

Child Advocates Quarterly

Current News for Friends of Child Advocates

FALL 2004

Why Infants & Toddlers Need Advocates

One of the most significant changes in the U.S. child welfare system over the past two decades has been the large increase in the number of infants and toddlers entering foster care. In Santa Clara and San Mateo counties, children under age five now comprise nearly half of the total foster care population.

Young children in foster care often exhibit substantial delays in cognition, language, and behavior and are at high risk for long-term emotional and behavioral problems.

According to the California Institute for Mental Health, the incidence of emotional, developmental, and behavioral problems among foster children is three to six times



greater than children in the general population.

In 1999, Child Advocates established the Early Childhood Program to focus services on these vulnerable infants and toddlers, who are at their most intense and critical stage of development. "The majority of our Early Childhood volunteers work on behalf of medically fragile

babies and toddlers who suffer from the effects of pre-natal substance abuse and were born addicted to drugs," says Leslie Kim, Advocate Supervisor. "Oftentimes, the child's parents are struggling with addiction, incarceration, or mental instability."

Judges, social workers, and other child welfare workers request Court Appointed Special Advocate (CASA) volunteers for at-risk infants and toddlers, and the program currently serves 75 of these children. The volunteers are key players in preventing unnecessary moves, ensuring service delivery, and encouraging the children to bond with their permanent caregivers. *(continued on page 2)*

Agency News

◆ **Santa Clara County Superior Court Judge Leonard Edwards, co-founder of Child Advocates**, has been named recipient of one of the most prestigious judicial awards in the country, the 2004 William H. Rehnquist Award for Judicial Excellence administered by the National Center for State Courts (NCSC). Edwards "is one of the most effective and progressive trial judges in America, especially in the area of juvenile and family courts," said NCSC President Mary McQueen. Chief Justice of the U.S. Supreme Court William H. Rehnquist will present the award to Edwards at the U.S. Supreme Court in November.

◆ **Child Advocates' Board President Kevin Gardner, Vice President Toni Cupal, and Mike Volpi** won the 2004 Association of Fundraising Professionals Distinguished Volunteer Fundraisers Awards for their work on behalf of Child Advocates. They will be honored at the AFP 17th Annual Philanthropy Day Awards Celebration on Nov. 19.

◆ **Philips USA is partnering with Child Advocates** to serve more children in need. Philips will be implementing an employee volunteer program, offering on-site orientations and training for employees interested in becoming Advocates. The California Governor's Office of Emergency Services awarded Child Advocates \$25,000 to support the development of this innovative program.

◆ **The Taproot Foundation awarded Child Advocates** a service grant valued at \$35,000 to redesign our website, www.cadvocates.org. The work begins this month and will be completed in 2005.

Donate Holiday Gifts: Help us provide \$25 gift certificates to 200 foster teens this holiday season. To contribute, please contact Brenda, (408) 573-5608, Brenda@cadvocates.org.



Our Mission: To provide stability and hope to abused and neglected children by being a powerful voice in their lives.



From the Desk of Our Executive Director



A., age 10. Title: *Hope, Love, Friendship, Growth*

Recently, Child Advocates held its First Annual Art Contest. The 35 submissions included paintings, sculptures, needlework and stories — all around the four theme words Hope, Love, Friendship, and Growth.

What an incredible gift these children gave us: a peek into their world at such a personal and emotion-filled level. In every piece of artwork, you saw a bit of the child who produced it — what they wished for, and thought their life could be like. No, what their life should be like.

Is there any one of us who can't embrace the notion that a child's life should be filled with love, driven by hope and strengthened and grown by family and friends? And yet these children — these talented, open-hearted delights — reminded us through their art that theirs is a world where hope has faded; where growth is diminished by abuse, neglect or abandonment; where family is fractured. Well, here was a real revelation.

Almost every piece of artwork created by the children had something to say about friendship. Primarily, it was through friendship, and the new relationships they were creating, that they could re-capture a sense of hope, could believe that love could abide once again in their world, and that they could find the strength to go on and not just survive, but thrive.

In these uncertain times, what a powerful reminder it is through these children's artwork to us that **we can make a difference in our corner of the world** — one child, one life, one gift of ourselves at a time. We will be sharing their work with you in our publications and events — to share their gift, hear their voices, and embrace their spirit.

Sincerely,

Gisela B. Bushey

Infants & Toddlers

(continued from page 1)

In addition to the core CASA training, volunteers choosing to work with this age group receive additional training specific to infants and toddlers. Topics include Fetal Alcohol Syndrome, drug addiction, and the effects of prenatal substance abuse on children. Special emphasis is placed on providing strategies to encourage and assess a child's development, skills, and strengths. In addition, volunteers learn legal issues specific to fragile babies and how to work cooperatively with social workers, attorneys, and foster and birth parents to determine the best decisions for the children.

Because of the children's young age and unique needs, Advocates tend to have a stronger advocacy and less of a mentoring role, although they still visit the children on a regular basis. They tend to work more closely with social workers and adults relevant to the case and are involved with more court hearings due to the fast-track nature of infant and toddler cases.

A 2003 evaluation of Child Advocates' Early Childhood Program by the Judicial Council of California showed the program has made a

significant impact on the lives of young children. According to the evaluation, "several interview respondents indicated that infants and toddlers who had CASAs received more services than those who did not." In fact, one bench officer interviewed stated that infants and toddlers with CASAs were the only children in that age group who received referrals to services. The study also found that Advocates do a substantial amount of work with birth and foster parents, including role modeling effective parenting behavior to caregivers.

"Unlike older kids, these kids, especially infants, can't say what they need," says Barbara Frymer, an Advocate who has volunteered with four children ages three and under. "In two of my cases, I observed these kids and saw that they needed Early Start services. I really pushed for these services and they got them. And it made a big difference." Early Start is a government program providing evaluations, assessments, and early intervention services to infants and toddlers who have or are at risk of developmental delays or disabilities. According to Frymer, "Advocates try to see what these kids' needs are and then act as their voice, since they can't speak for themselves."



Advocate youth rev up for the water balloon toss at **Child Advocates 2004 Annual Rotary Picnic**, held on Oct. 2. Over 200 Advocates and advocate children attended this event, made possible by the Campbell Rotary Club. Thank you!

Board of Directors 2004 - 2005

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Tributes & Memorials (July 2003 - June 2004)

Child Advocates is truly grateful for gifts received in tribute to or in memory of our donors' loved ones.

Tributes

All Advocates
 Margie Becker
 Becker Family
 Gail Cannis
 Roy Crenshaw
 Toni Cupal
 Julie Dalton & Stewart Logie's
 third wedding anniversary
 Mary Dean & Mark Linder
 Ruth Eastman
 Marc Federick
 Janie Felix & all other Advocates
 Kevin Gardner
 Linda Ginnini
 Shoshana Green's bat mitzvah
 Nancy Greene & Winston
 Belinda Hall & Dena Kaufer
 Cynthia Harland's birthday
 Aaron Hildreth
 Tim Jenks' service on Child Advocates'
 Board of Directors
 Sherron Kalbach
 Marion Kirk
 Cynthia Klustner
 Thane Kreiner
 Marilyn Langford
 Nora Manchester
 Sharon Meresman
 Cynthia Mertens

Bud Oliver
 Ponteri Family
 Sean & Jenny Prasad
 Greg Reyes
 Steve Ross
 David Sellers
 Robert Sharp
 Lisa Sonsini
 Dennis Speer
 Erv Unvert
 Susanne Waher
 Judy Wainwright's birthday
 Shlomo Waser
 Audrey Weinland
 Moe Whitaker's retirement
 Ann Whyte's birthday
 Friends & clients of Rosaleen and
 Richard Zlatunich

Mary Dean's mother
 Linda DeMeo's mother & Rebecca
 Blackford
 Joseph Donlan
 Sean Endez
 George Geigers
 Joseph Giansante's father
 Karen Goodman's father
 Jean Jefferson
 Mary E. Kaatari
 Sarah Kruger Gibson
 John Lee
 Sandra Magnus
 Magretta Martin's father
 Bill Mederios
 Ted Mini
 Bette N.
 Virginia Panighetti
 Helen Perez
 JoAnn Pickering's grandmother
 Laurence Rentschler
 Dorothy Ross' grandmother
 Elvira Silva
 Catherine Stearns
 Rolando Tapia
 Helen Webb
 Dave Wies
 Claire Wiedel & Peg O'Keefe
 Phillip Winslow

Memorials

All victims who did not survive
 child abuse
 Maureen Albanese
 TJ Albrecht
 Adeline Brutto
 Cassidy Noel Butts
 Lilia Cameron
 Genevieve Corollo
 Chuck Cowger, Jr.

The Cycle Ends Now

By Marina Moniz, age 24, former
 advocate child

I was born addicted to methampheta-
 mines. At the age of two, my
 mother's parental rights were taken
 away from her. I went to three foster
 homes between the
 ages of two and four. **"No matter where I was though,
 When I was four, I
 was adopted by what
 seemed like a nice family and then at
 age seven became what I call
 "unadopted."**

I was then placed back into the
 Children's Shelter and then trans-
 ferred to Eastfield Ming Quong. After
 being there for three months, I met a
 person whose name was Winnie
 Arthur. I asked her who she was and
 what she wanted and she told me that
 she was going to be my Advocate. I
 shined her on and was very rude to
 her and told her that I didn't want

one. She came back the very next
 Saturday. She continued to come back
 every week for the next 12 years.

By the time I was 14, I had been
 to over 15 foster homes and had been
 in trouble with the law. Nobody
 wanted me, so I didn't care what

happened to me. Every day I used a
 combination of drugs, from meth,
 LSD, PCP, to alcohol and marijuana. I
 was always on something. I just
 didn't want to feel all the emotions
 that were going on in my life. No
 matter where I was though, I always
 called Winnie.


At age 16, I was a gang member, a
 drug addict and homeless. The only
 people who cared about me were
 Winnie, who had been with me for six
 (continued on page 4)

Donor Spotlight


Lucile Packard
 FOUNDATION for Children's Health

Child Advocates extends our
 sincerest thanks to The Lucile
 Packard Foundation for Children's
 Health (LPFCH) for its generous
 support. The foundation recently
 presented our agency with a
 \$100,000 grant to support pre-teen
 foster youth. "A relationship with a
 caring adult is one of the prime req-
 uisites for a child to grow up
 emotionally healthy," says LPFCH
 President and CEO Stephen Peeps.
 "Our foundation is pleased to
 support Child Advocates' goal of
 providing an island of stability for
 foster children as they cope with
 frequent changes in homes, schools,
 and friends."

Upcoming Events

 **Sex, Drugs & Rock 'n Roll**
Sat., Nov. 6, 9 a.m. - 11 a.m.
509 Valley Way, Milpitas

Dr. Saul Wasserman, a child psychiatrist and author of *Healing the Heart*, will discuss behavioral and emotional issues that foster teens frequently face. Wasserman has worked extensively with foster children, and will discuss how Advocates can help youth address their problems. RSVP: Michael Tadina, (408) 573-5605.

Introduce Us to Your Faith-Based Community

Do you attend a local synagogue, church, or temple? Our new faith-based recruitment campaign is underway, and we will be making presentations at various places of worship. Our goal is to recruit community members to become Advocates for the 450+ children desperately waiting for a voice. Help connect us to your faith-based community! Contact Vickie Epstein, (408) 573-5618.



Child Advocates Annual Gala
Sat., Mar. 12, 2005, 6 p.m.
San Jose Fairmont Hotel

Mark your calendars for our largest fundraiser of the year! Child Advocates Annual Gala is an elegant and fun-filled evening with an average attendance of 500 guests. This year's event, the *Garden of Dreams*, features an extensive silent auction, entertainment, and gourmet dinner; plus a live auction filled with exciting, one-of-a-kind items.

Together, we can make this event a smashing success! Ways to help:

- ◆ Purchase tickets.
- ◆ Host a table.
- ◆ Become a sponsor.
- ◆ Donate an auction item.
- ◆ Join a planning committee.
- ◆ Volunteer at the event.

www.cadvocates.org/Gala2005.htm

Cycle Ends Now

(continued from page 3)

years, and Our House, a homeless youth program at the Emergency Housing Consortium.

When I found out I was pregnant, neither Our House nor Winnie judged me. I made the decision then to stop doing drugs and to stop banging. I was not going to have my daughter go through the same pain I suffered in my life. When she was born, I looked into her eyes and made this promise to her and to myself: "The cycle ends now."

Six years have now passed since I made that decision. Since then, I have gotten married, given birth to another baby girl and started working at Our House as a case manager for homeless youth. Now that I'm stable, I want to give others the gift that Winnie gave to me. I will never forget what Winnie did for me and how she cared for me. In some ways, she was the mother I never had. I want kids that were just like I was to know that there are people who care. I'd like to think that I had a part in that.



Speak up for a child

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