

# holiday helping hands

florence crittenton services



**Making  
Holiday  
Dreams  
Come True**

Thanksgiving and the December holidays are the toughest time of year for the pregnant and parenting teens that attend the Florence Crittenton School. While all around them they see people preparing for the holidays, buying turkeys and trees and fluffy red stockings, they open their thin wallets and wonder how they can possibly find the means to bring holiday cheer to their own children.

You can deliver your gifts directly to our young clients or to our warehouse, or if you need, we can pick them up from you. We also invite you to help present gifts to students and their families on Dec. 17, and to attend our festive annual holiday wrapping party on Dec. 15!

When almost 9 out of 10 of Florence Crittenton Services' clients live near the poverty line, how can they afford to put a Thanksgiving feast on the table, or buy their son a toy train or their daughter a new doll?

That's where you come in. During this season of giving, please consider giving from your heart to the families of the pregnant and parenting teens served by Florence Crittenton Services. We warmly invite you – with your family, friends or colleagues – to participate in one or more of Florence Crittenton Services' 2010 Holiday Helping Hands Projects (see box).

## Holiday Giving Opportunities

**Thanksgiving Baskets** – Your family, company, place of worship, club, school or other group can provide all the fixings of a Thanksgiving meal for a young family. **GOAL: 70 baskets**

**Giving Tree** – Your group can set up a holiday tree in your workplace, place of worship, school, retail establishment or other community location, and collect gifts listed on ornaments for our clients' children. **GOAL: Over 350 children's' gifts and diapers**

**Sponsor-A-Family** – A group of family, friends, club members or colleagues provides a holiday meal and gifts for an entire teen family. **GOAL: 50 families**

Contact **Marcia Jamison**, Volunteer and Events Manager, for dates and details, at [mjamison@FlorenceCrittentonCO.org](mailto:mjamison@FlorenceCrittentonCO.org) or 303-321-6363, ext. 208. Sign up online to get involved, at [www.FlorenceCrittentonCO.org](http://www.FlorenceCrittentonCO.org)!



# holiday giving



Support Florence Crittenton Services' Holiday Helping Hands Projects and bring joy into the homes of our struggling teen families during the holiday season!

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# PathFinder

The newsletter for volunteers, supporters and friends of Florence Crittenton Services

November 2010

Florence Crittenton Services

Helping Teen Parents Raise Healthy Families



President & CEO Sue Carparelli with Linda Armstrong Kelly

## From Cycles of Success to Holiday Giving

What a great fall we are having at Florence Crittenton

Services! As we celebrate the spectacular success of the "Cycles of Success" Luncheon, we're barreling ahead into joyous Holiday Giving.

Here on campus, everyone is rallying around our new (old) identity as Florence Crittenton Services. The feedback we've received from the community has been very positive, and though of course it's an adjustment, the name gives us a new feeling of unity and shared purpose.

The Early Learning Center (ELC) is our focus in this issue of the Pathfinder, as we head into the holidays and the year's end, a time when thoughts turn to giving. Colorado's child care tax credit means you can maximize your donation to Florence Crittenton by designating the ELC. In this Pathfinder, we describe how we work to create cycles of success with our youngest clients!

Finally, our Holiday Helping Hands project gives you a unique opportunity to directly experience the joy of giving. You can fill baskets with Thanksgiving feasts. You can deliver gift baskets to us or directly to the girls and their families. You can wrap gifts. You can come and actually hand our students and their children bags of gifts and food! It's a time that puts smiles on our faces every day as we work.

I hope you'll get involved!

## Early Learning Center Nurtures Babies, Teaches Young Mothers

In each issue of the Pathfinder, we're highlighting one of the ways that Florence Crittenton Services creates cycles of success for teen families. This month we visit the Early Learning Center.

They may seem like cute little dolls to be cuddled and cooed to, but the babies who arrive at the Florence Crittenton School's Early Learning Center as early as 6 weeks of age are actually learning machines, tiny human sponges soaking up everything going on around them.

"Studies have shown that the best learning happens between zero and three years," declares Marianne Giarratano, Senior Director of the Early Learning Center. "The earlier the developmental stages are met, the easier it is for children to love learning."

### Want to Support Florence Crittenton's Early Learning Center?

Take advantage of Colorado's child care tax exemption!  
Details on page 3.

The Early Learning Center, or ELC, is a licensed, 3-Qualistar-rated early childhood education center located on our campus. It serves an average of 120 babies per year, age six weeks to two years, while acting as a "parenting laboratory" where professionals teach young moms how to care for their children and promote their health and



ELC Teacher and Florence Crittenton alumna Lannette Casias with two small charges as she helps create cycles of success

development.

The first function of the ELC is to keep teen mothers in school – lack of child care is a major contributor to the high dropout rate for teen moms. But once the children arrive, the focus is on maximizing learning opportunities to give them the best possible start. Coming from backgrounds of poverty, they are at high risk for a myriad of developmental and societal problems. Strong parenting, health and

(Continued on page 2)

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# ELC Helps Teen Moms Become Better Parents

Continued from page 1

classrooms. Written in English and Spanish because 82 percent of the girls who attend the school are Latino, the boxes contain books such as "Goodnight, Moon" and "Polar Bear, Polar Bear, What Do You See?" and accompanying learning tools such as audio tapes, puzzles, manipulative objects and toys

him about gentle touch."

Taking care of students' children also includes their physical well-being. Because of the challenge teen mothers face getting access to medical care, Florence Crittenton Services follows up to ensure regular immunizations and well baby checks.

developmental support in the Early Learning Center can transform their odds.

The work actually begins while the teen moms are still pregnant, when they begin taking hands-on Parenting Lab classes, taught by ELC staff members, to learn how to care for their future children. "Every hour of the day, we have moms in here," says Giarratano. "They work with their babies, and with the other students, to learn about different developmental stages, and different personalities."

that address fine and large motor development, sensory stimulation and creativity.

Items used for learning in the classroom can be easily transferred to the students' homes. "We really try to incorporate the home environment into our environment, and our environment back into the home environment," Giarratano explains.

For babies and toddlers, Giarratano says the ELC offers a purposeful curriculum that emphasizes learning through play. "We watch babies (called authentic assessment) and see what the next developmental tasks they need to master are," she says. "If, for example, we find they're not tracking correctly, then we will work on visual tracking skills for their pre-reading, so that when they are ready to read, their eyes are ready for that. ... We really look at what each baby needs individually, and provide the curriculum that meets their needs."

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Fun on the ELC Playground

Esperanza worked with Ezikel outside of school as well. "I probably would have dropped out and stayed home with him if it weren't for this school and the ELC," says Shateera Busby, 16, who recently sat in the ELC's "Morning Glories" classroom reading to her one-year-old son Lyndell. She says ELC teachers also taught her how to handle his aggressive behavior. "He hits a lot," she says. "They showed me how to teach

year-old son Lyndell. She says ELC teachers also taught her how to handle his aggressive behavior. "He hits a lot," she says. "They showed me how to teach



Parenting Lab Student Shateera Busby reads to son Lyndell using a book box

"If we are able to give children that quality learning from the very beginning," says Giarratano, "that is the first step in creating that cycle of success."

It works! During the 2009-2010 school year:

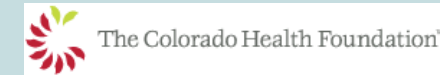
- 100% of children enrolled in the ELC for at least 4 months were at or above expected developmental level.
- 100% of babies enrolled in the Center were current on basic immunizations.

And an average 86 percent of eligible seniors have graduated over the last three years, a testament to the ELC's power to help keep teen moms in school.

# florence crittenton giving

## Matching Grants Maximize Your Giving!

Florence Crittenton Services has received two generous matching grants that can make your donations grow exponentially.



### Colorado Health Foundation

The Colorado Health Foundation has given Florence Crittenton Services a \$15,000 matching grant to support our health-related programs. The grant helps us provide parent-child development education, insurance plan enrollment and preventive, primary and mental health care. It meets the Foundation's goals of ensuring all people have access to the components

of healthy living, health coverage and coordinated health care. This generous match gives new donors the ability to double their dollars.

### Angel Donor

A Denver Foundation anonymous donor will match 50 cents for every dollar raised by Florence Crittenton Services, up to \$100,000, through June 30, 2011. Gifts qualifying for the match will include all increased donations from existing donors and all new donations from first-time donors. Gifts from all types of donors (individuals, corporation, and foundations) will qualify for the match. This is an extraordinary opportunity for us.

So if you have been thinking about donating to Florence Crittenton Services – or if it has been a while since you have given – now is the time. These two matches combined can transform your gifts. Combine these with the Colorado child care tax credit (see box, below) and you'll be amazed how your gift can grow!

Please donate today, either online at [www.FlorenceCrittentonCO.org](http://www.FlorenceCrittentonCO.org) or by using the envelope enclosed in this newsletter.

Thank you!



## Colo Child Care Tax Credit

Please consider designating the Early Learning Center in your end-of-year giving. Not only will you help the babies of teen mothers get a healthy start in life, but you are eligible to receive a 50% tax credit through the State of Colorado Child Care Contribution Tax Credit program. That means you can choose to maximize the impact of your charitable giving by donating even more!

Donors who make a monetary contribution to promote child care in Colorado may claim an income tax credit of 50% of the total contribution. Combined with other state and federal itemized tax deductions, the actual net cost of a donation is approximately one-third of your gift. Please notify us when you make your contribution that your gift is designated to the Early Learning Center. For more information, please visit [www.revenue.state.co.us](http://www.revenue.state.co.us) and search "child care," or contact your tax advisor.



10-year-old Amanda Komoczi, the daughter of a teen mom from Lakewood, delivers the 572 books she collected this fall for Florence Crittenton School students and their children.

## About Us

Florence Crittenton Services is a 501(c)(3) organization helping teen parents raise healthy families. Our programs include the Florence Crittenton School, the Early Learning Center and the Family Engagement Center.

**Our Mission:** To help teen parents raise healthy families

**Our Vision:** Healthy self-sufficient families building strong communities

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# special events



## CYCLES OF SUCCESS

### Luncheon Sets Records

The Florence Crittenton Services "Cycles of Success" Luncheon, held at the Seawell Ballroom of the Denver Center for the Performing Arts on Oct. 12, surpassed all expectations. The event attracted almost 400 people and generated more than \$90,000 in revenue, a 75 percent increase over last year!

Thanks to everyone who sponsored, attended, helped, or generously gave from their hearts. Here are the final numbers:

- \$71,000 in sponsorships and ticket sales (compared to \$43,000 last year).
- More than \$20,000 in donations (compared to \$8,875 last year).
- Matches from the Colorado Health Foundation and an angel donor mean new and increased donations are worth even more!
- Nearly 400 people attended (compared to 300 last year).
- 25 of our Florence Crittenton School students greeted guests, helped with registration, handed out programs and met supporters at their tables.

### Armstrong Kelly Visits the School

Luncheon speaker Linda Armstrong Kelly, mother of superstar cyclist Lance Armstrong, visited Florence Crittenton Services the day before the luncheon. She toured the school and held babies in the Early Learning Center before delivering words of inspiration to



Armstrong Kelly with Novus Biologicals President Karen Padgett

students at an assembly in the cafeteria. Many stayed long after the last bell as Armstrong Kelly answered their questions about how she was able to overcome poverty and abuse to become a successful professional and mother.

### Ready to Give?

If you weren't able to donate at the luncheon, or if you'd like to increase your gift, we encourage you to give now to take advantage of the matching funds! Just go to [www.FlorenceCrittentonCO.org](http://www.FlorenceCrittentonCO.org), or send your check to our offices at 55 S. Zuni Street, Denver, CO 80223. Gifts designated to the Early Learning Center are eligible for a Colorado state child care credit, which stretches your giving even farther.



Linda Armstrong Kelly with student speaker Evangaline Martinez and her son Jayden

Your gifts help us:

- Provide a quality high school education to jump-start their futures.
- Provide quality child care for our teen moms' children.
- Provide counseling for our at-risk clients and their families.

Thank you for investing in Cycles of Success!



CONSTRUCTION LEADERS



Contributors

