



The Resource

A publication of Childcare Resources, central Alabama's resource for child care

Serving Blount, Jefferson,
Shelby & Walker Counties

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Helping Others... Helping Ourselves

From the Desk of Executive Director Joan Wright

When there's a drought you want rain. When there's suffering you want comfort and healing. When there's destruction you want recovery and repair. When we see this happening to others, we want to help - and we do.

Help is a small word but its meaning is big for both the giver and the receiver. Danny Thomas said: "Success in life has nothing to do with what you gain in life or accomplish for yourself. It's what you do for others."

Today we are reminded of many neighbors who are in need of our help: the unemployed, the homeless, the hungry, the neglected children, those recently affected by devastating storms or serious illness and many more. The human spirit beckons us to respond to others, even when their challenges seem overwhelming.

Childcare Resources continues to be inspired by the generosity of people. Following this spring's catastrophic storms, a children's organization in Chicago decided to raise money for families affected by the Alabama storms. Their employees staged a blue jean fund-raiser over a period of time and sent the proceeds to Childcare Resources to be used, in turn, to help a child care program that was affected by the tornadoes.

In this issue of *The Resource*, we share stories of helpers and those who have been helped. While the intention of the helper is to fix what is broken, we find that more often than not, both the

helper and the one helped are rewarded. Maybe a new friend is made or a cause is furthered or a business is restored. In the end, generosity - like ripples in a pond - reaches far and wide and then returns to its beginning.

In your life, you probably extend kindness and a helping hand to friends and strangers alike. You may never be thanked directly, but because of you someone's day or even their life has been made better. We welcome your support. If you would like to learn more about ways you can help families and children in central Alabama, please contact me.



Program Director, Myra Shaw (right) helps child care director Valerie Square load toy donations for her child care center

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Bankers Open Books for Children

Wells Fargo Employees Take Time to Read to Local Children

Early literacy proponents know that reading aloud to young children is one of the best activities to stimulate language and cognitive skills. It also builds motivation, curiosity and memory. Dr. Seuss - in his wonderful book *I Can Read with My Eyes Shut!* - expressed his support of children's literacy when he wrote, "The more that you read, the more things you will know. The more that you learn, the more places you'll go."

Taking a cue from their company's signature slogan - "Together we'll go far" - the Financial Advisors team at Wells Fargo initiated a campaign to bring gifts of books and financial support to children in child care programs that serve low-income communities. Responding to one of our community's needs - early language skills for young children - the Wells Fargo team got busy.

Wells Fargo advisors made a significant financial contribution to Childcare Resources in support of the Supplemental Child Care Program, which offsets child care tuition for eligible working families. But staff members wanted to do more than provide financial support, they wanted to interact in a meaningful way with the children. A portion of their gift was set aside to purchase age appropriate books for the children. Recently,

several Wells Fargo advisors rolled up their sleeves and read the books to the children then, hand delivered a copy for each child to keep for their very own. The impact was touching and left an impression on the children and the volunteers alike.

One of the readers stated, "This is definitely one of the best community engagement projects that I've been involved with. It is more than rewarding to watch these kids become totally captivated by the stories being read. Our team hopes to duplicate our efforts in future years."

After each reading session, every child was given an age appropriate book to take home and copies were left for the classrooms' libraries. It was a joy to see the excitement on their faces to have a new book to take home.

One of the center directors stated: "It was an honor to have Childcare Resources, and Wells Fargo come to Wee Care Academy Downtown, read to the kids and give each child a book to take home. The kids and the teachers really enjoyed it. We thank them for recognizing the importance of reading to small children."

Wells Fargo is known as one of America's most generous companies, contributing about a quarter of a billion dollars to nonprofits each year. The bank is a generous supporter of Childcare Resources and many other non-profits in our area.



Wells Fargo Employees (L to R): Emily Curtis, Diane Cox, LaJuana Minor, Angela Elrod, Jason Sanders, and Dan Dimick



Angela Elrod and Jason Sanders



Emily Curtis and Diane Cox



LaJuana Minor and Dan Dimick

DID YOU KNOW?

Research shows that the more words parents use when speaking to an 8-month-old infant, the greater the size of their child's vocabulary at age 3. The landmark Hart-Risley study on language development documented that children from low-income families hear as many as 30 million fewer words than their more affluent peers before the age of 4.

2011 Special Events Round-Up

Beginning with the 21st Annual Children's Advocate Award luncheon held in March and ending with the 5th Annual Fairy Tale Ball in August, Childcare Resources' volunteers, donors, new and old friends, agency staff and each of our honorees came together in 2011 to recognize heroes and celebrate the agency's mission. Because of the work done behind the scenes by our wonderful volunteers, both of these fund-and-friend-raising events were very successful!

Children's Advocate Award Luncheon

Childcare Resources was pleased to honor some of our community's most active and dedicated advocates for children during the March Children's Advocate Award luncheon. Themed "Strengthening Families," the honorary chair of the event was Nancy Goedecke, Chairman and CEO of Mayer Electric, a locally-owned, family business that is a Certified Women's Business Enterprise. Nancy's parents, Mr. and Mrs. Charles A. Collat, Sr., were the highly-commendable recipients of the annual Margie Curry Lifetime Achievement Award for their long-time contributions of time and resources on behalf of children and families throughout Alabama.

Childcare Resources' Board members Carole Pizitz and Leila Watson headed the luncheon committee that did a great job designing, planning and implementing the event. The 10 Children's Advocate Award nominees - celebrated as Friends of Children - were all worthy of the award. In the end, the award was presented to two individuals - Judge Brian Huff for his work in juvenile justice reforms and Dr. Kathy Monroe for her involvement in projects that promote safety and well being for children.

Childcare Resources' Board of Directors has bold plans for the 2012 Children's Advocate Award Luncheon which will take place the end of March 2012. Please stay tuned for exciting news.



L to R: Susie Adams, Charles A. Collat Sr., Patsy Collat, Nancy Goedecke, Glenn Goedecke, Cheryl Collat, Charlie Collat, Caki Mendel and Bradley Mendel



Judge Brian Huff and Dr. Kathy Monroe



Leila Watson and Carole Pizitz

Friends of Children

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CONGRATULATIONS!

Because of the imagination and the efforts of our dedicated volunteers, we are pleased to announce that both events raised over \$200,000 for the agency in 2011. Thank you to all volunteers, guests and donors who supported these events. You truly help us "make quality and affordable child care happen" for children and families living and working in central Alabama.

5th Annual Fairy Tale Ball

Fairytales really do come true at the annual Fairy Tale Ball - the signature event of Childcare Resources' Junior Board. This 5th annual ball - the most successful to date - was a majestic evening for parents, grandparents, aunts and uncles and children alike.

Carrying on the year long theme of "Strengthening Families", the Junior Board extended an invitation to the entire Guy K. Mitchell, Jr. family to serve as honorary chairs of the Ball. Colin Mitchell, a previous Junior Board member, along with her husband Guy, III and the entire Mitchell family were instrumental in the success of the event.

Junior Board President Keith Johnson and Becky Rogers, Recruitment Chair, were the volunteer chairs of the 2011 Ball. With their leadership, the entire Junior Board played a part in presenting this splendid event that many guests look forward to year after year.

This year, in addition to the fairytale scenes and real live fairytale characters, children enjoyed activities such as custom decorating their very own gingerbread cookies, guessing the number of candies in the glass jar and helping the

Shoemaker and the Elves make shoes. Everyone flocked to see Willie Wonka and the Oompa Loompas at the Candy Bar lavishly decorated by Junior Board member Anna Fowler and agency staff, Beckie McRee and Donna Godbee.

A lively silent auction took place during the evening and bidding was brisk on Caribbean travel, celebrity photos and autographed sports memorabilia, jewelry, artwork and toys -

something for the entire family. Every item in the auction was donated by over eighty generous community businesses and individuals and yielded an excellent return for Childcare Resources.



A Very Tall, Juggling Mother Goose



Carrington Hodge and Ryann Wimbush



Keith Johnson and Guy K. Mitchell, III



Hope Martin, Emma DeMarco, Kendall Moseley, and Molly Martin enjoying the candy bar

Grand Duke



The Guy K. Mitchell, Jr. Family

Earl



Count



Anonymous



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- Oakworth Capital Bank
- RBC Bank
- Regions
- Vulcan Materials

Teaching the Teachers at Summer Conference

For the past 26 years, collaborators Childcare Resources and Jefferson State Community College have developed, planned and implemented the annual Stepping Stones Conference for early child care providers. The conference has become recognized by the child care industry as one of the best possible occasions to receive information and training to ensure quality in their programs and classrooms.

The venue for the July conference was the new Health and Sciences Building on the Jefferson State Junior College Shelby-Hoover Campus. Over 130 child care providers came from Blount, Jefferson, Shelby and Walker Counties for the opportunity to earn six of the minimum 12 hours required by the State of Alabama Department of Human Resources.

Attendees of the conference know the workshops are

lively, informative and convey the important lessons needed to nurture the development of children. Some of the workshop topics included the importance of talking to babies, caring for children with autism spectrum disorders, how to effectively communicate with parents and more.

Another feature of Stepping Stones is the partnership with other organizations. Groups like Alabama Partnership for Children, ALL Kids, Exchange Club Family Skills Center and others provided information on many services and resources available to child care professionals and the children in their care.

One of the best ways to sum up Stepping Stones 2011 is a comment from one of our attendees, "This conference gets better year after year. All of my sessions were informative and new ideas were presented that I can take back to my classroom."



Health and Sciences Building at Jefferson State Community College, Shelby-Hoover campus



Stepping Stones Class - Take Home Science Kits: A Recipe for Fun
One of the goals as a teacher is to find different ways to connect the home to the classroom. This fun, hands-on session allowed participants to create simple and inexpensive activities to use with their children at home.



Vendor Resource Area

DID YOU KNOW?

Stepping Stones is a multi-track training opportunity designed for early care and education professionals. Session topics consist of practices and trends, and addresses issues facing children, directors, or teachers in 0-to-4-year old classrooms.

Volunteer Spotlight

Sherri Jackson

Sherri Jackson is well known by many in our community. Married and mother to her teenage son, Jahaad, Sherri works full time as the evening news anchor at CBS 42, yet finds time to share her talents and passion with Childcare Resources.

"I share my time and energy with Childcare Resources because I believe it's an investment in the future of this community. I'm always enthused by the events that Childcare Resources puts on to bring communities and families together to celebrate our children."

Sherri, a member of the Board of Directors, is very active in the agency's work. She regularly attends committee meetings where she contributes to the discussion with ideas and questions that inspire positive change and action. She has graciously served as emcee for the annual events the agency offers: The Children's Advocate Award luncheon and the Fairy Tale Ball.

Sherri said, "I have to add that I love, love, love the Fairy Tale Ball. Seeing one child's face light up with a big smile when they meet their favorite story time character brings such joy. I wish every family could experience this wonderful night."

Sherri also engages others in the agency's mission. She has recruited additional board members whose skills and interest extend and support our work. Sherri has been instrumental in developing a strong partnership between Childcare Resources and CBS 42 News - a partnership that to a great extent adds value to the community in terms of media exposure to children's issues. Childcare Resources is featured frequently on CBS 42 News segments.

In August of 2010, with Sherri's assistance, Childcare

Resources held its first ever child care Resource and Referral live call-in special. Responding to another board member's idea, Sherri made it possible for the two-hour special to air during the evening news segments and a live stream on CBS 42's web site. The segment featured information on quality child care, parenting tips and brain development.

Sherri is currently serving her second term on the Board. In her own words, Sherri shares why she is involved with Childcare Resources: "I believe Childcare Resources' mission 'we make quality childcare happen' is a critical link to the future of our community. Many times people do not connect the link between our children and our future. But at Childcare Resources that link is made evident in everything the agency does."

We are grateful for her service and her guidance. She certainly works diligently to ensure we "make quality child care happen." Thank you Sherri!



Program Scrapbook





THE RESOURCE

FALL 2011

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Childcare Resources Mission

The mission of Childcare Resources is to make quality care and education of children happen by providing information, education, and assistance to families, providers of child care, and the community.



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