



Child Care Program Works Hard So Parents Can Too

Before she called Community Action, Vanessa was at a loss. After searching for weeks for child care, the graduate student and Executive Director of the Cornelius Chamber of Commerce, had no one to care for 17-month old Samantha. She and her husband, Greg, who live in Cornelius, were running out of options. They knew that many providers operate out of homes but usually can't afford to advertise in the local yellow pages.

"Mothers who don't already have a child care provider have to rely on word of mouth to find out about family child care," said Vanessa, "Most of the time you can't just open the yellow pages and find a provider." With each passing day, Vanessa struggled. With an energetic toddler climbing on her, working from her home office was becoming increasingly difficult. Greg, who works nights, wasn't getting the rest he needed to be productive on the job. Then Vanessa heard about Metro Child Care Resource and Referral (Metro CCR&R), a program of Community Action. Vanessa learned that Metro CCR&R is a free service available to all families in Washington County, not just low-income families. When Vanessa called the hotline she learned that roughly 90% of child care providers operate care in a home setting. She was not only referred to a list of family child care providers, all within a five-mile radius of her home, but also received informational materials regarding choosing a child care provider.

Armed with new information, Vanessa narrowed her search by conducting phone interviews. Then, she and Greg set out to visit two prospective providers. They chose a family child care provider who incorporates literacy activities into her care routine, is certified in CPR and first aid and who is registered with the state. Vanessa likes that the care Samantha receives is developmentally appropriate and stimulating. "Every day she comes home with new words she has learned," said Vanessa. "I don't know what we would have done with-



Greg, Vanessa and Samantha Hayden enjoying a family outing.

out Metro CCR&R. Child care is not only expensive, it is hard to find."

Next to housing and utilities, child care is quickly becoming the biggest expense for young families. While cost of care for an infant varies by neighborhood, rates typically range from \$500.00 - \$1,000.00 per month in Washington County. Yet, cost of care is no guarantee of quality because child care in Oregon is not highly regulated. Odd hour care, for parents who work swing or graveyard shifts, is difficult to find at any price. Parents who feel uncomfortable about the care their child is receiving aren't comfortable at work and parents who lack care can't go to work. For parents, employed in service sector or shift work, missing work can quickly result in termination of employment.

Community Action is striving to make life just a little easier for working parents. Because provider training and education is the strongest indicator of quality care, Metro CCR&R offers technical assistance and training to providers who are listed in Care Finder, a data base that houses information on licensed centers and registered family child care providers. The data-

base, which includes information on approximately 800 providers, reveals a cross-section of various specialties (for example, infant care), geographic areas and socioeconomic levels.

"Each family's needs are different and their child care has to be the right fit. It is important for people to know that METRO CCR&R doesn't evaluate the quality of care of a provider, we teach parents how to do that for themselves," said Lupe Jungwirth, Program Coordinator. This year Metro CCR&R hopes to enroll an additional 350 providers and increase referral service 40%. All this is especially good news to parents like Vanessa and Greg, who just welcomed their second child, Emily Rose, on February 12th.



Parents, would you like help finding a child care provider in your community? Call 503-253-5000. Child care providers call 503-693-3241 for technical assistance and information about training.



Dick Stenson
Board Chair



Jerralynn Ness
Executive Director

A Letter to Our Friends—

At one time or another, we've all *asked* for help. Likewise, there have been many times when we were in a position to *offer* help. Is it possible for a person to be capable of both simultaneously? Absolutely. The families who participate in Community Action programs have this opportunity everyday. Parents whose children participate in Community Action Head Start preschool have the opportunity to work in their student's classroom. In addition, more than 40 parents participate in monthly meetings of the Head Start Policy Council, an oversight board to the program. The result is informed and caring adults who are actively involved in their child's education. Individuals who participate in Community Action energy and emergency assistance programs often write a brief note of thanks. These messages are read to staff, partners and donors to

illustrate the power of our work. A few brave recipients of our services have offered to publicly share their story. A personal testimonial is the most powerful deed one can offer, and we are so grateful to learn from each other's experiences.

Community Action programs also offer opportunities for community involvement. During the holidays, dozens of faith organizations, businesses and service groups contacted us to participate in community service projects. We linked each group to a program, including a Head Start classroom, a before and after school care group, and clusters of expecting moms. Individuals had an opportunity to meet people from their own communities, exchange resources and learn about one another.

Community Action houses the database of all 300 social service agencies that provide services

to the low-income community. This database (accessible on our website, www.caowash.org, choose E.L.N.D. Resources) is not only accessed by people in need of services, but increasingly by corporate human resource offices that want to have social service information and resources available to their employees. Another good example of a valuable service is the child care resource and referral program available to everyone in the county (see cover article).

Certainly there are no shortage of opportunities for our community to give and receive. Thank you for all you are doing to participate in our community, and for continuing your support of Community Action.



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Local Heroes Support Community Action Programs

Holiday giving was in full swing from mid-November through early January. Columbia Community Bank hosted a giving tree to benefit the Beaver Acres Head Start. The bank also collected items for the shelter during Hillsboro's annual Holly Days celebration. Tektronix employees conducted a canned food drive and donated a cash gift to the Neighborshare office in Tigard. Employees of Synopsys adopted the shelter families, providing toys, clothing, and bicycles that filled an entire room at the shelter. The Unitarian Universalist Church also showed their support for the shelter, providing bus tickets and numerous self-sufficiency items. Merix Corporation adopted the entire A Kid's Domain program and the Gaston Head Start Center, generously providing holiday gifts and cash donations. Early Head Start and Vose Head Start received an abundant dose of holiday cheer from First Consumer's National Bank, a first-time donor. Landmark Ford provided holiday presents and meals for the Barnes Head Start class. The Consumer Affairs department at Nike provided shoes for JB Thomas, Indian Hills, and Mooberry Head Start students. Office Depot, another first-time donor, provided gifts to children at Bridgeport Elementary Head Start. Valley Presbyterian Church was incredibly kind (and speedy) in adopting Metzger and

C.F. Tigard Head Start just days before the holiday break. The Beaverton Chamber of Commerce Leadership Group conducted a baby layette drive to benefit Opening Doors. The Hazeldell ward of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints adopted the students of Chehalem Head Start. Students of Oregon Episcopal School donated 50 bags of toys to Head Start students while employees from Intel donated and sewed hats and scarves for Play it Again. Idea Factory supplied new toys for the waiting room at Neighborshare. Thank you to all our holiday donors and best wishes for the coming year!



Shelter Wins Holiday Lighting Contest

Community Action's Family Shelter won the 2001 Hillsboro Chamber of Commerce Holiday Lighting Contest for Best Business Display. Two local heroes, Doug Houk and Scott Zwingli of The Light Up Company of Beaverton, made sure the historic home was dressed to impress for the annual contest. Doug and others at the company generously provided and set up the festive lights and greenery that made the display so special! Thank you to The Light Up Company for making our holiday season a lot brighter.



Please Join Us This Spring!

There are plenty of opportunities to learn more about Community Action's programs. Listed here are events open to the public.

Program Tours

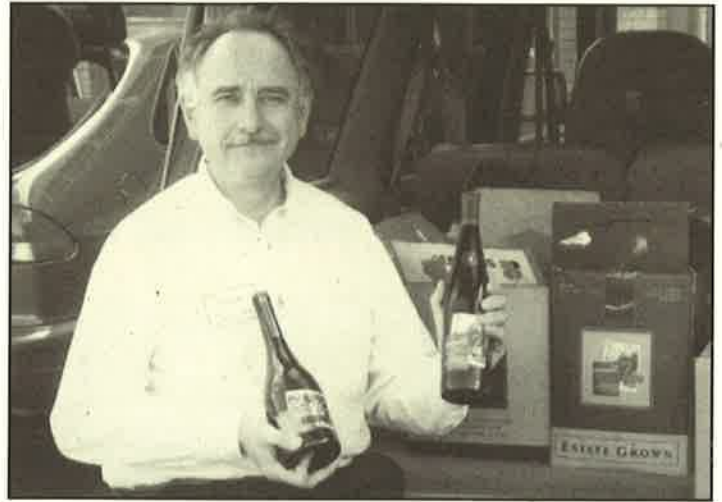
- **Thursday, April 11th**, 4:30 – 5:30 pm, *Early Head Start*
— Hillsboro Main Office
- **Wednesday, June 5th**, 7:30 – 8:30 am,
Metro Childcare Resource & Referral
— Hillsboro Main Office
- **Tuesday, June 18th**, 7:30 – 8:30 am,
Weatherization & Energy Services
— Hillsboro Main Office

Fundraising Events

- **Tuesday, April 2nd** Noon – 1:00 pm,
People You Should Know Luncheon
— Grand Lodge in Forest Grove
- **Thursday, May 2nd**, 5:30 – 8:30,
Celebration of Community Spirit Dinner
— Greenwood Inn in Beaverton

RSVP to Pamela White at 503.693.3230
or pwhite@caowash.org

6th Annual Wine Raffle a Success



Michael Sandoval, grand prize winner of the 6th Annual Community Action Wine Raffle

Eleven lucky winners are enjoying a selection of wines courtesy of the Washington County Winery Association and the annual Community Action wine raffle. The raffle, in its 6th year, raised \$8,000 for Community Action programs. The event has raised nearly \$80,000 since it began in 1995. The grand prize winner was Michael Sandoval of Portland. Additional winners were: Connie Peterson, Forest Grove; Mike Webb, Beaverton; Kellie Wisher, Tigard; Lois Ebel, Portland; Gary Link, Beaverton; Amie Thurber, Portland; Christi Cawood, Portland; Stacey Dodson, Gresham; Ines Whipple, Portland; Scott Soliday, Portland. Thank you to participating wineries: Beran Vineyards, Ponzi Vineyards, Cooper Mountain Vineyards, Sake One Corporation, Helvetia Winery, Montinore Vineyards, Tualatin Estates Vineyards, Oak Knoll Winery, and David Hill Winery.

Breakfast Guests Donate \$72,000

More than 100 supporters of Community Action gathered for breakfast November 14, 2001, and pledged \$72,000 over the next five years to support Community Action programs. The "People You Should Know" event was so successful that the agency has scheduled a second event on April 2, 2002, at noon at the Grand Lodge in Forest Grove for west county residents.

At the November event, guests were welcomed by school-aged children who participate in Community Action's A Kid's Domain before and after school care program. A Hillsboro resident named Sharon shared her experience with Community Action programs, including

receiving help paying her utility bill to keep her and her two boys in their apartment. Sharon, who has been homeless in the past, said she appreciated being treated by staff with kindness and respect that helped her maintain her dignity during some very rough times. Sharon later assisted Community Action update the human resources pages of the local phone book in a joint project with Verizon and Washington County.

Beaverton Mayor Rob Drake shared his experience with poverty as a boy and then asked the guests to consider making a multi-year pledge to support emergency assistance, maternity outreach, information and referral, and other

Community Action services available to low-income families living in Washington County. "People made gifts ranging from \$10 to \$15,000," remarked Jerralynn Ness, executive director. "Every gift is significant and we are happily overwhelmed with the outpouring of support."

No maximum or minimum gift is required at the event. For more information on the free, fundraising lunch on April 2, contact Pamela White at 503.693.3230 or pwhite@caowash.org



Community Connections

Community Action Organization

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Hillsboro, OR 97123

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Community Action Organization is a
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In partnership with the community,
Community Action assists low income
people to achieve
self-determination.

For further information contact
Resource Development: at 503-693-3255
or see our website:
www.caowash.org

Nov. 30, 2001

Thank you for the timely, much
needed, emergency assistance!

Everyone, especially Joan Swan-
son,* was so helpful!

I have worked all my life &
been a responsible working
individual for years, so I find
myself laid off and amazed at
how quickly the meager savings
account goes away! So I'm so
grateful for an agency who
understands, is available in my
hour of need, and has been so
great in providing information
in order to help me go forward
in this emergency time.

Thank you.

K. Johnson

* Joan is Weatherization Manager of Community Action's Emergency Services program and the recipient of this letter from a program participant.