



## newsletter

- Spring 2007 -

*Featured in this issue  
is a special section  
on the Campaign.*

### IN THIS ISSUE

- 2 - Executive Director's Note
- 3 - View from a Therapeutic  
Preschool Specialist
- 4 - Best wishes to a friend and  
outstanding member of The  
Children's Center: Martha Taylor
- 4 - An Outpouring of Support in the  
Lives of Hundreds of Children!
- 5 - Subs for Santa
- 6 - Contributors for  
July - December 2006
- 8 - Oquirrh School: More space to  
meet the growing needs of our  
community
- 9 - The Children's Center Expands  
Early Prevention Efforts for Infants  
and Toddlers
- 9 - Moms Learn about a  
Great Resource
- 10 - Focusing on the Future
- 11 - Campaign Contributors





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## A Note From The Executive Director

Jimmy is playing with toys in the waiting room but when I appear he jumps up and runs excitedly down the hallway to my office. He's become quite familiar with the routine, having come to The Children's Center for more than a year now. Bounding into my office, he seats himself across from me, eager to tell me about the wonderful toys he received for Christmas this year. After a few minutes of catching up, I ask him about his time with his dad over the holidays. His demeanor abruptly changes and he shifts his gaze to the floor. Trying his best to maintain his cheerful attitude he says, "I had a great time!" As we talk, his chin begins to quiver, exposing the real depth of his unhappiness. "You're really missing your dad now and it's so sad to leave him after you've had such a good time together," I say, reflecting on both the joy and the sadness that is consuming him. Almost imperceptibly he nods his head in affirmation, blinks his eyes, and his tears begin to fall.

Just down the hall, a similar scenario is taking place in another office. Janey is playing quietly with toys as her therapist follows her lead. Today she wants to build some furniture for her dolls out of the small wooden blocks. Having made a small blue and red block bed, she carefully lays the doll down and covers her gently with a piece of Kleenex "to keep her warm." "You're learning how to take such good care of her," her therapist says, "You're being a good mom." But Janey shakes her head and her eyes start to get red and fill with tears. "Mommy is mean to me," she says. And a story about her unhappy Christmas unfolds. Her doll play today reflects her wish about how she would like her life to be. Janey's foster mother watches the scene play out and dabs a tissue at her own eyes.

The wonder of Christmas provided a short, but most welcome reprieve for most of our families. But with the dark days of winter comes the painful reminder that the joy of the holiday is not permanent. Sadly, these scenes are played out in our offices throughout the days, weeks, and months of each year. Many ask how we, as clinicians and staff, can tolerate being witnesses to such pain and sorrow day in and day out. The answer is actually quite simple; we know that we're making a difference in their lives. Although the process is often slow – and painful – the reward at the end makes the journey worthwhile.

Tiffany was neglected and abandoned early in life. When she came to The Children's Center she was attacking anyone who dared get close to her. She was so aggressive at home and at her preschool that not only had she been expelled from two programs, but her adoptive family was wondering if they could keep her. After more than a year of intensive treatment she is now a smiling, happy little girl who is the star of her new preschool class. Her adoptive family delights in her and she gets along well with her siblings—aside from typical brother- and- sister spats now and then! During her recent follow-up visit she asked her therapist if she could draw a picture. Grabbing the crayons and telling the adults not to look, she drew a colorful rainbow. She was standing at one end of the rainbow sporting a beautiful smile and her therapist was standing at the other end with outstretched arms. It was her way of saying thanks while



- Douglas Goldsmith, PhD  
*Executive Director*

## From The Executive Director (cont.)

communicating her recognition that she is feeling so much happier!

As the Executive Director, I often marvel at the incredible work accomplished by our staff on a daily basis. The fact that over 90% of the families report feeling closer to their child at the end of their treatment is a testament to our impact and confirms our ability to effectively change lives. The true heroes are our entire staff - from the bus drivers, to the Therapeutic Preschool Specialists, the office support staff, administrative staff, and our clinicians. As a team, the staff works diligently to ensure that every family who needs us will get the help that they require to get back on track. Their professionalism and commitment makes The Center what we are today and allows us to confidently say that we help create brighter futures.

We know that we're making a difference in their lives. Although the process is often slow – and painful – the reward at the end makes the journey worthwhile.

## View from a Therapeutic Preschool Specialist

By Paul Callister

Standing on the playground at The Children's Center, "Tommy," one of our four-year-old boys, looked down to see his untied shoe. Too upset to ask for help, he quickly became very frustrated, hammered his foot against the ground, then threw his shoe across the playground. He lay on the grass, yelling

incomprehensible words, and began thrashing his body until he was literally kicking himself around in circles.

Frustration to the point of emotional dysregulation was a typical and daily struggle for Tommy, who has experienced significant abandonment, neglect, and loss. The unmet need may

have initially been the shoe untied; however, Tommy's lifetime of unmet needs, due to the failure of adults in his life, quickly pressed upon him, bringing him, in moments, from playing calmly to kicking in circles.

Through the past year, I have watched Tommy transform. No longer does he tantrum or withdraw from the group. He still becomes frustrated, but is now able to calm himself and verbally express his needs and strong feelings. Aggression toward peers and adults has gradually been replaced with cooperative play and involvement.

A highlight has been watching Tommy take care of toy dolls. On one occasion he selected a plastic baby, wrapped it carefully in a blanket, fed it, and placed it gently in a carrier. He brought his baby to show me, just beaming. I observed, "Tommy, what a great dad you are." He smiled brightly at me, as though saying, "Yes, I am." It seemed it was actually himself that he was holding in his arms, caring for, nurturing—symbolically. He seemed to be giving himself the care and love he had not received in full measure.

Experiences with children like Tommy at The Children's Center make my work as a Therapeutic Preschool Specialist rewarding and worthwhile.



He still becomes frustrated, but is now able to calm himself and verbally express his needs and strong feelings.

## Best wishes to a friend and outstanding member of The Children's Center: Martha Taylor

Like so many who have become involved with The Children's Center, Martha too started out as a volunteer. A year later, and with no expectation of staying beyond another year, Martha joined the staff under the guidance of Agi Plenk. Agi was so certain that Martha would remain a part of the team, she said, "I am going to hire you anyway. I think you are going to stay," a statement Martha shared with great affection. She stayed because of the incredible difference The Center makes in families.

After 28 years as the Volunteer and Community Outreach Coordinator and a friend to so many Children's Center community partners, volunteers, and staff, Martha Taylor has taken her skills and outstanding ability to work directly with young minds to the AMES School Program at Cottonwood High School.

When asked to recall a memorable volunteer, she said there were just too many to pick one great story. But



Martha Taylor

what she thinks of most about all the volunteers is what they are doing now. Did volunteering at The Center make them better parents? Have they made a difference in our world? Of those volunteers who have come back, some have brought their children, some have joined the staff, and some have become teachers who encourage their students to be volunteers.

Martha came to volunteer at The Children's Center after seeing an interview on TV with Agi Plenk. "The Children's Center made me a better parent. It taught me to learn what is important to kids and to listen to them." It made Martha a spokesperson for children, which she did so well for The Center for almost three decades.

"Volunteering at The Center gives people a chance to discover a positive atmosphere. We help to develop their strengths and discover what they didn't know they had."

Thank you, Martha, for making The Children's Center a place for so many people to have the opportunity to discover themselves through volunteerism.

Stat: The Children's Center has over 300 volunteers annually. Without the help of volunteers, we would be unable to help so many children in our Therapeutic Preschool.

## An Outpouring of Support in the Lives of Hundreds of Children!

Anticipation swept the room as the more than seventy attendees of The Children's Center's inaugural "Joy to the Child's World" breakfast on Tuesday, December 5, 2006 watched a poignant video, "Through the Eyes of a Child." The stories told represented the thousands of little children whose lives have been improved because of the services they and their families received at The Children's Center.

The Children's Center would like to thank Stephanie Harpst, of Wells Fargo, for giving a warm welcome to guests, and Nancy Hogarty-Baker for sharing her family's moving story.

The Children's Center would also like to thank all attendees for taking time to learn about the lives of these young children, many of whom, in addition to their emotional and behavioral problems, have also experienced abuse and neglect. The support of community members helps to ensure that The Children's Center can continue to give hope to these little children and their families.

An impressive \$27,240, and still counting, was generously given by those who attended. 100% of these gifts will go toward the programs and services offered by The Children's Center because of the generous support of:

**WELLS  
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**I.J. and Jeanné Wagner  
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**Utah Food Services**

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Lynn Kestle**

## Subs for Santa Make it Down the Chimney Again!

As in years past, the kind and generous individuals, organizations and companies in our community transformed Christmas for our needy families from bleak Dickensian scenes to festive familial gatherings with food, frivolity and fundamentals. We at the Children's Center are continually amazed by our extraordinary Santas, who sensitively and generously address the needs of families they will never meet, but families—so grateful their children have been given one of the essential joys of childhood

— Christmas. One cold afternoon the week before the holiday a work-weary father pulled up in his battered truck to receive the black plastic bags prepared for his family. As staff began loading the gifts his eyes grew wide with incredulity, "All this? Thank you!"

To you, our faithful Santas, we wish to convey the deep appreciation felt by our families. Your tremendous care reverberated throughout both Centers and infected us all with the true spirit of Christmas. Thank you.

### Thank you 2005 Sub-for-Santa Sponsors!

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Employees of ATK have been bringing Christmas to The Center for many years

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The Children's Center thanks the generous individuals, companies, foundations and organizations for their contributions from July-December 2006.

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#### In Memory of

Nina Begue  
Pam Bowen  
Howie Ujifusa  
Eleanore Eccles Steele

## The Oquirrh School:

### More space to meet the growing needs of our community

It is hard to believe that our 50 year land-lease with the University of Utah is quickly coming to a close, and we are in need of more space in order to provide the level of care necessary to meet the growing needs of our community. As anyone knows who has ever tried to move to a new location, finding a new space to meet our unique needs has been incredibly

challenging! After touring the Oquirrh School property, we knew we had found a new home for The Children's Center. As a former school, it has immediate curb appeal for our families, but more importantly, it is easily accessible from Trax as well as from the downtown freeway exits. As a result, our clients from Draper, Alpine, and Orem, as well as those from Centerville, Bountiful and

Ogden, will welcome the easy access! We are pleased to be able to share photos of the Oquirrh School. In future publications we will unveil the renovations taking place to ensure our needs are met for the future generations seeking our help.

We would like to thank the Board of Trustees and the Facilities Committee for their outstanding support and guidance in helping The Children's Center find a new home.

*To learn more about seeing the Oquirrh School first hand or how to help in The Children's Center's efforts to raise money for the Campaign for a New Children's Center, please call Courtney Garay, Development Director, 582-5534.*

#### A successful Campaign will:

- Create a new Children's Center main facility and allow us to double our current client capacity
- Enhance our ability to fund staff positions and support new and existing treatment and educational programs
- Develop innovative income streams in order to decrease dependence on government and other unpredictable funding sources.



## The Children's Center Expands Early Prevention Efforts for Infants and Toddlers

The Children's Center was recently awarded a grant to assist with enhancing the quality of care for children under two years of age in public child care programs. Linda Smith, recently hired as The Children's Center Infant/Toddler Specialist, joins with two other colleagues from non-profit agencies in Davis and Utah counties to launch a state-wide network under the direction of the Utah State Office of Child Care. This network of specialists will offer support to child care programs serving infants and toddlers by assessing the child care center program's quality and then offering training, mentoring and regular on-site technical assistance.

The Office of Child Care offers small, non-competitive grants called "Baby Steps" to child care programs serving children under two. Linda Smith's role entails supporting and mentoring the 50+ local infant and toddler classrooms

currently participating in the "Baby Steps" grant. Linda and her two colleagues use a nationally-recognized instrument called the Infant/Toddler Environmental Rating Scales (ITERS) to establish a baseline measurement of program quality. Using results from these scales, the specialists work with the program administrators to write specific, measurable program goals. Funds from the "Baby Steps" grant are then targeted toward achieving these goals. Throughout the year, Linda will mentor child care program staff to increase the likelihood of positive outcomes.

These services will result in healthier, more age-appropriate environments and more knowledgeable and responsive caregivers for babies, giving them a better start in life and decreasing the risk of developmental and emotional difficulties later on. Working parents using child care for their infants

and toddlers may notice continuing improvement in the care and have fewer concerns and anxiety over leaving their babies.

For The Children's Center, these new responsibilities are a great fit with our mission, our current services and future directions. Linda is a part of our Early Childhood Consultation and Training Program which has given training in child care centers and has been offering classroom consultation for many years. Resources and expertise within the existing program have helped launch Linda and these new services into the community with greater ease and credibility. Likewise, the focus of Infant/Toddler services broadens and deepens the expertise and services within the consultation and training department and gives our agency one more way to reach out in support of our community's very youngest children and their caregivers.

### Consultation and Training Program Accomplishments

**Taught 32 courses (6-7 classes per course), totaling 300+ training hours**  
**Trained over 475 child care center professionals**  
**Each year travels to a different set of childhood programs to help enable training to all child care centers that seek Children's Center training.**

## Moms Learn about a Great Resource

### Raising awareness and money

On November 2, mothers and grandmothers gathered to learn about a vital community resource for families: The Children's Center. At a breakfast they listened to Doug Goldsmith discuss the importance of developing empathy in children and the role The Center plays in helping families cope with the struggles of raising children in today's milieu of

violent video games and TV shows.

Just a week earlier, couples gathered to learn how they can help The Children's Center accomplish its mission by supporting the Campaign for a New Children's Center. Not more than two weeks later, over 35 guests joined The Center to become acquainted with our scope of services.

Thanks go to the hard working Community Outreach Committee chaired by Nancy Hogarty-Baker. Because of the committee's dedication, in just a few weeks over 100 people learned about The Children's Center with many pledging their support to help fund the Campaign for a New Children's Center.

## Focusing on the Future

### Why a \$10 million Capital and Endowment Campaign

**What if we don't act now?** The Children's Center is at an important crossroads, both for the future of our organization as well as the future of the children we help. Each year, we successfully care for more than 1,200 children, allowing them to lead happier, healthier lives. Our parent satisfaction surveys show that 95% of our families see a definite improvement in their child's behavior through our treatment. More importantly, 97% of parents say they get along better with their children. This is the good news. The bad news is that because of the size of our facility, families wait as long as two or even three months to access our services. That's 20 to 30 families each week that are faced with delaying vital treatment for their children.

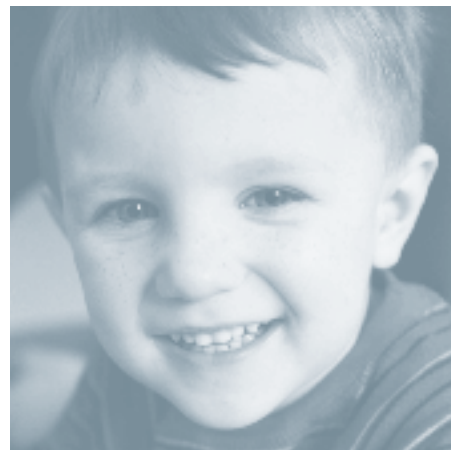
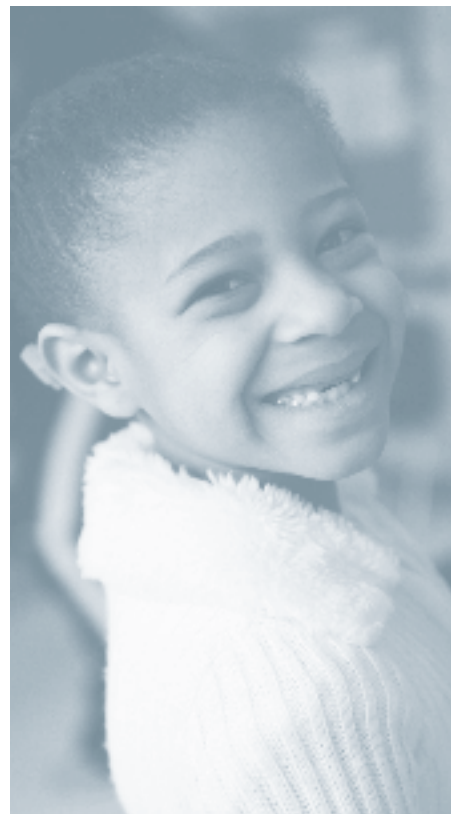
**Consider the impact of a 2 to 3 month wait.** That's two or three months of a deteriorating situation in which

the child's health and welfare (not to mention that of other family members) may be at serious risk. Even longer waiting lists prevent children in crisis from entering our therapeutic preschool for several months. During that time, the families experience more distress and frustration, which further damages the parent-child relationship.

**In addition to inadequate capacity, The Children's Center also faces unstable funding.** One-third of our current agency income comes from Medicaid reimbursement, which means any changes to Medicaid funding drastically affect our programs. This leads The Children's Center to confront painful decisions regarding cutbacks in staff and programs, as well as our ability to serve children who desperately need our care. And because we offer the only resource treatment program for families with young children, losing these

programs puts families in immediate jeopardy.

**17,000 will need services in the next 10 years.** Our passion for the work we do and the people we help compels us to look for solutions beyond simply maintaining our current level of service. With Salt Lake County's rapid growth, we must plan now to meet the mental health needs of future generations. Over the next ten years, estimates of the incidence of psychiatric problems in newborns to four-year-olds suggest that in Salt Lake County alone, more than 17,000 children may require therapeutic services for emotional problems. In order to meet this growing demand, we must expand our funding as well as our facility. These financial and physical expansions will make The Children's Center accessible to more families throughout our growing community.



## Celebrating Children

The Children's Center and Zions Bank present an elegant evening Celebrating Children

**Friday, June 8, 2007 at six o'clock in the evening at La Caille**

9565 South Wasatch Boulevard  
Social Hour, Buffet Dinner,  
Live and Silent Auctions,  
Entertainment  
Black Tie—Optional



## With Great Appreciation

*The Children's Center thanks the generous individuals, companies, foundations and organizations for their contributions to the Campaign for a New Children's Center.*

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Mike and Susan Zuhl

## How to Help:

The Children's Center is dedicated to giving struggling kids and their families a new start. We are their hope for a brighter, happier future. You are ours. Your support will allow us to continue our legacy of helping little kids with problems for decades to come.

For more information on The Campaign for a New Children's Center, please visit [www.tccslc.org](http://www.tccslc.org) or contact Courtney Garay, Director of Development, at 801-582-5534 ext. 36 or [Courtney@tccslc.org](mailto:Courtney@tccslc.org)

## Got Heart? Got Time? Get Love!

The Children's Center welcomes compassionate people to assist in our Therapeutic Preschool classrooms. We have three hour sessions weekday mornings and afternoons both in Kearns and Salt Lake. If you can commit one morning or afternoon a week, you will find yourself immeasurably enriched by the experience.

*For more information, call Penney Gregersen at 582-5534.*



1855 East Medical Drive  
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(801) 582-5534

5242 South 4820 West  
Kearns, UT 84118  
(801) 966-4251

[www.tccslc.org](http://www.tccslc.org)

## Share the Gift of Giving

*If you're considering a donation to The Children's Center, why not share it with someone you know. By contributing in honor of a friend or loved one, you give the gift of caring twice: once as you help a child receive treatment, and a second time as you designate someone else to share in your generosity.*

- Notification of your generous donation will be sent to the honoree.

I would like to help a young child by donating the following: \$ \_\_\_\_\_

As a general donation to The Children's Center

In honor of: name \_\_\_\_\_  
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### PAYMENT OPTIONS:

I have enclosed a check.  Please bill my credit card.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone No: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

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- Please cut on the dashed line and mail to one of the addresses to the right.