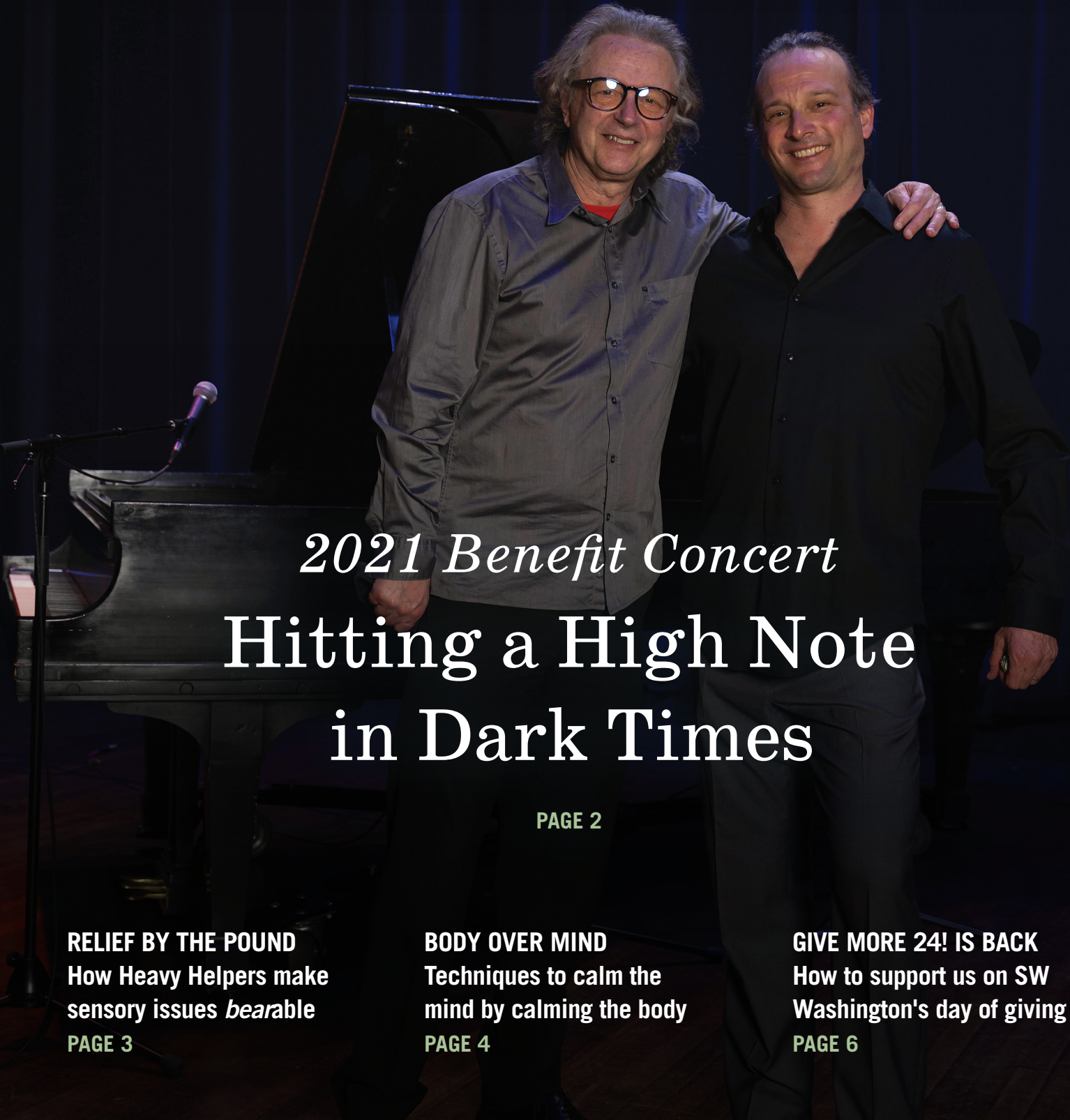




THE *chronicle*

THECHILDRENSCENTER.ORG | MEETING FAMILY MENTAL HEALTH NEEDS | SUMMER 2021



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YOUR GENEROSITY IS FELT, YOUR FACES ARE MISSED

Therapy is defined as a “treatment intended to relieve or heal.” Since March 2020 Children’s Center has been helping to heal those with wide range of mental health challenges via telehealth, but on May 10, 2021 we began the first phase of our return to in person treatment with a small number of clients and therapists returning to the office. It has been — like many reunions since the start of the pandemic — an emotional one for both therapist and client, and we look forward to further transitioning to more in person services as the situation allows.

Whether by telehealth or in person our work is made possible by you — our community of generous supporters. We have missed you and look forward to eventually seeing more of you in person, too. While we have been spatially distant during these past months we have sensed you with us every step of the way. As the pages of this newsletter reveal, your support, kindness, and message of hope to the children and families we serve have been stronger than ever. You have given over \$400,000 this year to help make our work possible; not to mention the countless gift cards, food, and other practical items. A huge *thank you* to each of you for ensuring kids have the support they need during this very difficult time.

Matthew Butte

Matthew Butte, Executive Director

NEWS FROM CHILDREN’S CENTER

• **SAVE THE DATE: Give More 24! September 23rd, 2021**

Mark your calendar for SW Washington's day of giving, when everyone who cares about Children's Center can take action by giving what they can, wherever they are, at the same time! *Follow us on social media, check the website or sign up for emails for more information*

• **PARTIAL RETURN TO IN-PERSON SESSIONS BEGAN MAY 10TH**

Children's Center has begun to reopen for client sessions, with safety measures in place, at the therapists discretion. We eagerly await the day we can open in person for all!

• **FARWELL TO TWO DEDICATED BOARD MEMBERS**

With great admiration we announce the retirement of two board members: Nancy Retsinas and Mike Stromme. We are so grateful for their many years of dedicated service!

COMMUNITY VOICES

What do you want people to know about children’s mental health? Join the conversation by sending your thoughts to Jennie Hoheisel at jennieh@thechildrenscenter.org.

“I feel blessed to be able to participate in The Children’s Center’s mission. All children deserve a chance to have a safe and trusted place for growth and The Children’s Center provides that.”

— LEAH PICKERING
CPE, KAZOODLES TOYS

“The Children’s Center is such an important resource in our community. To have this level of support and access for the children, youth and families is vitally important especially given the challenges of the last year.”

— DAWN TOLOTTI
PROVIDENCE MEDICAL GROUP

OUR MISSION

We serve children, youth and families through comprehensive community-based mental health services.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

- Gerald Bader, M.D., *President*
- Donald Brunell
- Denise Burgoyne, *Secretary*
- John Deeder
- Wendy Kelley
- Liz Luce, *Vice President*
- Carol McCaulley
- Tonya Rulli
- Maggie Traverso, *Treasurer*

CONTRIBUTORS

- ADCO Printing & Graphics, *printing*
- Kat Liljegen, *writing & design*

Lights, Camera, Fundraise!

On February 27th, 2021 Children's Center held its first ever Virtual Benefit Concert

The inability to host our annual benefit luncheon in 2020 inspired us to give back to those who have continued to support us throughout the year. The idea came to us from one of our founders and quickly took shape into the virtual event which was live streamed on February 27th, from the beautiful Elsinore Theatre in Salem, OR.

We were honored to have the talents of Michael Allen Harrison, concert pianist, and Aaron Meyer, rock violinist, perform an amazing concert. The two have been performing together for over 20 years and it came through in their stunning performance of both time honored classics like Halleluiah and truly beautiful originals such as Journey Home. We are so grateful to have their support.

Michael and Aaron are both champions of Children's Center and understand the impact of the work we do. In Michael's words "When an organization and a community come together to embrace folks



Michael Allen Harrison on piano and Aaron Meyer playing violin

who are in need and give them hope, that is the greatest gift that you could give to a fellow human being."

Hear more from Aaron Meyer as our Champion in the Spotlight on page 6.

A STANDING OVATION FOR...

We couldn't have asked for a more seamless, beautiful experience from our

wonderful production crew. We'd like to thank Tom Fohn and the Elsinore Theater and Moses and Jordan from Left Door Streaming for their services that night.

And a huge **thank you** to everyone who generously donated. Thanks to YOU, Children's Center raised \$50,000 for the children and families we serve! We are grateful not only for our continued supporters who donated, but for the 23 new donors who opened their hearts to the children of Clark County. There is a mental health crisis in our community and client numbers are on the rise. Your donations will allow us to continue providing quality mental health care to the children and families we currently see and to those who are still in need. Thank you for helping to change and save lives!



If you didn't get a chance to view the concert and would like to do so, scan this QR code with your smartphone's camera — or find it in the Videos section of our Facebook page at: [facebook.com/childrenscenterclarkcounty](https://www.facebook.com/childrenscenterclarkcounty)

THE CHAMPIONS WHO MADE IT POSSIBLE

Special thanks to our presenting sponsor — and longtime Children's Center supporters — Cherry and Ed Shaw. Additional thanks to Evergreen Pediatric Clinic, Columbia Credit Union, Providence Health and Services, Riverview Trust Company, and Vancouver Clinic. We couldn't have done it without your generosity!

How our Heavy Helpers Lighten the Load for Kids with Sensory Issues & Anxiety

The who, what, and why behind these cuddly creations — and how you can help

Although many things have changed over the past year one thing that our supporters have continued to help us with is our Heavy Helper program.

WHAT'S A HEAVY HELPER?

A Heavy Helper is a weighted stuffed animal given to children suffering from sensory issues or anxieties. They are made by modifying a medium sized stuffed animal, and weigh between 8 and 12 pounds.

HOW ARE HEAVY HELPERS USED?

We give Heavy Helpers to children with sensory issues so that they can take it to school and other places.

When working with children with sensory challenges, weight becomes a powerful tool. It provides sensory input that helps a child feel more calm and organized and improves their environmental awareness. Parents and therapists report that clients hold their Heavy Helpers during Zoom calls, while doing homework, and when falling asleep at night to ease anxiety.

HOW ARE HEAVY HELPERS MADE?

To make a Heavy Helper, volunteers remove some of the stuffing from the animal and replace it with washed aquarium rocks. The animals are then sewn back up and sanitized to be ready to be given out. As this is a project that can be done at home, we have relied on volunteers throughout the pandemic to continue making Heavy Helpers for us to give to the kids we serve.

A HELPING HAND FROM MICROSOFT

National Volunteer Week occurs every April, but this year Microsoft took it a step further



One young client expressed gratitude for their Heavy Helper with this drawing

and declared April “Volunteer Month” for their employees. Karen Smith — who works on Microsoft’s Azure Intelligence Platform (AIP) — saw an opportunity to help out kids in need. As a member of the AIP Women’s group, she suggested the group work together to build Heavy Helpers for Children’s Center. Co-worker Sharon Austin took the lead, and together the team made 54 Heavy Helpers!

“Each of the women enjoyed every minute of it and look forward to building more Heavy Helpers,” said Smith



Microsoft employee Karen Smith and family drove down from Seattle to deliver 54 Heavy Helper built by Microsoft’s AIP Women’s group

PICK UP A HEAVY HELPER KIT & VOLUNTEER FROM HOME

Mental health doesn't stop in a pandemic — and volunteering at Children's Center doesn't have to either! If you'd like to make Heavy Helpers from the safety and comfort of your own home, we can arrange a kit of all the materials you'll need to do so.

Get in touch today at: jennieh@thechildrenscenter.org

Promising Therapies That Explore the Body-Mind Connection

Guest article by Dr. Elia Vecchione, founder and clinical director of the Francis Foundation, a private non-profit that serves people with extremely challenging behavior

Over his 45 year career, Dr. Vecchioione learned a great deal from working intimately with wonderful and creative individuals about disabilities, mental health issues, and extremely challenging behavior. He has graciously shared here many of his findings and the philosophy that drives his approach to healing.

STRESS

All of us experience stress. Stress is a physiological, emotional, and physical reaction to thoughts or events that overwhelms us. Stress affects our thoughts, feelings, health, and behavior. The stress response was originally termed the “Generalized Adaptation Response” by Hans Selye back in the 1950s. This is important because the stress response is a general physiological response to distress. The stress (or distress) response does not differentiate between different types of stressors. If we get cut off in traffic, have a fight with our spouse, encounter a lion, or tiger, or bear (oh my), or even experience a mental or developmental disability, our bodies all react the same way. We either escalate and mobilize (flight/fight) or shut down (avoidance/withdrawal). Stress does not cause mental or developmental disabilities, but it certainly can make them worse.

THE BODY IS THE REPOSITORY OF ALL EXPERIENCE

Our experiences affect how our bodies react to events in the present. Our personal stress response is defined by evolution and experience. We’re born being wary of snakes and spiders, but learn to be afraid of things like engaging with people, having a conversation, or being disciplined. We come to fear things that have we have experienced as threatening or dangerous. Experiences in the present trigger re-enactments of the physiology and behavior

that helped us maximize our survival and minimize our suffering in the past. Just like bike riding, they get locked in our body, in our procedural memory.

THE BODY IS THE SPRINGBOARD FOR ALL BEHAVIOR

When it comes to trauma, attachment disorders, mental health, and developmental disabilities the body is the battleground in which this struggle is played out. Physiological changes that happen in our body in response to distress make some behaviors possible, and others impossible. People who are activated and mobilized by a stressful experience unconsciously generate an internal physiology that supports flight/fight behavior and they will not be able to sit still, listen, or focus their attention. They may even run away or become aggressive. People who are de-activated and immobilized by a stressful experience generate an internal physiology that will not allow them to engage with others, hear what others have to say, or follow instructions. The stress may even cause them to completely shut down and dissociate. The body is where treatment should always begin.

SKILLS NOT PILLS!

The first response to difficult behavior, or other symptoms, is often either consequences or medication. Typically we attribute behavioral difficulties to lack of motivation, and we use consequences to try to change



Dr. Vecchione with his three grandchildren

them. If consequences don’t resolve the problem we often turn to medication. While these interventions can be helpful they are not where treatment should begin. The most effective, efficient, and quickest way to change our feelings, thoughts, and behavior is to manage our body states. Tamingthetigervt.com offers 10 body-based techniques that are proven to change our body, brain, mind, and behavior. They are easy to learn and use. The videos include background on the techniques, examples of how to use them, scientific research, and demonstrations. There are also bibliographies of the scientific research that support the use of the techniques. Practitioners should be able to view the techniques and put them right into practice.

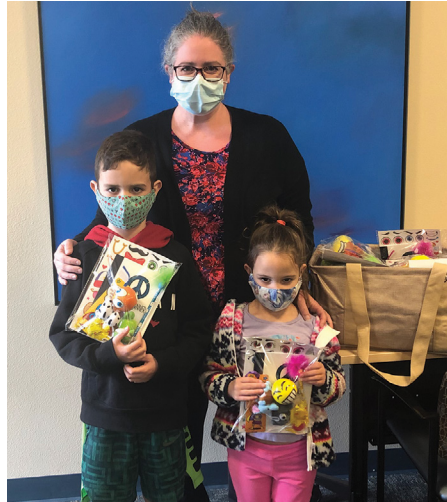
Everyone suffers from stress at some point. Stress happens in our bodies. Our stress response is based on the kinds of experiences we have had and dictates how we behave. Body-based techniques that either calm or activate us, depending on the need, should always be our first line of defense. So enjoy the techniques yourself and share them with those you care for.

Champions of Hope

When you support Children's Center's mission, you become a 'Champion of Hope' for a child in need. Here's what our Champions have been up to lately...



Cora's Snowflake Village came through once again, with a stack of gift cards for our drive



Erin Millar, Emmett and Samantha drop off gift packs for our clients



Luke McClaskey delivers stacks of care kits-filled with journals, markers and more



Chuck's Produce delivered a truckload of turkeys for our drive through Food Drive



On Point Community Credit Union helped make the holidays bright with a generous gift

WANT TO SEE MORE PHOTOS?

Find us on  & 

Children's Center Clark County
@childrenscenter_clarkcounty



Staff at local toy shop Kazoodles show their support



Ed Shaw and family lending a helping hand at our drive through food drive



Caeden Craig & Adam Cassanova pose with bears that will soon become Heavy Helpers

Champions in the Spotlight

MEET AARON MEYER

You may recognize Aaron from his performances at our recent Benefit Concert, which he was *instrumental* in organizing, and our 2019 Benefit Luncheon.

What keeps you busy? *"Playing Rock violin concerts with my band, running my music education programs and teaching private violin lessons... I also have 3 dogs that I walk several times a day, and I have a wonderful wife, named Renee who I get to cook for almost every night!"*

How does supporting Children's Center enrich your own life? *I love to be involved with my local community. Children's Center is providing such an important service and helping so many families. One way I can help is to use the talent I was gifted with to support Children's Center in their fundraising efforts.*



What moved you to take action and support Children's Center? *After an initial conversation with Matthew and hearing about the center, I wanted to be involved because of Matthew's passion for the families of Children's Center and because of the services that I learned that Children's Center provides.*

"You shouldn't go through life with a catcher's mitt on both hands; you need to be able to throw something back."

— MAYA ANGELOU

Become a Champion of Hope

3 EASY WAYS TO SUPPORT OUR MISSION

1 - CONNECT WITH US ON SOCIAL AND SUBSCRIBE TO EMAILS

Subscribing to updates helps keep you updated on the impact of your support. Even something as simple as a Facebook like can help others learn about Children's Center and help keep children's mental health top of mind in our community.

2 - TELL A FRIEND

You can have a big impact just by working within your own circle of friends, family, coworkers, neighbors, and more. Many people would love to be more philanthropic, but don't know where to start. Consider sharing one of our Facebook posts, passing along this newsletter, or starting a conversation in person to spread the word about children's mental health and the hope your support can bring to families in need.

3 - SUPPORT OUR GIVE MORE 24! DAY OF GIVING CAMPAIGN

Each year, SW Washington comes together and digs deep with a 24-hour community-wide fundraising event called Give More 24! We're hoping to make this year even bigger than the last — and we need your help. From organizing creative fundraising initiatives to recruiting matching donors, there are plenty of ways to show your support for Clark County families this fall.

Want to get involved?

Contact Jennie Hoheisel at jennieh@thechildrenscenter.org for more info.



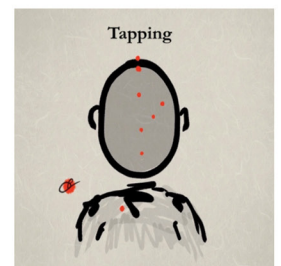
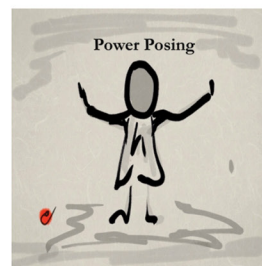
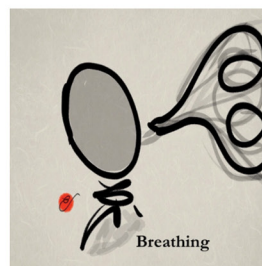
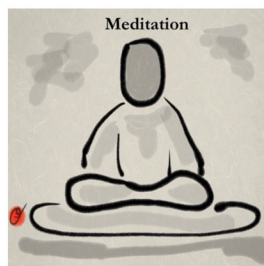
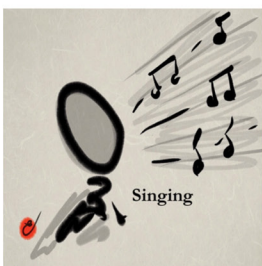
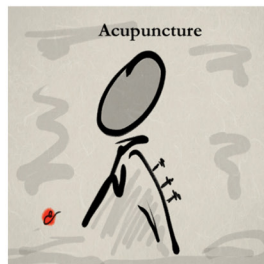
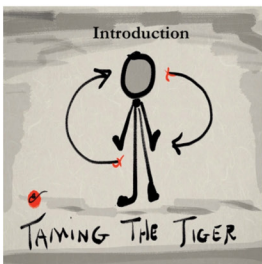
On September 23rd SW Washington nonprofits will band together for an annual day of giving

Body-Based Techniques to Change Behavior

Whether you're parenting a child with behavioral issues, or just trying to navigate modern life during a global pandemic, we can all benefit from knowing a few techniques to soothe, calm, and center our minds and bodies. Dr. Elia Vecchione, founder and clinical director of the Francis Foundation (and guest author of the article on page 4) has compiled a series of body-based techniques he uses in his work to support people with challenging behavior.

"Learn them from the videos and use them immediately to help us to calm our bodies, re-engage with others, and behave reasonably"

— DR. ELIA VECCHIONE, PH.D.



Learn the 10 techniques with short video tutorials at: TAMINGTHETIGERVt.COM