

Visitor

October 2015



www.childabuse.org

UPCOMING EVENTS

Annual Fall Quilt Sale

November 6, 2015
3 p.m. to 6 p.m.
November 7, 2015
10 a.m. - 2 p.m.
2950 Tennyson Street
Denver, CO 80212

Open House

November 7, 2015
10 a.m. - 2 p.m.
2950 Tennyson Street
Denver, CO 80212

Colorado Gives Day

December 8, 2015
Online at
ColoradoGives.org

For information on these or any TCC events, contact Alicia at 720.855.3317 or alicia.perras@tennysoncenter.org.

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KaBOOM! A New Playground

"I want a shark pit. And I want a zip line. Hey, what about a tire swing?" said TCC play engineers (a.k.a., our kids).

The play engineers may not have gotten the shark pit but Tennyson Center for Children's new playground does have a zip line, a tire swing and other sensory-integrated equipment to provide opportunities for the kids to play and heal.



Playground design from TCC play engineer, age 9

Thanks to KaBOOM!, The CarMax Foundation and 311 volunteers, the kids at Tennyson Center for Children (TCC) have a brand new playground. The playground was designed based on input from the children that live at TCC who drew their dream playgrounds for planners at a design day in August. TCC staff and volunteers also provided feedback on the designs.

On Sept. 22, the volunteers built the playground in less than six hours, replacing our 20-year-old play structures. The day was full of activity. KaBOOM! has a detailed system for organizing the volunteers, making sure everyone has a job and has fun doing it.

The CarMax Foundation and KaBOOM! donated financial and volunteer support to our project. Since 1996, KaBOOM! has been

dedicated to bringing balanced and active play into the daily lives of all children because KaBOOM! believes that play matters for all kids.

Through a \$4.1 million partnership, The CarMax Foundation and KaBOOM! will have built 30 playgrounds across the United States by the end of 2015, giving more than 100,000 children the joyful childhood they deserve. The CarMax Foundation supports the organization's goal of ensuring that all kids get the balanced and active play they need to become healthy and successful adults.

The children at TCC were excited to see the skid steer roll in, remove the old equipment and prep the new playground site. However, since concrete was used to hold the equipment in place and needed three days to cure, the kids couldn't play on the playground for several days. With great pride, the TCC staff watched the kids patiently wait during those three days.



TCC child testing out the new playground

We officially opened the playground on Monday, Sept. 28. The children were so eager to play on the new equipment and are overjoyed at the new state-of-the-art playground. As anticipated, the zip line and tire swing are popular areas, as well as the monkey bars and climbing wall.

We could not have done this without your support and are most grateful for the kids helping design the playground, the volunteers, sponsors and the TCC staff that made this possible. It truly took a village. Thank you to everyone involved!

TCC's new playground





Time, Talent and Treasure by Rod Witte, CEO

On behalf of the kids and staff, thank you to everyone who invests their time, talent and treasure in the kids at TCC. As a leader in the treatment of at-risk children, we could not do this work without you.

Corporations and organizations provide a great deal of time, talent and treasure to TCC. We offer many opportunities to sponsor events and volunteer with the children. One corporation I specifically want to thank is Noble Energy. They have sponsored our FORE! Our Kids Golf Classic for the past eight years. Their team members also collect school supplies and stuff backpacks for all the kids at TCC each year. The students are successful because of their support.

Many community volunteers also provide their time, talent and treasure for TCC. As you read on page one, more than 300 of you volunteered to help build a new playground for our kids on Sept. 22. In addition to funds we raised at the Mile High Q & Brew event last February, we partnered with KaBOOM! and The CarMax Foundation to build a new playground in one day. KaBOOM! is a nonprofit organization that builds playgrounds across the country. Our playground was KaBOOM! and The CarMax Foundation's 28th collaboration.

The volunteers mixed 22,000 pounds of concrete by hand and moved 15 dump truck loads of wood chips to three different areas of the playground. The new playground replaced 20-year-old equipment with new sensory-integrated equipment that is colorful, full of different textures and activities to activate the children's senses.

As play is a very important piece of therapy, this equipment will help the children learn, grow and heal. Thank you for making this possible for kids who need it the most.

Also, many individuals give their time, talent and treasure today and plan for the future. For example, Nancy Kurtz and her husband, Dr. Dwaine Kurtz (deceased) have been giving their time and treasure to TCC since the 1970s. Dr. Kurtz was a dentist in Greeley for many years and served on TCC's Board of Directors. When he passed away in 2009, they divided the memorial gifts between TCC and another nonprofit organization. Dr. Kurtz also introduced many friends to TCC and the work we do for children. After learning about TCC from Dr. Kurtz, a grateful patient continued to support TCC and included the kids in her estate plans. Nancy has indicated that when she passes, she too will direct gifts to TCC.

All of us at TCC are honored when donors recognize our children with meaningful planned gifts. As Nancy states, "You have to share what you have. You have to choose who to share it with because there are lots of people that want it. And there are lots of people that don't know about Tennyson Center and don't go to the Christian Church. And that's where I need to put my money." I appreciate Nancy and Dwaine's longtime support. With their gifts, we are able to help many more children.



Nancy Kurtz, TCC donor

Along with those who invest their time, talent and treasure in the kids at TCC, I also want to thank our neighbors for their patience, support and respect for the kids and staff. TCC has been located at 29th and Tennyson in Denver's Highlands neighborhood since 1910. In more than 100 years, thousands of children have passed through our doors. Many of those children are striving to heal from trauma or mental health or developmental issues. I want to thank you for your patience and kindness towards our staff and children. We are lucky to be part of such a welcoming community and have our kids grow up in a neighborhood.

Without your time, talent and treasure, we would not be able to serve hundreds of children and families each year. Thank you!

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Thank you for
investing in the
kids at TCC!
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- Special thanks to our
Gift-In-Kind sponsors:
98.5 KYGO
American West
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Costco Wholesale
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Eldorado Natural
Spring Water
King Soopers
Olive Garden
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Slo-Hi Coffee
Company
Subway
Target
Wagner Equipment
Company



Volunteers moving wood chips

Help Make Holiday Wishes Come True

The holidays are just around the corner and Operation Santa (Op Santa) 2015 is ready to launch. Op Santa fulfills the wishes and needs for TCC children, families and programs. Corporations, schools, churches and many individuals donate funds and items to create happy holidays for those who need it most. Join our Santa's helpers and make holiday wishes come true by:

1. Giving toys to the children so that our kids can experience the anticipation of Santa's arrival and the joy of Christmas morning.
2. Purchasing items for our cottages, classrooms or programs to fulfill essential needs for serving Tennyson Center children and families.
3. "Adopting" one of the families we serve through our programs.

Visit www.childabuse.org/santa and complete the online form to donate gifts from the wish lists to the kids, families and agency. Or contact opsanta@tennysoncenter.org or 303-433-2541 for more information.



Public Speaking as a Tool for Healing

Each February, the National Speakers Association hosts a speech contest for the kids at TCC. It is a great opportunity for the kids to learn how to give a presentation in front of their peers and adults and often times, the speech writing and presenting is cathartic and quite fun for our kids. Here is what 11-year-old Melissa had to say about this year's contest:

"I came to Tennyson Center kind of suddenly. It wasn't something I really expected, and it took me by surprise to say the least. On top of having to figure out how to deal with what felt like complete chaos and disruption in my life once again, I was told that my sister and I were going to be separated too. This was NOT good news. I was really sad,

confused, angry, frustrated and lonely when I was taken to Tennyson Center. There didn't seem like much hope for quite some time. Before Tennyson, I really loved to read, sing, and write—mostly poems. I barely did these things anymore, because of my hopeless feelings. But, then I heard about a speech contest, and this was something that I was interested in. I had been told that I could write any kind of speech, about any topic, and would get one-on-one attention from a speech coach to help me through it. This seemed to be a little something to actually look forward to, and something I could see myself succeeding in. So, I asked if I could write a poem for the contest. I was told that I could, and really started to focus my

energy there. I started to think about all the places I wanted to go in life, and the places I had been dreaming of seeing. I remembered a Dr. Seuss book that I loved, "Oh the Places You'll Go!," and started getting ideas. I titled my poem "Oh the Places I'll Go!" and started to write. I practiced my speech a LOT, and in the end, I took First Place in the contest! I really felt that I had decided I would never let situations that I couldn't control run my life, and that I would find a way to visit the world and live life for myself. I know that I am destined for amazing things!"

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Staff Spotlight

Each month, we recognize a staff member who exemplifies TCC's mission through service and learning. Nominated by colleagues for doing an outstanding job, here are the most recent team members honored:



July
Night Cottage Supervisor
Larry Bess has been with TCC since February 2012. Larry's reliability and

consistency keeps our kids safe and secure through the night. He is quick on his feet when something unexpected happens and always finds a way to keep campus running smoothly.



August
Youth Treatment Counselor **Kate Earleywine** has been with TCC since April 2014. Kate goes above and beyond working

with the youngest kids at TCC. She is passionate about helping the kids grow and heal and provides a safe place for that to happen.



September
Youth Treatment Counselor **Rachel Glenn** has been with TCC since August 2014. Rachel took on the role as our

summer gym teacher. With life-sized board games, foosball and more, she was able to get kids who usually avoid gym to participate and have fun.



October
Office Admin/ Operation Santa Project Manager **Rachel Tucker** has been with TCC since April 2014. Rachel stepped up to

help cover the front desk and ran that space like a pro. She is always willing to learn a new task and does so with a positive attitude.

Youth Across the Country Lend a Helping Hand

“I return year after year because I want to be part of something big for these kids.” ~ Max, age 16, mission group volunteer

Each week during the summer, TCC hosts mission groups from across the country. The groups of young people and their leaders volunteer in the classrooms and cottages. In addition to providing extra support to TCC staff, the mission group program goal is to expose the TCC kids to teens and adults that care about them. It helps the kids learn to build trust with others.

Mission groups often return to TCC year after year. Drew Kirtley, a Youth Minister from Oklahoma, has been bringing teen mission groups to TCC since 2010. He began with First Christian Church in Chandler, Okla. and now brings a group with First Christian Church of Duncan, Okla. According to Kirtley, there are many reasons he prefers TCC for his mission trips. The main reason is the opportunity to work with the kids. Many mission trips include physical labor like building houses or travel to other countries. By spending their time at TCC, the mission groups have the opportunity to work directly with kids and build relationships with them. They are able to see

the kids learn and grow over the week they are here.

Another reason Kirtley prefers TCC for his mission trips is how simple they are to plan. TCC provides a place to stay, showers and food, and the opportunity for self exploration. Groups don't have to worry about where their meals will come from, where they will sleep each night or where and when they will shower.

Finally, Kirtley and his mission group grow in profound ways when they volunteer here. TCC is a different type of mission trip because the groups are not sharing about their Christian faith, but are practicing it. According to Kirtley, “Students come here and have to be what their faith makes them be; they just have to live it.” They have to live their faith by demonstrating joy, peace, patience, generosity and self-control with kids that have the most challenging behaviors. The mission group helps children in need while learning to work together. At TCC, each youth is challenged to grow and change. “It’s a week of practicing your faith in a really intensified environment,” states Kirtley. “And it’s also helping people.”

To summarize how he feels about TCC, Kirtley explains that it is like visiting the “Kingdom of God.” As a church group, they read a great deal of scripture and often discuss how Jesus traveled around telling people what the Kingdom of God was like. Kirtley explains, “Tennyson Center for Children is a place where people who might not normally feel safe can feel safe. People who are considered outcasts won't be treated like outcasts. If the Kingdom of God was going to be like it's supposed to be in the world, it would look a lot like Tennyson Center.”

To learn more about TCC's mission group opportunities, contact Tia at tia.hunter@tennysoncenter.org.

“
It’s a week of practicing your faith in a really intensified environment.
”

Mission Group, First Christian Church, Duncan, OK



Thank you to our sponsors for helping us raise more than \$355,000!



Kids Want a Challenge?

Challenge By Choice (CBC) is the outdoor experiential classroom in TCC's summer Day-Treatment Program. Students apply to learn about water, soil, plants and animals, and participate in outdoor activities, including hiking, fishing, rock climbing, camping and rafting. The 2015 staff consisted of special education teacher Bridget Smith and youth treatment counselors Dara Ector, Mary Alice Hoppe and Daniel Stewart, supervised by Michelle Lawrence.

In addition to the academic component, the staff members teach the students problem solving skills and how to become contributing team members. CBC also partners with the National

Sports Center for the Disabled (NSCD) to provide additional emotional and mental health support to the children and assist any children who have physical limitations. Additionally, CBC works with the same NSCD staff all summer providing opportunities for the kids to build relationships and trust with adults during the program.

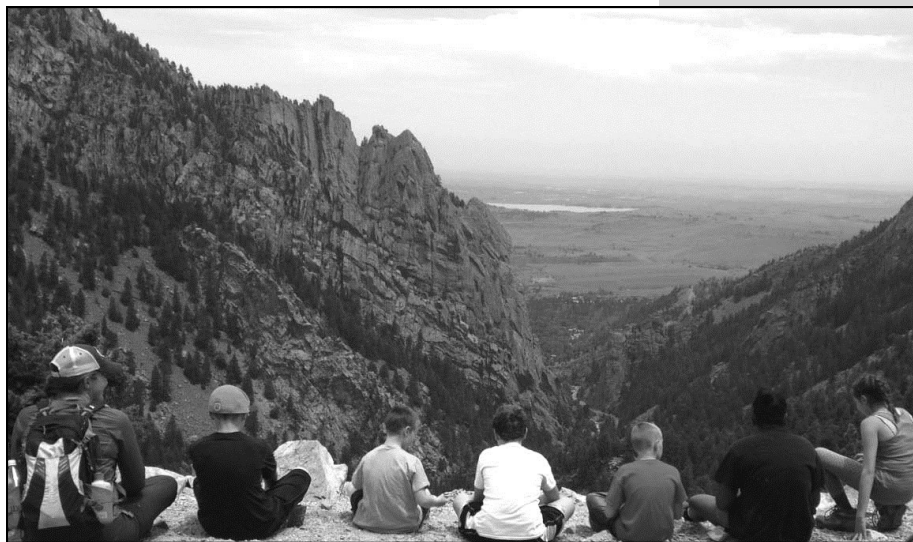
The kids that apply and are selected for the program get a lot out of it. Read one student's story in the column to the right.

We appreciate all the support for this program. Thank you for making CBC possible for its 18th summer! And especially thank you to our staff members for making this year a success!



L to R: Mary Alice Hoppe, Dara Ector, Michelle Lawrence, Daniel Stewart and Bridget Smith

Challenge By Choice students on a hike



"I signed up for CBC because I wanted to have fun outside doing cool activities and I wanted to challenge myself. I got to do lots of fun things like rock climbing, kayaking, ropes courses and hiking.

And I got to go camping for the first time ever! First, we camped in the gym to practice and then we got to go to Leadville. It was really exciting but everything smelled like campfire when we got back. I really liked being able to go off campus with the class. It was way more fun to get to do activities off campus than staying in class doing schoolwork all day.

I loved the staff too. They taught us really cool skills like how to fish, use cooking stoves and survive in the outdoors.

I even had to sign a contract that included expectations of being safe, respectful and responsible. And that I would participate in all CBC activities with a positive attitude. CBC helped me stay positive this summer and work toward my goals."

Kyle, age 10
CBC student

Mark Your Calendar

Annual Fall Quilt Sale

Nov. 6, 2015 3 p.m. to 6 p.m.
Nov. 7, 2015 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.
2950 Tennyson Street
Denver, CO 80212

Open House

Nov. 7, 2015
10 a.m. to 2 p.m.
2950 Tennyson Street
Denver, CO 80212

Visit our annual fall quilt sale, featuring unique, handcrafted quilts. 100% of the proceeds benefit the children at TCC. For information, contact Jennifer Force at 303-433-2541 or jennifer.force@tennysoncenter.org.

Stop by to tour the campus, check out the annual fall quilt sale and learn more about how you can get involved. Light refreshments will be provided. All are welcome; no registration necessary. For more information, contact Jennifer Force at 303-433-2541 or jennifer.force@tennysoncenter.org.

We appreciate your support!

October 2015



www.childabuse.org

Bigger, Badder, Radder

Five Tennyson Tigers, several staff members and one volunteer ran the Color Me Rad 5K at the Botanic Gardens at Chatfield on July 11. The 5K run was a culmination of a running group with children in TCC's residential program. Living on-site at TCC, the kids that participated ranged in age from seven to 12 and trained for two months to prepare for the 5K race. This was a chance for the

kids to push themselves to try their best and stay safe outside the TCC campus. They did a fantastic job, and one young girl completed the 5K in 30 minutes with a staff mentor. This was an opportunity for the children to be able to feel like "regular" kids. Great job to the kids, staff and volunteers!

The kids and staff who ran the Color Me Rad 5K



Colorado Gives Day

December 8, 2015

Support the kids at Tennyson Center for Children on Colorado Gives Day, Colorado's largest one-day online giving event, presented by Community First Foundation and FirstBank.

You can schedule your donation starting Nov. 1 at www.ColoradoGives.org.