

The Children's Hospital: Recent News
May 5, 2009

Children's Welcomes Last Teams Home to New Campus



Kempe Center leadership staff at new location.

As the Kempe Center's last boxes were loaded into a moving van at the downtown Denver campus, it wasn't just goodbye to an old office building—it meant the last teams were leaving The Children's Hospital's historic downtown campus. One door closed on a remarkable home of more than 40 years of care for generations of children treated at Kempe, and a new door opened with the promise of hope and a bright tomorrow for the next generation.

"Moving was an opportunity for us to reconnect with one of our primary partners, The Children's Hospital," said Jesse Wolff, president and chief executive officer, The Kempe Foundation. "It also put us on campus with our colleagues at the University of Colorado Denver Health Sciences and Department of Pediatrics. Co-locating with these two institutions supports collaborations, building synergies and partnerships." "The benefit is being near colleagues again, to see them on a daily basis; we are so tied to the hospital community," said Andy Sirotnak, MD, Kempe Child Protection Team (CPT), associate professor of pediatrics, University of Colorado Denver.

Kempe became involved with the initial stages of space planning when Children's first made the decision to relocate to the Fitzsimons campus. In spring 2005, it was decided that Kempe would purchase space in the behavioral health building, now known as the Gary Pavilion. The jointly owned building has several benefits; including, the playground that was recently re-designed to accommodate all ages enabling both programs to use it at designated times.

The design of the Kempe Center lobby was inspired by Children's lobby – open and kid-friendly. Overall, the new space incorporates bright colors and clean designs to welcome

clients and inspire the dedicated staff. The Kempe Therapeutic preschool kids have a sense of pride when they talk about “our new building.” It was coordinating these types of situations that impacted the success of the move. Gene Liffick, director of human resources and operations, The Kempe Foundation, was the liaison between Kempe, Children’s, the architect and contractor.

“We are very pleased with our new space and accomplished a fast-track construction process,” said Liffick. “We had a seven-month timeframe challenge and are thrilled we were able to pull it off.” Liffick also mentioned that it was a day-to-day joint effort between Children’s and Kempe to accomplish a successful move and continues to be a joint effort and “great co-ownership opportunity.”

In addition to its location on a prominent medical campus, The Kempe Center’s new space was designed, architecturally and functionally, to maximize efficiencies and professional collaborations with the CPT, The Kempe Foundation and National Association of Counsel for Children, which are now all housed in the same building.

With the move came new technologies to enhance the field of child abuse and neglect prevention and treatment. The state-of-the-art media conference center and training facility allows Kempe staff to train professionals worldwide by sharing its leading research and treatment expertise as it continues testing programs that other institutions will replicate.” We are very proud to have the Kempe name associated with Children’s, especially from an advocacy standpoint,” said Sandi Garcia, director, communications and public affairs, The Kempe Foundation. “We look forward to continuing a great partnership through the Shaken Baby Syndrome campaign.”

“The prestige of being physically and visibly on the same campus as a top children’s hospital in the country is very meaningful for us. It lends an additional sense of credibility to what we do and the people on our team,” said Wolff. “And, we appreciate everyone’s help and support to make this happen from Dr. Shmerling on down.” The Kempe Center opened its doors in 1972, and now opens its new doors in 2009, continuing the Kempe legacy with the same vision: to recognize that children are being abused and to do something about it. “If Dr. Kempe were still alive, he would be thrilled by what has been accomplished,” said Garcia