

# Voices



children & families of iowa

Stories and voices of hope.

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## Cornerstone Is On the Front Lines in Battle to Save Youth From Synthetic Addictions

When Mark\* was nine years old, his mother overdosed on prescription medications and died. His dad was in prison serving time on robbery charges, so Mark and his three younger brothers moved in with their grandparents in Des Moines. Mark's grandfather, who has been his only father figure for much of his life, was recently diagnosed with stomach cancer and given just a few months to live. To combat the stress and loneliness of his chaotic and stressful childhood, Mark started smoking marijuana daily at age 13, began consuming alcohol and experimenting with smoking synthetic cannabinoids known as "Pure Evil" at age 15.

Mark was referred to Children & Families of Iowa's Cornerstone Recovery program for treatment after testing positive for marijuana during a drug screen stemming from a previous offense. He had been purchasing the synthetics from a local shop, stealing money from his family to support his \$20-25 daily habit. He smoked to gain status among his friends, but continued using as a way to escape the pain of his family situation and to feel numb. "Smoking Evil gave me status and power with my friends," says Mark. "I could smoke stuff that other people couldn't handle. It was cheaper than marijuana and lasted longer. It was easy to get and it allowed me to be numb and escape life." Unfortunately, the reality of his usage included blackouts, vomiting, racing heart rates, shortness of breath and fainting spells.

When Mark was admitted to Cornerstone Recovery he was dependent on Pure Evil. "He was angry, aggressive, had mood swings, and didn't care about a lot of things going on in his life," says Chris, his therapist at Cornerstone. "He also struggled with anger control issues and strained relationships with members of his family." He was admitted into day treatment, and through therapy and a great deal of soul searching, Mark is progressing on a healthier path. He attends weekly therapy sessions where he is learning tips for relapse prevention, identifying internal and external triggers, coping skills, anger control techniques and employment skills. As he

makes improvements, the level and focus of his care shift to accommodate his changing needs.

"Mark's prognosis for recovery is very good," says Chris. "He will continue to drop down in levels of treatment until he completes the program. He is currently substance-free, and is working hard to build a toolbox of coping skills that he can employ when he senses a trigger. Recovery from substance abuse is notoriously difficult, but Mark is a resilient young man who has already overcome so much in his life. I have no doubt that he will overcome this as well, as long as his heart and his mind stay with the plan."



"Before Cornerstone, my life was nothing but stress, uncertainty and running from trouble," says Mark. "Now my goal to finish high school is back on track, and I am starting to think about college. I'd like to find a job where I can work outside. Having a family someday is really important to me."

*Note: Because of the emergent nature of synthetic drugs, there is no specialized treatment for abusers. Cornerstone uses a tailored approach in this case, because the substance is legally available, easily accessible to anyone, and growing in popularity. Cornerstone is one of the few treatment facilities in Iowa that can check for synthetic drugs in a urinalysis.*

*\*Names have been changed to protect client's privacy.*

More hope inside!

Why We Give ■ Events





# Why We Give: Stories of Hope from People Who Give Back

## Board Members Bring Insight and Dedication to Programming and Fundraising

**F**orty-seven individuals serve on Children & Families of Iowa's (CFI) two volunteer boards. The Board of Directors provides leadership and oversight for all aspects of our five main program areas, and the Board of Trustees secures funding and cultivates donor relationships. Each board member brings a unique and invaluable perspective to their position, and each has a different story about how they connected with CFI and why our mission is dear to their hearts.

### **Lynsey Oster**

#### **President – CFI Foundation Board of Trustees, 2011-2012**

*"I first become involved with CFI in 2007, when I was invited to consider joining the Foundation Board. At that time, my familiarity with CFI was limited to events such as Kidsfest, and I did not have a clear understanding of the breadth of services they offered. I toured several CFI facilities and the more I learned the more firmly I came to believe that this was an organization I would be proud to represent. Today I know that the dollars I personally contribute, as well as those I solicit, support programs that serve hundreds of families in need every day, offering the resources and support they need to build strong futures for themselves. When I hear clients' stories, their challenges and how CFI has been able to help, it reaffirms my decision to support CFI with my time and financial resources."*



### **Vicki Hedlin**

#### **Secretary/Treasurer – CFI Agency Board of Directors, 2011-2012**

*"I was recruited by a friend to serve on CFI's Agency Board in 2003. Although I had heard of CFI, my first real connection was made during a tour of various CFI facilities. I saw CFI staff members working with clients with great skill and respect, and I began to see how lives could be changed. I was especially moved by my time spent observing the Therapeutic Classroom at CFI's Child Development Center, chatting with a young resident at Farrand House about her life-changing experiences she had there, and seeing a woman entering the Family Violence Center after obviously having suffered physical abuse. I knew then that I had to be involved and wanted to support this organization. I do everything I can to make it possible for CFI staff to provide much needed services to the most vulnerable members of our community, including giving to the annual fund each year and including CFI's Endowment Fund in my will."*



### **Jan Beckstrom**

#### **Past Member–Foundation Board of Trustees**

*"When I became a board member and went on my very first site tour, I was hooked. Seeing the services firsthand made it all very real to me. The thing that spoke volumes to me was while touring the Domestic Violence Services' Family Violence Center I asked the director what they needed most. She simply said socks and underwear. She explained that women, many with small children, often escape their abusive conditions without time to pack or prepare at all, arriving at the shelter with little more than the clothes they are wearing. It really struck me, and I realized how much most of us take for granted. As my experience with CFI grew, I came to understand how efficiently CFI works, funneling as much as 90 cents of every dollar raised directly into programming and services. Today I spread the word about CFI's commitment to helping families wherever I go!"*





# Mark Your Calendar



## Princess's Party for Children & Families of Iowa



**Saturday, September 22, 2012**

**8 - 10 a.m.**

**Jordan Creek Town Center Food Court**

**Cost: \$12 per person**

Children & Families of Iowa invites princesses and their adult chaperones to join us for a fun-filled morning of princess activities! The morning will include breakfast, crafts, games and the opportunity to meet princess characters. Other activities are available for an additional fee: Professional photo with Pixi or Sleeping Beauty, kids' glamour spa, and a special screening of the movie "Brave." This event always sells out and attendance is limited, so register online soon!

All proceeds benefit Children & Families of Iowa's programs that help at-risk families. Visit [www.cfiowa.org](http://www.cfiowa.org) to register!



### **Second Annual Boys will be Boys Event A Hit**

More than 100 children and their grownups attended CFI's Boys will be Boys fundraiser on Saturday, May 19. The event was presented by EMC National Life Insurance Company and hosted by Incredible Pizza in Urbandale. Attendees enjoyed breakfast, a raffle, and received game cards for use in the arcade. Spider-Man and Batman were on hand for photo ops, and Urbandale Fire Department equipment and TMC Transportation trucks were available for exploring.

Be sure to mark your calendar for next year's Boys will be Boys event, tentatively scheduled for April 20, 2013.

### **Willow Creek Ladies Invitational Picture Perfect Outing**

This event was held on a gorgeous, clear morning June 26. Willow Creek's Two-Lady Golf Invitational offered a quick breakfast, ideal golf conditions, camaraderie, and the chance to support the programs of Children & Families of Iowa. Fifty-one 2-lady teams participated, raising more than \$6,000 for CFI and the families we serve.

### **Copper Creek Ladies Tournament Continues 11-Year Streak of Support**

**Thank you** to the Copper Creek Ladies Golf Club for organizing this popular event held this year on Friday, July 20. One hundred eight ladies competed at Copper Creek Golf Course in Pleasant Hill in this "best shot" tournament, raising more than \$3,900 to benefit CFI's programs for victims of domestic violence.



### **Tango Glitters With Dinner, Dancing and Games**

On Saturday, August 11, Tango attendees enjoyed hors d'oeuvres, live music and dancing, auctions, and gaming tables. Held at the West Des Moines Sheraton Hotel, 265 supporters celebrated into the night, all while raising more than \$164,000 for CFI's Domestic Violence Services. Thank you to our presenting sponsors: Principal Financial Group, Hy-Vee, Meredith, Nationwide, and Ruth and Ron Pearson; as well as our Tango committee and honorary chairs Stephanie and Greg Burrows!

Next year's Tango gala is scheduled for Saturday, August 17, 2013! Check our website at [www.cfiowa.org](http://www.cfiowa.org) for information.

# Holiday Classic 2012

## A golf event "fore" Children & Families of Iowa

Sunday, November 4, 2012

Terrace Hills Golf Course, Altoona

Tee time: 1 p.m.

Lunch served from 11 a.m. – Noon

Cost: \$65 per golfer

Before you put your golf clubs away for the winter, join Children & Families of Iowa for one last golf outing this year. The Holiday Classic is a two person best-ball golf tournament with shotgun start. Prizes are awarded to the lowest scoring twosomes.

All proceeds from the Holiday Golf Classic will benefit Children & Families of Iowa's programs.

Visit [www.cfowa.org](http://www.cfowa.org) for more information or to register.

For additional information about upcoming events,  
visit our website at [www.cfowa.org](http://www.cfowa.org)  
or "like us" on Facebook.

*Save the Date*

**\$100 for \$100**

**Thursday, November 8, 2012**

**10 a.m. - 7 p.m.**

Make a gift of \$100 or more to Children & Families of Iowa at this event and receive a \$100 gift card to use towards your purchase of \$200 or more.

**Available while supplies last!** Custom designed men's socks, featuring Children & Families of Iowa's logo for \$38 per pair. Mr. B will generously donate 100% of the proceeds for each pair sold during this event to CFI.

Mr. B. | 1995 NW 86th St. | Clive, Iowa

**Mr. B**  
For Men & Women

*New ways to give at  
[www.cfowa.org](http://www.cfowa.org)*

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