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WISHLIST

We currently need:

Capri Sun

Juice packs



Cereal

In single serve
containers



Kinetic Sand

Bags, any color



Chapstick

Any brand



Glue Sticks

Any brand



We accept donations from
9:00-3:00 Monday through Friday
OR
order through our Amazon Wish List
page and have items shipped right
to us.

THANK YOU!

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2021 Year in Review

CHANGES, CHALLENGES AND GOD AT WORK!

Welcome, 2022! Why am I caught by surprise when it is time to write the January newsletter? I feel like I just wrote the one for January 2021! Each year, I feel grateful as I look back at the prior year and anxious as I look forward to the next. This year is no different.

As 2020 departed and 2021 began, there were high hopes. 2020 was a struggle with the introduction of COVID-19 and all the unknowns.

*Would Rock House Kids be able to keep the doors open?
Who would take care of the children's needs?
Would donors forget about RHK? And, the list goes on.*

Well, we made it through 2020 and our hopes and dreams were that we would be able to return to "normal" again. Unfortunately, many of the children did not return. Some moved or were being kept at home. Our volunteers were also extremely cautious about returning. We pressed on, knowing in God's timing He would provide a way for us to be able to serve His children.

2021 was full of moments which brought laughter and tears, as well as excitement and exhaustion. Through all the difficulties there was one constant - the Lord's provision, guidance, and undying love for all.

As 2021 began, we navigated our way through all of the CDC mandates which felt as though they changed daily, to ensure everyone stayed safe. We followed proper protocol and took the temperatures of each child before they entered RHK. Hand sanitizing stations were set up throughout the building to ensure each child had access to them. The number of children was still down, and we were not able to have Thursday evenings open for our teens due to lack of volunteers. This was very hard on us - a large part of our heart is missing when not all the children are with us!

A Look Back at 2021

January - The year started with lots of planning and working out details for the coming year.

February - RHK branded a new logo and the kids got new blankets!

March - This month brought staff changes and learning how to paint abstract art for our teens.

April - The Pregnancy Care Center talked with the teens about making positive choices and there were new socks for all the kids!

May - The Rock Valley Nurses taught the kids the importance of exercise & nutrition, and care packages were distributed to each child.

June - Chris from RVC brought the Tech Bus & motivated the teens and our vans got a great face lift with our new logo.

July - The Big Eats Tour stopped at Portillo's and Dee got to share about RHK at Westminster Church.

August - Volunteers were honored at our Appreciation Picnic, we added a new staff member, new shoes & backpacks for school, and Chef Kevin Seuring became our volunteer Food Service Supervisor.

September - Two new promotional videos were made, Big Eats stopped at Backyard Grill, and the return of Streets & Sweets.

October - Rockford University nurses taught the kids about hygiene & first aid and our check-in window got an upgrade.

November - RHK goes into full Christmas preparations and we hosted over 50 people for our Vision Tour Open House.

December - An outpouring of support from the community for our kids, wrapping over 1200 gifts, a HUGE party with the kids and an excellent presentation of the real meaning of Christmas from Jon Melin!



STREETS & SWEETS

In September, we hosted our annual fundraiser for the first time in two years due to the pandemic. The event was sold out and we now have to find a larger venue for 2022! We also had a \$25,000 one day matching challenge - which was met over and above what we needed! Wow!!

250

KIDS PER WEEK
PARTICIPATED

MEALS/FOOD
BAGS PROVIDED

6595
ea.

25
(7 new)

HOT MEAL PROVIDERS

VOLUNTEER HOURS

9651

1205

CHRISTMAS
GIFTS WRAPPED

TOURS GIVEN

65

BUILDING & SAFETY UPDATES

Throughout the year, RHK was blessed with funding from various donors to allow some updates to be made.

Expansion Project

We are thrilled to have raised 74% of our \$545,000 Expansion Campaign goal as of the end of 2021!

Garage/Storeroom

With help from the community, we were able to install a suspended heater, a new garage door, tear down walls and add more shelving.

Classrooms

Generous donors made it possible to purchase security cameras and Smart TVs for each room.

AED Machines

We now have three AED machines spread throughout the building for use in a cardiac emergency.

Fish Tank

In August, a special friend of RHK gifted our kids with a beautiful aquarium filled with colorful fish to enjoy!



VISION TOUR

In November, RHK hosted more than 50 people for our Vision Tour Open House. It was a great time for our guests to see first-hand what we do here and how our expansion project will allow us to double our impact with the kids.

2021 PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS

Thursday Teen Nights

In June, we finally had enough volunteers back to enable us to open the doors for our teens to come again on Thursday evenings!

Event Nights

All through the year, we held special events including learning how to paint, learning about Jazz music from the Joel Baer Quartet, Special speakers and fun game nights - like wild and crazy water games on the hottest night of the summer. An extra special treat for the younger kids was when Life Church brought in huge inflatables, carnival games, cotton candy and a Sno-cone machine!

Baptism

In May, we celebrated with two of our kids as they made their faith public and were baptised.

Field Trips

We were excited to receive extra funding which enabled us to take our kids on more field trips this year. In 2021, the kids went roller skating, to the Gymnastics Academy, local museums, and Klehm Arboretum. The teens' went bowling in May and their field trip to Medieval Times in June was a special treat. In November they are able to cut down their own tree at Williams Tree Farm and in December, they went Christmas shopping! They were also able to go to Midtown Fitness several times to workout. We were so thankful to have the opportunity to go on each of these outings! They LOVED it!

CHANGES, CHALLENGES AND GOD AT WORK! *continued...*

Thankfully, finally, the children and volunteers began to return. New volunteers became part of the Rock House Kids family. Thursday nights were able to open back up for the Jr/Sr High students, bringing an influx of new and returning teens. An average night for the teens was 16-20 kids from the beginning of 2021 through the summer but now, we are up to 30-36 teens.

Let's not forget about the first through sixth graders. RHK was averaging 35-40 children each Monday and Wednesday evening. By the end of 2021, we were averaging 75-80 a night!

Once places started to open back up, we put field trips back on the schedule. Special guest speakers came to talk with the children on subjects ranging from going into the armed services, college, hygiene, first aid, and the list goes on.

In 2020, we were not able to have our annual fundraiser, Streets and Sweets. Our nonprofit friends decided to run virtual fundraisers. We didn't think this would work for RHK because one of the best parts of the event is having the children be a part of the evening. Not having them there just would not be the same. So, we decided we would wait and try again in September of 2021. Boy, are we glad we waited! Streets and Sweets was a sold-out event! You could feel the excitement in the room. Being there was like being at a family reunion with people mingling and catching up with each other. Some hadn't seen each other in over eighteen months!

During 2021, the outpouring of the community support for RHK for the kids was humbling. Our expansion campaign for the last portion of the building to be repurposed so more children could come to RHK was in full swing. Knowing people believe in our mission and want to partner with RHK in serving the inner-city children brought us to tears.

Throughout the year God showed up repeatedly. There are so many more amazing stories I could tell. To tell them all would take more space than this newsletter would allow.

I would like to extend my personal invitation to schedule a tour for you to see and hear what is happening at RHK.

RHK is what it is today because of our Lord, Jesus, and YOU! Whether you are a volunteer, donor, prayer warrior, or a cheerleader, we could not do what we do without YOU!

Praying 2022 brings you peace, joy, and health for you and your loved ones!

"Give thanks to the LORD, call on his name; make known among the nations what he has done."

1 Chronicles 16:8

Dee Lacny, Pastor and Executive Director

YES! I want to help Rock House Kids!

I want to be a **monthly supporter!** Please send more information.

Use my donation of \$_____ where most needed.

My donation is in honor of: in memory of:

I would like information on volunteering.

I/My group would like to provide a hot meal. Please call me.

I have included Rock House Kids in my estate planning.

If you would like to change your method of newsletter delivery to email or unsubscribe, please call our office at 815-962-5067.

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Phone _____

Email _____

Please mail to:
Rock House Kids
1325 7th St.
Rockford, IL 61104

Thank you!

