



We make quality child care happen.

**childcare
resources**

Serving Blount, Jefferson,
Shelby & Walker Counties

The Resource

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

DREAMS COME TRUE
at the 4th annual Fairy Tale Ball
PAGE 4

DONOR BILL OF RIGHTS
Practicing Good Stewardship
PAGE 7

STEPPING STONES
Building Better Teachers
PAGE 3

**CALLING FOR
QUALITY CHILD CARE**
PAGE 6

**VOLUNTEER
SPOTLIGHT**
PAGE 6

**COMMUNITIES
PUTTING
PREVENTION
TO WORK**
PAGE 3





New Strategies for Trying Times

From the Desk of Executive Director Joan Wright

"When the going gets tough, ..." We all know how to finish that sentence: *"... the tough get going!"*

"Necessity is the mother of invention" is a related cliché.

Both speak to the need to address challenges that face us whether it is a personal struggle, a downturn in sales or generating revenue for a nonprofit.

Today's headlines provide constant reminders that these and other quips about surviving amid difficult times are present day norms. We at Childcare Resources are not left out of this struggle. At a time when unemployment is hitting record highs and people's pocket books are experiencing record lows, now more than ever we are called to use our tenacity and creativity to ensure we continue to serve the children and families in need of quality child care.

When tried and true strategies are not producing the results needed, we have to employ new strategies. Some of the efforts we employed this year that have yielded good results include:

- Create new informative materials: redesign solicitations and appeals to help donors understand the scope of our programs and services
- Being more proactive with requests: submit proposals to donors based on their charitable budget calendars
- Increase online presence: provide more online experiences to learn about agency events and opportunities to become involved
- Engage volunteers to a greater extent: volunteer skills and services are highly valued commodities at Childcare Resources
- Partnerships increase opportunities: working alone is a tougher job in difficult times. Collaborations with like-mission entities can expand opportunities to benefit greater numbers while managing program expenses.

We are indeed grateful for our dedicated supporters who continue to ensure our mission is alive and well. We welcome new volunteers and contributors too. What are your ideas and suggestions? Please feel free to contact me with your thoughts.

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Childcare Resources' Stepping Stones

Building Better Teachers One Step at a Time

What makes a good early childhood education teacher? Is one "born a teacher?" Does a teacher's success depend on having a college degree, an extroverted personality, politeness, confidence, warmth or enthusiasm? In 1986 a group of university deans formed a coalition they named the Holmes Group and came to the conclusion that teachers need better training. Childcare Resources agrees.

In Alabama, requirements to teach in a licensed child care setting are that an individual must be at least 19 years of age, have a minimum of a GED or high school diploma and receive 12 hours of training annually. Realizing that the education and training of an early care educator is the most critical indicator of quality care, Childcare Resources aggressively advocates for advanced teacher training and continuing education and provides that training and education at no or very low cost.

According to a 2007 Child Care Workforce Report by the National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies, "Providers with specialized training are more likely to be nurturing, reinforce early literacy skills and challenges and enhance children's learning." Childcare Resources delivers

this specialized training in a variety of formats, locations and times, including weekends and evenings.

On July 31 nearly 160 child care providers attended Childcare Resources' Stepping Stones - a day long training conference in collaboration with Jefferson State Community College. The conference offered 27 sessions on early childhood education. Child care programs from Jefferson, Shelby, St. Clair, Talladega and Walker counties were represented by conference attendees.

Some of the conference workshop sessions included creative art forms, childhood obesity, teaching with love and logic, literacy and discipline. Workshops were enhanced by speakers from diverse backgrounds such as Alabama Public Television, Canterbury Day School, Jefferson State Community College, McWane Science Center, United Cerebral Palsy and more. Conference exhibitors included Alabama Partnership for Children, Exchange Club Family Skills Center and Jefferson County Department of Health.

Childcare Resources gages its own success with training programs such as Stepping Stones by asking participants for their feedback. This year 98 percent of



2010 Stepping Stones Conference participant Sally Turner

conference attendees rated the overall conference as good or excellent and 95 percent reported an increase in knowledge as a result of attending Stepping Stones.

Comments from conference participants included statements such as "Great! Look forward to next year" and "I feel that I've learned so much to take back to class with me" and "fantastic speaker lineup." While it is satisfying to receive such positive feedback year after year, it is inspirational to know that Childcare Resources is doing exactly what it is in business to do: make quality child care happen - one step at a time.

Communities Putting Prevention to Work

Childcare Resources, a member of the Jefferson County Health Action Partnership, is pleased to be joining 17 other entities to implement the Communities Putting Prevention to Work (CPPW) grant recently awarded to the Jefferson County Department of Health by the Department of Health and Human Services and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. The \$13.2 million award to the Jefferson County Health Department is to support both obesity and tobacco prevention efforts in the county.

The Health Action Partnership is a group of more than 100 organizations seeking to improve the quality of life for residents in Jefferson County by "Making the Healthy Choice, the Easy Choice." Together, we're working to reduce the obesity rate and educate residents about the dangers of tobacco.

Childcare Resources is involved in the effort to help prevent child obesity. Working closely with United Way Success By 6, Childcare Resources plans to train child care providers on ways to implement more healthy eating and activity choices in the

early learning setting.

Childhood obesity rates are at alarming rates in Jefferson County. Childhood obesity can lead to more complicated health issues such as diabetes, cardiovascular disease and other diseases that shorten a person's lifespan. In fact, research studies indicate that for the first time the upcoming generation is not expected to outlive their parents.

Fortunately, childhood obesity is preventable. Children's health habits are formed early. Teaching caregivers to realize easy ways to incorporate healthy snacks and meals along with fun learning and moving activities for children will help instill healthy habits that can prevent childhood obesity and the onset of other health issues. Look for more information in future editions of *The Resource* or visit our website at www.ccr-bhm.org as we venture into this meaningful work to support children and families.

If you would like more information on the Health Action Partnership, please visit www.jcdh.org.

Dreams Come True at the Fairy Tale Ball

Brandy said, ".....It was fun to see all of the princesses running around and Makaila was so thrilled to meet the Princess and the Frog!"

How do you help raise close to \$100,000 to promote quality child care in central Alabama while enjoying a fabulous evening out with your entire family? It's easy - come to the Fairy Tale Ball presented by the Junior Board of Childcare Resources.

The 4th annual Fairy Tale Ball took place on August 28th at the Sheraton Birmingham Ballroom. More than 700 guests - moms and dads, grandparents, aunts, uncles and **children** - attended the elegant (and occasionally boisterous) 2010 event benefitting the children and families served by Childcare Resources. As guests stepped off the red carpet and into the ballroom they were welcomed by a host of fairy tale characters, magicians, stilt walkers and balloon twisters. Just a Few Cats, a local jazz band, provided lively music throughout the evening.

Beginning in January, the Junior Board of Childcare Resources works diligently to plan and implement the August event. This year's Fairy Tale Ball planning committee was led by event co-chairs Hansell Boehme and Colin Mitchell. CBS 42 news anchor and Childcare Resources board member Sherri Jackson was the belle of the ball and mistress of ceremonies.

A. Fox deFuniak, III along with his grandchildren served as honorary chairs for the 2010 ball. Mr. deFuniak led a very successful corporate campaign. He and his grandchildren had the honor of proclaiming, "Let the Ball begin!"

A huge pirate ship complete with sail and working ship's wheel dominated one area of the ballroom. Tinkerbell and Peter Pan were joined

by a ragged assortment of swashbucklers who flaunted their sword fighting skills to anyone who would watch. Aarrg.

The Old Woman was spotted wandering around her shoe, counting her many children and muttering, "I

don't know what to do!" Perhaps it was because her shoe was actually a sliding board and every child in attendance seized each opportunity to climb the ladder then go for a slippery slide down the shoe!

As the festivities wore on, everyone - especially Rapunzel - began to let down their hair. During a rather dramatic moment on



The Queen of Hearts, Alice, a young guest and the Mad Hatter

stage, children watched wide-eyed as the Princess reluctantly kissed a frog. Everyone was delighted when the frog turned into a handsome prince!

This year's Cinderella's Castle was designed and built exclusively for the Fairy Tale Ball by the Sheraton's Executive Banquet Chef Mike Rigot. Chef Mike and his associates spent the week baking the sugar cookies and gingerbread that would become the life-sized castle's walls. Candy and icing decorated the structure and the entire area had a fresh-from-the-oven cookie aroma.

Surrounding the castle was a moat overflowing with small bags of candy. Children dove in and had their fill of sweet treats that were donated by a generous sponsor. But the children didn't stop there... Soon little inspectors were checking to see if the castle was really edible. Once investigated and proven, the nibbles and tasting lasted through the evening, but alas, the castle did not!

The Mad Hatter's Tea Party table overflowed with sweet concoctions. Other areas offered guests a spread fit for a fairy tale king and queen. Along with this magnificent banquet, Dream Cakes provided tasty treats for the Story Time area and Mafiazoza's/BaROLO's Catering served an antipasto buffet in front of the Mermaid living statue.

The Princess and the Pea, The Emperor sans clothes, Pinocchio, Beauty and the Beast and many other characters amused and entertained guests from early to late. A silent auction kept buyers on their toes, minding their bids on a wonderful selection of donated items - including a 10-day stay at a private villa on St. Bart's Island!

Thanks to the generosity of some businesses and individuals, several Childcare Resources' client families were given complementary tickets to the

Ball. Makaila and her mom Brandy, who participate in Childcare Resources' Parents as Teachers program, enjoyed every minute of the party. Brandy said, "I couldn't get over how nice everything was. It was fun to see all of the princesses running around and Makaila was so thrilled to meet the Princess and the Frog!"

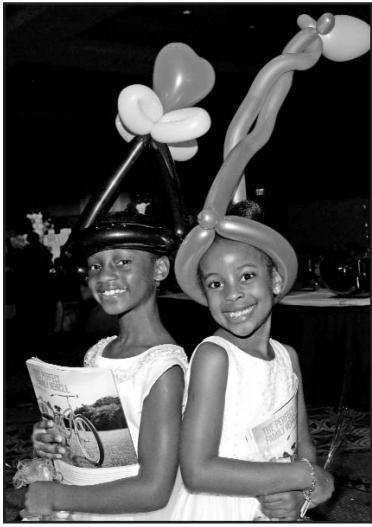
If you happened to miss this year's Fairy Tale Ball, don't despair - the 2011 Ball is already being planned with a tentative date of August 27. The 5th annual Fairy Tale Ball promises lots of new surprises!



Fairy Tale Ball Honorary Co-Chairs Fox deFuniak with his grandchildren and Childcare Resources Executive Director Joan Wright.



Father and Daughter Dance



Memories to Last a Lifetime



4th Annual Fairy Tale Ball Sponsors

Grand Duke



Childcare Resources'
Fairy Godmother



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Volunteer Spotlight

Childcare Resources Board Member Derry Herring

Board of Directors' meetings at Childcare Resources are held five times a year and members look forward to these gatherings where information is exchanged, finances are reviewed and fellowship is enjoyed. However, it is between these meetings when active board members roll up their sleeves and get down to the business of guiding and supporting the agency.

Just one of the many committed board members is Derry W. Herring, Chief Audit Executive of Protective Life Corporation. A board member for three years, Herring currently serves as treasurer of Childcare Resources. He is also the agency operations committee chairman and is a member of the strategic planning committee. He previously served on the Children's Advocate Award luncheon committee.

During a strategic planning committee meeting, Herring learned that Childcare Resources' current strategic plan was about to expire. As the committee discussed options for creating and putting a new plan into action, Herring thought that a balanced scorecard system might be the right solution for Childcare Resources.

Herring explained that the balanced scorecard is a strategic planning and management system that is in place at Protective Life Corporation and is used extensively in business and industry, government and nonprofit organizations worldwide to align business activities to the vision and strategy of the organization, improve internal and external communications and monitor an organization's performance against strategic goals.

Herring said, "Our prior strategic plan was a great document and roadmap that was developed by a committed group of individuals. Like other strategic plans for organizations, it had a



timeline and expected completion date. The new strategic planning process is based on a balanced scorecard methodology. The balanced scorecard is an active framework of processes, objectives and performance measurements that provide managers with information on activities that take place daily in order to reach the strategic goals of the agency. *Everyone* in the organization is involved in the balanced scorecard process on a daily and monthly basis."

Soon Herring along with representatives from Childcare Resources' staff and board joined forces during a two-day workshop presented by Protective Life Corporation at their Birmingham headquarters.

Herring and two associates used slide shows and other reference materials to teach Childcare Resources how a balanced scorecard system can help improve performance, align strategy with the work people do on a day-to-day basis, improve communication and prioritize projects. They also were instrumental in facilitating the development of a customized balanced scorecard for Childcare Resources.

When Herring is not fulfilling his responsibilities at Protective Life Corporation or serving as a committed working board member for Childcare Resources, one might find him teaching Sunday School at Asbury United Methodist Church, coaching the 90-pound Blue football team for Oak Mountain Youth Football or trying to improve his golf game. Herring and his wife Maryjayne have four children - Wriley, Drew, Griffin and Olivia.

Childcare Resources appreciates Herring and the many other Board and Junior Board members who are truly *working* to make a positive difference in the lives of children and families in central Alabama.

Calling for Quality Child Care

In an ongoing effort to reach more parents with child care needs, Childcare Resources presented its first ever child care resource and referral open house and call-in program. The event, co-sponsored by CBS 42 and AT&T, was held on August 17 from 5 p.m. until 7 p.m. and was streamed live on the CBS 42 website, www.cbs42.com. The event was also covered by CBS 42 during the 5 and 6 evening news programs.

Extra phone lines were installed by AT&T. Close to 40 calls were answered by Childcare Resources' professional staff who aided callers in understanding what to look for in selecting quality child care and offered to conduct child care searches and

send follow up information. Callers included parents, grandparents and even a great grandmother. One family called from their hotel room as they are newly relocated to Birmingham.

Myra Davis, Family and Community Services Consultant at Childcare Resources, shared one caller's story. "On the day of the telethon, a parent told me that she asked someone at her place of employment about finding a child care provider. They referred her to Childcare Resources. While she was on break, she saw the telethon on TV and called in. At that point she felt reassured that our agency was the right place to contact for her

needs."

The live webcast of the event attracted 150 hits and provided information on quality indicators of child care, early brain development and how to positively impact it, and the role parents play in supporting their child's development.

Everyday Childcare Resources' Resource and Referral program receives calls and visits from parents seeking the best child care options for their children. The agency was pleased to join hands with CBS 42 and AT&T to help broaden our parent outreach via enhanced technology and communications.

A Donor Bill of Rights

Childcare Resources Continues to Practice Good Stewardship

"Philanthropy is based on voluntary action for the common good. It is a tradition of giving and sharing that is primary to the quality of life."

So reads the preamble to A Donor Bill of Rights, a document created by the Association of Fundraising Professionals, the Association for Healthcare Philanthropy, the Council for Advancement and Support of Education and the Giving Institute and endorsed by a number of other organizations including United Way of America. Childcare Resources embraces this Donor Bill of Rights and abides by its guidelines.

A DONOR BILL OF RIGHTS

- 1. To be informed of the organization's mission, of the way the organization intends to use donated resources, and of its capacity to use donations effectively for its intended responsibilities.**
- 2. To be informed of the identity of those serving on the organization's governing board, and to expect the board to exercise prudent judgment in its stewardship responsibilities.**
- 3. To have access to the organization's most recent financial statements.**
- 4. To be assured their gifts will be used for the purposes for which they were given.**
- 5. To receive appropriate acknowledgement and recognition.**
- 6. To be assured that information about their donation is handled with respect and with confidentiality to the extent provided by law.**
- 7. To expect that all relationships with individuals representing organizations of interest to the donor will be professional in nature.**
- 8. To be informed whether those seeking donations are volunteers, employees of the organization or hired solicitors.**
- 9. To have the opportunity for their names to be deleted from mailing lists that an organization may intend to share.**
- 10. To feel free to ask questions when making a donation and to receive prompt, truthful and forthright answers.**

Future issues may include reports on the various points of A Donor's Bill of Rights. This article focuses on donor right number eight.

"At Childcare Resources, we believe *everyone* associated with the agency is involved in our resource development efforts," said Joan Wright, executive director of the agency. "From Board and Junior Board members to each member of our professional team, we all carry the message to our community that Childcare Resources is a good steward of our donors' generous support that promotes the mission of our agency."

Childcare Resources, like most nonprofit agencies, depends on the goodwill of donors - individuals, businesses and foundations - to provide the funding that makes possible our programs for children, families and child care providers. In order to reach our donors, Childcare Resources employs a variety of resource development activities which are primarily administered by three members of our professional staff: Executive Director, Joan Wright; Development Director, Joy Godsey; and Manager of Development and Communications, Bobbi Jo Grady. While these

three individuals have lead responsibilities for fund raising, the agency's entire professional team assists by providing the *quality* programs and accountability our donors expect to support.

Resource development at Childcare Resources does not take place with staff support alone. Our Board of Directors, Junior Board and other volunteers are significantly involved in efforts to generate revenue. Some of these efforts include our annual Next Generation campaign, the prestigious Children's Advocate Award luncheon and the highly successful Fairy Tale Ball. None of these projects could be accomplished without the support and assistance from our wonderful volunteer boards and committee members.

From grant writing to special events, from networking to direct mail campaigns, Childcare Resources staff and volunteers work year around to ensure our clients are receiving the help they need and deserve. In the end, it's the children - our futures - who benefit from our combined efforts.

Childcare Resources is a partner agency of United Way of Central Alabama, which is currently conducting its annual campaign. Please give generously to United Way.



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THE RESOURCE

FALL 2010

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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.



Looking Ahead

October 31st

Halloween

October 25th

United Way Visiting
Allocations Team

November 5th and 6th

Early Learning Resource
Center and Library
Open House

November 18th

Great American Smokeout

November 25th

Thanksgiving Day

November 25th - 26th

Childcare Resources
Offices Closed

LIVE UNITED



United Way
of Central Alabama, Inc.

United Way of Central Alabama supports the work of Childcare Resources and 80 other local nonprofit organizations. Its mission is to increase the organized capacity of people to care for one another and to improve their community.

Please give generously!

www.uwca.org