



Achieving Harmony

A Harmony House Newsletter

FALL 2013

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A message from Executive Director Leslie Vassilaros

This letter is serving as Harmony House's annual appeal this year. Please take a few minutes to read it and to open your hearts to the children Harmony House serves and the work we do. Harmony House also has \$6,000 worth of Neighborhood Investment Program (NIP) credits available for donors who pay WV state taxes and contribute \$500 or more to Harmony House. Please see page 2 for a more detailed explanation of the NIP credits.

Dear Friend of Harmony House:

If a child, alleging sexual abuse, asks why do people do these things to kids, how would you answer? As the executive director of Harmony House and also a child forensic interviewer, I have been asked this question several times. Unfortunately, I have no answer that will make sense to the child asking. I have no answer that will diminish the pain and confusion the child feels. I have no answer that will re-establish lost trust the child will probably experience.

Even though I, like many of you, don't have an answer for these children, we can ensure they will receive quality, child-appropriate, continuum of care services through Harmony House. Harmony House is a mandated reporter so designated authorities are always notified when there exists abuse concerns. In most instances, when a child accesses our services he/she will be screened through a child forensic interview. During this time the child will have an opportunity to tell his or her story in a non-leading, child-friendly setting and manner. Once details are gathered, Harmony House staff will work to ensure other services such as therapeutic intervention, medical assessment, and criminal justice advocacy are provided as needed.

Last year, Harmony House's two centers – one in Wheeling serving Ohio and Marshall Counties, WV and one in St. Clairsville serving Belmont County – provided help to 933 children and family members. This help included the completion of 359 child forensic interviews, the coordination of 87 medical assessments and 169 therapeutic interventions, and the education of 7,544 people about child abuse.

Please help Harmony House continue to provide specialized Children's Advocacy Center services to one of our most vulnerable populations, local children alleging abuse. On the back of this newsletter is a form you can complete and send it with your donation. Thank you for caring and making the world a little safer! Working together we are making a difference.

Warmest Regards,

Leslie



Neighborhood Investment Program (NIP) credits

Harmony House is happy to announce it has been awarded \$6,000 worth of NIP credits through the WV Development Office. NIP is a WV tax credit enacted in 1996 to provide clear incentives for the private sector to collaborate with non-profits such as Harmony House. Cash is the easiest eligible donation type while others such as stocks, real property, etc. have a specific formula to evaluate worth of the donation.

Minimum donation for NIP tax credit is \$500. NIP credits are usually issued for 50% of the eligible donation. Example: You donate \$1,500 to Harmony House. If Harmony House has available credits you will be issued NIP credits worth 50% of your donation. In this case, the NIP will be \$750. Once your donation has been received you will then be sent a NIP certificate stating your credit amount. You will also receive a WV form to be used to claim the credit.

A NIP credit cannot reduce WV state tax liability by more than 50%. You can use the Nip credit in one year or within a five year period. The tax credit can be used on the following WV state taxes: corporate net income tax, business franchise tax, and/or personal income tax. All donations remain eligible for Federal deduction to the extent allowed by law.

Children are often the silent victims of drug abuse and domestic violence. Please seek help if you and your children are living in this kind of situation.

DOMESTIC VIOLENCE DOES AFFECT CHILDREN!
Making the Connection




2nd Annual MONSTER MASH BASH
October 26th 7-10pm
St. Clairsville Rec. Center

Food, beer and dancing
Prizes for costumes
Tickets \$20pp
Please call 740-695-0812



A group of professional people posed this question to a group of 4 to 8 year-olds: "What does love mean?"

"When my grandmother got arthritis, she couldn't bend over and paint her toenails anymore. So my grandfather does it for her all the time, even when his hands got arthritis too. That's love." Rebecca, 8

"When someone loves you, the way they say your name is different. You just know that your name is safe in their mouth." Billy, 4

"Love is when my mommy makes coffee for my daddy and she takes a sip before giving it to him, to make sure the taste is OK." Danny, 7

"Love is what's in the room with you at Christmas if you stop opening presents and listen." Bob, 7

"Love is when you tell a guy you like his shirt, then he wears it everyday." Noelle, 7

"Love is when your puppy licks your face even after you left him alone all day." Mary Ann, age 4

"I know my older sister loves me because she gives me all her old clothes and has to go out and buy new ones." Lauren, 4

WISH LIST

- Juice boxes
- Snacks
- CDs for teenagers to listen to while waiting for appt.
- New stuffed animals/toys
- Hand held (DS) computer games for older children.
- Coffee/creamer/sugar for team member meetings.

**To report abuse in Ohio County, WV , call (304) 232-4411
To report abuse in Brooke/Hancock County, call (304) 794-3060**

**Marshall County, WV call (304) 843-4120
Belmont County, Ohio call (740) 633-5627**

Tips for keeping your children safe this Halloween

The school year is back and the fall season is upon us. This only means two things to kids; candy and costumes! Around this time of year children are being very active due to the sunny weather that Summer and Fall provides. The first major anticipated holiday (to kids anyhow) is Halloween. Halloween gives many opportunities for warm family moments such as hay rides, corn mazes, and of course bonding over sugary pieces of hard earned candy; trick or treat! However during all the family bonding that Halloween provides it is important to know safety tips to keep your family safe during scariest time of year! For instance, did you know a child is four times more likely to get hit by a car on Halloween than any other night of the year?



Tips for Parents:

- Encourage group outings with adult supervision, and participate in the excitement of planning the outing.
- Young children should be accompanied by an adult. Older children should be supervised by an adult.
- Set a trick-or-treat route.
- Talk to your children about stranger's safety rules (including unknown adults in costumes).
- Costumes should be comfortable, flame resistant, colorful, and have attached reflective strips for good visibility.
- Inspect all candy and discard any candy that has been previously opened.

For Kids:

- Don't lose sight of adult companion.
- Walk, don't run. Wear comfortable shoes with nonskid soles.
- Visit only familiar neighborhoods following the trick-or-treat routes set by the adult who accompanies you.
- Stay on the sidewalks and look out for cars at intersections.
- Avoid approaching animals you don't know, they can be dangerous, especially if you try to touch them or run around them.
- Wait to get home to eat the treats.

Work Cited: Miami Children's Hospital. Health Promotion & Education. "Halloween Safety Tips" <http://www.mch.com/page/EN/374/Health-Promotion-and-Education/Halloween-Safety->

**"Let no
child
live in
Fear"**



9th Annual Toast of the Vineyard

This years Toast of the Vineyard was very successful. We would like to thank our Title Sponsor: Christian Fellowship Foundation and the following major sponsors:

Bordas & Bordas, Consul Energy, Fitzsimmons Foundation, West Liberty University. Also, Project Best, Ohio Valley Medical Center, Di Carlos Pizza, Fraternal Order of Police, Gary Lewis DDS, Health Plan, Highmark West Virginia, Peacock Keller and YSS. We would also like to thank the local businesses (way too many to list), who donated to our live and silent auction, and of course a BIG thank you to those of you who attended, we hope you had fun.



Harmony House
2000 Eoff Street
Wheeling, WV 26003
Phone: 304-230-2205
Fax: 304-234-8479

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US POSTAGE
PAID
WHEELING, WV
PERMIT NO. 58

66850 Pogue Rd
St. Clairsville, OH 43950
Ohio : 740-695-0812
Fax 740-695-0781

harmonyhousecac@yahoo.com
harmonyhousecacwv.org



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If you would like to be taken off our mailing list please email: harmonyhousecac@aol.com or call 304-230-2205

Invest in the lives of children by supporting Harmony House, Children's Advocacy Center

I commit to supporting abused children in my community with my contribution to the 2013 annual appeal of:

- | | | |
|--------------------------|-------------------|-----------------|
| • Friend of children | \$10 - \$49 | Individual |
| • Advocate of children | \$50 - \$299 | Name: _____ |
| • Protector of children | \$300 - \$499 | Business: _____ |
| • Guardian of children | \$500 - \$999 | Name: _____ |
| • Patron of children | \$1,000 - \$2,999 | Address: _____ |
| • Benefactor of children | \$3,000 - \$4,999 | _____ |
| • Champion of children | \$5,000 or more | _____ |

I would like to take advantage of the NIP credits (contributions of \$500 or more) if they are still available.

This donation is to honor: _____

This donation is in memory of: _____

I would like to purchase ___ \$20 ticket(s) to the Monster Mash Bash on October 26th

I would like you to send me a sponsorship form for the Monster Mash Bash

Please send check to Harmony House, 2000 Eoff Street, Wheeling, WV 26003