong for me. "Strong" should be her name.

My hero is **brave** from her head to her toes. At times, when I am not brave, she is brave for me. Life is not a fairy tale. She has been through a lot, been given false hope, but that is what makes her the person she is.

Betty is my hero and my friend. Betty means "Servant of God and loves people." That is who she is; every day I see her I want to cry from my soul. I never had anyone to love me, never doubt or judge me. In my definition, B is for how Beautiful she is. E is how Eager she is to love everyone. T is for her Trustworthy personality. T is for the way she is Trustful to me and the world. Y is for "You will always remember her."

Ms. Betty Hancock is my hero and my guardian angel.

She is not a firefighter or policewoman.

She is my hero.

The Children's
Campus[®] Hope for kids and families
who need it most.

www.childrenscampus.org



Family & Children's Center
Building strong families and healthy children

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Who's the

GREATEST BIG KID
in town?



www.GreatBigKid.org

Step #1: Run, don't walk, to your computer and visit www.GreatBigKid.org.

Step #2: Vote for your favorite Big Kid. Or vote for them all - we won't mind. Your \$40 vote equals a youth's Club membership for one year. Vote often - The Club serves 3,000 kids each year!

Step #3: Attend the Youth of the Year dinner on **April 15** to see who is crowned The Greatest Big Kid in Town. Visit www.GreatBigKid.org to order tickets.

Great Big Kid Candidates

[Shawn Henderson](#), Washington High School
[Craig Horvath](#), University of Notre Dame
[Aaron Perri](#), Legends of Notre Dame
[Rick Rice](#), Teachers Credit Union
[Manette Tepe](#), Holladay Properties
[Perry Watson, III](#), Lexus of Mishawaka