

For a Child's Sake



Winter/Spring 2005 We've been saving children's lives and building healthy families since 1894 www.chsofnj.org



Some families come in extra large sizes

Wearing identical red jackets, red and green scarves, and red stocking caps, the Getty family of Cape May County, NJ, gathers around their 4x4 pick-up truck (red, of course!) to pose for their annual Christmas card picture.

Three of the 11 children in the picture were siblings who had spent a year in the care of this CHS of NJ foster family before they were formally adopted. Another child was adopted later through our agency. ♥

After parents, a child care provider is a child's critical and best first teacher

What happens in the first five years of life greatly determines a child's social and emotional stability and literacy.

For Bonnie Elbaz, one of our Lakewood office professionals, fingerpainting with baggies or painting a snow scene with Epsom salts is all in a day's work.

Bonnie, a former art teacher, is currently a home visitor for the Approved Home Quality Initiative. She has visited the Ocean County homes of close to 100 caregivers who have found themselves in the position of caring for the birth-to four-year-old children of relatives or friends. All of the referrals come through the "Work First" or "Jersey Cares for Kids" programs.

At the invitation of the caregivers, many of whom are grandparents, Bonnie visits each home at least three times.

The purpose of her first visit is to ascertain the children's current health and welfare. Prior to this visit, the caregiver is assessed to determine his or her knowledge of child rearing which determine the types of materials and information Bonnie will bring with her for future discussion. She also brings age-appropriate toys for the children and engages them in play as she makes her observations.

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Highlights:

- 2 PLANS FOR OUR 111TH ANNIVERSARY GALA ARE UNDERWAY!
- 3 MIDDLE SCHOOL STUDENTS FROM WARREN, NJ, RAISE MORE THAN \$1,000 TO HELP OUR BABIES.
- 3 \$25,000 GRANT FOR OCEANFIRST RESPITE
- 4 CUNA CLASSES HELP LATINO MOMS When she first came to CUNA, she "didn't know anything" about caring for babies. Now this CUNA mom is helping others.
- 5 VOLUNTEERING OPPORTUNITIES
- 5 WOMAN OF ACHIEVEMENT
- 8 CHS GOES TO THE CIRCUS! THANKS TO MCGRAW-HILL COMPANIES

Hundreds of gifts brighten holidays for our children

All of us at The Children's Home Society of New Jersey extend a heartfelt thanks to everyone who helped put a smile on the face of a child this holiday season! While we haven't the space to list the name of everyone who brought a gift to our office, we would like to recognize the following community groups and organizations that arrived with armloads (and often carloads!) of presents for our children:

Animal Friends for Education and Welfare
AT&T
Bedminster Township School
Benjamin Franklin Middle School
Capital Health System
Cases and Campaign Class
DeBows United Methodist Church
Dryden Procurement Technologies
Educational Testing Service
Evergreen at Hamilton
First Presbyterian Church of Levittown
GE Healthcare North America
Harmony Schools
International Schools Services
J&J Staffing Resources
Larison's Corner Church
Liberty Property Trust
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McGraw-Hill Companies

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St. James Roman Catholic Church
Stonhard, Inc.
TFH Publishing
Think Communications Group
Trenton Fire Department
Villagers of Allentown
West Trenton Presbyterian Church
Yardville National Bank

We also want to extend our appreciation to friends who gave gift certificates or cash contributions for the holidays. These gifts made it possible for us to meet the special needs of some of our children, needs that might otherwise have gone unmet. Many of our children would not have had Christmas gifts without you. Thank you again for your kindness and wonderful generosity! ♥

For a Child's Sake

A newsletter of
*The Children's Home Society
of New Jersey*

Donna C. Pressma
President & CEO

*Have news or a photo to share?
A letter to the editor?
Families are encouraged to
send news, updates and photos
of their adoptive families.*

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To learn more about
The Children's Home Society
of New Jersey,
please visit our website at
www.chsofnj.org

Co-chairs Stacey Meisel and Rosalind Doctor set date for this year's anniversary gala event

The 111th Anniversary Gala of The Children's Home Society of New Jersey will be held this year on Saturday, June 4th, at the Merrill Lynch Conference Center in Plainsboro, NJ.

According to Stacey Meisel, Esq., CHS of NJ board member and co-chair of the gala committee, the event will honor the late Thomas P. Foy, Esq., and the Capital Health System.

Foy, a member of the CHS of NJ board of directors and a former chairman of the board who died unexpectedly last September, will receive this year's "Friend of Children Award" in a posthumous presentation.



Rosalind Doctor, Ph.D.



Stacey Meisel, Esq.

Capital Health System, a long-time CHS of NJ supporter and community partner, is the recipient of this year's "Champion of Children Award."

Entertainment will be provided by gifted singer and humorist Vance Gilbert.

For more information or to make a reservation for this exciting event, contact Colleen Gehring at 609-695-6274, ext. 168 or colleeng@chsofnj.org. ♥

*Child Care Provider
continued from page 1*

The second visit focuses on reading and art activities with the children. In addition to bringing a book to read with the children, Bonnie brings informative childrearing materials to review with the caregiver. During this visit, she may use baggies for finger painting or homemade playdough to demonstrate simple ways that the caregiver can play with the children and encourage their imagination.

During her third visit, Bonnie has usually developed a good rapport with the caregiver and children in the home. Now able to talk with them more freely, she focuses on problems that may develop or answers questions the caregiver may have regarding sibling rivalry, potty training, or behavior issues.

For Bonnie, being invited back for a follow-up visit is one of the job's many rewards. Her greatest joy, however, is seeing the different reactions on the faces of the children as she reads to them. Nothing can compare to that! ♥



Wearing an apron with a pocket that is filled with learning toys, Bonnie Elbaz reads to the delight of these children during a home visit.



OceanFirst funds respite program

CHS of NJ has been awarded a charitable grant of \$25,000 from the OceanFirst Foundation to expand respite and family day care services in Ocean County. Accepting the check from OceanFirst Senior Vice President Michael O'Brien (far left) are Gwen Forte, Director of the Ocean County office, and Donna Pressma, CHS of NJ president and CEO.

Golf Anyone?

The Bucks County Association of Insurance and Financial Advisors is hosting their 16th Annual Charity Golf Outing on May 16th with proceeds benefiting our children at Northampton Valley Country Club in Richboro, PA. Lots of fun, food, drinks & prizes, including a new car for a hole in one winner.

Fees range from \$140 for an individual golfer to \$650 for a corporate foursome. For more information, contact Colleen Gehring at 609-695-6274, ext. 168. ♥

KIDS HELPING KIDS:

Warren students raise funds to help our babies

The Community Service Club is a popular one at the Warren Middle School in Warren, NJ. Under the supervision of teacher Dawn De Lorenzo, students gather once a week to work on community projects. Last December, the club chose to participate in CHS of NJ's "Baby Bottle Formula for Hope" fundraiser to benefit our infant foster care program.

"I am so proud of the generous spirit that pervades the halls of our school," said Ms. De Lorenzo of her students who raised an astounding \$1,311 in cash and coins deposited in our CHS of NJ baby bottles. These funds will be used to purchase clothing, supplies and medical care needed for our babies.

We thank Mr. Robert Comba, school principal, and all his staff and students for their wonderful support! If you or your organization would like to participate in this easy and enjoyable fundraiser, contact Valerie Noble at either 609-695-6274, ext. 141 or at vnoble@chsofnj.org. ♥



Congratulations to Mr. Rizzoli's sixth grade class for raising the most money at the Warren Middle School.

CUNA Classes Cradle Latino Mothers

Imagine moving to a new country where you don't speak the language. Now imagine that you are pregnant.

CUNA (koonah), meaning "crib" in Spanish, is the name of a program sponsored by The Children's Home Society of New Jersey in partnership with Capital Health System and in collaboration with Henry J. Austin Health Center and The Puerto Rican Community Day Care Center, offering Spanish-speaking women a place to receive emotional and educational support and ensure proper healthy care during pregnancy.

Many pregnant Latino women are not aware of the care they can receive from their local hospital and other facilities. From immunization information to directions on how to properly install a car seat, CUNA helps make the Latino community aware of existing services.

Maritza Raimundi-Petroski, supervisor of CUNA, has great hopes for the program. "I would like to expand the program to all of Mercer County," she says.

During bi-weekly classes, taught in Spanish, women learn how to make their pregnancy healthy for themselves and their babies. They are taught breast-feeding techniques and good nutrition, and even tour the Capital Health System hospital to see what their hospital stay will be like.

In addition to expert guest speakers, each class includes a hot, nutritious meal prepared according to the women's ethnic cooking style. Daycare is available, and group members often make important friendships with each other. ♥

While CUNA has been successful, there is an ongoing need for bilingual volunteers to provide transportation to and from classes, and supervise the children of pregnant women while they attend sessions. Doctors, nurses, nutritionists, and others who have skills that can benefit CUNA attendees are always welcome.

By giving them the tools and the information they need, CUNA is giving pregnant Latino women and their children a healthy start in life. To learn more about CUNA, or to volunteer, please contact Maritza Raimundi-Petroski at 609-695-6274, Ext. 169 or mramundi@chsofnj.org.



CUNA Moms gather for a hospital orientation tour of the maternity ward at the Capital Health System hospital in Trenton.

CUNA "graduate" now volunteers to help other CUNA Moms-to-be

Smiling radiantly, CUNA volunteer Ana Belén poses for a picture with her infant daughter, Hecybel (ay-see-bell). Ten months ago, this quiet and unassuming young woman was unsure of herself and her ability to become a good mother. Today, she is a confident and relaxed mother, a change she credits to the CUNA program.

When Ana left México three years ago, she left behind family, friends, and everything familiar to her. Last year, when she became pregnant, she had few people to turn to for support. "Not everyone is open to talking with strangers," Ana says.

Fortunately, she met María Otter, the CUNA Patient Liaison at the Capital Health System. María helped Ana apply for medical care and told her about the CUNA program. "I didn't know anything about caring for a baby," Ana admits. She saw CUNA as a way of learning.

After attending a full CUNA cycle, Ana decided to attend the next cycle, too... only this time as a volunteer. She wanted to give others the kind of encouragement she received.



Maritza Raimundi-Petroski, Director of CUNA and Latino Education/Outreach Programs for The Children's Home Society of New Jersey, says Ana volunteers about 4 hours each week. Ana had been trained as a dental hygienist in México, and was able to answer questions the expectant mothers had about nutrition and teething.

She also distributes handouts, arranges taxi transportation for the participants, and stuffs gift bags for their baby shower. "I felt like I was going to get my Master's at CUNA," Ana laughs.

Ana's familiarity with CUNA and its participants proved very helpful one evening when one of the women suddenly began having contractions. An ambulance was called, and while Maritza accompanied the woman to the hospital, Ana finished the CUNA class and saw that each person was able to get safely home.

This past January, Ana gave birth to her first child, a daughter. Yet she still intends to continue visiting other moms at home and accompanying them to doctor's appointments when needed. "CUNA is important," Ana says. "It helped me to be a better mom, to understand the problems of a baby. I feel like a more responsible person now. Before I came to CUNA, I was fearful of delivery and afraid. Afterwards, I didn't feel so fearful. CUNA helped me relax. I even told my mother that over here they actually teach you how to be a parent." ♥

How can I help CHS of NJ children?

Where there's a will, there's a way...

A will is the cornerstone of a sound financial and estate plan. Everyone, regardless of the size and complexity of their estate, should have a will. Yet, in spite of this, 58% of all Americans have not created one.

Why is a will so important? Without a will, in accordance



with the law, the state will determine the distribution of your estate. In all likelihood, the law will not mirror your wishes.

Creating a detailed will is critical to ensuring that your estate will continue to yield benefits to your family and to the organizations that are important to you, in line with your wishes. A well-crafted will can name guardianship for your minor children, distribute your assets and possessions, minimize estate taxes, and support your favorite charities.

If you have a will, you should periodically review it for necessary updates. An out-of-date will can actually cause more problems than having no will at all. Tax laws change, as does the size and extent of your estate. Life changes – marriages, births, retirement, inheritance, or the sale of a business – are additional reasons to update your will.

Now may be a good time to consider long-term estate tax savings. The federal estate tax can still take 40% or more of your estate at the time of death. That's more than income taxes! Tax laws favor those who are charitably inclined. A bequest in your will is fully deductible for federal estate tax purposes.

If you have already made a provision in your estate plan for The Children's Home Society of New Jersey, please let us know now, so that we may recognize your generous intent. If you have not done so, you can name The Children's Home Society of New Jersey in your will by including the following language: *I give (XX dollars, XX percentage, or all of the residue of my estate) to The Children's Home Society of NJ, a charitable corporation (EIN 21-0634966), located in Trenton, New Jersey.*

As always, we recommend consulting with your personal financial advisor. For additional information on planned giving, and how to include the Children's Home Society of New Jersey in your estate plan, please contact Chief Development Officer, Chris Rollins, CFRE, at (609) 695-6274, ext. 153, or at crollins@chsofnj.org. ♥

Do you like to create special events? Are you interested in volunteering your time and talent?

If you are interested in volunteer opportunities, you may want to consider helping at our gala on Saturday, June 4th, 2005.

Our largest fundraiser of the year, it hosts more than 400 guests and includes live entertainment and both live and silent auctions.

We are currently looking for people to help sell ads for the program book, obtain auction items, assist with decorations on the day of the event, and help sell raffle tickets.

If you would like to help, please contact Colleen Gehring at either 609-695-6274, ext.168 or via email at colleeng@chsofnj.org. It's fun! ♥

CHS of NJ volunteer is a 'Woman of Achievement'

The Mercer County Commission on the Status of Women awarded one of our volunteers its Woman of Achievement Award for her support of The Children's Home Society of New Jersey. **Dana Burzymowski**, Communications Manager of **Hamilton Horizons Federal Credit Union** in Hamilton Township, New Jersey, received the award for "her dedication to children and her impact on getting others to help." She has led many supply drives at Horizons to support



Shown, from left: Dana's parents, Ron and Cathy, Dana and Cindy Rein-zima, President and CEO of Hamilton Horizons.

children, including the "Wish Upon a Star-Adopt a Child" toy drive, backpacks, Easter Baskets, "Operation Literacy" for children's books, babysupplies, and "School Tools" for school supplies. She also takes her work beyond Horizons by approaching schools and other groups in the community to get them involved with The Children's Home Society of New Jersey. ♥

Donations from the heart

We extend a very special thank you to the following individuals and companies who made donations between September 2004 and January 2005 in honor or in memory of friends and loved ones.

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Amaris Kayla Armstrong

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Plan now to attend our Annual Gala – page 2



Parents and children gather on the front steps of The Children's Home Society of New Jersey's William S. and Meta A. Griffith's Children's Center to meet a bus taking them to the Big Apple Circus in New York City.

McGraw-Hill Circus trip a treat for our children!

We wish to thank our very good friends at **The McGraw-Hill Companies** for providing an evening of thrills and excitement for 35 of our children and parents who attended a performance of the Big Apple Circus in New York City last December. A bus chartered by McGraw-Hill picked up the families at our Trenton office at 4 p.m. and arrived in New York City in time for the 6:30 performance.

The circus trip was part of The McGraw-Hill Companies Volunteer Recognition Night and included vouchers for a boxed dinner as well as circus tickets and transportation to and from the show.

This was the second time in two years that youngsters served by The Children's Home Society of New Jersey were invited to attend this event. We wish to thank **Alice Hillary** from McGraw-Hill's Hightstown office for arranging the outing. As they did last year, the children had a wonderful time! ♥