Greetings!
January begins a new year and for many people, they start the year off with a list of resolutions. At the CCRB, we hope one of your New Year resolutions will be to support local youth by shopping in St. Charles County. For every dollar spent in St. Charles County, 1/8 of a cent goes to fund mental health and substance use treatment services for County youth. Your tax dollars are hard at work giving over 70,000 children, families, and professionals access to crucial services such as counseling, crisis intervention, and suicide prevention services.

January is National Mentoring Awareness and Human Trafficking Awareness month. The CCRB is proud to fund programs that mentor youth and raise awareness about human trafficking. Be sure to follow us on Facebook to learn more about CCRB funded programs and the success our service partners have in serving St. Charles County youth.

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Learn more about our monthly Board meetings [here](#).

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What is Human Trafficking?

*By Shima Rostami, Executive Director, Gateway Human Trafficking*

January 11 is National Human Trafficking Awareness Day, but you may be wondering, just what is Human Trafficking? Human trafficking is the use of force, fraud, or coercion to control a person for commercial sex or labor services. Traffickers use violence, threats, blackmail, false promises, deception, and debt bondage to trap vulnerable persons for profit.
Sex trafficking occurs in a wide variety of settings including residential brothels, online escort services, massage parlors, strip clubs, and street prostitution.

Labor trafficking occurs in diverse labor settings including domestic work, small businesses, large farms, and factories. Two primary causes of human trafficking include high profits and low risk. Similar to illegal drugs and arms markets, human trafficking is a market-driven criminal enterprise based on the principles of supply and demand.

Human traffickers generate billions of dollars yearly by victimizing people around the world. As defined by U.S. law, victims of human trafficking divide into children under the age 18 and adults who are forced, coerced, and/or induced into commercial sex and/or labor servitude. The average age of a sex trafficking victim is 13. Traffickers lure people into forced labor and sex by manipulating and exploiting their vulnerabilities. These individuals prey on people who are hoping for a better life, lack employment, have an unstable home life, or have a history of sexual or physical abuse.

Traffickers often use the internet to target their victims. Runaway and homeless youth have an increased risk to become victims. Traffickers often promise high paying jobs, loving relationships, or new opportunities. In other cases, traffickers kidnap victims or use physical and psychological violence to control them. Traffickers can work alone or in criminal networks with the common thread of exploiting people for profit.

In 2020, the CCRB began funding Human Trafficking awareness and prevention presentations through Gateway Human Trafficking, in order to raise community awareness and prevent youth from being trafficked. For more information, visit https://www.gatewayhumantrafficking.org/.

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Crisis Nurseries Offers 24/7 Support for Families

The Crisis Nurseries of St. Charles County are here to help year round! Parents who are experiencing overwhelming parental stress are able to connect with trauma-informed staff 24/7/365 through the helpline for support with counseling and community resources. All services are confidential and free of charge. The Nursery offers emergency care for children birth through age 12 in a warm, welcoming and therapeutic environment, including virtual art and play therapy sessions. Anyone can call the Nursery if in need of essential care items, diapers, wipes, formula and food. 636.887.3070

The Family Empowerment Program (FEP) is a long-term program that seeks to increase family stability over time. Staff provide virtual support and parent education groups. FEP has had great turnouts for their weekly giveaways of food, diapers, cleaning supplies, clothing, and other necessities.

In December, the amazing Santa Frank made a stop at the Wentzville Nursery, the kids were full of holiday spirit! Santa waved and gave high fives and fist bumps through the front door and windows. The kids were yelling “HO, HO, HO!!!!”
Mentoring has a Big Impact on a Little Brother

by Elaine Cha, Storyteller and Journalist for Big Brothers Big Sisters of Southeastern Missouri

In November 2008, Little Brother Joshua and Big Brother Jason met for the first time. Twelve years ago, Josh was a shy kindergartner with two older sisters who “didn’t get out of the house much.” Jason is a Minnesota native and at the time, was a recent Southern Illinois University-Carbondale grad who “didn’t have a whole lot of connections” in St. Louis.

What they had in common then was saying “Yes” to a new experience, relationship, and community. What they share today is a relationship that has thrived on company, care, and good-natured, old-fashioned humor. “To me, they’re identical in character,” says Josh’s mom Toni. “They’re hilarious together and never miss a beat!”

With Josh being so young when the match started, Jason initially drove conversation. The connection naturally deepened over time – much of it spent on sports, Josh’s biggest interest and extra-curricular activity. “When I first started playing tee-ball, then baseball, basketball, and football, Jason came to a majority of my games. No matter how hot or cold it was, he’d show up,” Josh says.

But that involvement hasn’t been limited to Big watching Little play. It’s also included post-game analysis, ribbing (“You were running for that touchdown and that guy almost caught ya…!”) and lively competition.

“Once Josh hit his teens,” says Jason, “we started [getting into] video games like Madden Football. That helped our relationship grow stronger.”

Not-so-little Little Brother Josh is now a senior in high school, and Big Brother Jason is a proud husband and dad of two. “I feel really close to [my Big Brother] Jason. He’s interested in what I care about. I’d say we’re like brothers that are very close, and we match great,” Josh says.

Jason feels a strong sense of that connection, too. “Josh just got his driver’s license. Watching him grow up from five years old to become a young adult, it has felt really good.”

Spotlight: Larry Marty, Board Member

Larry Marty joined the CCRB in 2013, after a successful career as Principal at Lutheran High School in St. Peters. Originally from Ohio, Larry served as an educator and administrator in New York, California, and Washington, before being hired as Principal of Lutheran High School in 1990. Education runs strong in the Marty family, as Larry’s father was a teacher and coach, and his wife Sherrie, is a retired Kindergarten teacher. They have two children and four grandchildren. Larry loves to travel and follows the local Lutheran High sports teams.

"Our family has counted it a blessing to live and work in this community for the last 30 years. As a school principal I was privileged to interact with students, parents, and faculty in the process of academic, spiritual, and personal growth and development, " Larry shared. "As a CCRB board member I am again blessed to interact with fellow board members, the CCRB staff, and the agency administrators
who are all working together for healthy growth and development of the children, youth and families of St. Charles County.”

Larry believes the greatest impact CCRB funding has for St. Charles County youth is the opportunity for multi-layer support from the services providers. These agencies are able to help families, youth, and children become grounded, offering protection and support, and most of all hope and a better future.

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**The Power of Family Connections**

_By Shonetta Reed, Foster & Adoptive Care Coalition, 30 Days to Family Specialist_

Jackson* came into foster care at 2 months old. Born drug-exposed, he had no family able to care for him and quickly entered care. Baby Jackson is the youngest of 7 siblings, four of whom were placed with grandma, who didn’t have the capacity to take in Jackson as well. Jackson’s mom was unable to find any other family and paternity had not been established.

Foster & Adoptive Care Coalition’s 30 Days to Family® Specialist, Shonetta, contacted immediate family members with no success. However through extensive searches and interviews she was able to start building the family tree. As a result of her arduous work, Shonetta was able to go up five generations on the maternal family, eventually locating a maternal fourth cousin.

The maternal fourth cousin was absolutely overjoyed to take placement. Within a matter of days, they set in place everything needed to bring baby Jackson home. When the maternal grandmother found out her cousin was willing to care for Jackson, she began to cry she was so excited. She had not seen this part of her family in such a long time. Grandma contacted the cousin and they began discussing phone calls and video chats between siblings, as well as scheduling visits once per month between the families.

Not only was 30 Days to Family® able to find a home for baby Jackson, they were also able to ensure these siblings maintained their bonds and also reconnected family members that had become distant over the years. With 30 Days to Family® the case expanded from 3 known relatives to over 5 generations of family that included more than 208 people. Now baby Jackson has the ability to grow up with the love and support of his family, connected to his culture and heritage.

The CCRB began funding 30 Days to Family services in 2020. 30 Days to Family® is an intense, short-term intervention designed to increase the number of children placed with family or friends within the first 30 days of children entering foster care. Learn more at [www.foster-adopt.org](http://www.foster-adopt.org).

*name changed to protect the child’s privacy*
**January Info Meetings**

Join a 1 hour Zoom call to learn how you can be part of the Safe Families ministry!

**Monday, January 4th**
6:30-7:30pm

**Saturday, January 16th**
1:00-2:00pm

RSVP: afrane@bethany.org
To learn more, check out safe-families.org or call our staff at 314-452-6547

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**Tree House of Greater St. Louis**

**Therapy**

**Recreation**

**Education**

**Exploration**

Learn about on-site and virtual services

thstl.org

(636) 332-4940

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**NAMI St. Louis**

Find out about current online programming by visiting our website at

www.namistl.org

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**COVID Stress Line**

Compass Health Network has a COVID Stress Line, in addition to our 24 hour crisis hotline.

**please call 888-237-4567**

Visit our website at

http://compasshealthnetwork.org

For more information

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**United Way 2-1-1**

Connects You to Information about Community Services

Dial 2-1-1

Free, confidential information & referrals, Available 24/7
The CCRB is funded by a dedicated fund for children’s mental health services in St. Charles County. Through a local sales tax, over 70,000 children and youth receive prevention education and mental health supports annually. The CCRB is proud to administer these funds, ensuring our youth and their families have the resources they need to realize a brighter tomorrow. All funds stay in St. Charles County for County residents.

**Community and Children's Resource Board of St. Charles County**

2440 Executive Dr, Ste 214  
St. Charles, MO 63303  
(636) 939-6200