

Visitor

Spring/Summer 2013



www.childabuse.org or www.tennysoncenter.org

UPCOMING EVENTS

Rolling Hills Golf Events

Poolside Soiree
Sat., June 22
Golf Tournament
Mon., June 24
Rolling Hills Country Club

3rd Annual Highland Running of the Bulls

Sat., July 13
32nd and Tennyson
Denver's Highlands Area

16th Annual Colorado Springs Dinner

Fri., September 6
Doubletree Hotel
Colorado Springs

4th Annual Mile High Country Q & Brew

Sat., October 5
Stampede in Aurora

36th Annual Denver Dinner

Sat., November 9
Hyatt Regency Denver

For information on these or any other events, call Sally at 720-855-3317.

Contact Tennyson Center for Children: 303-433-2541

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A Remarkable Turnaround / Dave Sevick

If you spend just a few moments with Dominic, you'll soon discover why it's virtually impossible not to fall in love with this remarkable eight year-old. But, given his smile, attitude and upbeat demeanor, it's also hard to imagine the rough road he has had to travel during his young life.

Unlike many of the clients we serve at Tennyson Center, Dominic has never been abused or neglected. On the contrary, he comes from a very loving home with parents who are dedicated to his well-being, which is why it was both frustrating and heartbreaking for his mom to find herself in such a difficult situation with the little boy she loved so much.

At the age of three, Dominic had already been treated for chronic ear infections and had multiple surgeries that included having tubes placed in his ears as well as the removal of his tonsils and adenoids. He was enrolled in an early childhood education



Dominic and his mother, Jennifer, celebrating his recent successes after transitioning back to public school from Tennyson's Hopkins program.

program to aid in his speech development, which had been slowed due to his condition. He progressed relatively well through the first year, but it was during his second year in the program when escalating behavioral problems began to surface. He would have fits of rage and anger and, at times, would even have to be restrained. He became

less able to focus on his work which only complicated the problem since that lack of ability to focus would also cause him to become even more angry and frustrated. Once, during the height of his anger-management crisis, he even chased his teacher with a pair of scissors.

Continued on page 4

A Mega-Makeover in the Cottages

The four south cottages at Tennyson Center for Children are finally getting a much-needed and long-overdue makeover. Thanks to the generosity of our dear friends at **Concerts for Kids (CFK)** along with several of their participating partners, the children in our residential treatment program are being greeted with new storage cabinets and shelving in the living rooms, new carpeting and reupholstered furniture. The improvements are the result of an ongoing project courtesy of

the folks at Concerts for Kids (CFK) and several of their partnering vendors including **Colorado Correctional Industries, Rails Plus, Inc., Milender White Construction Co.** and **Guy's Floor Service, Inc.**

But the improvements on the campus of Tennyson Center as a result of our relationship with CFK goes even further. A beautiful, sunny day provided a flawless setting for this year's Concerts for Kids Community Day at Tennyson Center. On

Saturday, April 27, volunteers from DaVita came to the TCC campus to paint the insides of the south cottages, which perfectly complemented the new cabinets and carpeting that had been installed earlier this month.

Concerts For Kids was founded in 2004 by Christie and Walter Isenberg based on the belief that all children should be entitled to the best healthcare available

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I have been amazed at the kids and how they respond over time to the chance to be themselves, the trust they gradually learn to give to adults and how they can rise to the challenge to grow.

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Visitor is back in print!

Well, we tried to go all-electronic, but many of you told us how you missed the print version. So, we're back. Thanks for speaking up and letting us know how much you enjoy our publication.

Visitor Staff

Bob Cooper

Chief Development Officer

Dave Sevick

Marketing Director/Editor

A Message from the President/CEO

Change / Rod Witte

What a blessing it is to be a part of this place! After working for over 30 years in the “For-Profit” sector, it is truly a privilege to now be a part of the “Not-For-Profit” sector. Change is difficult, nobody likes it, yet change is inevitable. Bob Cooper came up with an incredible plan preparing for change a year ago, when he proposed moving into leadership of our Development Team while working with a new Chief Executive Officer. This transition would be the least interruptive to the kids and the operations, and would allow time for me to get introduced to the many different people and aspects of this amazing place that has been changing lives and giving hope to children for over 100 years. The opportunity for change to occur like this is indeed rare in the corporate world.

The past 5 months have gone by quickly. My primary effort has been spent toward the kids and the various programs, getting acquainted with the staff and learning as much as I can about the various systems that make up child welfare. I have been amazed at the kids and how they respond over time to the chance to be themselves, the trust they gradually learn to give to adults and how they can rise to the challenge to grow. I am grateful for our staff, for the incredible patience and love they show the children, especially when the past comes out in the present as they re-live nightmares. I am thankful for the board of directors and the support, the insight, the ideas and the care they have for the success of this place. And I am encouraged that society truly cares about children when I visit with the volunteers and donors who spend thousands of hours and thousands of dollars to help make a difference. Each person involved with this place embraces the possibility of

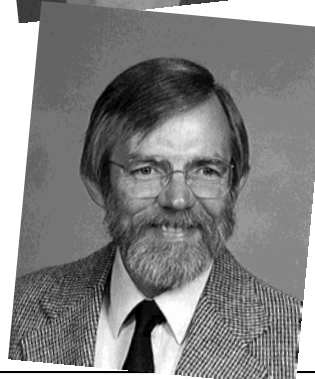
positive change in the lives of children.

One of my favorite things to do around this place is to spend some time with the kids. I had the opportunity to bring dinner in to each of the cottages and sit down and visit with the kids and the evening staff. There is nothing better than sitting down at the dinner table to get acquainted. I have watched our teachers teach and let the kids experience and actually learn history, science, mathematics and writing. One of our younger boys learned how to ride a “big bike” recently with the help of one of our staff. Some of our middle and high school kids have learned about fly fishing and actually spent time on an area river. Some of our high school kids will be part of a summer program that will stretch their boundaries by hiking, rafting, camping and experiencing our mountains. These are

experiences that every child should have an opportunity to be a part of, to help them grow, to help them find out what is inside of them.

I am part of only the 8th leadership change this organization has seen in the 109 years it has been in existence. But through those years change has been a constant. From originally being an orphanage to today being a treatment center, we have changed a lot through the years as the needs have changed. But a constant has been that this place cares for kids. The folks that have been here for a few months to many years all have a passion for being a part of making a difference in the lives of children. My passion is to see this place continue to grow and continue to be a leader in the Rocky Mountain region in changing lives and giving hope to children!

In Loving Memory



Over the course of the past few months, we lost three beloved members of the Tennyson family. Cindy McKinney, our Manager of Volunteer Services, Dave Ramos, a dedicated Youth Treatment Counselor and John Cook, retired Chaplain. They are missed but will never be forgotten. Cindy, Dave and John...you are forever in our hearts.

The “Other” Side of Tennyson / Dave Sevick

While Tennyson Center for Children (TCC) has long been known for its programs that serve children who have fallen victim to abuse and neglect, many are not aware that Tennyson is also a respected leader within the community for the treatment of children who suffer from a variety of mental illnesses, behavioral issues and special education needs. This is particularly relevant given all the recent debate over the need for increased programs and services addressing mental health care across the country. And with the month of May being Mental Health Awareness month, it gives us an opportunity to celebrate the success of two of our programs that serve a slightly different set of children—kids who have never been abused or neglected but who still struggle with some kind of mental health, behavioral or learning disability challenge.

The Hopkins Program. TCC’s day treatment program at Hopkins Elementary in Littleton is an example of the kinds of services being offered within the community. Now in its 15th year, the program is a collaborative effort with Englewood, Sheridan and Littleton school districts.

Similar to Tennyson’s day treatment/education program on its main campus, the Hopkins program blends the therapeutic and academic protocols together in a public school setting, allowing students to still have access to a traditional school environment close to their homes while still providing the therapy and special education component. A program close to home also means not having to ride a bus or van across town twice a day!

The typical student in the Hopkins program struggles with a variety of issues such as learning disabilities, mental health issues and other emotional and behavioral challenges that

prevent them from being successful in a more traditional public school classroom. However, it is still a primary goal of the program to return the student to a regular classroom setting in the shortest possible time.

The classroom can have up to 10 children and has a special education teacher, two paraprofessionals and a therapist. During the 2012-2013 school year, this classroom has been able to help 12 students and has successfully discharged several of these students back to their public school classroom.

Richele Newvahner, the program’s director, said, “This program is crucial for many children to receive the daily school support they need in order to be successful, yet remain close to home and in a public school setting. We are really proud of the work being done at Hopkins. Discussions have even begun about a possible expansion of the program to serve even more children in the future.”

Special Services Unit. April marked the one-year anniversary of the opening of TCC’s Special Services Unit (SSU), which serves as a transition program for children and families in crisis. SSU is focused on those children who are struggling with mental health issues that require immediate and emergency attention in order to evaluate the best possible track of therapy and treatment. Specifically, the SSU provides emergency and immediate access for children and their families during a mental health and/or behavioral crisis when criteria for inpatient hospitalization is not met.

Housed in Tennyson’s Huston Cottage and in partnership with local behavioral health organizations, this unique program was born, in part, out of the closing of two children’s



psychiatric facilities in Colorado and the need for immediate mental health care. As a result of those closings, families who found themselves in crisis were left to rely, primarily, on local hospital emergency rooms as their only option for 24/7 crisis care. A hospital emergency room is not the place for a child experiencing a mental health crisis.

The SSU provides a safe, short term environment within a specialized treatment facility to stabilize the current crises situation and plan for a successful transition back to the community with the proper supports in place for both the child and family.

The length of stay for a child in the SSU can range from a few days to as long as three weeks or more if needed. During our first year, the program has had 70 admissions.

Pam Hricik, Chief Program Officer at Tennyson Center, said, “Our partners in the mental health field are so pleased with the immediate access and care that families and their children receive when working with Tennyson’s Special Services Unit. Children and families in crisis find a comforting and safe place to re-group for a brief period. TCC connects the family and children to community services in a prompt manner which assists the family in remaining together through the crisis.”

Tennyson Center’s program at Hopkins Elementary offers students a unique blend of an academic and therapeutic environment in a public school setting closer to their homes.

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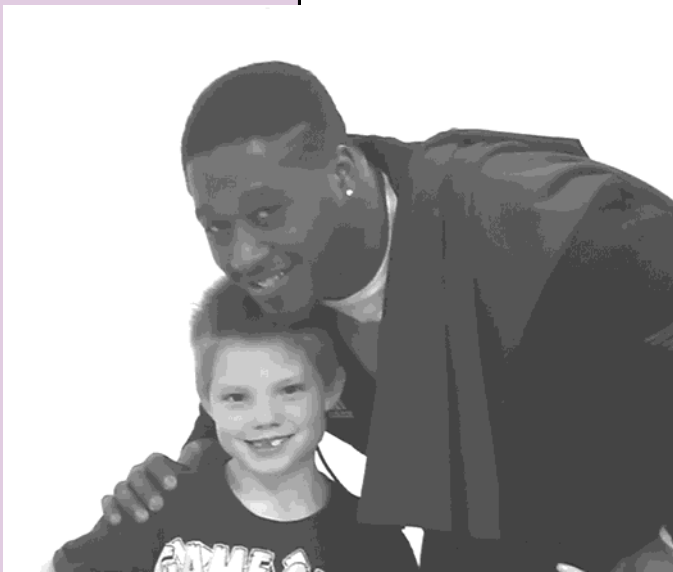
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Turnaround (cont'd. from 1)

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*Below: Dominic getting his
photo taken with Denver
Broncos linebacker Steven
Johnson.*



But the problems also carried over to the home. His mom, Jennifer, says it was getting harder and harder to put him to bed. She would spend every evening rocking him to sleep, but it seemed there was always at least one part of his body still moving, which prevented him from falling into an easy slumber.

By the time Dominic began kindergarten at the age of five, he had already been assigned an individualized education program (IEP) for his speech difficulties as well as his behavioral and emotional challenges. Soon after the start of the new school year, his mother would receive calls from the school asking her to take him home due to his lack of behavioral control in the classroom. Dominic was, not surprisingly, diagnosed with ADHD in addition to his anger management issues. Jennifer was exploring every possible option to help Dominic not only work through these issues but also to fit into a traditional classroom environment.

But things continued to get worse and the following January, the IEP team suggested removing him from the school and enrolling him in one of Tennyson Center's specialized programs at Mark Hopkins Elementary in Littleton.

“Wait a minute. Tennyson Center works with abused and neglected kids, don't they?” Jennifer asked. “Dominic has never been abused or neglected. I love him so much...he's my life!”

The IEP team explained to her that Tennyson Center also works with children struggling with a variety of mental health and behavioral crisis issues and that the program at Hopkins Elementary was geared specifically to treating children like Dominic.

Within the first six months of Dominic's entry into the program, Jennifer began to notice improvement in his behavior, although she says it was something of a roller coaster.

“He would go weeks without any incident and then he would fall back into some of his old behavior,” Jennifer said. “It was frustrating and heartbreaking. It wasn't until about a year into the program that we began to see real, noticeable results.”

The turnaround was dramatic. He was learning coping skills and would use them effectively when the rage and anger issues would surface. He was meeting treatment goals and even setting new goals that were also being met. One incident in particular involved how Dominic resolved a situation where he had been hit by another student at the school.

“The therapist called to tell me about the situation.” Jennifer explained.

“Unlike with his previous behavior where he would have likely struck back at the student , he used the coping skills he had been learning and simply walked away, telling the teacher about the incident before asking if he could take some alone time to work through it. I was so proud of him. That was huge for Dominic and it's when I knew there was real hope for his future.”

Over the course of the next few months, Dominic was no longer letting his anger control him. He had learned how to control the anger. The tantrums diminished and he would work through any struggles by taking time-outs and by sharing those moments with his therapist. He was now able to successfully interact with his peers and develop positive and effective social skills. Finally, after nearly two years in the Hopkins program, Dominic was ready to return to a traditional public school classroom.

After just six months since returning to his neighborhood public school, Dominic's behavior has been nothing short of amazing and his academic performance has improved significantly. He has had no anger management incidents, is almost reading at grade level and was recently given an award for “always smiling and trying to make everyone happy.”

When asked about what he learned the most during his time spent in the Hopkins program, Dominic smiled and said, “Tennyson Center showed me other ways to show how I'm feeling. Better ways. And if I do get angry, that I can take my space and then talk about it.”

His mom knows that there will always be challenges for Dominic and that anger management may continue to be a struggle for him.

She said, “I realize it's not something that just goes away. But it's the fact that Tennyson Center was able to teach him and other kids like him how to work through it and how to productively move past those moments by using proper coping skills. And now, just two years later, he is one of the best-behaved kids in his class and a lot of the other students look up to him because now he helps others resolve some of their issues. I'm just so proud of him and grateful for everything Tennyson Center has done.”

Cottages (cont'd. from 1)

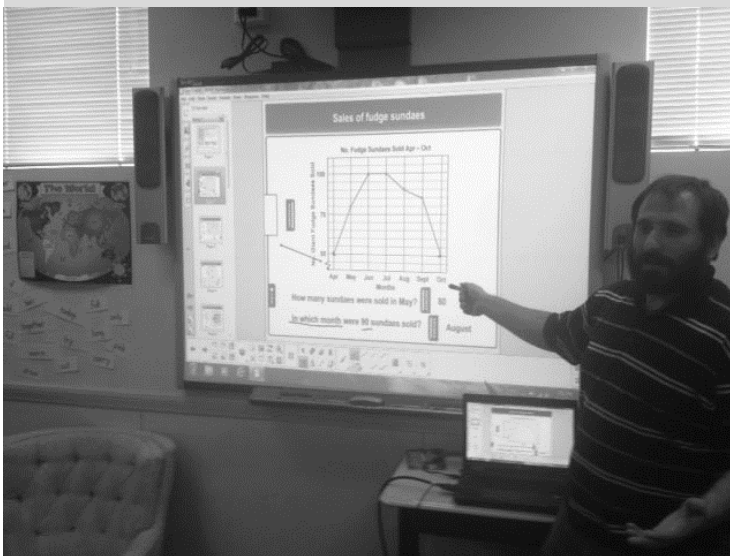
and to receive a quality education. Initial efforts focused on raising funds through an annual concert with monies raised donated to selected non-profit organizations. The mission of Concerts For Kids is to enrich the lives of children by providing access to the best healthcare and education available. Through both monetary and in-kind donations, they strive to help children faced with life-threatening illnesses and struggles to live better lives and to provide all students with the opportunity to participate in educational programs in a safe environment that will help them grow.

Today, Concerts For Kids helps to support over 50 child-focused organizations annually through its fundraising events and community service projects. One of the organizations that recently has become a beneficiary is Tennyson Center for Children. In 2011, Ms. Isenberg and her staff at CFK learned about the amazing work that Tennyson has been doing in our community and they wanted to find a way to get involved.

Concerts For Kids Community Day is a one-day volunteer service event where nearly 1,000 volunteers are brought together to complete facility maintenance projects at over 50 non-profit beneficiaries. Community Day is not only about completing the volunteer projects; it also aims to raise awareness of local non-profit organizations. The folks at CFK believe in building long-term relationships with their beneficiaries. They strive to be a year-round resource for their beneficiaries, to be the call that is made when there is a need to be met. One of the ways that Concerts For Kids is able to support their beneficiaries is through valuable partnerships within the community. The very first project that they were involved in at Tennyson Center was technology improvement that included the purchase and



Above: a wall of new cabinets along with new carpeting and fresh paint now greets the kids living in the south cottages. Below: Tennyson teacher Andy Jaegle using the new SMART boards to help his class learn about graphs.



installation of SMART boards in all of the classrooms. This project would not have been possible without the support of the **Morgridge Family Foundation**. As a result, Tennyson was able to update their technology systems and provide great resources for the children's education.

Concerts For Kids other events include the **Denver Day of Rock**, **Holidays For Kids** and a **Bowl-A-Thon**. The children at Tennyson Center will be beneficiaries of the

Holidays For Kids party this coming December. This event will bring the joy of the holidays to the kids in a meaningful and tangible way.

Since its inception, CFK has distributed nearly \$2.5 million to its named partners in both monetary and in-kind donations.

Ms. Isenberg said, "All of us at CFK are looking forward to a continued partnership and relationship with Tennyson for many years to come."



Above: Concerts for Kids founders Christie and Walter Isenberg.

“ All of us at CFK are looking forward to a continued partnership and relationship with Tennyson for many years to come. ”

Special Thanks To:

18th Annual Northern Colorado Dinner committee and guests. On April 19, 2013, this themed event, "Dream Big" at the Embassy Suites raised more than \$73,000 for the kids!

5th Annual Orion Birthday Bash Benefit for choosing Tennyson Center for Children as this year's beneficiary. The event was held on Sunday, May 5, 2013 and raised nearly \$8,000 for TCC.

The Honorable Judge Ray Satter joined the Deputies for the March Mustache Madness Fundraiser for Kids that was held on March 29th to "Shave It" at the Lindsey-Flanigan Courthouse. Judge Satter had his mustache for over 30 years before "Shaving It"! The event raised over \$1,800.

For more information on any of our events, call Sally at 720.855.3317 Or you can email her at sally.kittredge@tennysoncenter.org.

Right: Country music star Lee Brice rocks the crowd at last year's Mile High Country Q & Brew, benefiting Tennyson Center.

Events Recaps / Sally Kittredge

Many ask, what more can I do? And the answers are endless. But two valuable ways to make a difference and create awareness are: 1) host a fundraising event to benefit the children and 2) bring friends, coworkers, neighbors, etc. to our fundraising events. For more information on hosting an event or attending one, please visit www.childabuse.org or contact sally.kittredge@tennysoncenter.org

The **Northern Colorado Dinner** was held on April 19, 2013 at the Embassy Suites Loveland. Tennyson alumnus Scott Allen spoke about how he has overcome so many obstacles in his life and has, without a doubt, been able to Dream Big! Rod Witte appreciated the warm welcome he received from everyone and said, "It is very rewarding to see folks like you step up and care about the kids who so desperately need help – and to **Dream Big** on their behalf!" The *Dream Big* event brought in over \$73,000 for the kids!

A Look Ahead...**Rolling Hills Gala and Golf Tournament**

"Here's Lookin' at You, Kid" benefiting Tennyson Center for Children and presented by The Foundation at Rolling Hills. The



Runners gather at the starting line for last year's Running of the Bulls, which nearly doubled in size over the previous year.

14th annual poolside soiree at Rolling Hills Country Club is on Saturday, June 22, followed by the golf classic on Monday, June 24.

3rd Annual Running of the Bulls in Highlands Square will be held on July 13, 2013. Face your fears, prove your dodging prowess, and fight child abuse. Inspired by the running of the bulls in Pamplona, Spain, you will attempt to outrun members of the Rocky Mountain RollerGirls team wielding whiffle ball bats. *Race at your own risk... It will be a day of celebration for those who are able to escape the onslaught of the Rocky Mountain RollerGirls. You've never had this much fun in your life!

16th Annual Colorado Springs Dinner – Friday, September 6, 2013; Doubletree Hotel Colorado Springs, CO; "Dream Big" is the theme of this event. While Tennyson Center's campus is centrally located in Denver, TCC is proud to be a safe-haven for ALL of Colorado's children. We have some incredible support in Denver but we also have amazing friends in other areas of the state. The Colorado Springs dinner is one example of this. This year's theme celebrates the dreams of kids of all ages.

The 4th Annual Mile High Country Q & Brew – Saturday, October 5, 2013 at the Stampede.

This event features a private concert with country stars **J.T. Hodges** and **Walker Williams** along with a sensational silent and live auction. Rounding out the "Q & Brew" portion of the event, you'll enjoy a scrumptious barbeque dinner along with beer and dancing!

36th Annual Denver Dinner - You won't want to miss this year's Denver Dinner, "Puttin' On the Glitz." It's always an epic event, but this year will be one of the best yet! Mark your calendars for Saturday, November 9, 2013 at the Hyatt Regency Denver across from the Colorado Convention Center.



Gone Fishin'

Four of Tennyson's middle school classes were recently treated to a great, new learning experience courtesy of Phys. Ed. teacher, Bill Feeley. Clear Creek Canyon provided a picturesque setting as the kids learned about fly-fishing, including the basic skills of casting and knot-tying as well as a bit about insectology to help them determine which flies to use. While the kids did more fishing than actually catching fish, it was a wonderful experience. Remember, your donations help keep Tennyson's experiential education and outdoor learning programs like this one thriving.



The ReNew Boutique Grand Opening

So many of the kids in our residential treatment program first come through the doors of Tennyson Center wearing clothing that is torn, tattered and often ill-fitting. Those same kids have usually never experienced the joy of wearing new clothing or the American ritual of shopping. Fortunately, our generous donors have kept the children in clean, new clothes through our **Dress-a-Child** program.

But until recently the only opportunity those children ever had to select their own new clothes was on the day of our annual back-to-school shopping spree where volunteers accompany the kids to the south Arvada Target store to help them pick out a new outfit for the upcoming school year.

Well, now the kids are able to pick out their own clothes at any time of the year with the opening of Tennyson's ReNew Boutique, the new on-campus clothing "store." This exciting new venue gives the children a chance to learn how to shop for their own clothes and to enjoy picking out just the right outfit to suit their own personalities.

While the clothes are all free, the new store helps the children learn lessons about the shopping experience that they'll use later in life—including how to select the right garment and the importance of trying on the clothing before deciding to purchase it.

The idea for the store was the brainchild of TCC Clothing Coordinator, Beth June. A storage room in the basement of Huston Cottage was emptied and converted into a boutique style shop, complete with clothing racks and new shelves. Through the generosity of donors loyal to the Dress-a-Child program, those racks and shelves were stocked with new clothes and shoes of all styles and sizes from which the kids can choose.

"This would never have happened without the generous support of our Dress-a-Child donors. I can't help but smile every time I walk into our little store. It's so important for the kids to express their own personalities by being able to select their own clothing and, best of all, it's right here on campus," said Ms. June.

And the kids love it. One youngster said, "I've never shopped for my own clothes before, like other kids do. It's so cool to be able to pick out my own stuff just like I'm really shopping at the mall or something!"

You can help keep the shelves and racks stocked in The ReNew Boutique by making a donation of either cash or clothing from our needs list to our Dress-a-Child program. You can download the list on our website at www.tennysoncenter.org/dac.

Below: The ReNew Boutique on the campus of Tennyson Center. As you can see in the photo, not all the shelves are filled. Your donations of cash and clothing will help keep the store stocked. Go to tennysoncenter.org/dac to find out how you can help.





2950 Tennyson Street | Denver, CO 80212-3029

Spring/Summer 2013



www.childabuse.org

Tennyson Center for Children at Colorado Christian Home

Tennyson Center works with children, youth, and their families to overcome a variety of life crises, including abuse and neglect.

Tennyson Center is a community of people dedicated to serving children and youth and strengthening families. As professionals and concerned citizens we strive to provide competent and caring treatment, education, and advocacy services that are community-based, family-focused, and child-centered.

The agency provides services to children and families regardless of religion, creed, age, race, color, gender, national origin, sexual orientation, gender expression, disability status, or military status.

Colorado Combined Campaign (CCC): #0955

Combined Federal Campaign (CFC): #38586