

Helping Children Be the 'Child They Want To Be'

Greetings,

I love the holiday season for all the reasons that you do too. The lights...the colors...the sweet smell of pine and pumpkin pies. And, of course, the gifts I feel so blessed to receive from family and friends. Fortunately at Old Mill Center, the staff and myself experience the joy of 'unwrapping' gifts year round. They don't come wrapped in pretty ribbons and bows. Nor do they sit patiently waiting under the tree. Our gifts wiggle and cry, shout and laugh, try our patience and challenge our advice. Forget the pretty wrappings, and think scruffy tennies and t-shirts too big or too small depending on where you are in the 'hand-me-down' chain.

Our gifts are the small glimmers of growth and progress that give us hope to keep doing what we do. The 'aha' moment when we realize that repeating twenty times a day, 'You're doing a great job,' to an unruly kid works, or when a grieving child can giggle at funny memories of his deceased parent, or especially when an angry teen cuddles up to Jug Dish, the therapy dog, and declares he's going to get a 'mutt' just like this one some day. These are the gifts that keep us inspired and motivated to welcome the next child with enthusiasm, because we know there's a small 'gift' waiting to be unwrapped in every life.

One of our 'favorite' gifts that we received this year was seeing the transformation of a once angry, frustrated four year old blossom into the bright curious little character that we knew was always there struggling to get out. This is Brandon's story as told by his mother.

"When I had my son Brandon, I was living a lifestyle that no child should ever have to live. During his first 18 months of life, Brandon witnessed me and his father's drug abuse and domestic violence in addition to frequent moves and unhealthy living and eating habits. Being a mother never came easy for me, and I felt like I didn't have a clue. Parenting became extremely challenging and many times I felt like I couldn't do it. I love my son, and I wanted him to be happy, but I was at a loss for what to do.

I talked to the Old Mill staff. Brandon was tested and referred to an Old Mill therapist. I joined a parenting group and started seeing a Healthy Start home visitor with my infant daughter. Within a few weeks of therapy, Brandon's behavior changed drastically. He seemed happier, calmer, and more confident in himself. Brandon has made a great deal of progress with expressing himself in ways that are not harmful to him or others.

Brandon still has bad days and sometimes, bad weeks, but the teachers and therapists at Old Mill have given him the skills he needs to be "the boy he wants to be" (as he would say), and he loves Old Mill Center and every person there."

Brandon is one of many 'gifts' from this past year, thanks in great part to the generosity of donors like you. Please help Old Mill 'unwrap' a sleigh full of gifts in 2007.

Happy Holidays,

Bev Larson

Bev Larson, PhD
Executive Director



Note: Your generous response last year helped Old Mill Center provide critical services to over 1500 children and families in 2006.

Happy Holidays from the Old Mill Board

Meredith Baughman Susan Burke Heather Gerding Paul Goodmonson
Rob Grause Beth Hogeland Jeff Martin Jeff McCubbin Pat Newport Dale Ramsay
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Bond Starker Alan Sugawara Scott Travelstead Carol Lee Woodstock

A Gift for Children and Families...

\$25 \$50 \$75 \$100 \$250 \$500 Other: \$ _____

Please select a payment option:

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Card #: _____ Expiration date: _____

Contact me at the address listed below regarding a stock donation.

In celebration of: _____ In memory of: _____

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For Children and Families

Old Mill Center for Children & Families

Program Overview...



Old Mill Center for Children and Families is a 501(c)3 non-profit organization that provides services to address the educational, social, emotional, and family needs of a diverse population of children. Our unique range of services allows us to provide multi-levelled, individualized and group support to at-risk children, from birth to 18, and their families. Our services include:

Healthy Start – A program providing resources and intensive in-home support for high-risk first-time parents

Integrated Preschool Program – Nationally accredited preschool program uniquely staffed and organized integrating children with special needs and typically developing children (ages 3-6)

Intensive Treatment Services

- **Psychiatric Day Treatment Program** – Certified and funded by the State Mental Health Division to provide day treatment for preschool children with serious emotional challenges (ages 3-6)
- **Parent Education Programs** – Focusing on building parenting skills through support, information, and involvement in the child's development (birth to 18)
- **Psychiatric Evaluation and Medication Management (2-18)**

Occupational Therapy Program – Services include assessment, treatment and referrals as indicated for children birth-16. Services are designed to help children develop to their greatest potential and highest level of independence.

Strong Families Program – State-funded integrated mental health prevention, intervention and treatment program for families with children 0-8 years old who are having difficulties accessing and securing services in the community.

- **Family Support & Connection** – A program that provides support and coordination of resources to families struggling with stressors such as poverty, domestic violence, alcohol and drug abuse, and neglect to prevent child abuse
- **Outreach Support and Consultation** – Training, education and support for teachers, childcare providers and parents that have children with behavioral and emotional challenges, with the goal of keeping these children in their early childhood setting

Outpatient Mental Health Services – Primary provider of individual counseling for Benton County children & adolescents, dealing with issues surrounding family violence, sexual abuse, depression, abandonment & parental abuse of drugs or alcohol, school failure, self-harm, grief, loss and divorce, children living in foster care.

- **School Based Counseling** – Provide on-site services to Corvallis, Alsea, and Philomath school districts
- **Family and Parent/Guardian Counseling** – Supportive/educational group and individual counseling that focuses on the stabilization of families; ability to be more self-sufficient and better able to solve issues without aggression or violence, including groups for incarcerated parents.
- **Court Mandated Co-Parenting Program** – Program to support parents and children through the trauma of divorce and help parents address their children's needs during and after divorce
- **Psychiatric Evaluation and Medication Management (ages 2-18)**
- **ChildSafe Program** – Provides treatment for children/adolescents who have been sexually abused and provides support for their families (ages 2-18)

