



Winter 2012

News and Information for Parents, Educators and Donors

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southwest
human
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Southwest Human Development
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Healthy Families

Preventing Child Abuse for Arizona's Youngest Children

Three years ago Jeni's life was in chaos. She had struggled with drug abuse for years. Then she found herself pregnant—and suddenly realized she needed a safe and structured living environment for both herself and her baby-to-be. She entered an inpatient substance abuse clinic and also enrolled in Southwest Human Development's Healthy Families program.

Healthy Families is a child abuse prevention program with a 99% success rate. In today's environment, where the news is filled with tragic stories of child abuse and policy makers are struggling to find solutions, Healthy Families is good news indeed. It helps parents be the best for their children—and is a first step in keeping children who might otherwise experience abuse or neglect from having to enter the social service system in the first place.

Jeni's Healthy Families home visitor came regularly to meet with her. That helped her gain confidence and independence, learn to make better decisions, and provided valuable child development information. She also steered herself for some tough personal choices. Jeni has distanced herself from her old lifestyle and former friends to keep herself drug-free. She has even had to break ties with some family members due to the unhealthy nature of their relationships.

Healthy Families home visitors focus on the whole family as part of their effort to get children off to the very best start in life. So in addition to helping new mothers and fathers learn parenting skills, home visitors can assist with goal setting, stress management, and connecting with community resources like child care, health care and social services.

Now Jeni's primary focus is her son Cody, who is two years old. She says that she's learned to make positive choices for his welfare. Recently, she became uncomfortable with the quality of the child

care center Cody was attending. Using information and resources provided by her home visitor, she researched other options and ultimately found a new environment for him that she felt was more conducive to his development. This was a huge accomplishment for Jeni, as she had spent many years feeling like she was not in control of her life.

Healthy Families is a free program. Eligibility is based on risk factors like single or teen parenthood, poverty, or a history of abuse in the parent's own childhood. Healthy Families Arizona has been serving the people who need it most for 20 years. Healthy Families America, the program's parent organization, has cited Arizona's program as a model for the rest of the nation.



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Babies to Big Kids

Southwest Human Development Partners with 'Raising Arizona Kids' Magazine to Create New Blog for Parents

From toddlers in full meltdown mode to medications for children struggling with attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD), Southwest Human Development's experts are offering advice and information to Arizona parents with young children. Now you can get that advice anytime on a new blog, *Babies to Big Kids*. It's a collaborative project with local magazine, *Raising Arizona Kids*.

The blog can be found at:
<http://babiestobigkids.wordpress.com/>

Recent posts include "How to Build A Great Relationship with Your Child," by psychologist Terrence Mateo, Ph.D. He encourages parents to watch, wait and wonder as they learn to follow their baby's cues, respond to their needs and really build trust.

Developmental and behavioral pediatrician Dr. Daniel B. Kessler provides tips for healthy sleep and



eating habits and explores the often confusing realm of medications for children. In his post "Managing Meltdowns: Helping Your Child Cope with Tantrums," Lorenzo Azzi, Ph.D. helps parents understand why their toddler has temper tantrums and offers advice on how to handle these stressful moments—even in public.

Donate A Book Now, Help Create A Reader for Life

Ensuring that children have access to a variety of appropriate books is an important step in getting them to read. Donations of gently used children's books are a wonderful way to help young children develop both early reading skills and a lifelong love

of books. To find out what types of books are needed and how to make a donation, contact Kelsey Wolf at (602) 633-8185 or kwolf@swhd.org. You can also visit us at swhd.org to learn about our early literacy programs and how you can help.

Save the Date for Walk With Me 2012

Mark your calendars and join us for the fourth annual Walk With Me fundraiser! This year's walk will be held Saturday, May 5, at Steele Indian School Park in central Phoenix. It's not too early to start forming your team! To register go to www.walkwithme.org/phoenix or contact Lindsey Roberts at (602) 224-1759 or lroberts@swhd.org. Proceeds will benefit Easter Seals Southwest Human Development's services for children with disabilities. Help us meet our goal to raise \$175,000 this year!



Ready to Go!



Family Fun!



Team Spirit!

Thanks for Making the Holidays Brighter

Valley Businesses Donate Time and Gifts

Please join us in expressing our sincere thanks to the employees from CVS Caremark, Express Scripts, Safeway, and Wells Fargo who provided much needed holiday cheer (and a helping hand) to over 100 families across the Valley.

Each of these Valley companies encouraged their staff to buy presents for children and families participating in Southwest Human Development programs. The children and their families are facing a variety of challenges including disabilities, temporary unemployment and the trauma of past abuse or neglect. Many of them wouldn't receive any gifts without help from these generous donors.

While carefully protecting privacy, Southwest staff provided key details about each child including age, gender, and interests. Company volunteers took this information and shopped for holiday gifts like toys, games, bikes, and clothes. Many also provided the whole family with basic needs such as blankets, linens, and cooking utensils. We were thrilled to see several big-ticket items like car seats, strollers, and a crib arrive at our offices, ready for delivery to surprised and grateful families.

For families who otherwise could not afford a holiday celebration, these gifts made a huge difference. Participating employees found that they also benefitted from the

holiday giving program. The words of one corporate team leader say it all: "That experience made my holidays!"



Portraits of Opportunity A Success

Annual Photography Exhibit Raises \$83,000



Our annual photography show of some of Southwest Human Development's most touching success stories was another stirring event this year. October's Portraits of Opportunity exhibit, which features photos of families who have overcome great challenges, was a huge success. More than 200 guests enjoyed extraordinary visual insights from some of the Valley's most

admired photographers while sampling hors d'oeuvres and listening to live piano music.

The event raised \$83,000 for Arizona's most vulnerable children, surpassing last year's total. Thanks to all who participated!

If you missed these moving stories and photos you can view them on our website at <http://www.swhd.org/how-we-help/success-stories>.

Healthy Families

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Thanks in part to our generous donors, Healthy Families serves 1,750 families each year. Unfortunately this represents only a fraction of those who are eligible. And the number of families who need this vital program is growing as our state's economic problems continue. High unemployment, severe rates of children living in poverty, and serious cuts to community resources have led to increased stress on parents as well as increased substance abuse, domestic violence, and untreated mental illness—all of which contribute to increased rates of child abuse.

Jeni is grateful that she was able to participate in Healthy Families. Today, this 25-year-old has been sober for over three years, has a job, is attending community college, and is engaged to be married. She is a few semesters away from transferring to ASU, where she would like to pursue a degree in criminal justice. She plans to use it to help support women like herself who are transitioning into stronger, healthier new lives.

Other News & Upcoming Events

Our Vision and Mission

For over 30 years the mission of Southwest Human Development has been to help our community's children get off to the best start in life. Recently we shortened our mission statement to more simply reflect the critical reason for the existence of this organization. We also added a vision statement to convey the future we seek to create for Arizona's children.

Our Vision

A positive future for every child.

Our Mission

Southwest Human Development strives to give all children the healthy foundation they need for an optimal start in life.

You Can Leave a Legacy for Children

The generous support of our donors has allowed Southwest Human Development to provide programs and services to our community for thirty years. But did you know that by including the agency in your will or estate plan you can help continue our work well into the future? Consider including a gift to Southwest Human Development in your will or living trust and make a difference in the lives of those who follow. For more information about planned giving, call Ellen Lord, development manager at (602) 224-1757 or elord@swhd.org.



Southwest Human Development is a non-profit organization.

To make a tax deductible contribution please call (602) 224-1757 or visit us online at www.swhd.org.



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