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# Reaching Out

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## Safe Sleep Program Returns to FYSB

We are proud to announce that FYSB received funding from Community Partners that allowed the agency to reinstate the Safe Sleep Program through the Tot Shop. The agency previously provided this service, however due to funding cuts by the State of Indiana a few years ago, it was discontinued.



The Safe Sleep Program is geared towards families of low income who have a baby under 12 months that don't have a safe sleeping place for their baby. Family & Youth Services Bureau has partnered with *Cribs for Kids*® to provide this valuable service. *Cribs for Kids*® provides training, supplies, educational training, and other related materials. Eligible families receive a free Pack 'N Play® portable crib plus other safe sleep items (shown in photo) and literature that can significantly reduce sleep-related deaths and SIDS (Sudden Infant Death Syndrome). In exchange, new parents are required to attend a training on safe sleep practices. Members of FYSB's staff have received the training as 'safe sleep trainers' in order to be able to offer this program in seven counties in Northern Indiana.

Sleep can be a dangerous time for infants. Incidents while sleeping are the largest cause of infant death with over 3,500 cases per year. *Cribs for Kids*® has done the research to determine the main causes behind the deaths and identify best practices for preventing them. This is the kind of knowledge every new family should have. Then, to include the items needed to do what is recommended, is an added attribute! The training literature is offered in Spanish as well. Cont. on p.2



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## CENTURY 21 Alliance Group continues Pick & Treat for Tots Partnership



The Tot Shop has benefitted significantly from the Pick & Treat for Tots annual drive over the last five years in-part due to the generosity of the staff at Valparaiso CENTURY 21 Alliance Group. We're happy to announce they plan to continue to support the drive again this year!

Their office participates in several community drives each year but the staff especially enjoys buying the baby items the Tot Shop needs! The full bin we receive from them each year is proof of that!

CENTURY 21 Alliance Group is a full-service residential and commercial real estate brokerage firm in the Northwest Indiana area. The group, known as Indiana's foremost real estate brokerage, has consistently earned CENTURY 21's Quality Service and Presidential Awards which recognize production and outstanding service.

Sole sponsorship for Pick & Treat for Tots is provided by BMO Harris Bank.





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

## Board Participation at Chalk the Walk 2021

The FYSB Board was a big part of the success of this year's Chalk the Walk! Almost every member signed up as a premier sponsor and/or helped significantly the day of the event. We offer our sincere thanks to:

### FYSB Board Premier Sponsors



**Darby Straw**



**Johanna Williams**



**Jon Rutkowski**



**Paul Knauff**



**Pat McGinley**

**Also to David Butterfield, Connie Rudd & Amy Solmos for their contributions!!**

## Safe Sleep cont.

Based on current resources, we're confident that we will be able to offer this program to every family that requests it. We are also partnering with another community organization to make the availability of this program known. Please call FYSB if you or someone you know could benefit from our Safe Sleep Program so we can keep babies safe!



## CASA CORNER

Our CASA volunteers continue to inspire us with their dedication to advocating for children who have experienced abuse and/or neglect. Here are some examples of how they've gone above and beyond to impact young lives recently:

- CASAs have reached out to school professionals to help enroll children in summer school or tutoring so they won't fall behind.
- A reluctant child with a CASA was empowered to take to the soccer field after seeing his CASA in attendance at his game.
- A CASA traveled out of town to offer one-on-one support to a child with severe autism transitioning to a new home.
- A CASA who advocates for two teenaged girls and their younger brother (who were forced out of their home with only the clothes on their back after a Drug Task Force raid) made sure they had their personal belongings delivered to them before their first day of school.
- A CASA fixed bicycles for his CASA children, along with shepherding their caretaker-grandmother through a guardianship process when she had no other supports.

*Thank you CASAs!!*

## New FYSB Board of Directors Member – Amy Solmos



We are happy to announce that Amikay (Amy) Solmos has accepted a position on the FYSB Board of Directors. Amy has a strong background in the arts and is excited to bring a fresh perspective to the Board.

Amy received her undergraduate degree from Purdue University and her Master's degree from Valparaiso University. She has been a member of the FYSB Auxiliary Board for three years and helped with the planning and execution of the CASAblanca gala to celebrate CASA's 30<sup>th</sup> Anniversary in 2019.

When asked why she chose to commit to FYSB, Amy said "This agency does incredible work for the community and it's an honor to be a part of it."

Amy, her husband Matt, and their daughter Bryn, grew up in Valparaiso, then lived in other places for a few years and came back about 10 years ago.

## Family & Youth Services Bureau

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