



The Crossroads Chronicle

October-December 2015

Looking Back, Moving Forward: A Year In Review



It's hard to believe how quickly this year has passed. Much like a roller coaster, it had moments of great excitement as well as its share of challenges, especially in the areas of Youth Services funding and maintaining our many Head Start/Early Head Start facilities through floods, tornadoes, and changing localities. Through it all, however, we progressed on many fronts.

During all of 2015, we celebrated, along with our sister agencies in Oklahoma and nationally, the 50th Anniversary of the research-based, quality early childhood education program we know as Head Start. What an honor it is to sponsor this program!

We were gratified to successfully pass three (3) Aligned Monitoring Events in Head Start (otherwise known as audits) with no deficiencies, and we were able to make facility improvements to a number of our Head Start centers, most notably Education Engine in Lawton. Family and Community Engagement and providing health information to families to address the problem of childhood obesity were also areas of emphasis.

Our Youth Services Program achieved an excellent score in its Peer Review monitoring event, and we were able to keep our Juvenile Intervention Center intact even in the face of large budget cuts. Our wonderful Board of Directors and Policy Council faithfully discharged their duties of joint leadership of the agency, and our caring, compassionate staff went the extra mile to serve our clients. Our Mission to support the healthy lifestyles and emotional well-being of children, youth, and families through the provision of effective, community-based programs is one we take seriously, as we do our Mission in Head Start of supporting healthy family lifestyles to give young children a "head start" in life through the provision of a quality, comprehensive early childhood education program. As we assess the results of Fiscal Year 2015, we believe that we accomplished both.

While we lost our long-time Head Start Director, Anthony Stafford, we nevertheless delivered quality, effective services to those who need us the most. One of our greatest strengths is a legacy of caring for the clients we are honored to serve, and we are grateful for them. All in all, 2015 was a very good year!

—Marla Parish
Director of Administrative Services



Giving is not just about making a donation. It is about making a difference.

—Kathy Calvin, President of the United Nations Foundation

Give the gift of making a difference to Crossroads Youth & Family Services this holiday season!

Checks can be sent to our mailing address: 1301 W. Main Street, Norman, OK 73069

All credit and debit-card donations can be made through our website: www.crossroadsyfs.org (Click the Donate button at the top of the screen).

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Thank You: A Note From A Crossroads Employee



Ainsley Olivia Muns (Olive), celebrated her first birthday on October 8th. Olive was born 3 weeks premature and spent 6 days in the NICU at OU Children's Hospital during her first week of life. She has grown and developed into a wonderful, intelligent, and joyful child. She is the light of our life.

Prior to her birth, I had taken a leave of absence from my counseling career while Kevin maintained his job at another agency. After staying home with Olive in the first months of her life, we re-evaluated and realized it was time for a change. Soon afterward, I began working at the CYFS Counseling Office as a staff counselor while Kevin continued to care for Olive at home. Later, Kevin was hired on staff at the CYFS Emergency Youth Shelter. At this point, we began to prepare ourselves to enroll Olive in daycare, as we have no family in the area to assist with child care.

However, as it turns out, that never had to happen.

Olive has spent ZERO days in daycare in her lifetime. She has been in familial care, in our home, each and every day since she left the NICU. With both parents working full-time, we realize what a rarity this is. There is no doubt in either of our minds that this would be impossible without Crossroads Youth and Family Services. CYFS gives us

the opportunity to care for our child in what we believe to be the best way possible at this point in her development. To me, there is no greater gift or benefit. I sincerely believe the reason it works so well is that Crossroads cares about children. It cares about families. It cares about its employees.

I would like to express my thanks to the Youth Services leadership staff at the Tecumseh Road office: **Terran Manning** (Director of Youth Services), **Christabel Suthers** (Assistant Director of Counseling Services) and **Ursula Walker** (Assistant Director, Emergency Youth Shelter). Thank you for putting your faith in us to serve Crossroads well. Thank you for your constant support and feedback. Thank you for caring for children and families—not only our clients, but also your staff. Thank you for your unwavering advocacy. Thank you for supporting my husband in a way that brings him joy, fulfillment, and confidence unlike anything I have ever seen. Thank you.

—Ashley Muns, Staff Counselor

JIC Update

The Juvenile Intervention Center is a community-based partnership of juvenile justice system service providers who maximize resources through coordination, direct communication, and non-duplicative efforts into a safe and secure centralized facility for the temporary detainment of juveniles arrested by law enforcement for misdemeanor and non-violent felony offenses.

Program Goals:

1. To provide immediate and appropriate consequences when a juvenile allegedly commits a misdemeanor or non-violent felony offense;
2. To increase a police officer's time in the field by reducing time 'baby-sitting' juveniles;
3. To increase parental responsibility and involvement;
4. To provide a database to assist police, juvenile courts, prosecutors, and other appropriate service agencies; and

5. To refer families to needed social services;
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 5. To refer families to needed social services;
 6. To provide an assessment of the juvenile
- The Juvenile Intervention Center was opened in 1997 as a 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, 365 days a year secure holding facility for youth arrested for minor, nonviolent crime. The primary funding source for Juvenile Intervention Center services is the Office of Juvenile Affairs (OJA). In FY 2014, the Juvenile Intervention Center received a 25% cut in funding from OJA. At that time, the JIC was forced to close on Mondays and Tuesdays due to these cuts. Had it not been from increased funding from municipalities in 2014, it is doubtful the JIC would have been able to continue to serve the community. It was hoped that full funding

from the Office of Juvenile Affairs might be restored this year. This was not to be. Our funding from OJA remains flat. However, The City of Moore increased funding for the Juvenile Intervention Center, which will allow us to be open an additional day. Beginning Tuesday, October 6th, The JIC has been able to remain open **6 days a week**.

The Juvenile Intervention Center receives financial support from the Cities of Norman, Moore, Noble, Lexington, and Purcell, but serves any law enforcement agency in need of secure holding for a juvenile. The important work of the Juvenile Intervention Center would not be possible without the increased financial support of our community partners. We are grateful for their continued support.

—Gregg Fryday
Assistant Director, Juvenile Intervention Center



Halloween Shelter Party

On a cold, rainy Friday in October, the halls of the Main Street office were filled with strange sightings: cartoon characters, one very “Mad Hatter,” an identity thief and even a rock star or two came to enjoy the festivities. Thankfully, there were more tricks than treats as the Administrative staff hosted a Halloween Lunch for the children at the Emergency Youth Shelter. The children (and staff) enjoyed a spread of delicious treats, including cornbread salad, nachos, a “graveyard” made of pudding and cookies and mummy fingers—also known as hot dogs. The children’s favorite part of this annual event is still trick or treating around the office. As with other years, they received plenty of candy and healthy snacks.

Just as the children were preparing to leave, they received one more spooky surprise: the owners of the Lexington Zombie Farm invited the children and staff to be their special guests at one of the most elaborate haunted trails in Oklahoma. We would like to thank them for making our Halloween terrifyingly fun!



Lisa Winters
(Executive Director),
showing her
Pumpkin Pride!



Marla Parish, Director of
Administrative Services
(dressed as an *Identity
Thief*)



Denise McClure,
HS/EHS
Administrative
Assistant (and
Mad Hatter)



Mark Miller
(IT Technician/Monster) &
Kayla Woodberry
(Volunteer Coordinator/80s Rock
Star)



Ashley, Kevin and Olive
Muns as *Team Rocket*

Help Us #SparkTheGood!



Would you like to help Crossroads Youth & Family Services win **\$10,000** in just ten seconds?

Sure you would!

Givn, a social media sharing platform designed for nonprofit organizations, is sponsoring a contest called Spark The Good. By sharing a simple postcard with your followers and friends, you can help us promote the “good” we do on a daily basis.

Here’s how it works:

1. Go to <http://givn.social/donor/share/25874>. This will take you to a page on the Givn website, showcasing a postcard with our logo (and a picture of the Education Engine playground).
2. Decide which social media platform you will use to share the postcard. You can share it on Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn or all three. **Note: we will not be able to see any of your personal information. We can only see the number of people who have shared the postcard.**
3. In your post, please use the hashtag #SparkTheGood. Givn is also tracking the number of times the hashtag is used.

The contest has been extended to **December 31** and we are currently in **4thplace**. Please share our postcard and help us receive money to fund our wonderful programs!

Over The Back Fence

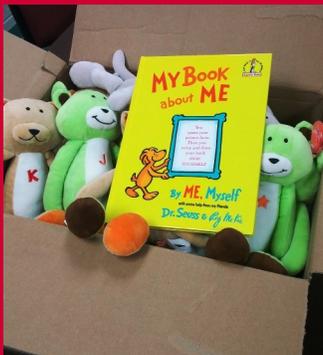


The Gift

by Matthew Dickman (Head Start Alumnus)

Sometimes the whole world
can feel unsafe.
Your house can fall away from beneath your feet,
even your own room can feel like fog.
Down on the corner
men are gathering like a storm.
They lean against a wall
and on the wall the names of the living
and the dead are spray painted over and over.
If sometimes the world feels unsafe
it's because it is unsafe,
and if sometimes we are lonely
it's because we are alone.
But when I was alone you were there.
And when I had no one to hold me
you held me.
You looked me right in the eye
and told me I was worth something.
Then the world moved from winter into spring,
then I knew I wasn't just my street,
I wasn't a bottle and I wasn't a needle,
I wasn't trouble, I wasn't my father's rage
or my mother's silence.
You made the dark sing with starlight.
You made the wild dogs of my insecurity sit and stay.
You gave me songs
when my neighborhood only gave me sirens.
You gave me a place
where I could be myself, where I could grow.
You looked at me, at all that I am,
and when the world said no to what you saw,
you said yes, you said yes, yes, yes.

The Spirit of Giving With Barnes & Noble



For the second year in a row, Barnes & Noble of Norman chose Crossroads Youth & Family Services as their preferred organization for the Annual Holiday Book Drive. At checkout, each customer was asked if they would like to purchase a children's book or toy and donate it to Crossroads, and the response was absolutely TREMENDOUS!

The month-long campaign resulted in a donation of 468 brand-new books. Of these, 280 books are for children ages five and younger and will be distributed to each of our Head Start/Early Head Start centers. The rest are for older children and will be given to residents at our Emergency Youth Shelter. Patrons also donated more than 35 games, action figures and stuffed animals, which will be utilized by our Staff Counselors in working with children. The generosity and hope of this season was made evident in these boxes of books, reminding us all that giving is truly the gift that keeps on giving.

We would like to express our thanks to the Barnes & Noble staff for thinking of us and for assisting with the delivery of these books, our Administrative volunteer **Mary Howkins** and Clerk **Lauri Acree** for organizing and counting the items, and, of course, the community of Norman who made this remarkable gift possible.