



# CHILDREN'S CENTER

Winter 2006

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Children's Center is a private, non-profit, state-licensed mental health agency providing community-based services to promote the psychological and social well-being of children, youth and families in Clark County. Professional therapists treat a full range of mental health issues and, through a community outreach program, provide on-site services in several Clark County schools.

Contact us at:  
415 West 11th Street  
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Thank you for another great year! A large part of Children's Center's success is because of the involvement and support of people like you. I have been privileged to work at Children's Center since it first opened its doors in 1989. It has been an exciting journey filled with surprises, challenges, tears and joy. I am grateful on a daily basis for our talented and gifted staff, committed Board leadership, the passion and energy of our volunteers and the generosity of our donors.

Last year, I shared Children's Center's experience with the increased number of preschoolers needing specialized mental health services due to exposure to methamphetamines. The methamphetamine crisis in Clark County continues to have a devastating impact on our most vulnerable citizens-infants and preschoolers. A 3 year grant from Legacy Community Health Fund has allowed us to develop the COACHES program (Calming Over-Aroused Children for a Healthy Early Start) to work with preschoolers affected by meth. Neuro-behavioral strategies are taught to parents, family members, teachers, day care providers, mental health professionals and other people involved with the child to help the child learn the necessary developmental skills to be successful at home, school, and with friends. To date, we have seen 32 preschoolers through this program and have trained over 100 adults who are important people in these children's daily lives. Katie is a 5 year old girl who has been in our COACHES program since age 4. She was removed from her home due to her parent's chronic meth use and placed in foster care. She wasn't sleeping and would scream, cry, kick and bite for hours at a time. Her language skills were delayed. She was asked to leave several day cares and preschools due to her behavioral challenges. Today, Katie is in kindergarten and proudly showed her therapist an award she received from her teacher that stated "Katie is a STAR. She has many friends and is very kind to others."

Your generous support will allow us to continue to provide the high-quality services to children in Clark County. Please help every child be a star! With appreciation for your support and with warmest wishes for a happy Holiday Season and a peaceful New Year.

*Pat Beckett*, Executive Director

## Save the Date! March 6, 2007 Friends of Children's Center Luncheon



Friends of Children's Center will host their 13th annual luncheon March 6, 2007 at the Red Lion Jantzen Beach. Jody Stevenson will be the guest speaker.

Jody Stevenson is a world-renowned speaker and author. She works with people who want to make successful choices, which guide them to a more peaceful mind and joyful heart. Her "Soul Success Series," delivered with warmth, humor and passion, has made her a popular favorite of audiences around the country. People are motivated with greater self-awareness and are inspired to embrace personal success. In addition to her book series, *Soul Purpose, How to Discover Your Soul Purpose, Soulutions*, and contributor to the bestseller series, *Chocolate for a Woman's Soul*, Jody has been a guest on numerous national radio and local TV talk shows.

Often described as a "master teacher", Jody combines her unique wisdom, awareness and enthusiasm to sponsor people as they awaken to their personal and professional passions. With a style that is down-to-earth and provocative, Jody gives her audience the tools for success and encourages them to take responsibility for creating a balanced and authentic life. Call 360-699-2244 for more information.

## Can you be a "Partner"?

Friends of Children's Center invites individuals and businesses to partner with us in providing services in our community. One of the ways that you can help is to be a "Community Partner." By contributing a minimum of \$500 you can become a Community Partner and help ensure that no family seeking help is ever turned away due to lack of resources. Community Partners receive two spaces at the Friends of Children's Center Luncheon, recognition in the event program, on [www.thechildrenscenter.org](http://www.thechildrenscenter.org), and in a post-event ad in the Columbian newspaper. Please consider becoming a Community Partner today. Call 699-2244 for more information or to sign up.

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## Children's Center Teams up with SW Washington Boys & Girls Clubs

Children's Center has a mental health therapist on site of the Boys and Girls Club. This unique partnership will benefit the children who participate in Boys & Girls Club activities by teaching leadership and conflict resolution skills. It is anticipated that 100 children will be involved in this training. Additionally, specialized training in mental health conditions such as attention deficit disorder, anxiety, etc. will be provided to the staff at Boys & Girls Club. We are excited about the potential benefits this partnership offers to the youth who attend the Club.

## Your Home Furnishings Can Turn into Dollars for Children's Center!

Divine Consign, a project of Nonprofit Network, is a community fundraiser where you can donate, buy and sell upscale, gently used home furnishing. It supports charitable, education and arts activities. A team of over 100 community volunteers operates Divine Consign & the Holiday Shop, its social enterprise projects.

1. Donate no longer needed home furnishings to Divine Consign, receive an in-kind tax receipt and a share of the proceeds will go to your favorite charity. Call Divine Consign at 360-695-6443.
2. A professional moving company can pick up your donation at no cost to you.
3. Make sure you specify Children's Center as your nonprofit.

## Toy Donations

Halo Designs Hair Salon at 1923 Main St is accepting new, unwrapped toys to be given to Children's Center families. Please consider dropping off toys for any age child. Call 360-737-2330 for more information.

## Thank You

You believe in what we do. You've proven it with your investment in the children and families we serve. Your gift helped children take the next step toward a future filled with hope and possibility. Recognized below are the individuals, foundations, corporations and organizations that made monetary gifts to Children's Center between October 1, 2005 and September 30, 2006. Thank you for making a difference!

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## Meet Our Newest Therapist



Brianna Thoreson grew up in Idaho with a younger brother and sister. She has always loved the outdoors, from playing soccer to mountain biking, backpacking, camping and more recently, triathlons. No exertion meant no fun! Looking towards her future, she knew she wanted to work with people, perhaps in sports medicine, but science classes definitely did not excite her. Then she took Child Development and Psychology, and she knew she had found her calling. Brianna received her MSW degree from Portland State in 2006....and was on her way.

Previous to Children's Center, Brianna worked for Lifeworks, Kaiser, and Multnomah County Corrections, where she worked with high-risk sex offenders. Her experiences taught her to find that "something good" in each person and work on bringing out that quality.

Brianna believes that "you can really make positive changes in people's lives, by working with kids and their families." She happened to find Children's Center's website one day while looking for a post-graduation job. She asked her professors and other people what they knew about Children's Center. She heard a lot of positive responses and was thrilled when she was hired as a therapist. "It's challenging but rewarding work." Brianna likes that challenge, and puts the same effort into her clients that she puts into a triathlon...she helps them cross that finish line, and reach toward their goals!

*Welcome to Children's Center, Brianna!*

## Big News!

### Post Adoption Resource Center Opens

Thanks to generous funding from the Gibney Family Foundation, Vancouver Rotary Foundation, 40 ET 8, and Windermere Foundation, as well as our big-hearted donors, the Post-Adoption Resource Center (PARC) is opened! This program represents the creative and collaborative approach that makes Children's Center special. Clark County has lacked a comprehensive resource center for adopted children and their families. Significant support from formal systems exists for people during the process of adoption. Typically, after the adoption has been finalized, the support abruptly ends. This reality negatively impacts not only adoptive families, but the entire community as these children

and their families sometimes struggle to adjust. Especially impacted are those amazing families who adopt children with special needs such as physical, and/or mental and emotional disabilities ranging from mild to severe in nature. Research has shown that without ongoing post-adoption support services, especially for children with special needs, the risk of the adoption disrupting increases exponentially. The program offers a monthly support group for adoptive parents as well as a lending library and other supportive services. Barbara Fullman, an adoptive parent herself, has been hired to coordinate the program. Many thanks to our donors for making this much needed program a reality!

### A Magical Evening in the Garden

Larry and Bonita Hanggi generously hosted The Friends of Children's Center's 4th Annual "Magical Evening in the Garden" fundraising event. Approximately 200 guests enjoyed the sights, sounds and fragrances associated with beautiful fountains, statues, and over 1,500 flowers in the Hanggi's spectacular garden overlooking the Columbia River. Gourmet treats included delicious food prepared and donated by Muggs Broselle complemented by outstanding wines from Wind River Cellars and Mark Fitzgerald Fine Wines. Lovely music rounded out the feast for the senses. A live auction, with items procured by a committee chaired by Anita Elliott

and Linda Laughlin, provided funds to match a \$20,000 challenge grant from The Gibney Family Foundation to benefit the agency's Post Adoption Resource Center. Thanks to The Friends' hard work and the generous donations of local businesses and guests, a record amount of over \$40,000 was raised during the memorable evening.

**Event Sponsors:**  
Biggs Insurance Services, Inc.  
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**For more information:**  
[www.thechildrenscenter.org/](http://www.thechildrenscenter.org/)  
Click on:  
Friends of Children's Center



## One of Our Wonderful Staff!

Brenda Johnson came to Children's Center 6 years ago from the southern Oregon coastal town of Coos Bay. She is our dynamite office manager and insurance specialist. Her day begins at 7:00 a.m. with the usual paperwork piled high, and finds her frequently on the phone throughout the day with insurance companies, claims reps and clients. Her favorite aspect of work is helping our clients with funding difficulties find the means to afford counseling and get the help their kids need. She also enjoys convincing insurance companies they should pay the benefits they quote, which involves a lot of

documentation, determination and excellent negotiating skills!

In Brenda's home life, she splits time between her 16 year old daughter, Jessica, who is a junior at Hudson's Bay, and her new found adventure; volunteering for Search and Rescue. She will be going through monthly training sessions for tracking, map & compass, rappelling, survival, first aid, crime scene, and dog handling. The latter will be used when she picks up her new Rhodesian Ridgeback puppy just before summer this next year, to train it for Search and Rescue also.

Brenda just received the news her 22 year old son, Zach, who is a Marine currently deployed on the USS Iwo Jima, is heading back from

## New Role for David DiCesare

We are pleased to announce that David DiCesare, a former Children's Center Board member, has contracted with the agency to provide consulting services to our Development and Marketing Team. David will provide valuable guidance and expertise in his new role. Look for exciting changes about Children's Center in the near future!

Kuwait, and will be coming home for 2 weeks at Christmas...so needless to say all is well with her world!