



FALL 2011 NEWSLETTER



COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIP

Dear Friends,

Happy Fall! What a glorious time of the year as nights turn crisp, leaves turn to gold and thoughts turn once again to upcoming months laden with family traditions.

Celebrating special anniversaries are one type of tradition, and here at Community Partnership, our family of board and staff just celebrated a big one. For 20 years, we have been a trusted leader, a community facilitator and a valued resource for solving issues in the 21 county area of the Ozarks we call home. That's quite an accomplishment.

During this time, the Partnership has helped launch important community efforts and is now considered by many to be a key "go-to" organization when there is a challenging issue to be addressed. Because of our work, vital programs and services are in place to build resilient children, healthy families and strong communities that were not there 20 years ago. Because

of these programs and services, more safety nets are in place to help individuals – birth to seniors – in need.

By focusing on three major areas – Neighborhood and Community Development, Children and Child Well-Being and Substance Abuse and Violence Prevention – we have developed data driven traditions, while innovating new solutions, to achieve our core outcomes.

It promises to be a busy fall for all of us here at the Partnership, as we continue to respond to an ever-increasing number of families in crisis—keeping them safe and healthy is a huge challenge. But, in times like these we are fortunate to have so many in our community that are willing to lend a hand.

As the crisp fall nights turn colder still, I would ask that if you have winter coats, mittens, scarves or hats for little children under five or for

adults that you can spare or would like to purchase, we can get them to the families who need them most. If you can help us help others, drop your items by our office at 330 N. Jefferson Avenue, or call us at 888-2020.

On behalf of our board and staff, I wish you time to sit still and enjoy the colors and smells of this glorious season. Someone once said, "October is a symphony of change". May that be true for those we serve.



BUILDING RESILIENT KIDS,
HEALTHY FAMILIES,
AND STRONG COMMUNITIES

CPO implements programs & services to achieve 5 major outcomes:

Children, families and
community members
are safe and healthy

Children are school-ready
and succeeding in school

Youth are ready to enter
productive adulthood

Parents are working

Neighborhoods are strong,
healthy and thriving

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Lunch Buddy program a winner

Multiple studies have shown that the presence of a caring adult in a child's life reduces the child's likelihood of involvement in risky behaviors. Today, families are struggling with numerous stressors, and as a result, many children are not receiving the individual attention and support they need. The good news is that Community Partnership coordinates a Lunch Buddy Program at many of our schools, matching students with a committed, caring adult mentor who acts as a supportive listener, encourager and cheerleader.

Each Lunch Buddy is asked to commit to meeting with their student once a week during lunch for at least one full semester. This consistency helps the mentor and student build a strong and trusting relationship. Early assessments of the program show that students who participate have an increase in academic achievement and attendance and a decrease in undesired behaviors.

One of our Lunch Buddy volunteers recently said, "I met with a student named Daniel. We would read Dr. Seuss and interact based on the book we were reading. It was amazing to be the encouraging and positive voice in a child's life. It made me feel like a million bucks to be a part of his life."



Cooking up fun at Kindergarten Camp

Imagine your first day of school, without the benefit of ever holding a pair of scissors or being able to recognize your name. Children all over our community enter school with few, if any, activities that will prepare them for that exciting, but scary school experience. Thus, Kindergarten Camp was created to give low income children a chance to feel the success and a love of learning they might otherwise not be afforded.

Through a matching grant from Community Foundation

of the Ozarks, the generosity of many donors, and the gift of space from Temple

"My children don't go to preschool, so all they see is me. This program has been a huge help!"

—Parent of Kindergarten Camper

Baptist Church and Trinity Lutheran Church, Community Partnership was able to provide 19 week-long "camps" for 232 preschool children and their families this summer.

Campers planted, cooked, observed bugs and butterflies, and even built their own bird houses. They read books, drew and cut with scissors, sorted, counted and spent time playing simple games. In addition to the learning activities children experienced, parents also learned about kindergarten. They learned what would be expected of their child, how to build their skills, and what resources were available if their child needed additional help.

Each child in attendance took home a backpack filled with children's books, scissors and

crayons, games to practice the skills they were learning at Camp, and the Partnership's own DESTINATION KINDERGARTEN book, which "tours the city of Springfield" giving them ideas for developing school readiness skills.

Kindergarten Camp is such a simple program, but this does not reduce the incredible results we have seen in the three years we have been providing it. We continue to search for funds, so we will be able to support children entering school next fall.

Investing in our future

Community Partnership receives funding each year to provide technical assistance and grant funding to child care programs in our area that would like to become licensed providers. This year, we will be able to help 6-8 additional child care programs increase the quality of the services they provide.

Over the past 11 years, we have provided funding and support to 107 programs that serve 1,233 children in Greene, Christian, and Webster counties. Our funding can be used for teacher education, to purchase cribs and other appropriate equipment, supplies and materials, or to make minor modifications to a structure. The support provided to child care providers allows them to increase their health and safety standards, as well as increase the overall quality of their program.

Research has shown that a majority of children under age two are in substandard care, the age when they are most vulnerable to safety, health, and developmental issues.



Don't let one disaster lead to another

Community Partnership is thrilled to announce that it has received a large grant from the Missouri Division of Alcohol and Drug Abuse to work with the City of Joplin.

History shows that following natural disasters, a myriad of additional problems often follow. According to treatment providers in Joplin, alcohol use has increased since the tornado, as have domestic violence incidents. Thanks to this grant, Community Partnership will be working to help residents restore a sense of power and control back in their lives, and assist the community in focusing on the health and well-being of those most vulnerable.

During Phase I, we will be working with dozens of partners in Joplin to launch a comprehensive multi-media campaign



to increase awareness of substance abuse and domestic violence issues that may develop or become worse due to disaster-related stress. Along with sharing warning signs, we will promote resources to help with these problems. A youth campaign to reduce substance abuse is also planned. Finally, we will promote the Developmental Asset Model. This research based framework can involve the whole community, giving everyone a way to help youth develop positive assets to enhance their lives, even in the midst of tragedy. Stay tuned for more news on this great opportunity to help our neighbors.

A permanent solution to a perplexing problem

Community Partnership, in collaboration with the Missouri Youth Adult Alliance and local prevention coalitions, has stepped forward to help secure a safer way for residents to dispose of unused or expired prescription medications. A recent grant to Community Partnership has allowed us to establish permanent, secured drop boxes at police stations in Nixa and Branson.



Teen prescription drug abuse is the fastest growing drug problem in our country, with 1 in 5 teens reporting abuse of these drugs for non-medical purposes. A major reason for this abuse is the easy availability of these drugs, with many teens obtaining them from the medicine cabinet in their own home, or the home of a friend or relative. Proper disposal of unused or expired medications has long been a perplexing problem. Flushing them pollutes the water supply. Throwing them in the trash makes them an easy target, not only for abusers, but for pets and wildlife. These drop boxes are great news indeed, and we hope to provide more in communities throughout southwest Missouri over the coming months.

Mental health first aid saves lives

Sometimes, first aid isn't a bandage, or CPR, or the Heimlich, or calling 911. Sometimes, first aid is you! You are more likely to encounter someone – a friend, family member, co-worker, neighbor, or member of the community – experiencing a mental health or emotional crisis than someone having a heart attack. Community Partnership, in collaboration with the Missouri Department of Mental Health, now provides the Mental Health First Aid course, which teaches a 5 step action plan. This course helps community members identify someone exhibiting signs and symptoms of a possible mental illness or emotional crisis and teaches them how to connect the affected individual with appropriate professional, peer, social, or self-help care. This course can benefit anyone, including students, teachers, faith leaders and caring citizens.

While this training has only been available through Community Partnership for a short time, positive outcomes are already being experienced. The Bolivar Police Department is planning a Crisis Intervention Team to deal directly with incidents involving mental health issues after attending our training. One police officer commented, "All law enforcement professionals need to attend this training. It's a lifesaver!" Several more are being planned for later this year – just call Chris Davis at 888-2020 for more information.

"All law enforcement professionals need to attend this training. It's a lifesaver!"

—Police Officer



Hope for our homeless

Homeless and alone; a family with small children, a veteran with wounds that penetrate deeper than anyone can see, a woman fleeing from years of abuse, a teen that sees no other options. Where do they go? How can they get help?

Community Partnership's Continuum of Care provides hope to the homeless through our Hope Connection – a one day service site to be held November 16, 2011 connecting individuals with the vital services needed to secure safe, decent, affordable housing, immediate healthcare, education and employment. Hope Connection brings together service providers from federal, state and local

"It is not just a day for people to wait in line for information on resources... but a day for people to make changes & have immediate access to essential services."

agencies and organizations all working to help stabilize lives.

Most importantly, the event is outcome oriented; it is not just a day for people to wait in line for information on resources available in the community, but a day for people to make changes and have immediate access to essential services.

Perhaps the most unique component of this event is the connection of the volunteers who act as an event host for each homeless individual that comes in to seek services. This one-to-one attention helps the homeless feel valued and supported in their day's activities.

Hope Connection is based on the best practice program Project Homeless Connect that began in San Francisco and is now duplicated in over 100 communities across the nation. Through the execution of our project – Hope Connection – our community has become an active participant in a solution that has been effectively implemented throughout the country.



New partnership yields a new playground

Community Partnership, along with our partner Sustainable Housing Solutions (SHS), applied for and was awarded a brand new playground from Dr. Pepper Snapple Group and KaBOOM early this summer. Fulbright Springs is an affordable housing development owned by SHS, and Community Partnership provides a part-time social worker on-site to assist families. Months of intense

planning, the help of 250 volunteers, tens of thousands of dollars of in-kind donations, and of course the wonderful equipment paid for by the grant, all came together on June 21st. On that historic day, a complete playground was built at Fulbright Springs, so the children would have a safe place to play within walking distance of their home. Thanks SHS, Dr. Pepper Snapple Group and KaBOOM!

National Night Out a good time for all

On August 26, Community Partnership in cooperation with the City, Parks and Police, sponsored National Night Out at various parks throughout Springfield. The purpose of the event was to heighten crime and drug prevention awareness, strengthen police-community partnerships and, in some neighborhoods, the celebration also serves as an event to kick off the new school year. Springfield Police officers were on hand to mingle with residents, answer questions, and provide safety tips. Thanks to the help of hundreds of volunteers, National Night Out drew over 3,200 attendees in 12 neighborhoods. All enjoyed free food, games, activities, resource booths and live music throughout the night.



Helping families get ahead

Families in our community are struggling to make ends meet and many are forced to live paycheck to paycheck. Even in the best of times, this kind of financial instability hits low income families the hardest and makes it difficult for them to meet their most basic needs, much less get out of debt or increase self-sufficiency. That's where Community Partnership's CASH program comes in, providing financial education and services for low income families.

In our popular basic budgeting

classes, participants examine money beliefs, develop a workable budget, set a savings



goal, and meet one-on-one with one of our banking partners. In our specialized track classes, they have the opportunity to open a free

savings account to help them develop the habit of saving money.

Our CASH Savings Club provides a chance to network with others and share money saving and budgeting tips. Participants also have access

to Community Partnership's supportive services such as free adult education, GED, parenting classes, and crisis intervention. Community Partnership's CASH program is giving families the critical tools they need to begin building assets, leading to greater stability for their families and for our community. As one recent CASH graduate put it, "I used my spending journal to find the hole where money was leaking through, then started a budget, stuck to it and started paying off bills."

Many thanks to those whose contributions are helping us build resilient kids, healthy families, and strong communities.

CONTRIBUTIONS

Received May 26, 2011 - October 1, 2011

\$20,000 and up

Mid-Missouri Bank**

\$5,000 - \$9,999

Bob & Becky Bach
Rob and Sally Baird ★
O'Reilly Auto Parts ★

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\$101 - \$499

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\$100 and under

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★ Contributed to both general operating funds and endowment