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# We Care Newsletter

**SPRING  
2017**

## **WHY IS EARLY INTERVENTION SUCCESSFUL?**

Frederick Douglass has been in the news a bit lately, and it's reminded us of one of his more powerful quotes:

**"It is easier to build strong children than to repair broken men."**

At We Care, this concept is the foundation of all the work we do. Remarkably, his words were written a century before the critical brain research that now shows us exactly HOW right he was.

Decades of this research clearly tells us that the neural circuits that create our capacity to learn and determine our behavior are most flexible and "improvable" in the first three years of life. Once this window closes, it becomes increasingly difficult for these pathways to change.

We also know now that consistent and caring relationships with adults as well as safe environments are key to healthy brain development. Physical and social/emotional health provide the base from which cognitive and language skills develop.

Simply put, the first three years determine success in school, work, and life. Too, it determines the quality of family life, as well as that of our community.

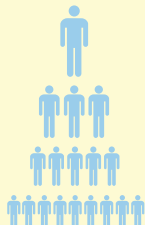
The research also shows that high quality intervention

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# Check out our annual report 2016

You'll find our annual report on our website ([wecarechildren.org](http://wecarechildren.org)) under the "NEWS" tab.



OUR PROGRAMS AND EVENTS  
ENGAGED MORE THAN

## 725

CHILDREN & FAMILIES



WE DIDN'T DO IT ALONE

## + 78

VOLUNTEERS

CONTRIBUTED  
MORE THAN

## 2,610

HOURS OF SUPPORT

## A message from **Pete Caldwell** Executive Director



Dear We Care Family,

I hope this finds you well and enjoying the new season! That was a long, wet winter – thankfully. Now, spring is very much feeling like a time of change and growth at We Care, and I'm excited to share with you some of the planning that's going on behind the scenes of our daily work here with children and their families.

Our board of directors and key managers held its annual retreat this past month, and we're now clarifying and articulating the great work done that day. While the "big picture" decisions have affirmed the critical goal of reaching even more children in our community with our programs, our more immediate goals include a restructuring of our administrative and management functions. We're bringing in new, talented folks to fill key positions, and we're beefing up some aspects of our administration to better position us for the next phase of growth. All of this, still, while we ensure that the proportion of our resources that go to direct service (as opposed to administration) are among the highest among non-profits in the county. We remain committed to having a lean and effective organization – it's one of our core principles.

We're being aided by a remarkable group of extraordinary, and extraordinarily talented volunteers. High-level executives with some of the Bay Area's most significant companies are part of our strategic planning process, and I couldn't be more grateful that these folks share our vision for We Care, and for our community. It's an exciting time for us!

I look forward to updating you in the months and years to come as we develop and implement our strategies about We Care's work to become an even more important part of this community's safety net, and trusted source for treatment, resources, and support.

Best,

*Pete*

## FUTURE PALEONTOLOGISTS IN THE MAKING?

Our preschool children had a fun week studying dinosaurs; which included hunting for bones on our playground. You can see from the photos that they were very engaged!





## Why is early intervention successful? *Continued from page 1*

services are the key to moving a child onto this positive trajectory if he or she enters these first years at a disadvantage. That's where we come in. At We Care, we devote every day to helping families struggling with a range of concerns get the help they need. And whether it's speech and occupational therapy in our developmental programs, or attachment or behavioral therapies in our Mental Health program – everything we do is to ensure that the children we see have the best possible chance during this critical phase to become the men and women they were meant to be. Frederick Douglass would approve.

Having been providing services for over 57 years, we often hear from families with children who long ago graduated from our programs. We wanted to share with you a recent note we received from a former client:

**“Thank you We Care staff and board members for your dedicated work with children with special needs.”**

**Our son attended when he turned 18 months. November 30, 2016, he celebrated his 21st birthday. He will finish up at Diablo Valley College May 2017 with his AA in Communications and will attend CSU in fall of 2017!! He goes to college full-time, works part-time, and for six years he has volunteered at De La Salle High School for the freshman and JV soccer team.”**

**Thank you from our hearts!!**



## Our staff celebrating Hungry Caterpillar Day



## We Care Board of Directors

Marc Greenberg  
*Chair*

Dirk Fitzgerald  
*Vice Chair*

Bob Sachs

Nicole Brocato

Jeff Butler

Maureen Bullotta

Nina Rowe

Steve Mellema

# mark your calendars!

## Little Stars

# Gala

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

# our mission

Through targeted, compassionate, and effective early intervention services, We Care helps young children and their families reach their full potential, regardless of their abilities or circumstances.

## Meet Marisa

I discovered We Care when my school (University of Phoenix), challenged us to volunteer at a local nonprofit organization. After researching the list of approved agencies, We Care caught my attention because they cover all the areas I am interested in. Since I am majoring in Human Services/Management, We Care is teaching me how their services benefit children and their families. My internship is helping me understand what it takes to run an agency efficiently and will also help me become a more compassionate human services professional and hopefully, an effective manager.



Outside of volunteering here three mornings each week and going to school, I work as an insurance agent, and serve in the Air Force Reserves. Sometimes it can feel overwhelming, and I forget which place I am supposed to be, but it is worth it. Even though I don't have a lot of downtime, when I do, I enjoy reading and swimming laps. They are both great stress reducers.



I truly look forward to my days at We Care. Since my first day here, everyone has been completely welcoming and have made themselves available to answer all of my questions. I'm sad knowing that my time here will come to an end, but I will leave having more knowledge about how important fundraising is to a nonprofit agency, and how important it is to be a strong support system for your clients.

## A BIG thank you to these very special groups who are supporting We Care's programs



### 100+ Women Who Care

100+ Women Who Care of Contra Costa for choosing us as their nonprofit to support this quarter. If you have an interest in learning more about 100+ Women of Contra Costa go to Facebook and take a look at their page – 100+ Women Who Care Contra Costa County.



### Knights of Columbus

The Knights of Columbus from St. Francis Assisi Church who have supported We Care through their annual fundraisers since 2009 and have donated \$17,169.18.