



FALL 2023

TRUE TO LIFE

A publication of the Evangelical Child and Family



Stride Together for Life

Together We Made an Impact!!

On Saturday September 16th, more than 100 friends of ECFA came out to enjoy the morning at Herrick Lake in Wheaton. In attendance were many long-time supporters, new friends learning about ECFA, and our amazing volunteers.

Julie, a Pregnancy Support Services caseworker, started the event by sharing an impactful story about one of her clients. Pastor Michael from Village Church of Bartlett led us in prayer before we walked around Herrick Lake together!

Seeing all of the blue shirts circling the lake and hearing the laughter, stories, and camaraderie was

inspiring. There was one couple walking the trails that stopped and asked where they could get a blue shirt to join the event.

While walking around the lake, attendees and others on the trail walked past several signs that highlighted the impact being made with your support: Strengthening Individuals and Families, Affirming Life, Building Families, Healing Relationships, and Restoring Families.

After the walk everyone gathered back at the shelter to enjoy delicious, fresh-baked donuts from Tom's in Warrenville along with

other breakfast snacks. There was a craft table for children to create cards to encourage ECFA clients, as well as kites to decorate! We also had several yard games, a face painter, and balloon artist to keep children of all ages entertained.

For this event we had a goal of raising \$7000 in donations. At the time of this writing we have raised \$10,955 resulting in a total of \$17,955 due to matching grants from the Ozinga Foundation and Friends of ECFA. We are beyond thankful for your continued partnership with the ministries of ECFA.

AUCTION 2023

FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 10TH AT 5:30 PM

SEE PAGE 3 FOR DETAILS

Sanctus Real Concert

We have a new event! Grab some friends and loved ones and join us on Friday, May 10th at Avenue Christian Church in Clarendon Hills to watch Sanctus Real perform and help support the Life Affirming programs of ECFA at the same time! Stay tuned for details on how to buy tickets!

Sanctus Real has a total of nine studio albums, most recently 2019's Unstoppable God, which was the follow-up to 2018's Changed, Sanctus Real has accumulated eight NO. 1's and eight top five singles on multiple Christian radio formats. To date, the band has sold more than 1.2 million albums and their music has been streamed 210+ million times globally.

This unique opportunity came about through a partnership between ECFA and Avenue Christian Church, who specifically supports our Adoption program.



TOY DRIVE 2023

This year's toy drive will kick off in the beginning of November. We serve over 250 children and our goal is for each child to receive four presents. If you would like to be a **Secret Santa** to a child, please check our Facebook page for the **Wish Lists**, or give us a call at 630-653-6400.

Every year we are humbled by your generosity to the children & families we serve.



Some of last year's donations.



THE AUCTION IS NEXT MONTH!!

FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 10TH ~ DOORS OPEN AT 5:30 PM

Can you believe the auction is almost here? This year is gearing up to be another great event with an amazing selection of items to bid on. We'll have some items you've come to expect every year, some new items, and some auction favorites with a different twist on them. You may want to bid on an item or two to kick off your Christmas shopping!

Did you receive your invitation? Be sure to register online or give us a call. If you didn't receive an invitation in the mail, we'd still love to see you at the

auction, but registration is required.

Through this fun event a big impact is made on our services. From our life affirming Pregnancy Support Services program, to healing and restoring families through our faith-based counseling, and building families through adoption, your participation and partnership keeps ECFA strong.

CALL DAN AT 630-653-6400 TO RSVP.

Stay In Touch

Change is one of the things we can count on in life. We would love for you to stay in touch no matter where life leads you. You can update your contact information here:

<https://evancfa.kindful.com/register/contact-2023>

This QR code can be used as well.



We want to be certain that donation acknowledgements, event invites, and newsletters are received in a timely manner and sent to the correct address.

You may also call Dan at 630-653-6400. He will update your information for you.



ADOPTION ILLINOIS & WISCONSIN

Adoption is a partnering with Jesus to see lives transformed. We love because God first loved us.... a pure act of faith is to care for His children just as He cared for us. ECFA's adoption program offers training and support to families adopting domestically, internationally, or from the foster care system.

Be encouraged by this beautiful testimony:

"God has done wonderful things in my life. He's given me a beautiful family who loves me and takes care of me. They have encouraged me to do things I love like art, music and dance. My adoption was a sad but really happy moment in my life. As I grow up, God will open my eyes to know Him more. Having a family means the world to me."
~ Keysia



Keysia loves to bake!

INTACT FAMILY SERVICES



For illustration only

The Intact Family Services (IFS) program serves families indicated by DCFS for abuse or neglect. Many families have significant underlying issues leading to DCFS involvement such as substance abuse, domestic violence, and mental health concerns. Through referrals to specialized providers, including ECFA's counseling and pregnancy support programs, IFS assists parents in preventing future abuse and neglect from occurring and improving overall family function.

"Sarah" and her family came to ECFA due to the family's living situation and concerns about the supervision of the children. The family struggled to find stable housing but eventually secured housing with the financial resources of ECFA and other community resources. Sarah is working, she ensures the children are properly supervised, she is engaged in mental health services, the kids are attending school regularly, and the family is doing very well at this time. Sarah was feeling anxious and overwhelmed but with the help of her caseworker she overcame her fears and has created a stable and supportive environment for her family.

PROGRAMS

PREGNANCY SUPPORT SERVICES ILLINOIS & WISCONSIN



For Illustration Only!

ECFA offers Pregnancy Support Services (PSS) to affirm life and come alongside mothers, couples, and families throughout a woman's pregnancy and after the baby's birth. PSS is unlike most other Pregnancy Support programs as we go to the homes of those we serve and all of our services are free. PSS provides emotional, educational, and practical support from the beginning of services until the baby is six months old and sometimes longer. In our Illinois office we offer further support after case closure through our mentorship program.

"Pam" has been part of our Pregnancy Support Services program since March of this year. Pam has a history of postpartum depression and anxiety and desired help after having her third child, "Joey." Pam's son Joey has medical issues that require frequent visits to the doctor. Pam was also on a demanding breast feeding schedule to help Joey gain weight which he is doing slowly but surely! Pam has been learning ways to manage the many demands of motherhood, her post-partum depression, and anxiety during sessions with her worker. Pam's worker secured a grant to pay for a month's water and electricity bills which was of a great assistance to her. Pam is invested in her time with her worker and is making progress on her outlined goals. Her worker is proud of the progress Pam is making and is grateful for the opportunity to come alongside her during this challenging time.

COUNSELING SERVICES

ECFA serves a wide range of clients including children, teenagers, adults, and seniors. We are encouraged to see people make progress during the time they are in counseling, whether this change occurs quickly or over a longer period of time. Our approach is to treat everyone with compassion and provide support in order to help them feel prepared to address and resolve their personal challenges.

When "Sophia" came in for counseling, she was desperate to keep her anxiety and depression at bay. Over the years, her depression, fueled by anxiety, caused her to isolate, self-medicate, and not care for herself well. She finally decided that she was done with that way of living. Through therapy, she was able to see how some of her behaviors fed the depression and anxiety. When Sophia ended services, she was well grounded in her identity in Christ, has new tools to address her anxiety and depression, and a renewed joy and anticipation for what God has in store for her.



For illustration only

MEET THE STAFF



Rachel Collins joined ECFA staff on September 1st as our Office Manager. Rachel brings a depth of experience to the position. She has a Health Insurance Specialist Certificate, Microsoft Office Specialist Certificate, and is Certified Professional Coder. Rachel has experience in supervising, billing, audits, and training. In addition, she has an Associates Degree from Le Cordon Bleu and Hospitality Institute of Chicago.

Rachel, her husband, and their three children live in Bartlett and attend Village Church of Bartlett where she serves on the worship team, hospitality team, and can often be found helping out in the church nursery!

We are excited to have Rachel join ECFA.

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED

ECFA has a need for volunteer receptionists. If you enjoy interacting with people whether in person or on the phone, we can use your help.

Our counseling program sees clients in the early evening, between roughly 5:00 pm and 7:30 pm. You would be greeting clients and letting therapists know they have arrived. We can use help during the day as well, either mornings or afternoons for approximately three hours. During the day you would be answering the phone and forwarding calls to the appropriate staff person in addition to greeting visitors.

You are welcome to bring along a book to read, or work on any quiet activity when you are not busy.

Volunteers can choose a schedule that works for them. Please give Rachel or Rita a call at 630-653-6400 or email mail@evanfca.org if you would like more information.



ECFA Upcoming Events 2024

FEB 10

HEART FOR LIFE
Fox Bowl
Wheaton, IL

APR 26

LOVE IN ACTION
HILTON BY DOUBLE TREE
LISLE, IL

MAY 10

SANCTUS REAL
AVENUE CHRISTIAN CHURCH
CLARENDON HILLS, IL

MAY 23

TOP GOLF
FRIENDRAISER EVENT
NAPERVILLE, IL

The new year brings some fun events to add to your calendar. While many of you are familiar with our Heart for Life bowling event and our annual Love in Action celebration of the agency, we have added the Sanctus Real concert and Top Golf.

All of the events are a great opportunity to have fun and introduce ECFA to family, friends, small group members, etc. More details to come!

ECFA Foundation

This year, the ECFA Foundation will provide funding for counseling services to economically challenged individuals and families, a graduate school scholarship for an IFS caseworker, agency marketing expenses, and assistance with other agency needs. Please consider investing in the ECFA Foundation.

Your gift will support our work and ministry from a long-term perspective. For information about how to direct a gift to the ECFA Foundation, please contact Tim Carrick at 630/653-6400.

Memorials and Tributes

In Loving Memory

Robert Stotz

From: John and Barb Larsen
David and Valerie Grant
David and Heidi Dryer
Peter and Marcia Calabrese
Barb Tomany

Peter Leprich

From: Gloria Dearing

Don McGrail

From: Elaine McGrail

Maurice Hellmer

From: Barbara Hellmer
Paulette Mannella
Rich Mannella

Jean Walstra

From: Elaine McGrail

Lee Wright

From: Darlene Wright, wife of Lee

In Honor of

Esther Pikel

From: Barbara Hellmer and Paulette Mannella

ECFA True to Life – Fall 2023 – Fourth Quarter 2023 Vol. 51, No. 4

Evangelical Child & Family Agency
1530 N. Main St.
Wheaton, IL 60187

Phone: 630-653-6400
Fax 630-653-6490
Email: mail@evancfa.org

Find us on Facebook & Instagram
Web: www.evancfa.org