

Partnership Opportunities

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Electronic Funds Transfer

We accept credit cards and electronic fund transfers directly from your account to ours. The process is fast and secure. Visit our website and follow the instructions on our donation page to get started today.

Prayer Support

We believe that our ability to do what we do comes from the grace of God, providing our team with wisdom in making decisions and guiding our daily activities. Praying for us daily would be a great encouragement to our team.

Join us this Summer for an Urban Immersion Experience!

Looking for an opportunity to participate in a service trip while taking in the sights, sounds, and diversity found within an urban context? Well, the Family Empowerment Centers Envision service teams experience is for you!

Under the auspice of Envision, volunteer groups spend one week immersed in an urban context. Combining educational training sessions with service based opportunities, Envision team participants experience meaningful ways to put faith in action.

Our first Envision team visit of 2013 is fast approaching as thirteen students from Simpson University are preparing to come and work with us at the end of March. These students will host a Spring Break camp for the children in our S.A.Y. Yes! Afterschool and AWANA programs, and other children in our community. We also have three teams committed for this upcoming summer with more still in the decision making stage.

We have truly been blessed by the work accomplished through Envision teams and look forward to seeing God move in mighty ways through those coming this year. If you are interested in coming to serve with Family Empowerment Centers, please contact Rob at 773.262.0760 or rob@familyempower.org. We will be happy to get any necessary information to you and help promote your trip here in any way that we can. We are currently scheduling Envision teams for Summer 2013. Reserve your space today!

Recognizing Our Partners!

Family Empowerment Centers wishes to thank the following agencies for showing support within the previous quarter via financial contributions or gifts-in-kind:

Castle Rock Matrix Foundation, Centro Dental, Children's Hunger Fund, Eve's Cleaners, Frank P. O'Meara, Here's Life Inner City, Joseph Sperlazzo, DDS; Little City Ministries, McDonald's Corporation, The Townsend Giving Fund, and those who wish to remain anonymous.

Would you consider adding Family Empowerment Centers as one of your monthly giving beneficiaries? Your financial support helps us maintain programs and services that impact the lives of those facing difficult circumstances in an urban context. Using our online giving tool, setting up a recurring donation is secure, safe and easy. Visit our website today: www.familyempower.org

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The Official Newsletter
of the
Family Empowerment
Centers

February 2013 ♥

We're On The Move in 2013!

There is much hustle and bustle around the Center as we begin a New Year. The S.A.Y. Yes! Afterschool & AWANA programs are back in full swing. English as a Second Language classes resumed after a short winter break with the addition of some new faces eager to improve their competency in the English language. We launched a nine-week group study called "Reading the Bible for Life" on Wednesday nights and continue to see enthusiasm from attendees who are excited to learn about the many facets of the Bible. We're moving at a quick clip around the office and look forward to sharing with you all the wonderful things in store for Family Empowerment Centers in 2013—including a \$50,000 Match Grant! (More details on the Match Grant will follow in our April newsletter.)

Join Team Family Empowerment for the 2013 Bank of America Chicago Marathon

Did you know that Family Empowerment Centers is a registered Contributing Charity with the Bank of America Chicago Marathon? Well, we are. Why is this great news? Because through the umbrella of the 2013 Bank of America Chicago Marathon, runners can help raise awareness and funds to support the work of Family Empowerment Centers.

If you are among the 45,000 runners registered to participate in the Bank of America Chicago Marathon in 2013, we encourage you to run with purpose this year: join Team Family Empowerment! As a member of Team Family Empowerment raising funds for the Center is easy and fun, with our step-by-step guidance.

In addition to the marathon, runners are welcome to represent Family Empowerment Centers as a member of Team Family Empowerment while participating in any 5K or alternative endurance race.

For more information on how to join Team Family Empowerment, email office@familyempower.org



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Schedule of Events

S.A.Y. Yes! Afterschool Program
Monday-Thursday
3:00-6:00pm

AWANA Program
Wednesday 4:30-6:00pm

E.S.L.
Tuesday & Thursday
6:30-8:30pm

Church Service
Sunday 6:00-7:30pm

Bible Study
Wednesday 6:30-8:00pm

The Cost of Discipleship, by William, “Kick-It” Group Mentor

Every week I have the privilege of meeting with three junior high boys who attend the “Kick-It” mentoring group. During our time together, we hang out and play games, have a devotion/teaching time, and then top our time off with some dinner.

Each of them hungers for authentic love and attention. They come from various backgrounds and socio-economic situations, and two of them experience very difficult family environments in the home each day. The Lord has called me to these boys in this season and I pray on behalf of these boys often. My aim is that they see Christ through my life and they see radical devotion to seeing His purpose played out in their lives.



We are currently working through a series on the cost of discipleship, exploring the question “What does it mean to actually follow Jesus?” To understand the invitation Jesus extends to each of us we had to begin by sorting out some basics like who the boys think Jesus actually is and then discuss who the Bible reveals Jesus to be. Last week I saw the Lord moving in the hearts of the boys. I saw them contemplating if following Christ was really for them. The Lord is challenging them and asking them to choose. One of the boys held tightly to his Bible as I declared to an “all in” or “all out” path when it comes to following Jesus for eternity. We discussed the possibility of Christ asking them to give up everything they have and all that they are to the world. Pray that these gospel threads will penetrate their hearts in the coming weeks.



Honor Roll Celebration! by Daniella, S.A.Y. Yes! Mentor

The year 2013 has begun and we hope to continue making a difference in the lives of the 25 children enrolled in the S.A.Y. Yes! Afterschool and AWANA programs. They bring joy to those around them, and our goal is to encourage them to become better people every day. It is touching to me when the kids proudly show their graded papers of how well they did in school. As a little token of appreciation for the hard work they do to get a good report card, we decided to take them out to eat. A few of the staff members, including myself, took the children who made it on the honor roll out for pizza. We ate, shared jokes, goofed around, and had a great time. It was amazing seeing how happy they all were. I am so glad to be able to share experiences like these with them. I look forward to many more occasions like these. God has certainly blessed their souls!



Silent Light Christmas Party, by Susan, Development & Donor Care

In December, Family Empowerment Centers welcomed 18 volunteers from Bloomingdale Church as we hosted a Silent Light Christmas Party for the students in the S.A.Y. Yes! Afterschool and AWANA programs. Roughly 25 students (and their families) were treated to an afternoon of games, crafts, holiday treats, sing-a-longs, photos by a fully decorated tree and ... presents!

Every one of the students in the afterschool and AWANA programs received a gift for the holidays. By the number of smiling, joy-filled faces at the end of the day we'd say the party was a huge blessing and success. Thank you members of Bloomingdale Church for making Christmas 2012 one our students will remember for a long time to come.

Academic Achievement, by Damaris, Children's Christian Ed Coordinator

I love the opportunities that I have to interact with the children in the S.A.Y. Yes! Afterschool & AWANA programs. I see them every week during AWANA and am pleased to watch as their trust and acceptance has grown from the first week in September when the programs began. I pray for them often. I encourage them to look for evidence of God's presence in their lives. I feel humbled to be a part of such meaningful programs that provide a light of hope in their lives. I always pray for a greater connection to the parents, particularly the moms that stay in the lobby waiting for the kids during the afterschool program.

Last week two Mentors from the afterschool program and I went to an awards ceremony at one of the local schools that some of our students attend. We found out that some of our S.A.Y. Yes! kids were going to receive awards marking academic achievement. So, off we went as a surprise with a card and flowers to give in recognition of this accomplishment.

As we entered the auditorium, I cannot forget the smiling faces that greeted us from three of the students' mothers. Their smiles were so big. They were so thankful to see us that they quickly found us a place to sit in such a packed auditorium!

As the ceremony took place we ended up splitting the flower bouquet as we saw more of our S.A.Y. Yes! participants receiving awards. They were so proud and gave us hugs, even in front of their friends! It was nice to see them in a different context. I couldn't believe that such a small act would make a big difference! Small things can go a long way. God showed me that what we do has an impact.

