



Family Nurturing Center

Jackson County Children's Relief Nursery

Stable Families  Healthy Children

WINTER
2008
NEWSLETTER

nurturing notes

Your Help Can Make A Difference



By *Mary-Curtis Gramley, Executive Director*

The Family Nurturing Center (FNC), Jackson County Children's Relief Nursery, is bursting at the seams! Children fill every classroom and many stay for afternoon respite childcare. More parents are coming regularly for parent education and support.

Our children's clothing closet continues to need replacements. We have added three new teachers and two outreach workers. We are working closely with children's mental health therapist to strengthen interventions for the children. **Seventy children and their families** are presently enrolled in the program. It is truly a time of excitement and growth. Encouragement and support from people like you and from businesses and foundations in our community have made this all possible.

Our progress is encouraging, but, sadly, we are falling further and further behind in meeting the need in our community for the preventative services we offer to families. **Due to the alarming increase in the number of child abuse and neglect victims in recent months, we are not able to serve all the families who request services.** The Department of Human Services Child Welfare Division announced that September and October of this year were the busiest they have seen since 2005. In September, 55 children became wards of the court. An additional 68 were placed in care in October. These children came from 95

families in our county—families like those we serve at the Family Nurturing Center.

Over and over, we see parents who want to be able to provide a quality experience for their children, but who are often lacking in the resources needed to do so. We work hard to wrap "a blanket of support" around these families through programs both at our center and in families' homes. If we had the financial means to do so, we could be serving hundreds of families in our valley, and with the downward spiral

"By working together – individuals, non-profit organizations, foundations, businesses, and civic and church groups – we can come together as a community and help the most vulnerable families in our midst."

of the economy, we anticipate the need for services such as ours to grow. **You can help us in our work.** Financial contributions at any level provide the crucial operating expenses we need to keep our doors open and our services running. **We are enclosing a return envelope with this newsletter and we invite you to send in whatever you are able as this year comes to a close.** With your support, we can continue to make a difference.

Mary-Curtis Gramley

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Bus Driver

We Watch Magic Happen in our Classrooms

By Nadejda Razi-Robertson,
Teacher/Care Coordinator

While adding flour to last week's play dough and readying the classroom for the children's arrival, I looked up to find three-year-old Sam arriving early with his mother. He ran into the classroom beaming and gave me a big bear hug. He sat down at the table intrigued at my adding flour to the play dough and, after watching for a minute said, "I some."

He looked at me as he spoke, smiling ear to ear. With strong eye contact and mutual joy, I responded as he knew I would. "I love it when you use words to tell me what you want, Sam! You are talking so much!"

This exchange would have been unimaginable a year ago when Sam first enrolled in the Family Nurturing Center's therapeutic classroom.

For the first three months, he cried

a trembling, scared cry when his foster mother dropped him off. He would scream a shrill, protective scream if another child would get too close. Other than these screams, his mornings were spent in silence. Even when he fell, he would show no affect. He made very little eye contact and would rarely respond to his name being spoken. After a year

After a year at the Family Nurturing Center, Sam is beginning to thrive.

Sam is one of the many children at the Family Nurturing Center who, after a time here, are blooming with such beauty. I believe I speak

for all of us here in expressing our deep wish to continue expanding our services at a rate that would meet the needs of our community. It is truly a privilege to witness each day the resilience of these young children and to share in the magic as they blossom in our classrooms.



Become A Volunteer and Join a Circle of Caring

The Family Nurturing Center (FNC) is pleased to have recently received grant funds from the **Oregon Community Foundation** and the **Juan Young Trust** to support a new Jackson County project. The **Jackson County Circle of Caring** is a pilot project designed to recruit and train skilled volunteers to assist in helping agencies serving young children.

A grant of \$48,000 was awarded to FNC in a competitive grant process. One of only three projects funded in the state, staff and Board members hope this project helps to significantly increase the strength and quality of services the agencies can provide. In addition to the **Family Nurturing Center, Asante Child Development Services** and the **Job Council's Child Care**



Resource Network will recruit and train volunteers to assist in direct services with children as well as fundraising and administrative activities, which are crucial in ensuring that organizations continue to serve the community well.

We are grateful to the **Jackson**

County United Way, the Jackson County Commission on Children and Families, and the Southern Oregon University Department of Education for partnering with us and providing training and recruitment assistance. The grant specifically targets “Boomer” adults, those ranging from age 45-65, for the project. Rita Vance, who is herself a “Boomer” volunteer in the valley, is the volunteer Project Coordinator.

If you are interested in learning more about the project, please call Rita at the Family Nurturing Center, (541) 779-4252.

Help us become “a community working together to meet the needs of young children.”



Carol Klouda

For two years, Carol Klouda has faithfully come to the FNC. The smiles, hugs, and welcoming squeals of joy when the children see her bring Carol back each week to help in a “wobbler” class. We are so grateful for her valuable contributions to the children and staff.

Thank you Carol!



Creating Hope

Partnering with families to offer healing, support, and hope for a brighter future

What We Provide:

- Services which prevent child abuse and neglect for Jackson County families at high risk
- Interventions with children and parents after abuse and neglect have occurred
- Therapeutic classrooms, parenting classes, home-based mentoring services, and respite childcare
- Caring and skilled teachers, care coordinators, mental health practitioners, and community volunteers who wrap a blanket of support around children and families

The Need in Our Community:

- 123 children referred to Child Welfare for abuse or neglect in Jackson County in October and November 2008
- 7,023 children are living below the poverty level in Jackson County
- 70 children from 57 families currently served at The Family Nurturing Center, with 30 on the waiting list to receive intake services
- The changes in our economy hit the most vulnerable families first, meaning that the need for our services will continue to rise

How You Can Become a Part of Preventing Child Abuse and Neglect

- Donations in any amount are crucial to our ability to cover the costs needed to provide services to our families – please fill out the attached card and mail a donation in the enclosed envelope
- Volunteer to help in the classroom, assist in the office, or help with fundraising and community outreach projects
- Donate diapers, good condition clothes for children, vouchers for groceries or bus passes, or other household items families may need

The Family Nurturing Center is serving children and families with many challenges. PLEASE help us help them

www.familynurturingcenter.net

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To strengthen parents, build successful children, and preserve families

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