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The Family & Youth Services Bureau provides
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Reaching Out is the newsletter of the
Family & Youth Services Bureau
published three times yearly
253 W. Lincolnway, Valparaiso, IN 46383



Reaching Out

The newsletter of the Family & Youth Services Bureau May 2018 volume 7 • issue 2

Tot Shop—Funding Cuts Impact Service

The Family & Youth Services Bureau's Tot Shop had a busy year in 2017. The number of shoppers increased by 50 compared to 2016. However, **due to state funding cuts impacting service, the Tot Shop will not be able to service as many shoppers in 2018 despite the growing need.**

Over 1,500 shoppers redeemed 2,129 coupons for essential baby items in 2017.

Tot Shop's First
Crib Drive is a Success!!

Thank you to
Valparaiso Noon Kiwanis
Club
&
Jack & Carol Ronneau

How does the Tot Shop work?

Parents aren't given items or made to purchase them, but rather earn them by participating in activities such as prenatal exams, parenting classes, well-baby check-ups, health screenings, and immunizations. The coupons they earn can be exchanged for items including diapers, educational toys, clothing, and even cribs. If a mom-to-be makes regular pre-natal visits to her physician she may be able to earn enough coupons to exchange them for a new convertible crib. It's an expense that is out of reach for many families in Porter County but a safe place to sleep for an infant is crucial.

As demand for the Tot Shop has increased over the last few years, program funding has correspondingly been reduced by the state which has historically funded it. The Extended Tot Shop had to be cut in early 2018 as a result. Cont. on p.2



Saturday, June 9th



Chalk the Walk
A Family & Youth Services Bureau Event



Planning for the 6th Annual Chalk the Walk is in full swing and there will be a number of new activities added to the schedule this year! This event is primarily a fundraiser for FYSB but it is also an art fair and family fair at which we welcome everyone in the community to participate in this fun day.!!

IT'S AN ART FAIR!!

Strolling around the
Courthouse Square you'll see
the processes and results of
artistic creation by some truly
talented artists in the
community.



IT'S A FAMILY FAIR!!

There will be events and
giveaways for children throughout
the day. Highlights include live
performances, craft centers, games
and more! All ages will have lots to
see and do!

Beyond the Influence Workshop
Families and Addiction— A workshop by Allen Wright of Frontline Foundations, Inc.
Tuesday, May 8th, 2018 from 6-7:30pm at the Valparaiso office, RSVP to kunderwood@fysb.org. Space is limited.

Tot Shop cont.

The Tot Shop funding cutbacks that have led to service reductions impact the families that need our services. Private donations are the only source for making up the funding shortfall. The majority of our fundraising efforts during 2018 will be focused on maintaining the current level of Tot Shop operations.

The Tot Shop has been in operation since 2003. The program encourages positive parenting by providing essential supplies for pregnant women and families with infants and young children up to age five. Since 2015, the amount of shoppers who have used the Tot Shop per year has increase from 1,087 to 1,508 which represents a 39% increase in two years.

Coupons are distributed at over 20 medical and social service locations in Northwest Indiana.

The need for Tot Shop has increased while funding has decreased.



Chalk the Walk—Budding Artists

Grade school and middle school artists are able to participate free of charge courtesy of

1st Source Bank's Budding Artists sponsorship

Last year, we had our first designated Budding Artists area for young artists to get a chance to create smaller chalk art drawings. If you have a group of 2 or more children in grade school or middle school who would like to be Budding Artists and create their own chalk masterpiece please contact Kate Flannery at kflannery@fysb.org to register or download a registration form on our facebook page: [Chalk the Walk Porter County](#).

Participants will receive a free t-shirt!



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Melanie Dooley Director of Prevention and Early Intervention Services 219.763.6623 mdooley@fysb.org

Sarah Fink Director of Porter County CASA Program 219.464.9585 sfink@fysb.org

Kate Flannery Director of Development and Community Relations 219.464.9585 kflannery@fysb.org

Carrie Honeycutt Office Operations Manager 219.464.9585 choneycutt@fysb.org

Jessica White Director of Clinical Services 219.464.9585 jwhite@fysb.org

CASA Corner



When abused or neglected children are removed from their homes by the court they are assigned a CASA volunteer who represents the needs of the child throughout the duration of the case. Due in part to the significant increase in substance abuse in Porter County, the number of children being removed from their homes is exploding!

This translates into a **150% increase in children served** in the past five years. The number of hours spent on cases by volunteers and staff has skyrocketed from 2,067 hours in 2016 to 3,166 hours in 2017. This is a 53% increase in just one year.

Porter County CASA is charged with serving every child who needs an advocate, but sometimes staff members must step in to cover cases when there are not enough CASA volunteers, which ultimately strains resources needed for recruitment and retention. This is why CASA needs your help. With such exponential increases over a short period, more volunteers are needed.

If you would like to learn more about joining this group of volunteers that are impacting so many young lives please contact casainfo@fysb.org or 219.464.9585.

Summer Day Camp

Registration is now open

Traditional summer camp isn't right for every child. Instead of being a time of joy and a chance to spread your wings, a child who struggles socially can feel anxious about going to camp.

The FYSB Summer Day Camp takes place from June 11th to June 22nd and is offered to children ages 8-12 at no cost. Communication, confidence, and cooperation are the focus of each activity.

The Summer Day Camp at FYSB is led by licensed Clinical Services Counselors who lead campers in games, crafts, and readings designed to teach and practice social skills. Friday field trips are part of the program as well.

Campers will meet Monday through Thursday at the Forest Park Rotary Shelter and at our agency for each Friday field trip.

If you know a child who could benefit from our Summer Day Camp please call FYSB at 219.464.9585.

The registration deadline is **May 25, 2018**

Our Mission is to assist youth and families through supportive services that create a positive change in Porter County.

The Family & Youth Services Bureau will ensure that no person shall be excluded from or denied participation in services based on the grounds of race, age, religion, sex, disability, national origin, ancestry, protected class, or any other protected class as defined by current law, or otherwise subjected to discrimination under any program or activity that directly or indirectly receives state or federal support.

Featured Donors—Mike and Mark Connors of Boy Conn Printing



FYSB's relationship with Mark Connors and Boy Conn printing goes back decades. Mark was first introduced to FYSB by its founder and past President, Dennis Morgan when Dennis was Mark's baseball coach as a child. Dennis made sure Mark was aware of the many people FYSB helped in the community from a young age. As Mark grew up, and came to be in a managerial position at his family business Boy Conn, he felt that helping FYSB was like helping family. Mark and Boy Conn printing are still generous to the organization to this day including printing the FYSB newsletter for over a thousand recipients and sponsoring Chalk the Walk!

Mark is particularly moved by FYSB's CASA and Tot Shop programs. He knows how important it is to take care of the most vulnerable in our community and these programs do just that.

Mark and his brother Mike are lifelong Valpo residents running Boy Conn printing which has been in the family for three generations. He is a graduate of Ball State where he received graphics training. He is married to Natalie and they have a 10-year old son who is already learning about the family business. Mark enjoys coaching baseball and soccer in his spare time both with his son and as a volunteer coach for the Valpo Boys & Girls Club. FYSB and all of Valpo benefit from the many ways the Connors give back.

