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Our Mission

Sharing God's love with inner-city children through Biblical principles, with physical and spiritual solutions.

Our Vision

To meet the physical, emotional, and educational needs of inner-city children by instilling hope in a safe, Christ-centered environment.

Our Motto

*Help for TODAY,
Hope for ETERNITY!*

Contact Us:

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Office Hours:
M-F 9 AM - 3 PM

Program Hours:
M-Th 5 PM-8 PM

Board of Directors

Mark Morris, President
Barry Kramer, Vice President
Beth Yock, Secretary
Marla Gregory, Treasurer
Matt Hevrin
Kyna Lucas
Bobbi Marks-Cooper
Bob Mellon
Dee Lacny, Executive Director

FROM OUR EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR...

Recently, I had a radio spot which described how someone had mentioned that we should not invest in the Westside of town because the people there will not change. I have tried to put this out of my mind, but it returns over and over when I look at the kids who come to RHK. This cuts me to the core because at RHK many of our kids are from the Westside.

When a child first comes to RHK, they are unsure what to expect. Is RHK like school? Is it another social program? Is it a church? Do I really have to listen to these adults?

When a new child comes, we have something we call a "New People Party." It really isn't a party, but a time we sit down with the kids to explain the rules, expectations, and consequences. They are also told about the different activities we do at RHK, such as field trips, giveaways, and event nights. Then, as they leave the "party," they get to pick out a small gift from a bucket.

Even though the kids are told the rules and consequences, some still push the limits. Some kids seem like they will never get with the program and are in trouble every night, but we don't give up!

Westside or Eastside, it doesn't matter to us. We work to help show each child they are important. Our responsibility is obedience to the word of God. As Proverbs 19:17 states, "Whoever is kind to the poor lends to the LORD, and He will reward them for what they have done."

We have many stories of kids at RHK who have changed their behavior, trust, and concerns. Much of this is due to the volunteers who come alongside them.

One specific group of kids get a ride to RHK on our van. There are two van drivers who pick them up twice a week. They have built a relationship with these kids. When the kids were first picked up they were disobedient, disruptive, and generally rough. After months and months of the drivers picking the kids up and asking about them, the walls started to fall. These kids now help keep the other kids on the van calm and controlled.

One driver stepped out and asked the kids if they wanted to go to church with them. The kids were excited and said, "YES!". Their mom was contacted to get permission to take her kids to church and she agreed.

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STANDING ON GOD'S SIDE! continued...

Usually, you have to tell kids to be ready at a certain time and remind them over and over. These kids make sure they remind the volunteers what time they are picking them up so they can go to church. The kids have come a long way since the first day they stepped into RHK. They came from the Westside, and they HAVE changed.

At RHK we do not care where a child lives, what their family background is, what type of clothing they wear, or the color of their hair or skin.

We see each child that walks through the doors of RHK as a child of God. Because they are God's children, they are worth the numerous hours of prayer, planning, and patience it takes to show them they are loved because of WHO they are, a child of God, not where they came from.

I am thankful for RHK's volunteers, board members, donors, and staff who believe each child is important and worth having a chance:

*Whether you have donated in-kind items or financial gifts.

*Whether you volunteer during the day to help prepare for the evening program

*If you come to serve in the evening program.

Each one of you reading this newsletter makes a difference in helping change lives! Without you, we would not be able to serve the kids. We would not be able to show them how special each one of them is. We would not be able to ensure they have a safe place to come to each week.

Thank you for investing in God's work. As Mark 10:14 says, "Let the little children come to me, and do not hinder them, for the kingdom of God belongs to such as these."

With Christ ALL things are possible, including changed lives in situations our earthly minds may have trouble seeing.



Dee Lacny, Pastor and Executive Director

WINTER CAMP ADVENTURES!



Brrr! Some of our teens had a fun, but chilly weekend at Covenant Harbor in Lake Geneva, WI on February 11-13.



Hanging out in the cabins brought lots of laughter, fun, and great bonding time.



They learned archery, challenged themselves on the climbing wall, went ice skating, played lots of basketball, volleyball, and broom ball, plus came in third place for Stump ball!

The theme for the weekend was "Panarama." We focused on the fact that God is everywhere and able to be there for all of us where we are, all at the same time. We never have to wait in line for Him and He is never too busy for us.



BOARD MEMBER SPOTLIGHT: MATT HEVRIN

Matt Hevrin, our newest board member, joined our Board of Directors in April of 2021. As an attorney, he brings to us a wealth of legal knowledge and experience. He has been a great help with various legal documents, such as looking over grant applications and making sure various organization contracts and policies follow guidelines and requirements that need to be met.

He was born and reared on the west side of Rockford and attended Auburn High School. He has witnessed first-hand the difficulties and struggles some kids in Rockford face and is proud to help advance the mission of RHK. Matt feels honored to be a part of the Board! He "loves working with a great group of Board Members who are all intelligent, always thinking ahead, and who share a common goal of doing whatever we can to care for the kids."

So far, his favorite RHK experience was attending our annual Streets & Sweets fundraiser. He loved watching the kids perform and found the generosity of our community in helping Rock House Kids overwhelming! "I love everything that Rock House Kids stands for and does. I can only hope that we can serve even more kids".

Matt is no stranger to volunteering or serving on boards. In fact, he currently serves as a board member of the Prairie Hill School District where, like with Rock House Kids, he does whatever he can to help the kids. Making sure they are taken care of, well educated, and prepared for life is one of the most important things we do. He is also a former board member of the North Western Illinois Chapter of the Red Cross, where he ran the Chicago Marathon to help raise funds for Red Cross.

Matt and his "soulmate" Lori have been married over 20 years and share two daughters, Kaitlyn and Ash, of whom they are extremely proud. He is a graduate of the University of Illinois where he obtained his bachelor's degree in Psychology and went on to Northern Illinois University for law school. In his free time, he enjoys playing golf, boating, waterskiing and spending quality time with his family.



A VALENTINE SURPRISE!



Wow! Just before Valentine's Day, Family Dollar called to tell us they had some balloons for our kids that were donated by their customers - enough for ALL of them!



The kids were excited when they walked in the cafeteria and saw what was waiting for them. At the end of the night, they each go to take one home. The biggest challenge was how to tie them so they wouldn't fly away!



Some of the children decided to enjoy their dinner sitting together under the colorful canopy of balloons - fun!

On our next teen night, it was their turn to take home a balloon valentine. Young or old, we all appreciate the little things that remind us we are loved. Thank you for showing our kids they are loved this Valentine's Day!



EXPANSION CAMPAIGN UPDATE

Help us make it to the end! Less than \$100,000 stands between us and doubling the impact for the children we serve. With our expansion, we will no longer have to separate the children by age groups. Instead of coming to RHK two nights a week, the doors will be open to them ALL four nights! This means the children will be off the streets, bellies full, and in a safe environment surrounded by loving mentoring TWICE as much, allowing us to have a much bigger impact! Did we mention this will also allow for additional children to join our program? Please share our need with your friends, family, church, businesses and affiliated organizations.

100%
75%
50%
25%
0%

We are currently at 84% of our goal!



Imagine if 100 people donated \$1,000.00 or 500 people purchased a \$200.00 tile...our goal would be reached! Donations of over \$1,000 will be recognized on our large plaque. 4 x 8 tiles can be purchased for \$100.00 and 8 x 8 tiles for \$200.00 with a personalized message. Tiles will be a permanent part of our expansion area once it is completed.

Please reach out to *Nicole Bergren* at 815-962-0567 x 111 for more information on donating, facilitating a tour or to purchase a tile.



MARCH Wish List

Shampoo & Conditioner



Cereal (in single serve containers)



Body Lotion (8-20 oz)



Body Wash (Men's & Women's)



Tampons & Pads- all sizes



Yo-Yo's



Bottled Water (8oz)



Donations can be dropped off at our office from 9 AM to 3 PM (M-F)

OR

order through Amazon or Walmart and have them delivered to us at 1325 7th Street; Rockford, IL 61104. Be sure to include your name on the receipt so we know who it is from.

Thank you!!

Thank you for supporting our kids!