



Spring 2023

TRUE TO LIFE

A publication of the Evangelical Child and Family Agency

Reflecting God's Love

In cultures the world over, younger women have relied on and learned from older women. For many of us, this support came



from our immediate family, often from a mother, grandmother, or aunt. I believe this is how God intended it to be; mothers teaching their daughters how to care for themselves and those they love, and how to engage the world in a healthy way. The most vital area for needed support is parenting, especially parenting young children. I remember in my early days of parenting my two girls, I had so many questions, fears, and challenges and I leaned into my mom's wisdom a lot! Unfortunately, many of the women in the Pregnancy Support Services (PSS) program do not

have a mom they can call with questions or routine challenges of parenting. For some of our clients, sadly, their moms have passed away. Other clients have left their home countries, leaving behind their wise, supportive female relatives. Still others have had to separate themselves from their families of origin due to unhealthy relationships and overall lack of love and care from those they should be able to count on.

Since its inception over one year ago, the PSS Mentor Program has had several clients benefit

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YOU ARE CORDIALLY INVITED TO
EVANGELICAL CHILD & FAMILY AGENCY'S 73RD ANNIVERSARY

Love In Action Dinner

FRIDAY, MAY 5, 2023

DOUBLETREE BY HILTON, 3003 CORPORATE W DR. LISLE, IL 60532
DOORS OPEN AT 6:45 PM | DINNER IS SERVED AT 7:00 PM

FEATURING: POINT OF GRACE

DINNER IS COMPLEMENTARY * RESERVATIONS ARE REQUIRED
(SEE REVERSE SIDE FOR MORE DETAILS)

RSVP by
April 21, 2023
to save your seat!

Scan the
QR Code to
make your
reservation



*Deadline to Register is April 21st - Reserve your seat today.
More details on page 2.*

Love In Action

73rd Anniversary Celebration with Point of Grace

God has been so faithful to ECFA for many years. This evening will be a time to reflect on what He has done and what the future holds. You will hear testimonies from those we are serving, the Foundation will tell you about their purpose, a delicious meal will be enjoyed, and the room will be filled with the delightful music from Point of Grace. You will also discover the many ways you can support the life-affirming work of ECFA. Our desire is to provide Hope and Healing to those in need, for many years to come!



There is much to celebrate and we hope you will come and celebrate with us!

Volunteer!!

Our counseling program is getting busier, which is a great thing, but we need help. As you can imagine, a majority of our clients seek evening appointments due to job or school commitments.

We are seeking individuals who are willing to put themselves in this picture. Our evening volunteer receptionists arrive at 4:45 pm and stay until at the latest, 8:00 pm. Your job is simply to welcome our clients and let the therapists know they have arrived. Receptionists are welcome to bring a book, do school work, or any other quiet activity. Volunteers need to be 18 years or older.



For more information, please call Dan at 630-653-6400 or email danv@evancfa.org.

SAVE THE DATE

STRIDEFORLIFE

SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 16, 2023

HERRICK LAKE

FAMILY FUN WALKING OR BIKING AT HERRICK LAKE. LUNCH AND OTHER "KID-FRIENDLY" ACTIVITIES.

AUCTION2023

FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 10, 2023

ABBINGTON DISTINCTIVE BANQUETS

A FUN EVENING WITH DINNER, LIVE AUCTION, AND SILENT AUCTION

Reflecting God's Love (cont. from page 1)

from the compassionate care of a PSS mentor. Sophia, one of our mentors, shared that her initial year-long commitment with “Kelly” (name changed to protect the client) has been fulfilling and she and Kelly plan to continue their relationship. Kelly says that she really likes the support and feels that Sophia is the only one in her life right now that she can talk to about the struggles of being a single parent. Arlene and “Jamie” (name changed to protect the client) are just getting started in their mentoring relationship but already they are talking about a long-term friendship. They connect via video or phone calls at least weekly, which is especially helpful for Jamie as she navigates some challenges with her teenager.

One of the primary roles Sophia plays in her relationship with Kelly is one of cheerleader. Sophia wants Kelly to know that Sophia is always in her corner, encouraging her, noticing Kelly make sacrifices for her son. Sophia strives to point out the good she sees, because it is hard for Kelly to admit that she is a good mom. For Arlene, she

sees her role to mostly be a good listener. Although she is often asked for parenting ideas and tips, she mostly provides a model of Christian motherhood for Jamie. Together, they plan to attend church services in person or virtually, and then discuss them. Arlene and Jamie always end their time together with prayer, to bind them together in Christ. Jamie shared that she felt a strong connection to Arlene from the beginning and says that Arlene is her “mother figure” because of the caring things Arlene says to Jamie. This has been such a positive help for Jamie as she strives to be a godly mom to her children.

A piece of advice from Sophia for anyone interested in volunteering in our PSS Mentor Program to remember it is designed to bless our moms and their children. We want the mentor relationship to be mutually satisfying, and for the client to feel safe, not judged, and to be treated with respect. It takes time for women who maybe haven't had positive female relationships before to build trust. However, patience pays off allowing for the wonderful

mentor/mentee relationship to last for years to come. Arlene states, “ the relationship takes time to develop, but it is well worth the effort”. She feels that she has a new friend in Jamie. Arlene considered becoming a mentor for 1 year before she contacted Faith about it. Arlene wishes she would have done it earlier, as it has such a blessing in her life.

The biggest take away thus far for Sophia is this: when she is reaching out for a connection with Kelly, she is reminded of how God cares for and pursues her. God is gentle, patient, long suffering, and always delighted when we turn towards Him. In Romans 8:38-39, we are reminded of his great love for us “ For I am convinced that neither death nor life, neither angels nor demons,[a] neither the present nor the future, nor any powers, neither height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord.” This is how Sophia strives to interact with Kelly.

~ Faith Allman, LCSW
PSS Supervisor

*If you want to learn more about becoming a mentor,
please contact Faith Allman at faitha@evancfa.org.*

Golf Outing & Auction 2023

ECFA's 36th Annual Golf Scramble & College Invitational is happening on Monday, June 12, 2023 at Prairie Landing Golf Club in West Chicago and the shotgun start is at 9:30 am. From talking to past participants of this event, we heard over and over again that Prairie Landing is one of the most challenging courses they've played – and that's a good thing! Registration and the driving range will open at 8:00am with a continental breakfast available. Lunch will be provided in your carts, and once everyone has finished their 18 holes, the awards ceremony and appetizers will round out the day. To make the day a little more fun, we'll have some "cheats" available for purchase. So even if you don't bring your best game to the course, you can make up for it with a mulligan,

throw, fairway tee, or putting strings.

There are several sponsorship opportunities available, several of them include a complementary foursome to the event itself! Sponsorships start at \$250, however, any donation will help ECFA serve more clients by affirming life, building families, healing relationships, and restoring families. We are also looking for some quality items to include in our silent auction that will close the day of the event. Even if you're not attending the event, you'll have the ability to bid on all of the items through our website.

For more information on this exciting event, visit www.evanca.org/golf. If you are interested in a sponsorship or item donation, you can contact Dan Vallaro at (630) 653-6400 | danv@evanca.org.



Views of Prairie Landing ➔

ECFA Foundation

In 1995, Henrietta VanderMolen, who had long supported ECFA as a contributor, foster parent, and board member, participated in establishing the ECFA Foundation to promote long-term support of ECFA's Christ-centered services to children, families and individuals.

Since her death in 2000, many who share Henrietta's vision have expressed their support

for ECFA through gifts to this foundation. Please prayerfully consider an investment in ECFA Foundation to help keep the agency strong in the coming days. For further information, please contact Tim Carrick at 630-653-6400.

Adoptions Many Forms

Adoption comes in many forms: domestic infant, international, or foster to adopt. Many families desire to adopt infants, but there is a greater need for loving, committed Christians to adopt children who are in the foster care system. If you do not believe this is your calling, please be one of our prayer partners, and ask God to provide additional families.

In March 2023, ECFA received two separate referrals from an agency, looking for a placement; and ECFA had none. Many more children (typically 8 years old and older) are waiting for a family to call their own. Do you have questions on adopting from foster care? Are you able to be the family for a child from hard places? For more information, please email barbh@evancfa.org or sarahb@evancfa.org.



For Illustration Only



The Power of Prayer

Have you ever heard people say, “I will pray for you, it’s the least I can do.” Praying is actually one of the most meaningful things you can do; and we can pray any time and any place!

ECFA would like to invite you to pray for some specific needs within our Intact Family Services (IFS) program. The families we serve come from very hard places and the parents often have their own trauma history, which makes breaking the cycle of abuse even harder.

Here are some of our current prayer requests:

We have a family that had an open court case, which was recently dismissed. The dad is now hedging on engaging in recommended substance abuse services. There is a current safety plan in place and it cannot be removed until dad

engages in services. Please pray that the dad would engage and be successful, so that safety plan can be terminated. This would be a great benefit to the children and both parents.

Please give praise that a Paternal Great-Grandmother was awarded plenary guardianship of a minor whose father passed away. This will bring much needed stability to the child’s life. Please also pray for the family as they continue to grieve this loss.

Please pray for two siblings who are living apart from each other and their mom, due to the mom having significant mental health needs that need to be addressed. Their fathers are petitioning for emergency full custody and our prayer is that this will be accepted by the court so both kids can remain with family. Please also pray for mom to receive the support she needs.



Finally, we have a mother who is fearful of completing a parenting capacity assessment. We are asking the mom to complete this assessment due to concerns regarding the safety and supervision of two very young children that continue to sustain injuries from one another. Please pray for peace of mind for mom and honesty during the assessment so that she can get the help she needs and that her children will remain safe.

Thank you for praying for these families. We know that all things are possible with God!

Youth Making a Difference

Generosity comes in all ages. Recently, middle school students from **Westminster Christian School** (WCS) in Elgin, along with some parents, came to our office and organized the donated items in our Pregnancy Support Services (PSS) closet. As a bonus they did some organizing in our kitchen as well. Not to be left out, on another occasion we received a donation of baby food from the kindergartners at WCS. Baby food is a much needed item for many of the families we serve.

Wheaton Christian Grammar School (WCGS) students donated over 80 bears from Build A Bear. It brought a smile to our faces, so imagine how much happier kids in our Pregnancy Support Services, Intact Family Services, and our Counseling programs will be when they get a new bear to cuddle.

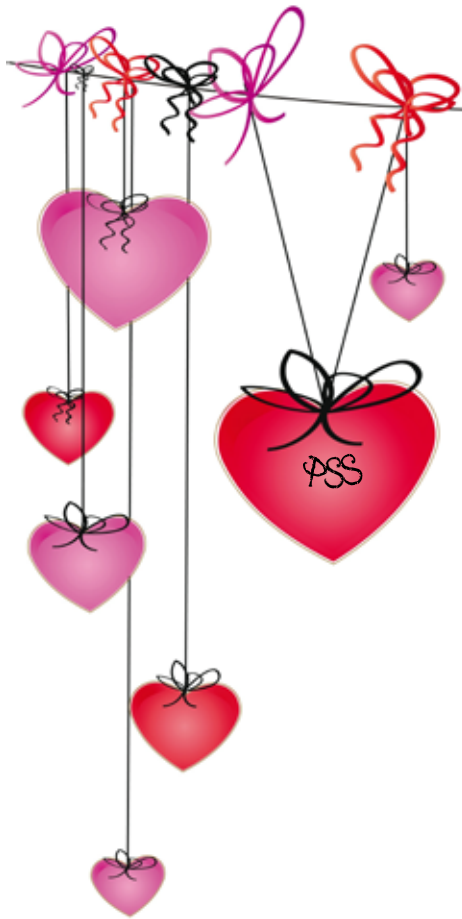


Faith Allman, Supervisor & Julie Twohill with the baby food donation from Westminster Christian School.



Bears donated by Wheaton Christian Grammar School.

Thank you to all the students for your service and donations.



Have a Heart for Life Bowling Fun!!

Heart for Life this year was a huge success! We had more than 100 people come out to help raise awareness and funds for our **Pregnancy Support Services (PSS) Program**. There were at least a dozen first-time attendees and many who have been supporting ECFA through this event since we started it. Thank you to our event sponsors, donors, and attendees who helped raise over \$7,000 to affirm life through PSS! You have helped supply formula and diapers to a newborn, parenting education to a birth mother, baby supplies and clothing to families

who need help, and you have allowed for countless conversations with women who have ultimately chosen to continue with their pregnancy and either parent or place her child for adoption. Without your support of ECFA's Pregnancy Support Services program, the women we have served and hope to continue to serve would have to find other options that may or may not be life affirming. You can still donate to Heart for Life by visiting our website at www.evanca.org/bowling.



Family fun for everyone!!
Thank you for your support!!

Memorials and Tributes

In Loving Memory

Janet Eichelberger

From: Nancy Westover

Dr. Alma Labunski

From: Mr. and Mrs. Art Brown

John Stotz

From: Gloria Dearing
Esther Pikel

Shirley Bray

From: Esther Pikel

Jane Barber

From: John McParland

Lorraine Leach

From: Doug and Linda Haney

Jennie Tietjen

From: Bill and Marilyn Newell

In Honor of

Dante Buchanan

In honor of his 21st Birthday

From: Marlene Brokaw

Ken Withrow

From: William and Marilyn Newell
Howard and Janet Torkelson