

# Voices



children & families of iowa

Stories and voices of hope.

Volume 118, Issue No. 1 2014-2015

## A Leap of Faith and Hope for Tomorrow

*How one woman breaks free from a decade of domestic violence and finds safety and stability for her family.*

Last year in Iowa, nearly 20,500 individuals were declared victims of domestic violence, including over 2,800 children (Iowa Attorney General's Office). Many more cases go unreported. Children & Families of Iowa (CFI) continues to provide hope to many families like Sandra's\* who are affected by domestic violence.

When CFI staff first met Sandra, she was lying in a hospital bed with gashes on her head, arms and hands. After a violent episode with her abusive partner, she had jumped out of a window of her home to safety.

Hospital staff were concerned for Sandra when she arrived, knowing this situation was not a rare occurrence for her. Year after year, she had been in and out of the hospital for injuries inflicted by her partner, and her four children were repeatedly exposed to the violence. Sandra feared for her family's safety and desperately wanted a better life for them, but with no money and nothing to her name, she felt helplessly trapped under her abuser's control.

Hospital staff reached out to advocates at CFI's Domestic Violence Services (DVS) who are trained to speak with domestic violence victims. An advocate came to the hospital, where she talked with Sandra about different safety options that were available to her. They discussed the wide range of services and support that the DVS program offered, including the program's safe shelter. The advocate also talked with Sandra's three year-old daughter who was with her during the recent incident, and helped her work through the events she had just witnessed between her parents.



After being treated at the hospital, Sandra and her children moved into the shelter. Staff began to notice the children displaying trauma related behaviors. They were overly aggressive and anxious, and very fearful of being abandoned. After years of experiencing violence in their home, the family was no longer able to mask their pain. Staff collaborated with other organizations in an effort to find stability for the family. They guided Sandra through the employment search process, helping her land a good job where she was able to save enough money to afford living independently from her abuser. Gradually, Sandra began to find strength and courage she never knew she had. CFI staff coached her on how to be more supportive of her children and she joined a community-based outreach group focused on parenting skills.

Sandra's children also began showing significant signs of improvement in their behaviors through counseling and support.

The family moved into CFI's transitional housing, which

offers affordable housing to domestic violence victims. Together they continued to work through their traumatic pasts and improve their family relationships through ongoing counseling.

CFI has given Sandra and her family hope and inspiration in knowing that no matter how bad things get, there is hope for a better life and assistance is available. Your gift will allow more victims like Sandra who are fleeing domestic violence to find safety, security and hope for their future.

*\*Name has been changed to protect client confidentiality.*

*More hope inside!*

Announcement from our CEO ■ Thank you to our volunteers ■ Events



# Dr. Gloria Gray to retire as Children & Families of Iowa's CEO

Dr. Gloria Gray has announced her retirement as CEO of Children & Families of Iowa (CFI), effective February 27, 2015.

For the last 14 years CFI has been under the leadership of Gray, who has overseen many programs that help Iowa's at-risk children and families. Gray's career has totaled 44 years in the human services industry. Early in her career, she spent 13 years with CFI before going on to work at organizations in Kansas City and Oklahoma City. She returned to CFI in November of 2000. "Coming back to CFI was such an easy decision to make because I knew it was a special place, doing awesome work with children and families," says Gray.



Under her leadership, CFI experienced growth in many ways, including:

- An increase in clients served from over 12,000 individuals in 2000 to over 25,000 this past year.
- Growth in the annual budget from \$9.4 million in 2000 to this year's budget of \$16.8 million.
- Our addition of important services to help children and families, including adding infant and toddler care to our array of child care services, aftercare services for youth using our Cornerstone Recovery Program, additional service options for victims of domestic violence, youth work readiness services added to our array of teen programs, the statewide Parent Partner program, and technology upgrades to benefit all aspects of operations.
- Achieved Hague Accreditation, allowing for all aspects of international adoptions.
- Continued accreditation from the Council on Accreditation, an independent nonprofit child and family service accrediting organization.
- A successful capital campaign involving major renovations and structural improvements to CFI facilities in Des Moines.
- An organization-wide commitment to CFI's mission of restoring hope, building futures and changing lives.

"It has been my great honor and pleasure to serve as CFI's leader, and to work with so many talented staff and dedicated board members to help Iowans in need," says Gray. "CFI is in good standing and positioned to maintain success well into the future. I plan to continue my financial support to the organization for many years and hope that you will as well." Watch for our winter newsletter to read about Janice Lane, who will step into the CEO role for CFI next March!

Please join Children & Families of Iowa in extending a warm welcome to this year's incoming board members. As community leaders, professionals and philanthropists, they bring support, vision and oversight to all CFI functions and programming.

## Board of Directors



**Corey Keninger**  
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**Julie Johnson**  
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**Alessandra Meschini**  
*Cooking with Alessandra*

*Thank you to the following individuals and groups who recently shared their time and talents as volunteers of Children & Families of Iowa.*

Nationwide Insurance Group  
WorldLink Exchange Students  
Hope Lutheran's Hope  
for the Heart

Abie Bergeron  
Amanda Logan  
Graylene Dugan  
Walnut Creek Church

Toni Jacobson  
Marisa Heisterkamp  
Zach Heisterkamp  
Stacey Johnson

Jim Knoepfler  
Michelle Durand-Adams  
United Way RSVP Volunteers

# Mark Your Calendar

## Spread the word about Adopt-A-Family!

Sponsorships for our annual Adopt-A-Family program will be available starting **November 3!** Help make the holiday season brighter for those in need by sponsoring a family or lending a hand through volunteer opportunities!

Check out our website to learn more about the program, and help us spread the word to others who may wish to participate. We have many families and children in need of a happy holiday!



**Monday, November 3 -  
Friday, November 7**

1995 NW 86th Street, Clive

Donate \$100 to Children & Families of Iowa and in return receive a \$100 gift certificate to use towards your purchase of \$200 or more. This is a great opportunity to get a head start on holiday shopping or pick up a little something for yourself, while helping families in need!

**VISIT** [www.cfiowa.org](http://www.cfiowa.org) or "like us" on Facebook for up-to-date information and registration for CFI events.

## EVENT RECAPS



*Nathan and Elizabeth Overberg get ready for a day of golfing at CFI's annual Family Tees Golf Tournament.*

### Family Tees Golf Tournament

Family members of all ages enjoyed an active day together on June 26 and raised over \$13,300 for CFI programs!



*Rebecca Albers and Adrienne Boughman enjoy a day outdoors at CFI's Copper Creek Golf Tournament.*

### Copper Creek Golf Tournament

Area women's golf leagues hit the course on July 11 for the 14th annual best shot tournament. A total of \$3,236 was raised to benefit CFI!



*Children & Families of Iowa's CEO Gloria Gray (center) with Tango honorary chairs James and Roxanne Conlin.*

### Tango

Over \$125,000 was raised for CFI at our annual gala August 1, where 260 guests enjoyed hors d'oeuvres, dancing, and silent and live auctions.

# Plan to Attend!



**Saturday, September 6**

Southridge - 1111 E Army Post Rd, Des Moines

This family-friendly event presented by Southridge kicks off at 3 p.m. with activities including **mini golf, inflatables, games, food vendors and raffle prizes**. A **Jason Brown concert** benefiting Children & Families of Iowa begins at 5 p.m. Tickets are available for purchase at [www.cfiowa.org](http://www.cfiowa.org) or at the Hy-Vee Southridge location. Children under 12 years are free!



**Saturday, October 4 | 8 - 10 a.m.**

Jordan Creek Town Center Food Court

Treat your little royals to a morning full of princess activities including **breakfast, games, princess photo opportunities and crafts**. Additional activities available for purchase include: professional photos with featured princesses, children's spa treatments, and VIP packages. All children are welcome and encouraged to dress in royal attire! Online registration will open at [www.cfiowa.org](http://www.cfiowa.org) in early September.

*Find ways to give at  
[www.cfiowa.org](http://www.cfiowa.org)*

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