



KidsView

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From Grandparents to Parents Overnight

A Story of Love and Sacrifice

Love and responsibility are what drive grandparents and other relatives to raise and parent children when circumstances prevent biological parents from continuing this role. With the number of kinship families on the rise – there are now an estimated six million nationwide with some 18,000 in Kansas – the many challenges these families often face have come to light. From this have come new efforts and legislation championed by kinship families to assist with raising children.

An Unexpected Move

Bruce and Brenda Bynum are one of those families. Four of their grandchildren, ranging in age from 6 months to 7 years old, were placed in foster care in November 2005. At the time, the Bynums were living in Topeka and the children were residing in Wichita. Within a few months, they found themselves uprooting their lives to be closer to the children. "We didn't want to move, but we wanted to do what was best for the kids," said Bruce.

Grandparents to Parents continues on page 5

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Bruce and Brenda Bynum with their grandchildren (from left to right): Bruce, 12; TreNae, 9; Mason, 7; and Kiaunna, 4.



Nearly 40 Families Set to Graduate from Healthy Families in 2010

One of the most exciting – and rewarding – aspects of the Healthy Families program is the graduation of a family. Families often enroll in the program before the child is born or shortly after and remain in the program for the next three years. They meet regularly with their home visitor, learning about child

development and setting goals for themselves and their families.

"Graduation from Healthy Families is a wonderful accomplishment for families," said Tracie Lansing. "It demonstrates that a family has set and accomplished goals for their child and their own well being."

Families Graduating continues on page 3

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From the President's Desk



Child advocates, educators, and those who serve Kansans with disabilities took a collective sigh of relief when the Legislature adopted a revenue package in the waning days of the 2010 session. This meant feared further reductions to schools, social services, and other areas – which had already been cut nearly \$1 billion during a record budget shortfall – would be avoided.

Getting to this point wasn't easy – for advocates or lawmakers. Voting for a tax increase was very difficult for many legislators, and one they hoped not to have to make. But when faced with the alternative and out-right human toll, it became the lesser evil. Much has been, and will most likely continue to be made about the political implications of casting a vote for raising taxes. While some predict dire results for the economy, I believe most Kansans will understand and appreciate decisions that benefit deserving children, families, and individuals.

One of the best ways we can show our appreciation to lawmakers and taxpayers is through results. Our Healthy Families programs, which are supported in part through restored Children's Initiatives Funds (see article page 3), are serving more families than ever and making a real difference in communities across the state. In 2009, 99% of children working with Healthy Families remained free from abuse and neglect despite initial assessments indicating a 50% risk of maltreatment at the time of service initiation.

Additionally, 85% of children involved with this program have an identified medical home compared to the State's average of 50%. Like schools, our Healthy Families programs have graduates that go on to

great success – as competent, confident parents – which is the best result of all! (see cover article).

We also are looking for new ways to collaborate with new and existing community partners to maximize limited resources. One example is our Head Start program's CORE initiative (see article page 4). Working with school districts in our 13-county service area, the aim of this project is to leverage the strengths of both the schools and KCSL to enhance the early learning opportunities for all children served. Another partnership we are excited to build on is with Carlos O'Kelly's and U.S. Foodservice, which have agreed to support a new Red Stacking Breakfast in Hutchinson this year (see article page 6).

In April, we welcomed new members to our Board of Directors and Foundation Trustees at our 117th Annual Meeting. We also presented numerous awards honoring service to KCSL, communities, and children and families (see article page 7). And while the preparations for this event are always intense and usually exhausting, year after year I find myself humbled by the number of people who truly care about KCSL and the work we do every day.

It takes the efforts of many to make a social services agency work – skilled staff, dedicated volunteers, like-minded partners, generous donors, and lawmakers willing stand up for Kansas kids and families. Whatever your role, I thank you for the part you play.

Janet Schalansky, President/CEO

To make an online donation, visit, www.kcsl.org

An estimated 200-300 families have graduated from the program since its inception at KCSL. This year, nearly 40 families are expected to graduate.

A Graduation Story

At age 14, Jennifer found out she was pregnant and her life changed forever. "I didn't have all the answers, but I knew I wanted to do what was best for me and my baby," she said. "Because I was only 14, I didn't even know how I was going to get to the doctor."

Before her son, Eric, was born, she enrolled in Healthy Families Reno County. "I had no idea what to expect at first," said Jennifer.

"But, my home visitor helped me get to my doctor appointments and provided a lot of prenatal information. She helped to point me in the right direction and became a mother figure to me. Healthy Families understood what I was going through. They were there to help me and encourage me every step of the way."

For the next couple of years, Jennifer remained in the program, receiving guidance through the early years with Eric and through the birth of her second son, Austin.

Jennifer and her husband, Stacy, now have four boys, giving birth to the

youngest, Levi, in 2008. They are proud of their family and the progress they have made during their time in Healthy Families. "It's exciting to graduate and know we have come so far. But, it's also a little sad because we will miss Joy, our home visitor. She has been a great friend to our family."

Stacy and Jennifer are one of 11 families graduating from the Healthy Families Reno County program this year. "It is the most families to graduate from the program since it began in 1996," said Michael Woods, Family Services Supervisor for the program. "The progress these families have made in the past few years is no short of amazing."

Children's Initiatives Fund Protected Legislators Support Early Childhood Programs with Revenue Package

After a difficult and divisive session, Kansas lawmakers embraced a one-cent increase in the statewide sales tax to avoid broader cuts in social services and education. The increase in the statewide sales tax is expected to provide a temporary bridge to better times.

The revenue increase made it possible to avoid as much as \$7 million in cuts to the Children's Initiatives Fund (CIF) expenditures for 2011 that would have denied services to as many as 23,000 children and families. In order to fully fund CIF programs for 2011, \$9 million for Juvenile Justice Authority programs were moved from CIF to the state general fund. This helped alleviate the pressure on CIF, which received decreased funding this year due to declining tobacco sales.

"In a year with very little good budget news, we are very pleased Kansas lawmakers kept their promise to children by preserving monies for early childhood programs," said Janet Schalansky, president and CEO of KCSL. "While we thank the legislators for their vote, we also are very appreciative of the efforts of KCSL supporters across the state for their efforts advocating on behalf of children and

families. We've heard from many lawmakers that these actions made a difference."

CIF supports services for children aged birth to five which help ensure healthy brain and social development. These are evidence-based programs that have been proven effective in helping children surmount the difficulties they face because of risk factors like poverty, isolation, domestic violence, or poor parenting skills. In 2009, more than 340,000 children – roughly half of the state's children – were served by programs that rely on CIF dollars.

KCSL's Healthy Families programs, childhood mental health, and Early Head Start services are funded in part through the CIF, as well as the Kansas Early Learning Collaborative and Pre-K pilot programs that KCSL manages. The budget also restored funding for mental health and some residential services to their usual and customary rates, following a 10% reduction during the last six months of fiscal year 2010.

According to Schalansky, State agencies still face some cuts, and it will take several weeks to determine what effect those will have on KCSL's programs and services.

Other legislative actions of interest to KCSL included:

Infant Mortality: Kansas has one of the highest infant mortality rates in the nation, but it is unclear why because of restrictions in how we collect and use infant mortality data.

This law will allow the Department of Health and Environment to collect additional information and make better use of data the state currently collects to identify better public policy solutions to reduce the high number of children who die in their first year of life.

Lexie's Law: This law will require registered child care homes to become licensed, making them subject to additional regulation and oversight. This legislation was spearheaded by parents of young children who died following incidents at unlicensed child care homes.

In addition, the legislature passed bills that clarified and codified current practices regarding custody orders for children and codified compliance with federal restrictions about detaining juveniles.

Did You Know?

Additional Target Grants Awarded

Target has awarded grants totaling \$8,500 to KCSL programs in four Kansas communities: Hutchinson, Manhattan, Topeka and Wichita. Funds were distributed to benefit child abuse prevention services along with Healthy Families Reno County and the Oasis program in Dickinson, Geary, Riley, Shawnee and Wabaunsee Counties.

Wichita Couple Running to Raise Money for KCSL

Jerry and Christina Romero formed Miles4Kids, a fitness and fundraising team, in March 2010. All proceeds from their efforts benefit KCSL child abuse prevention programs and services. So far, they have raised more than \$3,000. For more information, visit www.miles4kids.org.

Fatherhood Training Provides “Father-Friendly” Tips

In March, Ron Clark, Director of Community-Based Programming for the National Fatherhood Initiative led a training hosted by the Kansas Responsible Fatherhood Coalition. The training, “How to Create a Father Friendly Organization,” is part of the Partners for Kids United Hands Make the Best Families – Kansas Fatherhood Initiative and is funded by Circle of Parents®. KCSL is a state leader in implementing and coordinating fatherhood initiatives in Kansas.

Grant Provides Books for Head Start Students

The Western Kansas Community Foundation awarded an \$850 grant to KCSL to provide three books for each of the 600 children in KCSL’s Head Start program.

KCSL Receives Finnup Foundation Grant

The Finnup Foundation has awarded a \$7,830 grant to KCSL’s Head Start program in Garden City. The grant will provide a translator to work with Somali and Burmese-speaking families in the program.

2010 Foster Care Affair Held in Wichita

Understanding and meeting the needs of children in foster care is the focus of Foster Care Affair, an annual training event for foster parents and professionals. This year’s focus was on diversity and culture within children. Foster Care Affair is organized and sponsored by the Round Robin Consortium, which is comprised of staff from Wichita area child welfare agencies and other partner programs.

Healthy Families Receives Grant

The Oppenstein Brothers Foundation has awarded a \$10,000 grant to KCSL Healthy Families programs. \$8,000 was awarded to Healthy Families Johnson County to provide services to two new families for one year. Healthy Families Wyandotte County received \$2,000.

Period of Purple Crying® Continues to Expand

St. Francis Health Center and Stormont Vail HealthCare in Topeka, Mercy Health Center in Manhattan, and Central Kansas Medical Center in Great Bend are the most recent hospitals to begin implementation of The Period of PURPLE Crying®, an evidence-based program offered by the National Center on Shaken Baby Syndrome (SBS). For a full listing of birthing facilities offering the program, as well as information about Dose 2 and 3 implementation, visit www.kcsl.com.

Program Receives Character Education Award

KCSL Family Resource Center’s Immediate Intervention Program (IIP) was recognized with an Evidence Based Practice Award in Character Education by the Kansas State Department of Education in partnership with the Character Education Partnership. IIP was recognized along with Safe Streets of Topeka/Shawnee County for its use of the Positive Action Curriculum. Positive Action is a nationally recognized curriculum that aims to improve the academic performance of school-age children while teaching them how to prevent adopting risky behaviors.

CORE Creates Advantages for Kids, Families

Creating win-win situations for school districts and KCSL’s Head Start program sites, while enhancing early learning opportunities for all children they serve is the goal of the Head Start program’s CORE (Collaboration, Opportunity, Resources, Enhancement) Project. Through this effort KCSL is working with school districts within its 13-county Head Start service area to develop new or enhance existing partnerships to ensure the most effective

use of state and federal funds in the delivery of quality preschool programs.

While the impetus of the CORE Project is the new Head Start Act (2007), KCSL has been working collaboratively with school districts for many years, according to Julie Wright, West Region/Head Start director. “Right now we work primarily with schools for space, food service, and special education services,” she said.

“With this project we’ll be exploring possibilities addressing ten areas including educational activities, staff training, and transportation.”

“Through this project,” Wright continued, “we hope to ensure parents and children receive both the strengths of the school district’s infrastructure and KCSL’s social service expertise to build high quality preschool services.”

The move made it possible for the children to live with Bruce and Brenda while efforts were made to reintegrate them with their mother. "When the children were placed with us, we were asked if we were interested in adoption, but we really wanted reintegration to work and believed it would for our daughter."

At this time they were caring for the children on an informal basis with no legal arrangement. Because of this they found many tasks, such as enrolling the children in school and obtaining medical and mental health services, difficult. "The children were placed with us but were still in State custody," said Bruce. "We were able to obtain a medical card and \$600 a month in assistance, which helped but was not near enough for four children."

The financial and medical struggles became especially apparent when the youngest of the four, Kiaunna, was diagnosed with cancer. "We were already using the little money we had to meet the needs of the children and didn't receive anything additional to help in treating Kiaunna's cancer," Bruce added. "Children's Mercy Hospital, Ronald McDonald House and our church provided us with much-needed support."

Finding Permanency

After a little more than a year of unsuccessful reintegration, the Bynum's completed PS-MAPP classes in 2007 and became licensed foster parents for the kids.

"Becoming foster parents helped us overcome some of the financial challenges, but still left so many things in the air," Bruce continued. "My wife and I wanted a more permanent situation and decided we wanted to adopt the kids." The Bynum's began the adoption process in 2009 and

on March 31 of this year, their adoption was finalized. Also this year, the Bynums found out Kiaunna is now cancer-free. "The struggle has been bitter-sweet," Bruce said. "We have closure now and feel like we can make plans and move forward from here – as a family."

Change is Not Always Easy

"The addition of someone else's children inevitably brings change," says BJ Gore, Parents Helping Parents/Parent Leadership Supervisor. "And with that change, comes stress. Understanding the stress and finding proper ways to deal with it is vital for the emotional and physical well-being of the grandparents as well as the children."

Gore coordinates the Parents Helping Parents Support Group Network, which provides networking for kinship families. She met Bruce through his involvement with the Kansas Fatherhood Initiative and brought him to KCSL in the fall of 2009. He is now the Parents Helping Parents Coordinator and works with the facilitators of eight support groups statewide. Bruce also represents KCSL in the Kansas Fatherhood Initiative and was selected for the 2010 Parents As Leaders (PAL) Committee.

One thing Bruce became aware of in his early years as a grandparent raising children, was the lack of support, guidance and resources for grandparents like him. He became dedicated to advocating for kinship families. "I knew there had to be a better way, so I began working with other kinship families to find solutions that would benefit the grandparents and most importantly, the kids," he said.

For more information on KCSL's kinship services call 877-530-5275 or visit www.kcsl.org.

You & A Kid



Trace
Age 7

ID # CH-5075

Trace has a smile that will light up a room. He is searching for a forever family that is willing to love him unconditionally. Trace is described as creative, caring and intelligent. He is very active and loves playing with others. He can become easily frustrated and would benefit from an understanding family that is able to stay calm and redirect him. Trace will need support to succeed in school and would like to have people in his life to help him process his thoughts and feelings.



Mikayla
Age 13

ID # CH-5198

Mikayla is longing for a family to love her. She enjoys playing outside, riding her bike and hanging out with her friends. When she grows up she dreams of being a crime scene investigator or a detective. Mikayla will need a home that can provide her with structure and positive discipline. She would make a good big or little sister. Mikayla is a loving child who wants to feel loved back by a forever family.

To learn more about adoption visit AdoptKSKids.org or call 877-457-5430.



Tune In for Kids

Meet more great kids needing adoption on these stations:

In northeast Kansas, "Wednesday's Child" with Lori Hutchinson on WIBW TV-13

In southeast Kansas, "Monday's Child" with Lisa Oligis on KOAM TV-7

In south central and western Kansas, "Susan's Kids" with Susan Peters on KAKE TV-10



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In Memory: Marcia Russell Berkley



"Too often the approach is simply to stick a finger in the dike," she was quoted saying in KCSL's 2001 Annual Report. "At that point, it's already too late. Programs like Healthy Families address the trouble before the trouble gets too out of hand."

Marcia Russell Berkley, October 31, 1930 – April 27, 2010

Marcia Russell Berkley, a long-time supporter of the Kansas Children's Service League, died on Tuesday, April 27, 2010, at her home in Fairway.

A passionate advocate for children, Marcia Berkley became involved with the Kansas Children's Service League as a founding member of the Johnson County Community Council, which was responsible for bringing the Healthy Families program to the Kansas City area in 1999.

Marcia was a fierce believer in the rightness of prevention programs from both a financial and societal point of view.

Throughout her lifetime she committed her time and resources to programs that help families succeed. In addition to Healthy Families, Marcia was a co-founder of SAFE House, Johnson County's domestic violence shelter.

In 2004 Marcia received KCSL's Hall of Fame, Direct Service to Children award, which is presented annually to recognize individuals who, over time, have done exceptional work with children and families.

Marcia is survived by her husband of 51 years, Eliot S. Berkley, and two children, Eliot A. Berkley and Emily D. Berkley.



Save the Date

**Governor's Conference
for the Prevention of
Child Abuse and Neglect**

**November 3 thru 5, 2010
Hyatt Regency Hotel
Wichita, Kansas**

Red Stocking Breakfast to Expand to Hutchinson

Since 1990, when the first Red Stocking Breakfast was held in Wichita, the event has grown and expanded in several other communities, becoming the signature fundraising event for the Kansas Children's Service League.

In addition to Wichita, breakfasts are held in Garden City, the Kansas City metro area, Liberal and Topeka. Over the years, it has also been held in Emporia, Manhattan and Salina.

Once again, the event is growing and will add one more location in 2010. "Thanks to the generosity and support of Carlos O' Kelly's and U.S. Foodservice, the first-ever Hutchinson Red Stocking Breakfast will be held in December of this year," said Kelly Peters, Development Manager. "This is a great opportunity to raise funds for the Healthy Families Reno County program and other prevention and education programs that serve the residents in the Hutchinson community."

KCSL Hosts 117th Annual Meeting and Awards Luncheon

The Topeka Country Club was the site of Kansas Children's Service League's 117th Annual Meeting and Awards Luncheon, held on Friday, April 23.

The event included an awards presentation (see below) and a keynote address by Miriam Krehbiel, president and CEO of the United Way of Greater Topeka.

Marilyn Ward, Topeka, was presented the Distinguished Service to Kansas Children Award in recognition of her lifelong commitment to children and families through her 25 years of service to ERC/Resource and Referral and many volunteer activities including as a member of the KCSL Board of Directors where she was a past Chair.

New members to the KCSL Board of Directors and KCSL Foundation Board of Trustees were introduced and KCSL staff meriting milestone awards were recognized. Joining the Board are Ken DeLuca, Hutchinson; Cordell Meeks III, Kansas City; and Jeremy Snowden, Topeka. New Foundation Trustees are Robin Bowen, Topeka; Shirla McQueen, Liberal; and Janice Parks, Garden City.

Karen Griffiths, Norton, serves as Chair of the Kansas Children's Service League Board of Directors. Joining her on the Board's Executive Committee are: Brad Heyen, Wichita, First Vice Chair; Max Wilson, Topeka, Second Vice Chair; Beverly Catanese, Garden City, Secretary; Mark Meier, Wichita, Treasurer; and Marilyn Ward, Topeka, Past Chair.

2009 KCSL AWARD RECIPIENTS

Distinguished Service to Kansas Children – Marilyn Ward
Hall of Fame, Corporate Friend to Children – U.S. Foodservice
Hall of Fame, Direct Service to Children – Sue Lockett
Hall of Fame, Former Board Member – Bruce Harris
Hall of Fame, Outstanding Staff Achievement – Claire Chisholm
Nancy Perry Building Better Communities – St. Catherine Hospital, Garden City

OUTSTANDING VOLUNTEER SERVICE

Garden City – Sue Atha • Hutchinson – Jamie Esposito • Liberal – Tanya Colvin
Johnson County – Dave and Nickie Schmoeller Topeka – Kim Gronniger • Wichita – Rod Harris



Above: Marilyn Ward (center) received the 2010 Kansas Children's Service League's Distinguished Service to Kansas Children award. Pictured with her are Janet Schalansky (left), KCSL President/CEO; and Karen Griffiths, Chair of the 2010-2011 KCSL Board of Directors, Norton.



Above: Miriam Krehbiel (right), President and CEO of the United Way of Greater Topeka, provided the keynote address. Pictured with her is Janet Schalansky, KCSL President/CEO.

Training Opportunities

Incredible Years

With funding through Project LAUNCH (Linking Actions for Unmet Needs in Children's Health), KCSL will now be offering The Incredible Years, an evidence-based parenting program designed to teach positive parenting skills to parents with children ages 3-8, in Finney County.

A facilitator training is scheduled for June 9-11 and workshops are slated to begin in late summer or early fall 2010. Two parenting programs, one in English and one in Spanish, is scheduled for completion by September 30, 2010.

For more information or to enroll in the facilitator training, contact Lois Limes at (620) 805-6454 ext. 1136 or via e-mail at llimes@kcsll.org.



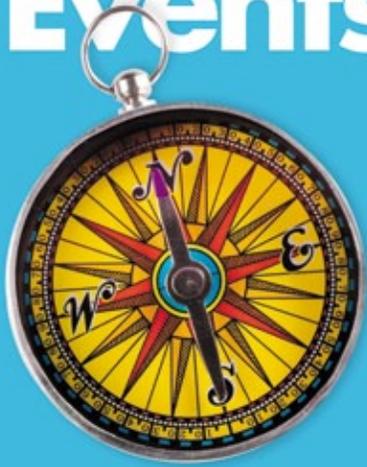
Mediation

KCSL will be offering a 30-hour training for individuals who wish to volunteer for the Parent Adolescent Mediation Program.

The training is planned for September 10-11 and 17-18 in Topeka. Once trained, volunteers will be able to co-mediate in order to gain their Kansas Supreme Court approval. The training fee is \$400, which includes a 16-hour core mediation training before the 14-hour parent adolescent portion.

For more information or to enroll contact Linda Laird at 785-215-6439.

Upcoming Events



Klicks for Kids

June 8 The Mall at Hays
thru 2918 Vine Street
June 22 Hays, KS

June 28 West Ridge Mall
thru 1801 SW Wanamaker Road
July 12 Topeka, KS

Dads Days

June 14 Lawrence, KS
thru Sponsored by Dads of Douglas
June 19 County in collaboration with KCSL

Governor's Conference for the Prevention of Child Abuse and Neglect

Nov 3 Hyatt Regency
thru 400 W. Waterman Street
Nov 5 Wichita, KS

For more information on these
events, please visit our website,
www.kcsl.org

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Events Mark Child Abuse Prevention Month



Throughout the month of April, KCSL participated in numerous activities in recognition of Child Abuse Prevention Month. One such event, "Wear Blue for Kids Day at the K," was hosted by the Kansas City Royals. Mary Dobbins (far left), long-time KCSL supporter and child abuse prevention advocate, was recognized for her dedication to Kansas children by filling the Buck O'Neil Legacy Seat.

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