

# A CENTER OF EXCELLENCE.

## A center of hope.

### Kempe Weaves Safety Net for Foster Kids



Getting caught stealing isn't a kid's idea of a lucky break. But it turned out to be very lucky for eleven-year-old Justin. After trying to shoplift food for his two sisters, police brought Justin home to discover his parents' meth activities. The children were immediately removed from the home and placed in foster care.

Scared, angry and trying to cope the only way he knew how, Justin started acting out. He became verbally aggressive, punched walls, and got suspended from school. This was when Justin was introduced to Kempe's Fostering Healthy Futures program.

#### Helping At-risk Kids

Recognizing the immense need to help our community's vulnerable foster care population, Kempe created this highly innovative program that is paving the way for brighter futures for pre-teens. The program promotes positive development among nine- to eleven-year-olds placed in foster care and has received national attention for its work on mentoring.

Many children in foster care have endured significant maltreatment or abuse. They are at high risk for entering the juvenile justice and mental health systems in great numbers. Moreover, foster children are likely to experience continued difficulties into adulthood.

Kempe's team of compassionate experts is there for these traumatized children. We have provided free academic and mental health evaluations for 300 children in foster care over the past six years. Of these, over 100 have been enrolled in

our intensive nine-month prevention program, where they are assigned a mentor and attend weekly therapeutic skills groups at The Kempe Center.

Kempe is a place where kids can process their feelings about being in foster care. They learn how to solve problems, resist negative peer pressure, manage anger and maintain self-control. And they meet children just like themselves....

*"It taught me that I wasn't alone."* - Fostering Healthy Futures child

#### Mentors Make a Difference

Mentors are an essential ingredient of Kempe's Fostering Healthy Futures program. Carefully chosen from local universities, mentors are graduate students in social work or related fields. The mentors serve as advocates, role models and friends, helping build a brighter future for these children. In exchange for their mentoring commitment, they receive invaluable training that will help ensure that future generations of maltreated children are better served by professionals who understand the complex issues surrounding placement in foster care. As of June 2007, The Kempe Center has provided 20,000 hours of training to graduate students over five years.

*"We [my mentor and I] had a real close relationship...She was somebody I could share my feelings with because not most people I can share my feelings with..."* - Fostering Healthy Futures child

Kristin Krietemeyer was selected as a Kempe Fostering Healthy Futures mentor for the 2007-2008 year. A joint degree student in the University of Denver's School of Law and Master of Social Work programs, Kristin first heard about the field placement opportunity at Kempe a year ago from former DU students. "The program has gotten a lot of positive feedback and gives students a valuable opportunity to work with other professionals in different fields. I look forward to working with the children and the experience I will gain by becoming a stronger advocate."

#### Kempe Experts Continue to Lead the Way

Fostering Healthy Futures Program Director Dr. Heather Taussig was recently appointed to Governor Bill Ritter's Task Force on Foster Care and Permanence. The 24-member task force will examine child foster care and adoption systems, meeting for the next eight months and then presenting findings and recommendations to the Governor, Colorado Supreme Court Chief Justice, and House and Senate Judiciary and Human Services Committee.

Dr. Taussig will play an instrumental role on this task force and bring her consummate expertise to recommendations in improving Colorado's foster care system.

## Helping More Kids

Kempe is extremely excited to double the impact of our Fostering Healthy Futures program this year. A prestigious five-year grant from the National Institute of Mental Health supports our program expansion into Adams, Arapahoe, Denver and Jefferson Counties. Kempe will enroll an additional 256 youth into the program over

### Kempe Center's Work

Fostering Healthy Futures Program: Victims of child abuse who have been placed in foster care have very special needs as they enter adolescence. In our work with children placed in foster care, we found that for youth 13-17 years of age:

- 64% had been truant
- 55% had been suspended from school
- 86% had received detention
- 41% had destroyed property
- 34% had carried a hidden weapon
- 27% used a weapon to attack someone
- 45% had run away from home
- 25% had been arrested
- 25% had gang involvement
- 15% had sold drugs.
- 23% had thought seriously about dropping out of school
- 14% dropped out of school

Through skills groups and individual mentoring, FHF helps abused 9- to 11-year-olds placed in foster and kinship care learn to create their own healthy futures with life skills that will help them overcome the challenges of adolescence.

the next five years. Ongoing support for this program has been provided by multiple foundation partners including The Pioneer Fund and the Daniels Fund.

## Brighter Futures

Kids who graduate from Kempe's Fostering Healthy Futures program show promising futures with improved social and behavioral functioning. Kempe is intervening at a critical developmental juncture in young lives and it's making a difference. For more information on Kempe's life-changing programs, visit: [www.kempe.org](http://www.kempe.org).

# THANK YOU FOR YOUR SUPPORT

## Building Brighter Futures for Kempe's Children



A heartfelt thank-you to Richmond American Homes and Alberta Development Partners for raising \$187,833 to further Kempe's programs to prevent child abuse!

These extraordinary organizations donated proceeds from the sale of a lot and home located in the new Forest Hills at Wheatlands community in Aurora. Numerous construction partners contributed materials and labor to support this collaborative effort to make the future brighter for abused and neglected children.

This is the third time Richmond American Homes has donated proceeds from a house sale to Kempe! And Alberta Development Partners stepped up to further our cause even more by donating proceeds from the sale of the land. On behalf of The Kempe Foundation Board of Directors, Foundation and Center staff and countless children served by Kempe, we express our gratitude for this incredible gift of hope.

## Providing Help and Hope to Our Youngest Victims

We are pleased to announce a \$25,000 grant from the **Temple Hoyne Buell Foundation** for Kempe's Infants in Foster and Kinship Care (IFKC) Program, for the fifth continuous year! This grant will allow Kempe experts to provide ongoing developmental evaluations and screening services for 275 children who entered the Program as infants after being placed in Denver's foster care system. The grants are based on a rigorous review process, including an on-site visit, research data review, and national and international clinical impact documentation. Thank you Temple Hoyne Buell Foundation!