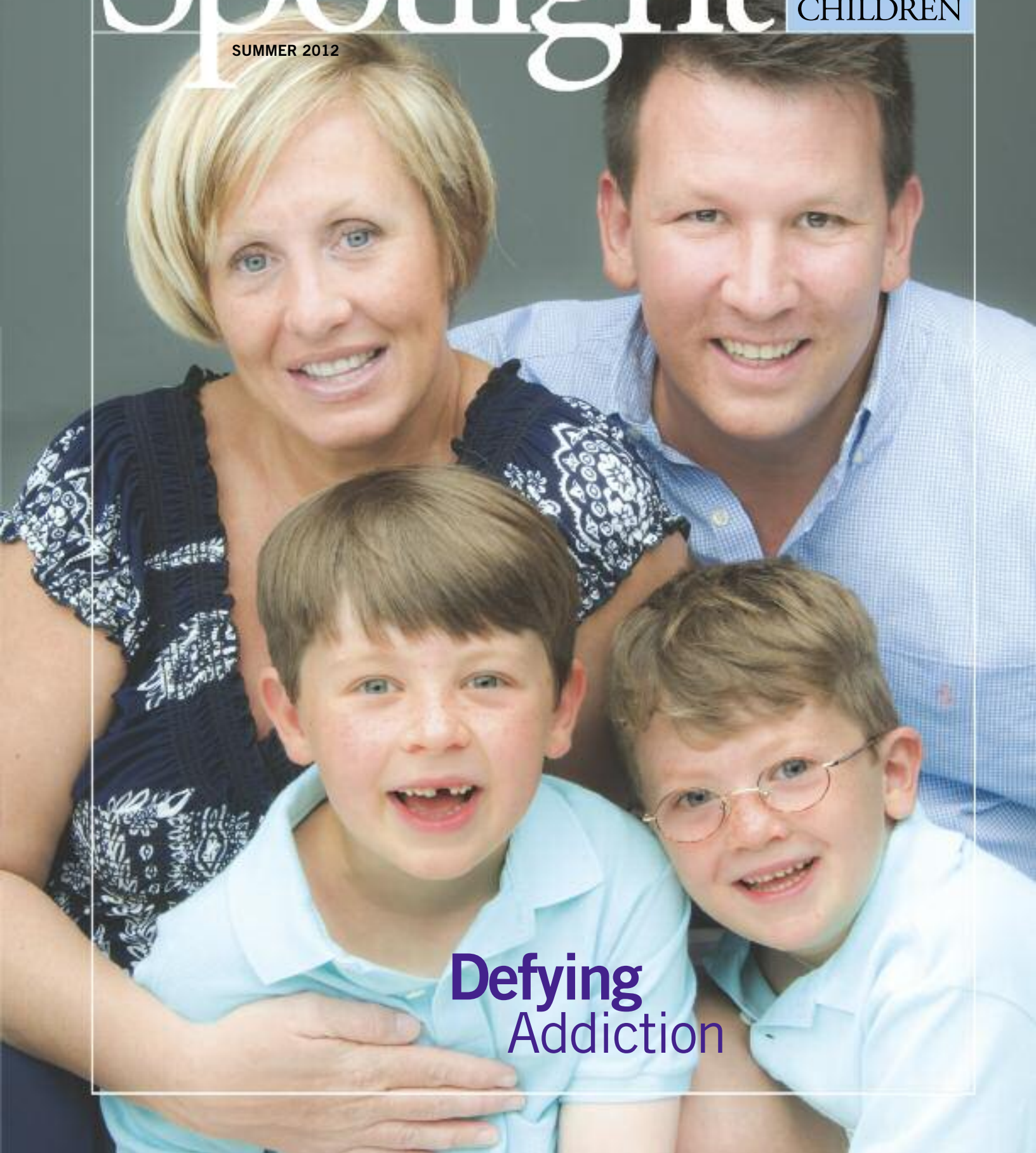


Spotlight

METHODIST
HOME FOR
CHILDREN

SUMMER 2012



**Defying
Addiction**

Spotlight on the Family™

Published semi-annually by
Methodist Home for Children

In service to God, our mission is to build upon the social, physical, emotional, and spiritual strengths of children, youth, and families, and to affirm their worth.

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The Transformation of Self

Recently President Barak Obama awarded a select few Americans our nation's highest civilian award, the Medal of Freedom. Among the recipients was singer and songwriter Bob Dylan. It was noted in the press that Dylan's folk anthem "Like a Rolling Stone" may be the most influential American song of any genre. While that's a claim certain to be debated, no one can deny that Dylan inspired other singers and songwriters, anti-war activists and environmentalists, and was at the vanguard of American cultural changes in the '60s.

While I have never been a particular fan of Dylan's music, I will admit to being greatly impressed by his creation of self. His given name was Robert Zimmerman. As a young man growing up in Minnesota, despite the fact that he could barely sing and could barely play either guitar or harmonica, he had a vision of who and what he wanted to become, and he was bold enough to do so. Young Robert Zimmerman let his hair grow and boarded a bus to New York City. With a nod to poet Dylan Thomas he changed his name and relentlessly pursued open microphones in coffee-

houses in New York City. He refused to listen to reviews claiming (perhaps accurately) that he "can't play, can't sing," knowing he could perform and believing in this character he had created.

What follows in this issue of *Spotlight* are stories of lives also transformed. We are sharing stories not of Medals of Freedom but of "moments of freedom" from abuse, neglect, suffering and fear. These young people are able, often for the first time in their lives, to create a new vision of self and to imagine a future with hope. At MHC, we give them the tools and support they need to fulfill that future. Some leave behind all that's familiar to get there. Some adopt new names signifying their new identity. All are wonderful examples of Christ's ability to work through our foster parents, staff and communities in the task of fashioning each child's preferred future.

Blessings,

Reverend Bruce E. Stanley
President/CEO

ON THE COVER: It's been a year since Colleen and Ted Glackin regained custody of Teddy, 6, and Peter, 4, with counseling and support from Methodist Home for Children. Read their story of recovery on page 2. Photo by Brownie Harris.

News and Updates

Board Members on the Move

Dr. Laura Gerald has been named state health director. A pediatrician and former senior advisor for the N.C. Department of Health and Human Services, she leads the N.C. Division of Prevention, Access and Public Health Services.

Wayne Holden has been named president/CEO at RTI International. A seven-year veteran of the organization, Holden was previously executive vice president of social and statistical sciences.

Transition to Success

When De'Quan Nelms, photo below, was released from the Edgecombe Youth Development Center, he knew he needed help and a fresh start to avoid a repeat of his eight-month commitment for larceny. He got chances for both at an MHC group home, operated in partnership with the N.C. Division of Juvenile Justice.

The Craven Transitional Living Program opened in New Bern last July for court-involved youth who need a safe, secure place to stay while they learn skills for independent living. De'Quan arrived in October and has worked part-time, studied for his adult high

school diploma and trained with MHC staff to improve his independent living and communication skills. In April, he was one of 14 teens who volunteered to tell their stories publicly at MHC open houses in Eastern North Carolina.

De'Quan is set to graduate from the Craven program in July. Read his story online at bit.ly/cravenhome.

HELP for Education

Nationally, fewer than half of foster children graduate from high school and only 2 percent go on to finish college. But Veronica Armstrong and Benita Warren won't be counted among them. They're both in college—two of 18 students getting financial support for their education this year through Methodist Home for Children's Hackley Education and Learning Program (HELP). Armstrong was profiled online this spring as a graduate of the Fostering Bright Futures program at Wake Technical Community College, and she'll attend UNC-Greensboro with HELP funds in the fall. Warren is studying at Guilford Technical Community College with the goal of enrolling at North Carolina A&T. Read their stories online at bit.ly/mhchelp.



Services for Complex Needs

MHC serves a vulnerable population of children who are dually diagnosed with mental illness/severe emotional disorders and developmental disabilities such as autism or traumatic brain injuries. A recent report from Disability Rights North Carolina (DRNC) points to a dire need for more services like these in North Carolina. Specifically, says DRNC Executive Director Vicki Smith, families need help keeping these children at home or accessing foster homes with specially trained adults.

Two MHC group homes serve dually diagnosed youth with the goal of preparing them to live as productively and independently as possible. The homes are located in Jacksonville and offer round-the-clock care, intensive therapies and a carefully choreographed return to the community. Results show most young people in residence are able to return to their families [Outcomes, below]. Darek Alexiou, photo above with his parents, is one of them, and he celebrated a big milestone in June—his high school graduation. Read his story online at bit.ly/dualdiag.



OUTCOMES FOR DUALY DIAGNOSED YOUTH

- 51% return to family homes
- 29% move to lower level of care
- 12% move to higher level of care
- 8% move to facilities for specialized treatment

De'Quan Nelms plans to graduate from the Craven Transitional Living Program in July.

Defying Addiction A Wilmington Couple Recovers Family With Faith

“Colleen, I met your boys. They are just so darling. If they can’t keep you sober, I don’t know what can.”

Perhaps the guardian ad litem said this to motivate Colleen Glackin. Maybe she wanted to challenge the young mother to finally beat her long-running battle with drug and alcohol addiction. But what Colleen heard that day in August 2010 was condemnation—more judgment, spoken before by disappointed social workers, family members and her own aching conscience when she’d made a mistake. And she’d made a lot of mistakes in recent years.

From all appearances, Colleen and Ted Glackin once led a charmed life with two beautiful children, successful careers, a 4,000-square-foot home in Wilmington. Colleen came from a wealthy family; she had a Bachelor of Science in Nursing from Georgetown University. Ted was a general contractor with success in a side business, affiliate marketing. But none of that, including the children they loved dearly, could keep them sober. Both were tending addictions that ruined their lives. By the time the boys’ guardian ad litem stepped in, the couple had lost it all: custody of their children, freedom, careers, family relationships, self-respect, home and possessions.

It would take a higher power, a web of support and lots of work through Methodist Home for Children to heal the Glackin family and to reveal what was missing from their lives. Colleen and Ted

Colleen and Ted Glackin have their boys at home again after losing custody twice.

They say this recovery is based on faith.

now share their story with hearts grateful for God’s forgiveness and the chance to pay forward their blessings.

Colleen hit rock bottom in October 2010. Her boys, 3 and 4 years old, were in foster care for the second time. Her husband was in prison. She had attempted suicide. A drug dealer was living in her home and beating her. She was getting high almost daily and selling everything she owned—tools, jewelry, the kids’ beds—to support her addiction. “In those situations, maybe some people rush to get better,” she says. “But I just crashed even worse.”

She had struggled with addiction before—relapsing, then sobering up through 12-step programs—but this time was different. Everything fell apart in a matter of months. She started

abusing amphetamines, convinced she needed them to function as a mother, wife and top-billing case manager at a human services agency. With stimulants and alcohol, she thought she could outrun a busy schedule and a persistent emptiness that stole all the joy from her life, but she was never far ahead of her problems.

In March 2010 Colleen forged a prescription for Adderall on a pad stolen from work, and she got caught. She was arrested, fired from her job and barred from working in the human services industry. Depressed and shamed, anxious about quitting a drug she thought she needed to survive, she was referred for a psychiatric evaluation. A doctor diagnosed her with bipolar disorder and prescribed Geodon.

MHC works to bring stability to families through its substance-abuse program and in-home counseling services.





Peter, left, and Teddy have embraced their parents' new lifestyle and the "Glackin Family Rules."

"I didn't want to live anymore," she says. "I didn't believe in myself and I didn't think anybody else did. I thought there was no hope."

On the night of May 24, 2010, Colleen swallowed an entire bottle of prescribed antipsychotics and collapsed on the bathroom floor in front of Ted. Her breathing stopped as her frantic husband called 911, but he could do little to help that night—or any night before. At his worst, when the boys were babies, Ted would disappear for days at a time; he'd accumulated multiple DWI charges. He and Colleen had both gotten sober after losing custody once in 2008, but they relapsed after the children came home, and both had been drinking the night she collapsed. While an EMS crew took Colleen to the hospital, Ted piled sleeping boys into the family car and drove them to a friend's house before heading to the emergency room.

Colleen woke up in the hospital the next day with her arms restrained and a breathing tube in her throat. She learned then that her boys were going back into foster care. A month later, she learned that Ted was going to prison for driving without a license the night she was hospitalized—a violation of probation for an earlier DWI.

In prison, hundreds of miles from home, Ted reeled at the losses in his life.

He was stripped of everything he cared about. "I firmly believe that God removes anything that is keeping you from Him," he says. "It was the money. My freedom. Our children. Our marriage. He took everything away from me. I was alone and gone."

Ted had seldom done it before, but he began to pray—and the prayers electrified him. He joined a discipleship ministry in prison. He taught other inmates to read. He "prayed like a madman" for Colleen, writing letters begging her to turn to God and sending people to talk to her.

But Colleen would have none of it. "I was angry," she says. "I was like, 'I'm sorry we can't all go to prison and find Jesus. Leave me alone. I'm angry that you left me.'" She was resentful and numb, unable to think about her children when the prospect of getting them back seemed impossible. She attended some 12-step meetings, trying to get better, but wound up instead connecting with a drug dealer who moved into her home. "I was doing drugs every day. I got high in the bathroom. I pretty much lost everything we had."

It was inexplicable, she says, what she was doing. It was incomprehensible.

"I don't think there's a better story for God's grace than Colleen's. It's been such a rollercoaster over the years. [Addiction] will always be there. It will be a demon she will fight the rest of her life. She may falter, there may be times of weakness, but hopefully God will carry her through."

KELLY CAMPBELL

But it was, finally, the rock bottom. By October, exhausted and disgusted, she found the courage to evict the drug dealer and look for help.

Help came to Colleen from two unexpected sources: A neighbor she barely knew and a Methodist Home for Children social worker she didn't trust, at least not initially.

The neighbor knew Colleen was struggling and facing eviction, and she

This fall Peter, left, starts kindergarten and Teddy enters 1st grade.

recommended a church that might help with free groceries. She introduced Colleen to Global River Church and, through its pastor, to a Christian-based 12-step program called Celebrate Recovery. “When I first met with Pastor Mike [Satorre], I spilled all this stuff I had done,” Colleen says. “I poured my heart out to him and he just sort of stared at me and said, ‘Jesus died on the cross for all that. That’s not who you are. That’s done. Your slate is wiped clean. What are you going to do now?’ ”

Colleen had been raised Catholic by church-going parents, but she hadn’t grasped the power of forgiveness until that moment. “I’d never heard that Jesus died on a cross for us, to save us from our sins. I didn’t really know why he died. I thought maybe to make us feel guilty. I had always thought that God picked certain people to help out, and it wasn’t going to be me because I had messed up too many times.”

The idea that God would help her—that she was worth saving—transformed Colleen. She dove into the Global River Church community and its Celebrate Recovery program, finding hope and comfort that she hadn’t known before. But getting her children back a second time would not be so easy. For that, she needed the help of Kelly Campbell, a licensed clinical social worker and Methodist Home for Children’s program coordinator in New Hanover County.

Kelly and Colleen were paired in October 2010 through a program called Families In Recovery Staying Together. The Department of Social Services contracted with MHC to counsel families in crisis so that children could be safely reunited with their parents. At the outset, Colleen says, she wasn’t sure she could trust a social worker who’d reported her progress to DSS. But Kelly showed her she could.



“You want to start where the client is,” Campbell says. “And what kept Colleen going each day was her faith—her early faith as a new believer. So she started and it grew from there.”

For 10 months, sometimes twice a week, Colleen excised painful layers of her life and tried to make sense of her self-destructive ways. She worked without flinching, even the days she was barely hanging on, and she began to find peace in her sessions with Kelly.

“Kelly was truly one of the first

people who believed in me, and she made me feel like there was hope for a new life,” Colleen says. “I would be in a million different directions, wanting to clean up my mess all at once, and she would calm me down and get me on track.

“For a long time I couldn’t even communicate with people, and Kelly would give me the words to speak.”

When Ted was released from prison in January 2011, he and Colleen started a new life together focused on faith and family.

“I think having a faith-based agency involved when Colleen was new in her faith—and she and Ted were new in their faith together—that was not an accident,” Campbell says. “That was God’s work. So that was really cool to see it play out, to see what happens with the power of prayer. So many people were praying for her and for them.”

In July 2011, those prayers were answered when Teddy and Peter came home. They’d been gone 14 months.

The idea that God would help her—that she was worth saving—transformed Colleen.

It's true what the guardian ad litem said about the boys. They are darling.

Blue-eyed, brunette and freckle-spattered, they tumble and talk all over each other. They love Batman and other superheroes. Teddy, 6, likes to draw and he resolved for the New Year to improve with practice. He also wants to learn how to do a cartwheel and a backflip. Peter, 4, is a natural athlete, great at anything requiring a ball, club or bat, and he enjoys drawing dinosaurs, "rock stars and fancy persons."

Between the two of them, the boys can recite the six "Glackin Family Rules"—some more than once:

"Obey without arguing."

"Love God and love others."

"Clean up after yourself. That's No. 6."

"Respect people, animals and things."

"Love others."

"Be kind to ... dogs."

"Be honest."

"Speak kindly and in a pleasant voice."

In the throes of her addiction and depression, Colleen had been unable to enjoy time with her children. "I felt like a bad mother. I felt like, I see these other mothers and they look so happy. How come my children can't make me happy?"

Today, she says, as much as she loves her family, she realizes she won't be a good mother or wife—or have the strength to stay sober—without her relationship with God. "I realized that the periods of sobriety I had in the past were dry periods. I took away the drugs and alcohol, but never filled it with anything."

Faith is what makes this recovery different, she says, and paying forward the blessings in her life will keep her focused.

"God doesn't waste a hurt. I went through all of this for a reason. I know that God will use my testimony to save someone else's life. I believe that if you want to show someone what God will do for them, then let them see what He has done for you."



ON THE CASE:

KELLY CAMPBELL, a licensed clinical social worker, is program coordinator for MHC's in-home services in New Hanover County.

Campbell worked with Colleen Glackin to manage her addiction issues, to fulfill the requirements of regaining custody and to resume parenting after the boys' 14-month absence.

Colleen and Ted attend Celebrate Recovery meetings twice a week and, as trained leaders, plan the Thursday worship ministry together. They volunteer in their boys' classrooms, teach Sunday school and help other families in crisis through their church, Grace Harbor. Colleen is studying to be a paralegal and Ted has a computer repair business, but they still have difficult work ahead, not the least of which is making amends with family members who may doubt their staying power.

"It's so hard to put into words how much different it is right now because we're basing our recovery on God," Colleen says. "Right now, after everything He's done for us, if I picked up a drink I feel like God would be like, 'Are you kidding me?' Literally, that's how I picture it. I don't want to lose everything we've gotten. I don't want to disappoint Him. I know that I would be forgiven but I don't even want to go there. I've seen the light and I don't want to turn away from it." ■

Helping Families Succeed

The Glackins benefited from in-home services for parents whose substance-abuse problems have caused them to lose custody. The goal is to stabilize the home so that children can return safely.

Other MHC in-home services include family preservation for parents who are at imminent risk of losing their children due to neglect, a problem often rooted in substance abuse.

These programs focus on the children's best interests and work to correct family problems with counseling and support.

Research shows children fare better academically and socially when they can be successfully reunited with parents rather than placed into long-term foster care.

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August 30, 2012

Wilmington Convention Center, Wilmington, NC

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Wilmington's
Epicurean Evening

Ties That Bind **Sibling Relationships Anchor Children In Crisis**

Sister Sledge had it right. We are family. Our strongest lifelong connections are with family members, especially our siblings. Brothers and sisters share our genes, our history and our identity. They teach us how to play and to fight. They are our earliest relationships and, at the end of our days, they are the people we've known the longest.

Imagine, then, what siblings mean to each other in a household darkened by abuse or neglect. They are a buffer, a source of support and nurturing and, in cases when foster care is needed, they are a lifeline as everything else falls away. "Family is so much a part of who we are, and that doesn't change when a child is placed in foster care," says Laura Mayer, Methodist Home for Children foster care specialist. "Foster children struggle with self-identity, and being separated actually strengthens the bond between siblings, so it's important to maintain those relationships."

The sibling relationship is especially strong between T.J., 13, and Messiah, 11. They were 6 and 4 years old in 2005 when their mother dropped them off at a charity boarding school in Durham. With a history of mental illness and drug

abuse, she visited the boys sporadically, but she never came to take them home. The brothers spent the next four years together, and a tight bond formed between them. T.J. was the protector, the stand-in parent; his job, as he saw it, was to take care of Messiah. They had other siblings still back at home—three eventually were removed for neglect in 2007—but T.J. and Messiah, living apart from their family, counted on each other almost exclusively.

That dynamic was all the boys knew when they left the school and entered the foster care system in 2009, first together and then apart. They spent two years in various foster and group homes before the Department of Social Services, through Methodist Home for Children, found parents looking to adopt an older child. In 2011, Messiah went to live with Mary Cleveland in Wendell and T.J. went to live with Dan and Tameka Smith in Wallace.

MHC and DSS (legal guardian of MHC foster children) place siblings together whenever possible, but there can be a variety of reasons for sending them into separate homes, says MHC adoption and licensing supervisor

What's Summer Without Camp?

Methodist Home for Children will send T.J. and Messiah to Camp Rockfish for a week together this summer. The brothers are among eight MHC kids, including another sibling group, who will go to camp with support from the N.C. United Methodist Camp and Retreat Ministries.

Basketball camp is also on T.J.'s summer calendar thanks to donations from MHC friends at Wrightsville United Methodist Church. Your gifts can help fund summer opportunities for children like T.J.

Michelle Kennedy. "It's the last thing anyone wants to do," she says. "But sometimes children need to be placed apart for therapeutic, behavioral or safety reasons, or maybe because a family is not able to take more than one child."

In cases when siblings are separated, MHC coaches foster and adoptive parents to work together so that the children can visit and check in by phone. Otherwise, they tend to worry about their brothers and sisters and will search for one another at the first opportunity—even before seeking out birth parents.

This is especially true for children who've been subjected to abuse or neglect, Mayer says. "When siblings are separated, they need and want to know that their brothers and sisters are OK. If they can talk to their siblings and see them on a regular basis, it's a reassuring reminder that their family members are still alive and well."

T.J. and Messiah will spend their childhoods apart, in separate homes, but their brotherly bond is alive and well. Read their stories here. ■

ON THE CASE:



ERICA BURGESS, foster care and adoptions director, arranged summer camp together for T.J. and Messiah.

MICHELLE KENNEDY, adoption and licensing supervisor, worked on adoptions for Messiah, T.J. and their brother Jaheim.

LAURA MAYER is foster care specialist for Messiah and foster care licensing specialist for the Cleveland and Smith families.

BRIAN WYLIE is foster care specialist for T.J.



T.J.: The Protector, Resilient

Dan and Tameka Smith remember meeting 12-year-old T.J. in August 2011. He'd been left by his mother at age 6 and separated from his brother, Messiah, at age 10. By the time he arrived at the Smiths' home for foster care, he was carrying a heavy load of worry and anger. "He had issues with abandonment and some behavior issues," Dan says. "And he had anger management issues. A lot of anger."

But there was more to T.J. than his rage, and Dan and Tameka saw it right away. He was humble, highly teachable and, in spite of his anger, respectful. He'd looked after Messiah for years before they were separated, and he had a big heart. "I guess from his upbringing, he was pretty much the mother and father," Dan says.

The Smiths were moved by these qualities and they welcomed T.J. and his family into their lives. They figured if the kids couldn't live together under the same roof, they could at least see each other with occasional weekend visits or a birthday party.

Relationships between brothers and sisters are important, especially for children who've been through hardship together and separated, says Laura Mayer, foster care specialist for Methodist Home for Children. "We understood that these kids, T.J. and Messiah, had an unbreakable bond," she says. "And, for

them to be successful, they needed to have contact with each other."

T.J. is 13 now, and he remains close to Messiah, 11, even though they live 100 miles apart. In April, the boys spent spring break together at the Smiths' home, most of it at the park "showcasing" their athleticism with basketball games and flipping contests. "When T.J. and his brother get together, that's what they do," Tameka says.

But it wasn't always so easy, especially for T.J. "He is a protector," Tameka says. "He did not relax until he actually met Ms. Mary [Messiah's adoptive mother] and had an interaction with her twice. He had to make sure, to see for himself, that his brother was safe. Then he let his guard down."

Dan can relate to these complicated feelings, having been raised by a grandmother apart from his brother. He remembers the same yearning for siblings and feelings of abandonment, and it's painful even in adulthood, he says. "When I got ready to take Messiah back [after a visit], I told T.J., 'I already know how you feel,' because my brother and I had weekend visits. The hard part was going back our separate ways. You feel like life has treated you unfairly. But then the positive is you make the best of what you have."

T.J. has found ways of coping—making frequent calls and, when it's time to end a visit, packing his brother's

T.J. lives in Wallace with Dan and Tameka Smith, who are in the process of adopting him.

bag with extras. "When we first got T.J. in our home, if Messiah came down, T.J. would try to give Messiah just about all his clothes," Tameka says. "That is just how he was. I'd go and buy him three pairs of shoes and he'd try to give two pairs to Messiah."

Durham County social worker Filicia High has seen T.J. struggle with grades, school suspensions and a few runaway incidents in the three years she's worked with him. But she's also seen him demonstrate resilience. This past year, in 7th grade, T.J. formed a peer-mentor group called "Boys With Attitude" to help kids like himself stay out of trouble at school, and he won an award for the initiative. "He can turn around things that were negative into positives," High says. "To me, that's a very good characteristic to have, to recognize something about yourself and to do things differently."

T.J. is also journaling—chronicling his days, writing poetry and lyrics—and beginning to open up about his mother. Dan and Tameka encourage that, telling him it's OK to remember and love your family members, even if they weren't perfect. "He likes to tell us things he remembers, little things, like the drum rolls [his mother] taught him," Dan says. "And I'll listen to him and say, 'Man that's great, don't ever forget that because nobody can take that from you. That's a memory you have of her.' And I teach him the value of things he remembers that are positive." ■



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Messiah: Life, Laughter, Love

Five years ago, Mary Cleveland felt like the joy had drained out of her life. Her children—Rocky and Monique, now 26 and 24, respectively—had moved out and her husband of 22 years left, saying the children were grown. Devastated, she struggled financially and almost lost her Wendell home. She resolved to move forward, but she couldn't help but feel something was missing. "I'd drive around my neighborhood on the weekends and see families having fun together," she says. "I don't like being alone, and I realized the happiest time of my life was when I was raising my children. That's when I decided to see if there was a child out there who needed love and affection from an older, single mom."

In June 2010, Cleveland became a Methodist Home for Children foster parent with the goal of adopting an older child. "I'm 50 years old, so I wanted a child who could get in the car and put on his own seatbelt," she laughs. A year later, Messiah, now 11, moved into her home. He was "a tough one, always with his guard up," she says. He shied away from affection and fought at school.

MHC trains foster parents for this behavior in children who've been separated from family because of abuse or neglect. Cleveland worked with Messiah, talking things out, listening, coaching, setting goals and offering incentives. She asked his teachers and school staff for help. "They said, 'We'll hang in there with you to get him on the right track,'" she says. Then, one November afternoon,



Messiah came home from school and told Cleveland he was done fighting. One fight always led to another, he said, and it cost him privileges like playing basketball or going to parties.

"I said, 'Messiah, can you really mind your business and stay out of trouble? Can you do it?'" Cleveland says. "And he said, 'yes.' Since then, he has shown me he can do it." Messiah has improved his grades, stayed out of the principal's office and is finally "getting to be a kid." Loving and affectionate, he laughs and smiles easily, and is seriously into basketball, playing in leagues year-round. He enjoys riding his bike, four-wheeling on his all-terrain vehicle and playing his Xbox.

"He has a big heart toward younger children and a lot of compassion for those in the foster care system," Cleveland says. With the exception of a sister, age 2, all of his siblings were placed into foster homes. T.J., 13, lives with Dan and Tameka Smith in Wallace and Jaheim, 9, lives with his new family

Mary Cleveland of Wendell adopted Messiah on May 11, 2012. Messiah lives 100 miles from T.J., his older brother, but they stay close with visits and calls.

in Knightdale. Another brother and sister, ages 7 and 5, live with their adoptive parents in Chapel Hill.

Messiah is especially attached to T.J. and Jaheim, and he stays in touch with calls and visits. He spends time with T.J. at least every other month, most recently for a week at spring break, and he's the beneficiary of a typical younger brother rite—T.J.'s hand-me-downs. Since Jaheim lives nearby, Messiah sees him more often. "We want the boys to visit each other in their own homes so they can enjoy normal, everyday activities together, playing, seeing friends, family meals, etc.," Cleveland says.

Meanwhile, Messiah has grown close to his newest siblings—Cleveland's adult children. "Rocky has become the male role model in Messiah's life," Cleveland says. "He is very protective, often challenging me to put myself in Messiah's place and think how I would feel in his situation."

It was hard initially for Messiah to let go of hopes that his biological family would one day reunite, says Durham County social worker Filicia High. But he's happier now that he's accepted others into his life and sees them as part of his larger family. "He's talkative. You can joke with him. You can play basketball with him," she says. "It's like you go see a different kid."

This summer, Messiah will spend part of his vacation with Cleveland's extended family at a ranch in Texas, then a reunion cruise to the western Caribbean. "Before Messiah, I thought about giving my house away because I felt a happy family deserved to live here," Cleveland says. "Now, to my surprise, we're the happy family. There's still plenty of drama, don't get me wrong. But there's even more life, laughter and love, and it's because of Messiah." ■

SEPARATED, STILL CONNECTED (read about Lang and Ashlynn on page 9)

Bobby and Patricia Davis help Lang, 8, stay in touch with his biological brother, Joseph, 16. "They call and talk with each other almost every night. It's a very important relationship to Lang," Patricia says. "When Joseph comes over, they play video games, ride bikes and just hang out together."

Troy and Gail High arrange visits for Ashlynn, 5, and her biological brother Ryder, 7, and cousin Chloe, 6. The contact with her birth family helped Ashlynn as she transitioned to a new home, Gail says. "At first she felt like everyone had died because they disappeared and she was so young. It gives her peace to know that they're still there."



ADOPTIONS

Read more at bit.ly/LRbLOC.

Jayne and Richard Howard of Southport, photo above, adopted Amanda Faith, 14, on March 6, 2012.

She came to them in October 2010 and joined four adopted brothers in the home—Talmadge, Tashawn, Christian and Ricky—and the Howards' three adult children. Amanda finished 8th grade with a near straight-A record; she loves science and wants a career in the medical field. Outside the classroom, she managed the middle school wrestling team and took First Aid and CPR courses for babysitter certification. She also studies dance and makes time to support her brothers. "She has adapted to being a wonderful big sister," Jayne says. "We've got two boys playing baseball and four playing soccer, and she manages to go to all of their games. She's a sweetheart." Read the Howards' story at bit.ly/howardfamily.

Bobby and Patricia Davis of Louisburg, photo right, adopted Lang, 8, on Sept. 12, 2011. Between them, the Davises have 10 biological children, 18 grandchildren, eight great-grandchildren and 10 years of experience foster parenting. But they had zero interest in adopting until they met Lang in November 2008. Patricia says the plan to adopt wasn't immediate—it just evolved as Lang lived in their foster home and became part of their family. "He

knew our kids, and they all said to go for it, you can handle it," she says. "When it came down to the wire, we couldn't let him go. No way." Lang has finished 2nd grade and enjoys participating in Sunday school, reciting Bible verses, riding bicycles, playing basketball and helping with upkeep of their 3.5-acre yard.

Troy and Gail High of Wake Forest, photo bottom right, adopted Ashlynn, 5, on Oct. 31, 2011. When she arrived in March 2010, Ashlynn connected immediately with Troy, Gail and new brother Daniel, 9. She was such a natural fit, Gail says, it's hard to believe her placement almost didn't happen. The Highs had planned to foster only children who were cleared for adoption—and Ashlynn was not. But when they got a call to take her in, they prayed about it and said yes to a little girl they thought they couldn't keep. "She got here and she looked exactly like us," Gail remembers. "I think because she looked so similar to us, and also because I was a stay-at-home mom so I was able to spend a lot of time with her, we

did connect very quickly." Ultimately, Ashlynn's biological mother and father forfeited their parental rights, freeing her for adoption by the Highs. Today she loves gymnastics and looks forward to starting kindergarten.

Ralph and Monique Liriano of Clayton, photo below, adopted Emoree, 5, and Haleigh, 3, on Nov. 7, 2011.

The girls were stressed when they arrived in December 2010 and slept in the same bed to feel secure—but no more. They have their own bedrooms now, and Emoree recently helped decorate hers in pink and purple, her favorite colors. "She got to be involved in picking out the bedding, painting the walls," Monique says. Both girls take summer dance lessons and enjoy performing with the Praise Team at their church. This fall, Emoree will start kindergarten and Girl Scouts. They're also working to overcome a shared fear of dogs and hope to have one as a pet someday. Until then, they have a goldfish. "We're learning how to take care of something until we move on to a dog," Monique says. ■



They Really Were Good To Me

It was late afternoon on Feb. 2, 1951, when 9-year-old Robert Carter first stepped onto the grounds of Methodist Orphanage (MO). His sister had brought him to Raleigh and he had no idea—until she drove off without him—that MO would be his home for the next seven years. It took several teachers and students to restrain the distraught youngster as he realized he wasn't going home. "I didn't respond too well," Carter says. "But now I understand that it was the best thing for me."

Born in Leasburg, on the eastern edge of Caswell County, Carter was the youngest of three children in a family struck twice by tragedy in 1950. His father, a tenant farmer, died in April and his mother was killed in a Christmas Eve car crash that claimed the lives of his aunt, an uncle and a cousin and injured his brother and another uncle. Carter was able to walk away from the wreckage with hardly a scratch—but suddenly an orphan.

Through family connections to Union United Methodist Church (now part of

the Hightower Charge), Carter was later invited to live at MO. He remembers that the shock and panic he felt in his first hours on campus were replaced that evening by the delight of attending a girls' basketball game. "Those girls were so pretty and they wore shorts that were so short!" he says. "I decided this wasn't going to be a bad place to live after all."

Carter adjusted to his new home and bonded with several boys his age who remain friends nearly 60 years later. He enjoyed the well-structured routine at the orphanage and quickly learned the "dos and don'ts" of campus life. He remembers each Christmas receiving "any present I asked for" and earning money as a teenager with his newspaper route and yard-care job inherited from MO boys who were graduating and leaving town.

He also remembers being allowed to travel alone by bus to attend his sister's out-of-town wedding. Returning that evening to Raleigh, he "pulled the rope" to signal his stop, getting out



on Glenwood Avenue in front of the orphanage gates. But unbeknownst to him, waiting at the downtown bus station was MO superintendent Rev. Leon Larkin. When a frustrated Larkin called campus hours later to report a missing child, he learned that Carter had returned safely and was already in bed.

In the 10th grade, Carter left MO to live with his sister and her family in Burlington. He went from high school into the U.S. Air Force and, after his discharge, lived several years in Nebraska. Just prior to 1970, he moved to Virginia and tried his hand at different jobs before settling into a career with the U.S. Postal Service. He worked 31 years with the USPS, primarily in Petersburg, Va., where he lives today, and retired in 2005.

One of the best parts of retirement, Carter says, is having time to spend with his orphanage "brothers and sisters," both informally and at MO/MHC Alumni Association events. He remembers fondly his time at MO—and the teachers and staff who, in a way, became his parents for seven years.

"They really were good to me." ■

Robert Carter, circled, and Billy Gibson enliven this photo taken at the Brown Building.



A Winter's Tale: "Feed Our Children"

Cynthia Marshall rose above a difficult childhood in the housing projects of Richmond, Calif., to win a prestigious university scholarship and ultimately lead AT&T North Carolina as president. She worked hard and sacrificed to get where she is today. But along the way, at critical points in her life, she also encountered people willing to "feed" her what she needed to succeed.



Marshall shared her story with 500 guests at *A Winter's Tale*, Methodist Home for Children's 15th annual gala, and thanked them for extending their own hearts and resources to change the lives of children in need—as others did for her. "When I say feed me, I'm not talking about just food. I'm talking about love, the things children need in order to thrive in this world," Marshall said. "These people saw something in me that literally got me from the projects to the president's office. I stand here as a

person who knows the value of having been fed by people like you."

A Winter's Tale this year raised a record \$226,000 to "feed" children, youth and families in need of MHC's high level of care. The occasion also honored new members of the Guardian Angel Society—businesses and people who, through their service and support, have made extraordinary commitments to MHC. The 2012 Guardian Angel Society inductees were Margaret Anne Biddle of Raleigh, Lee and Jim Black of Raleigh, Kimberly and Patrick Edwards of Wilmington, The Forbes Foundation of Wake Forest, Hamilton Point Investment Advisors of Chapel Hill, the Harris Family Fund of Durham and Hayes Barton United Methodist Church of Raleigh. ■

To view more *A Winter's Tale* photos visit awinterstale.mhfc.org

Save the Date!
Saturday, January 26, 2013
 * * * * *
A Winter's Tale

Jerod and Marnie Cohen made the winning bid on a Carolina Panthers jersey signed by quarterback Cam Newton.



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You Make It All Happen!

1K FOR 1KID

What is 1K FOR 1KID? — For each child in care, Methodist Home for Children must raise \$1,000 to close the gap between costs of services and funds available.

Aldersgate UMC, Durham, gave \$6,140 in February.

Rock/indie band **The Avett Brothers** of Concord gave \$1,000 in December.

Burgaw UMC gave \$1,000 in May.

Cedar Grove UMC, Mebane, gave \$1,000 in November.

Robin Collier was inspired to make her own 1K FOR 1KID collection jar last summer after MHC President/CEO Bruce Stanley spoke at **First UMC**, Sneads Ferry. She brought the jar to church weekly and eventually raised \$750, which was topped off by a Vacation Bible School collection to make a \$1,000 church-wide gift.

Duck UMC gave \$1,000 in May.

United Methodist Women of the **Elizabeth City District** gave \$1,000 after hearing from Daniel, 15, who entered our Chowan home as a repeat juvenile offender. Daniel is scheduled to go back to his family in June with new skills and refocused priorities.

Richlands UMC gave \$5,225 in April.

Home Memorial UMC, Clayton, gave more than \$2,000 in May.

ACTIVE SUPPORT

Bethlehem UMC, White Oak, part of the **Bladen Charge**, gave \$2,770 from the annual Fore the Lord golf tournament, held in October at Carolina Sands.

Dede Britt, pastor of **Fremont UMC**, raised nearly \$1,100 this spring with a missions walk to support MHC.

The 13th annual **Hunter Snow Memorial Tennis Tournament**, held in

April at the North Hills Club, Raleigh, raised \$5,000 for MHC.

The **Junior Women's Club**, Raleigh, donated \$500 from the BaySix Southern 5K Classic in May.

Wrightsville UMC, Wrightsville Beach, donated more than \$3,330 from its annual Son Run in April to benefit MHC and other charities.

CAMPAIGN COUNTS

North Carolina State Employees' Combined Campaign raised nearly \$14,500 for MHC. Tell your state-employed friends that MHC is charity #1588.

Combined Federal Campaign raised more than \$4,900 for MHC. Tell your federally employed and military friends that MHC is charity #28619.

INTO THEIR HANDS

Circle 3 at Edenton Street UMC, Raleigh, donated 52 backpacks stocked with books and school supplies to Jordan Center children leaving for kindergarten.

The **Junior Women's Club**, Raleigh, collected school supplies and delivered 21 backpacks for younger children in MHC care.

Marvin UMC, Fayetteville, collected socks, T-shirts and underwear for our children.



Mission Possible Kids (MPKids) and **GLOW Kids** at **Spring Hill UMC**, Lillington, collected hygiene products and donations toward 1K FOR 1KID.

FUN FOR A CAUSE

Educational Data Systems Inc., photo above, a workforce development services company, sponsored the MHC Adoption Party in Raleigh for three families in November.

Three churches hosted foster care appreciation dinners in May: **United Methodist Women** of **Millbrook UMC** in the Raleigh District, **Farmville UMC** in the Greenville District and **Oleander UMC** in the Wilmington District.

FROM THE HEART

St. James UMC, Greenville, hosted the May 24 Home with a Heart luncheon for MHC supporters in the Greenville area. Our appreciation goes out to all who made this event a success—table captains and organizers, volunteers, guests and donors. It was a great opportunity to share our stories and introduce teens who benefit from living in our multipurpose homes, including Jimmy and Daniel, photo right.

Logan Stockman, a 10-year-old from Apex, sent \$142.39 from his "generosity jar" in December, image left. Logan's mom says he saved portions of his allowance and gifts to help other kids "feel family love like he does." He decided to give the money to MHC after hearing President/CEO Bruce Stanley speak at his church, **Apex UMC**.

An anonymous donor gave \$1,000 through the **Triangle Community Foundation** to help transport 15-year-old

James from MHC's Jacksonville home for dually diagnosed youth to a Florida treatment center specializing in adolescents with severe mental illness and developmental disabilities.

CLOSE TO HOME

Progress Energy Finance Department employees spread mulch and planted flowers at the North Hills home in April.

Quintiles employees, photo right, volunteered at the Jordan Center in November, sealing wooden playground equipment, erecting birdhouses and washing toys.

Trinity UMC, Jacksonville, has embraced MHC's program for young

people dually diagnosed with mental illness and developmental delays. In December, the congregation supplied refreshments for a daylong staff event and paid for Christmas gifts to kids in residence over the holidays. Trinity also pledged \$200 monthly in 2012 and invited an employee to speak at **MHC Sunday** services in February.

PASS THE PLATE

Friends of MHC at Edenton Street UMC, Raleigh, donated \$500 from When Pigs Fly—Missions Happen, an April barbecue benefit.

Sunrise UMC, Holly Springs, donated \$1,150 from a barbecue fundraiser "in loving support of the kingdom work that you are doing as you continue to serve the needs of children and families."

United Methodist Men of Millbrook UMC, Raleigh, raised \$1,710 with an April barbecue chicken fundraiser.

A VERY MERRY CHRISTMAS

Once again, our children and teens did not want for toys or love at Christmas thanks to the generosity of MHC friends and partners. We are grateful to each of you for helping to make the holiday a little brighter for our kids, many of whom struggle during the season. Thank you for helping to deliver some extra cheer to their lives. See a full list of our "Christmas angels" at bit.ly/Jd1X12. ■



TEAM UP FOR KIDS!
It's as easy as 1-2-3.

Start your own 1K team to help MHC children!

Go to 1kfor1kid.org.
 Name your team.
 Create a team page with our easy-to-use template.

Tell your friends about MHC with our social media widgets and emails!

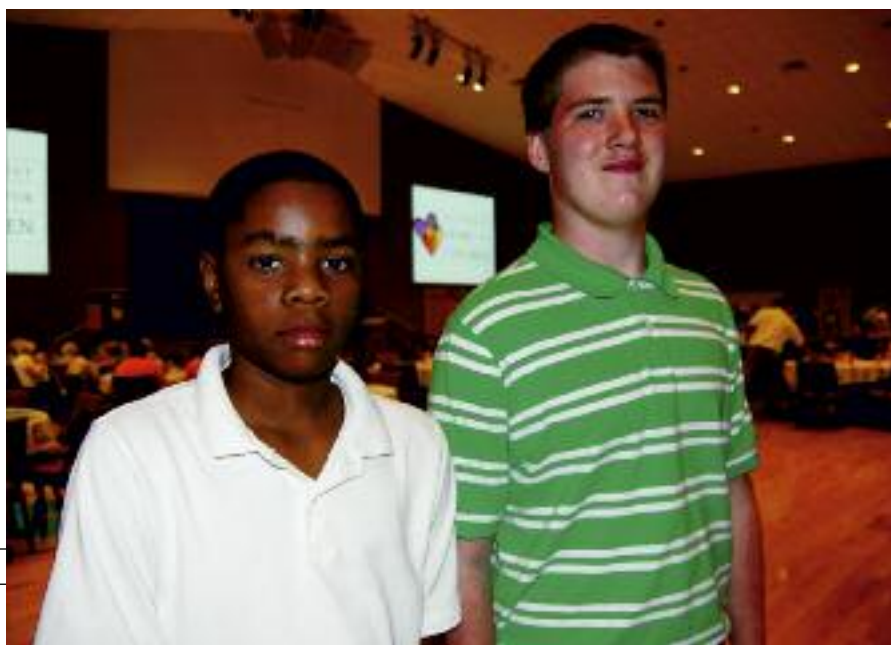
Thank You!
MHC Sunday 2012
 raised enough money to serve 150 children.

With every \$1,000 given by friends like you, MHC can serve one child in desperate need of love, shelter, support and direction.

For all things come from you, and of your own have we given you.
 1 Chronicles 29:14b (NRSV)

Methodist Home for Children is sustained by prayers and gifts that are a wonderful manifestation of God's gracious spirit at work in His people.

If you are creating or revising your estate and legacy plans, please consider a bequest to the Methodist Home for Children Foundation, 1041 Washington Street, Raleigh, NC 27605. Details are online at www.mhfc.org/help.



Methodist Home for Children

Administrative Headquarters
1041 Washington Street
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Kudos to Methodist Home for Children Staff:

Michele Boguslofski, director of consultation and program development, was elected to the Teaching Family Association (TFA) Board of Directors for a two-year term. TFA is an accrediting agency that ensures quality of care by professionals who use the Teaching Family Model to treat and support children, families and dependent adults.

Derrick Crumpler, program manager at the Wayne County multipurpose home, was awarded the Teaching Family Association's (TFA) Distinguished Practitioner Award. He received the award in Calgary, Alberta, Canada, at the TFA annual conference.

Becky Fields, clinical director at FACT Specialized Services, was appointed to the Clinical Advisory Committee of the Southeastern Center, a public agency that manages and oversees mental health, developmental disabilities and substance-abuse services through a provider network in Brunswick, New Hanover and Pender counties.

Four MHC employees won **Excellence Awards** for outstanding service to children and families:

Marcella Ference, intensive family preservation specialist, In-Home Services

Michele Jordan, therapist, FACT Specialized Services

Harlan Magers, resident counselor, Macon County multipurpose home, Residential Services

Charlecia Turner, lead teacher, Jordan Child & Family Enrichment Center, Early Childhood Services



FEDERAL AND STATE EMPLOYEES:

CHOOSE CHILDREN IN COMBINED CAMPAIGNS

Make MHC your charity of choice this year! Use our agency numbers below—and encourage co-workers and friends to do the same:

- *Combined Federal Campaign #28619 in the Research Triangle area, Onslow County (includes Camp Lejeune), Southeastern North Carolina (includes Fort Bragg and Cherry Point) and the Piedmont Triad area.*
- *State Employees Combined Campaign #1588.*