Long Held Vision of a Family Center Becomes Reality

This Fall, we will begin building the Cole & Jeannie Davis Family Center at Casa de los Niños. We are realizing a vision, started decades ago by Sister Kathleen Clark, of an integrated campus of care for children and families. It has been a long road, but looking at the path, it is clear that we have arrived at a pivotal time for children and families in Tucson.

Casa de los Niños began with the vision of Sister Kathleen Clark, and has been built and enriched with the incredible support of the Tucson community. The shelter space was made possible by the generosity of this community, the O’Rielly Family, and the Angel Charity. And, the shelter will continue to provide a nurturing, warm environment for children who have been removed from their homes. But we do not want to build more shelters! Kids belong at home. And, over the years, we have worked with a laser vision and mission of keeping families together. As early as 1980, we started to truly invest in prevention with the formation of a parent aide program to work with at-risk families. The earliest, least intensive and least expensive interventions can provide the greatest outcomes!
The Path to a Family Center on our Campus

After seeing a severely abused girl while working in the emergency room at St. Mary’s Hospital in 1958, Sister Kathleen Clark wrote: “All of us, the doctors and nurses on duty that night, felt that if there were ever anything we could do to prevent such a terrible thing from happening to another child, we would...in fact, prevention of child abuse would become our real and final life. From then on, I knew deep inside, if there were anything I could do to prevent one child from being harmed, I would do it.”

St. Kathleen Clark, excerpt from her book, A Dream Come True: The Story of Casa de los Niños

1973 Casa de los Niños, the first crisis shelter in the nation, designed specifically for infants, opens in a house donated by local philanthropist Cele Peterson.

1976 Casa de los Niños begins to acquire houses along Helen Street to make room for future expansion.

1978 Realizing the need for a shelter for older children, a new 18-bed shelter is opened for children ages 4-11.

1980 Casa de los Niños implements a program of child abuse prevention and intervention: A parent education program is started that provides advocates for mothers experiencing parenting problems.

1983 Sister Kathleen Clark memoir, A Dream Come True: The Story of Casa de los Niños, is published for the first time.

1987 Sister Kathleen Clark retires as Executive Director and Jeanne Landdeck-Sisco begins her 17-year tenure.

1989 Angel Charity for Children provides a gift of $823,144 to help fund the construction of a new shelter for infants and children under the age of 3. The new Angel Nursery is opened on the northwest corner of the campus.

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1993 Casa de los Niños celebrates its 20th anniversary with a gala at the Tucson Convention Center Music Hall.

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2001 A new prevention program, the Tucson Safe Baby Program is launched at Casa de los Niños, in an effort to reverse the rising number of abandoned infants.

2003 Sister Kathleen Clark, the organization’s founder, passes away on February 21st.

2005 Continuing the vision of prevention. The organization commemorates its 30th anniversary with special support from the “Circle of 30” donors.

2004 Casa de los Niños begins to acquire the last remaining houses along Speedway.

2006 The O’Rielly Family Foundation and the Union Pacific Foundation provide grants for the renovation of the 20-year-old shelter for children 4-11, now called the O’Rielly Residence.

2008 The Sister Kathleen Clark Foundation, now known as the Casa de los Niños Foundation, is established to manage resources for the long-term stability of the organization and to provide support for capital improvements.

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2007 Great Beginnings opens to provide comprehensive assessment and therapeutic interventions to children under 5 years old who have been exposed to violence, abuse or other traumatic experiences.

2008 The Parent Education Program begins providing free classes on a wide variety of parenting topics. Its first year, 1,236 attended three important classes. In 2015 over 3,300 parents engaged in this series.

2009 The Nurse-Family Partnership program is launched to provide in-home nursing services to at-risk, first-time mothers. Nurse visitors helped the mothers of 73 families to care for their newborns.

2012 Presidio Counseling, a well-recognized counseling organization established in 1999, becomes part of Casa de los Niños Behavioral Health Services. The last remaining house on Speedway is acquired, and the organization’s campus is now the entire square block. That house and the one next door are used as visitation homes for families.

2013 Casa de los Niños celebrates its 40th Anniversary with Honorary Gala Chairs: Tucson Mayor Jonathan Rothschild and his wife, Karen; Unisource Energy Corp. President David Nuttelden and his wife, Cathy; and Jeanne Landdeck-Sisco and her husband, Bill.

Family Center design plans are completed, a builder is chosen, and a $12 million capital campaign is launched.

2015 Public phase of capital campaign continues, reaching 70% of the $12M goal.

2016 Ground breaking for The Cole & Jeannie Davies Family Center is planned for Fall 2016.

"We have been deeply concerned about the welfare of children in the Tucson community, and we are impressed with the work of Casa de los Niños and their long-standing commitment to families in this community." - Cole & Jeannie Davies

"Casa de los Niños is uniquely positioned to reverse the costly and troubling trend in Southern Arizona of families in crisis and children being removed from their homes. We have the expertise, the space, and the resources to take this on. The Cole & Jeannie Davies Family Center will have a dramatic impact, allowing us to break the legacy of abuse and neglect for future generations of families." - Steve Ihnh, CEO

Kathy Salois is one of the amazing volunteers at Casa de los Niños. Kathy started volunteering in 2013, and donates her time every weekend to help care for the babies in the Crisis Shelter. She has always cared about children, and from the day that she became a volunteer, she knew that she was making a positive difference in the lives of the children at the shelter.

Kathy has worked for Radiology Ltd. for over 20 years. She and the staff at Radiology Ltd. have done so much over the years to support Casa de los Niños and the children at the Crisis Shelter. Employees have collected and donated items, and every year, Kathy and the Radiology Ltd. team host a holiday party for the children at the shelter and make sure that Santa is there to visit! Radiology Ltd. is deeply committed to helping charities in Tucson. When Kathy learned of Casa de los Niños and how they were embarking on a capital campaign to build a Family Center, she knew that she and Radiology Ltd. had to be a part of it!

Kathy reached out to Dr. Andrew Gyorke, who had recently toured Casa de los Niños. Dr. Gyorke and Kathy approached the leadership of Radiology Ltd. to facilitate fundraising with past and present physicians and staff. The funds raised will name one of the behavioral therapy rooms in the Family Center. Not only did Dr. Gyorke and his wife, Sara, personally match the money raised! Kathy was so impressed with the mission of Casa de los Niños and wanted to help the Capital Campaign with more than just a usual donation. Kathy’s enthusiasm and love for Casa inspired me further,” said Dr. Gyorke. Kathy led the fundraising efforts and immediately reached out to current and retired physicians and the staff at Radiology Ltd. She shared stories about children who were at the shelter and explained how crucial the prevention programs are to families. Together, with the incredible generosity of the staff and Dr. Andrew and Sara Gyorke, they were able to raise $20,000 for the new Family Center!

"Thank you to our Partners..."
Nurse-Family Partnership Changes Lives for Generations

Alex has been on her own since she was 16 years old. During her senior year of high school she became pregnant. The nurse at her high school had a strong relationship with Nurse-Family Partnership (NFP) and made a referral call for Alex.

A Nurse-Home Visitor met with Alex at the school health office. Having a baby in high school had not been her plan. She and the nurse agreed to make a partnership. The two would work side by side to set and achieve goals over the next several months of her pregnancy. The nurse would educate Alex on healthy habits for pregnancy, labor, and newborn care. She and her boyfriend worked hard to graduate and did so during her pregnancy.

Alex shared the same dream her mother had for her when she was born….a better life for the new baby. But, her family had lived in poverty. Alex wanted to go to college, but was not sure how she could handle a baby, school, and work. She met two times a month, and spoke on the phone frequently and with her Nurse-Home Visitor. Together they monitored Alex’s health and ensured that she was on a healthy path for her newborn. While waiting for her baby to arrive, Alex worked on applications and financial aid forms for college. Her baby arrived a couple of weeks early and needed some extra help with feeding. The NFP nurse supported her to nurture and nourish her baby boy. The nurse reinforced all that Alex was doing and helped her to see that she is a wonderful mother. It was an important confidence building experience for Alex.

Every success that Alex achieved helped her to build her confidence, beginning with high school graduation, the healthy delivery, and now motherhood. The nurse continued to work with Alex to ensure the baby was meeting critical milestones, and on goal setting and life course planning.

She is now a part-time student at a technical college, and the NFP nurse worked with a community partner to enroll Alex in a housing program. She was soon working at a receptionist during the day, and worked on schoolwork at night while her child slept. She shares childcare with her roommate, and is making the life that she and her mother had dreamed.

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March for Children

Join us before the Family Fiesta at 9:30am for the 12th Annual March for Children: Marching forward with our community to end child abuse.

The march will start at 10am. For more information go to marchforchildrenweb.com.

Spring into Summer Clothing Drive

With the number of children in out-of-home care rising, we have an urgent need for spring and summer clothing for the children in our crisis shelter.

Please join our Spring into Summer Clothing Drive, now until the end of April.

We are in need of:
- New clothing (up to children’s size 16/18)
- New bathing suits (one piece only)
- New shoes (closed toe)
- New school code clothing (navy, burgundy, white collared shirts & navy or khaki pants size 7-12)

Please drop off your donations at our Administration Office at 1101 N. 4th Avenue, Monday to Friday, 8am to 5pm.

Please consider organizing a drive at your work, club, or other organization.

Contact Dan Gregory at 520.624.5600 or via email at dang@casadelosninos.org for more information.

We have found that having new clothing available for the children is a powerful tool in helping them begin the process of improving their self-esteem.

Oriala Anda, Crisis Shelter Supervisor

An up-to-date estate plan can ensure that your loved ones will be cared for and your charitable legacy will endure.

Whether you’re young or old, have great wealth or live modestly, your generosity can make a significant and lasting difference to the children and families of Southern Arizona.

Please contact Lisa Webster at 520-624-5600 for more information. casadelosninos.org
The mission of Casa de los Niños is to promote child well-being and family stability in our community.

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