



A message from Pete Caldwell



Thanks from Nico



Meet Volunteers

WHAT'S INSIDE: 

# we care news

Summer 2017

## A Thank You from Noah's Dad

I am sharing my reflection on the huge impact We Care has had on my son Noah, who is two and in the Explorers Classroom. I have experienced other childcare/preschool programs, plus private day care providers with my other children, and each had their own positives and negatives. These days, it seems that “No praise is good praise,” but for me, when I do experience something impressive and “eye opening,” I take time to reflect on it.



“ She has created a curriculum that is fun and encourages learning. She knows what the kids are thinking and feeling — if they are sad, she immediately finds a way to make them smile. ”

Noah has challenges with his motor skill development and communication, and needed a specialized facility like We Care Services for Children that helps children receive the best foundation for their future learning. This program has made such a difference for Noah, and he has made huge improvements in his developmental and communication skills.

From the minute we walked in the door at We Care, we were impressed by the kindness, love and energy the teachers and staff have for the children. Noah was reluctant at first and cried every day. But as time went on, he felt comfortable with everyone — from the floaters, Hanna and Jackie (teachers who help in all the classrooms), to the teachers, Chrissy and Amy. All have truly helped and inspired Noah, and we have seen an amazing difference in him. After just a few months of therapy, Noah has met developmental milestones that changed his occupational therapy needs of once a week to an “as needed” basis.

The Explorers team is led by Head Teacher Masako, who takes on a personal and professional relationship with each child in her class. She has created a curriculum that is fun and encourages learning. She knows what the kids are thinking and feeling — if they are sad, she immediately finds a way to make them smile. This intuitive teaching happens many times a day with different personalities and to me, that’s an incredible talent. If I can sum up in one word what each teacher and staff member show the kids on a daily basis, it is “Passion.” Not just passion to do a good job, but passion to make a positive difference in these kids each day. I really don’t think we parents can tell the teachers enough how thankful we are for their dedication and devotion.

Each teacher works with all the kids in the class, but the kids are also assigned teachers to work with them on a one-on-one basis. Noah’s teacher is Chrissy. She inspires Noah with her patience and kindness, and her teaching has helped him develop

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A message from:

**Pete Caldwell,** Executive Director



Dear We Care Family,

In these quarterly messages, I'll often share the story of a child in one of our programs whose life has been changed by the work we do. In part, this is because I love these stories myself — there's nothing more inspiring and motivating to me than knowing that every day our teachers, clinicians, therapists, and specialists are helping remake the life path of a child with significant challenges.

There's another story to tell, though. It's the story of community-wide influence and the large number of families impacted by the services we provide — services we're able to deliver because of you and the support you provide to these programs.

This year we will have treated over **100 high-intensity cases**, children who have experienced trauma due to abuse, extreme neglect, etc., in our mental health therapeutic program. These are children who are brought to us because their behaviors and emotional response to daily circumstance will keep them from being able to function in school or have healthy relationships. The pre- and post-testing we do shows that the vast majority of these children now have gained skills that can help them function successfully in their families and in school. In addition, the parents have learned parenting skills to support their children at home, in the community, and in school — assuring the entire family is on a healthy path. Our care and the work with them, as well as with their parents, make the difference between a lifetime of struggle and a healthy path.

**Hundreds of children** are impacted by our Childcare Solutions program. Our consultants meet with preschool teachers and administrators to address classroom disruption or other issues related to a student's mental health issues. While we're typically called to a preschool because a particular child is at risk of expulsion, the work we do increases the capacity of the teachers to address the needs of many students at the time, and in the future.

On the developmental side, our playgroups this year will help **over 130 children** whose developmental delays don't meet the criteria set by the state and thus are ineligible for paid treatment. These children are at-risk for developmental delays, and often fall through the cracks when it comes to getting the services they need to be successful in school. These playgroups help parents learn to address their children's developmental needs so the child can be integrated into a typical school and create an enriched home environment.

Our early intervention inclusive classrooms see **over 30 children** with diagnosed developmental disabilities such as Down syndrome, autism, severe speech delays, etc. These classrooms also include typically developing children who provide peer modeling and inspiration for the children with special needs. Research shows that they benefit as well, with dramatically improved levels of empathy and willingness to help others.

There are **tens of thousands** of children whose lives have been impacted by the efforts we've made over the 57 years We Care has been working in this community. This legacy is possible because of the generosity of people like you who share our belief that early intervention is one of the best gifts you can provide a child — and a community.

And speaking of long-term impact, I'm very excited to announce that one of our volunteers, Joy Fauvre, who you'll meet later in this newsletter, is developing a program enabling us to reach out to alumni families to better learn of their needs and our impact. What we'll learn from this program will better enable us to predict future issues for our families and craft improved services. I could not be more grateful to Joy and excited about better understanding the needs of the families we serve.





skills for a strong foundation for future learning. She takes clear, precise notes and takes the time to explain in detail his trials and tribulations, and most of all, his accomplishments. Amy, the second teacher, always has a smile on her face and a warmth about her that the kids are drawn to and look to for comfort.

How can you say "Thank you" to all this? Words cannot express how very impressed and grateful we are for everyone at We Care. I personally have seen a big change in Noah since we began our We Care experience, and look forward to tomorrow and many more great gains for him.

## A Heartfelt Thanks from Nico, St. Mary's Intern

I know this message is long overdue, but I am just getting settled after a long vacation and enjoying the post-grad life. I'm reaching out to you today because I want to thank you for giving me the opportunity to serve at We Care. It was more than I thought it would be, and I am extremely blessed to have been placed there with such a caring, genuine, hard-working staff, and of course, innocent, curious, no-filtered-question type children. I have learned so much throughout my time at We Care, and they're lessons I will definitely take with me as I continue my work in mental health and in the game of life.

I took the time to re-read the letter you gave me from Alfred J. Accurso. I'll be honest and tell you that I teared just as much as the first time. Although it sounded like a tough road, the program persevered with hope. All of you at We Care carry on this trait and let me tell you, it's beautiful. I am assured that the work you all are doing is providing a greater good, and I feel it as soon as I walk in a room. We may not know all the cures and answers to the variety of disabilities and handicaps these children might have, but you all have provided them with your own special medicine of hope. And it's this hope and belief in the program that allows it to thrive. This is what I feel the program is based on, and it starts with everyone at We Care who thinks positively, works intentionally, and loves unconditionally — something I've observed you all do so naturally.

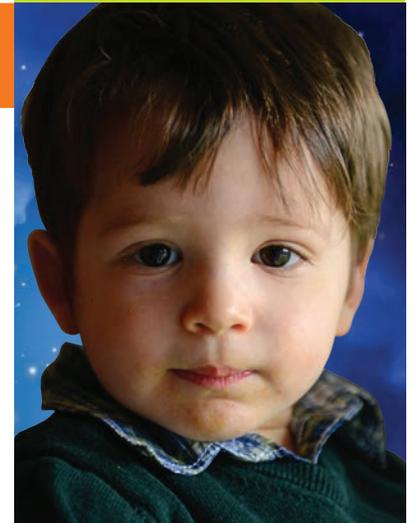
The letter also mentions who Mr. Accurso is and how he fits in the upbringing of We Care. It automatically made me think about everyone on the staff. I've come to learn a lot about the teachers and the other staff members. You all have provided me with insight about what the job entails, but also about your motivation and stories that push you all to continue your work. I sought to learn and seek guidance for my vocation, and you have given me that and so much more. You taught me how beautiful diversity is when we're all working together towards a common cause.

I tell my professor all the time that I love that the classrooms are a mix of children with and without special needs. It creates a common ground between children at different stages of development, and teaches them how to socially and emotionally interact with others. This will definitely be beneficial for each of the children in the future as they develop their own perspectives of the world. I can safely say that We Care is making the world a better place on Kirker Pass Road, and I'm extremely proud to say that I was a part of such an amazing organization and family.

We Care will always have a place in my heart.

Warmest regards,  
**Nico**

*Note: Mr. Accurso is an alumni Board member (from the late 1960s) and was instrumental in getting the Kirker Pass land donated for our school.*



**Little Stars Gala**  
WE CARE SERVICES FOR CHILDREN  
**October 7, 2017**



Our annual  
Little Stars Gala  
has a new date,  
October 7, 2017,  
and a new place,  
The Clubhouse at  
Boundary Oak.

Please visit:  
[wecarechildren.ejoinme.org/  
MyEvents/LittleStarsGala2017](http://wecarechildren.ejoinme.org/MyEvents/LittleStarsGala2017)

**join us!**

## Meet Volunteers Greg Coplans and Joy Fauvre

Greg Coplans and his wife, Joy Fauvre, understand the need for early intervention for children with learning issues. Their son David was diagnosed as an infant with a genetic disorder that required speech and occupational therapy during his preschool years.



In 2010, when Greg was EVP, Corporate Affairs at Hitachi Data Systems (HDS), one of his responsibilities was to manage the HDS Social Responsibility program that emphasized employee volunteerism in their local communities. Greg researched East Bay organizations that offered services to children with special needs and was so impressed with We Care's services and staff, he asked if he could join We Care's board.

Greg served on the board for three years, and HDS has been proud to help sponsor many of We Care's fundraising galas.

Involvement with We Care extended to his family. Joy assisted with editing newsletters, and their son Will was a student volunteer one summer, playing with the children and helping out in the classrooms.

When Greg retired from HDS in 2013, he resigned from the We Care board and became a weekly volunteer to work on a range of We Care business matters. He is the acting secretary of the board and a member of two board committees. Greg is still a liaison between We Care and HDS, which continues to help underwrite We Care's galas.

Joy recently retired from her job at AssetMark (also a We Care corporate supporter) and is now a weekly volunteer too. Her primary project is to develop an ongoing program — "We Still Care" — to follow up with families of We Care graduates to learn about the children's progress and, if needed, provide information on additional resources.

"David is now a behavioral interventionist for children and young adults with autism," said Greg. "In addition, he is working on a master's degree in Marriage and Family Therapy. We saw the results of early intervention for our child — and We Care has given us the opportunity to help pay it forward."

## workplace giving

We Care is so appreciative to our supporters who donate through workplace campaigns. If your company has workplace giving, please consider choosing We Care.

## Donations in Memory and in Honor

Marc Greenberg donated in memory of **Annalise Fredicksen Curtis & Barbara Martin**

Glen Johnson donated in memory of **Joyce Knud**

Lainie Johnson donated in honor of **Nate Greenberg's birthday**

*Thank you, Nate, for inspiring others to give and share with those who are less fortunate. I'm so proud of you for setting this example at your birthday!! Well done! I hope that others join your efforts and use their birthdays as opportunities to share information about the organizations they care about. Happy birthday!*

Kellund Knud donated in memory of **Joyce Knud**

Barbara Langsdale donated in memory of **Tony Franceschini & Barbara Martin**

Daniella Lopez donated in honor of **all the amazing staff at We Care**

Clair Murphy donated in honor of **Abelina Carmona**

Garda Pohle donated in memory of **Phyllis Lewis**

Eric Ruiter donated in memory of **Dia Ruiter**

JoAnn Pico donated in honor of **Rex Johnston's birthday**

Cheryl Shaffer donated in memory of **John Orrin Galletti & Don Shaffer**

