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Mentoring Children, Feeding Families

Adjusting to our Fall schedule

Now that Fall is in full swing, our programs that run throughout the school year have begun. The Family Empowerment Centers is hosting over 30 student volunteers from Moody Bible Institute. They are helping us with the Food Pantry, our after-school program, English as a Second Language classes, church on Sunday mornings, and street evangelism.

We cannot accomplish all of this without the help of our volunteers. We also cannot mentor children and feed families without your financial support and prayers.

Would you keep us, our programs, and volunteers in your prayers?

- Pray that our volunteers have plenty of opportunities to share the love of Christ in word and deed
- Pray for the sustainability of our programs, financial and personnel
- Pray that we are able to hire a full-time staff member to help us raise awareness and support for the Center
- Pray for our community, specifically that they experience less violence and experience more hope and love



Support our ministries today!

There are less than two weeks until our Over The Edge event. In addition to preparing for the event, we continue to run our food pantry, after-school program, ESL class, and strive to accomplish our mission to mentor children and feed families.

If you would like to support the everyday work of the Family Empowerment Centers, feel free to write a check to "Family Empowerment Centers."

You can send checks to: 1533 W Devon Ave. Chicago, IL 60660

You may also donate online by visiting us at <https://familyempower.org/donate-now/>

We are going Over The Edge!

Fall 2022



Less than 2 weeks to go!

On Friday, September 30th and Saturday October 1st, friends of the Family Empowerment Centers will be rappelling down 27 stories of the iconic Wit Hotel in beautiful downtown Chicago. This year, we are laying before God a goal of raising \$150,000 through this event.

Proceeds from Over The Edge will directly support our food pantry, ESL program, and the myriad of mentoring programs we offer children in our community such as summer soccer camps, summer day camps, football camp for the local high school, and our after-school program.

By the time you receive this newsletter we will only be a couple weeks away from our Over The Edge event. We are so thankful for the support and awareness this event is bringing to the work of the Family Empowerment Centers. You can help us reach our goal of \$150,000 by supporting one of our rappellers, or supporting the Family Empowerment Centers directly by scanning this QR code. God bless you!

Scan Me to Donate!

FEC Featured on NBC 5!



On Thursday, September 6th, Executive Director Scott Manke sat down with Good Morning Chicago on NBC 5 to talk about Over The Edge. One of the hosts of Good Morning Chicago (Matt Rodriguez) is committing to going Over The Edge on Friday, September 30th in support of the Family Empowerment Centers.

Check daily for the interview here: <https://www.nbcchicago.com/entertainment/chicago-today/>



Mentoring Children: Summer Camp



If you were to walk along the streets of our neighborhoods you would find broken liquor bottles, used heroin needles, trash, and more. These are the “tells” of the pain experienced in Chicago. But, while these are the signs and symptoms of brokenness, the true brokenness lies under the surface of every person in need.

In the face of such pain, the Family Empowerment Centers is able to bring some of the youth out of the city and into our summer camp. Camp is a place where young kids can leave the city behind and experience opportunities they don't get in the city. Our summer camp gives individuals the chance to be a kid, without the usual pressures from the city. But most importantly, it's a place where they can hear and respond to the Gospel.

This summer, we had the opportunity to bring 19 teenagers from various parts of the city to camp. While at camp, many of the youths got to try new experiences. Everything from swimming, riding horses, making birdhouses, playing carpet ball, and even going canoeing. There were many times that I [Matt Schrottenboer] was able to take a step back and watch the campers having fun. It was beautiful to watch and experience.

While we do get to have fun- we are also there to pour into the kids spiritually. While at camp, the youth have their phones set aside. On the last night, we were able to have a conversation on what life will be like when they get their phones back. Many of them were hit with the reality of how much they rely on their phones. Our phone is a great tool we can use for good, but it can also be a major distraction, taking our attention away from what matters. During this conversation many of them said that they want to have more times like camp where they aren't attached to their phone, but rather able to be present in the moment- both with others and with God. We all confessed that if we had better self-control with our phones, we would have better quiet times with God. All the young men in my group expressed that having intentional time with God was beneficial for them and that they wanted that time to carry into when camp is over.

This is one of numerous stories of how God met the campers and counselors, and how everyday He led us back to Himself. We cannot do camp without God and without your help and support.

-Matt Schrottenboer

Ministry Highlights: PCM Students



As a new semester began at Moody Bible Institute, Beth Mason, my colleague here at the Center, planned a gathering for our student volunteers- called PCM students. She started our time together with some simple ice breakers. On the agenda were introductions, snacks, prayer, and an overview of why Family Empowerment Centers exists.

As we went around the room, each person shared about their background and connections with the Family Empowerment Centers. Each person shared pivotal moments of their lives. I [Phil Palmer] was struck with the simplicity of the experiences that define us.

One student talked about how their parents suggested they come to Chicago; another mentioned how their friend from high school recommended Moody Bible Institute. These relationships were instrumental to the students as they sought out their next steps. In their journeys, the key parts were often shaped by a person they knew personally.

As I listened to these stories, I was reminded about how the families in our own neighborhood are shaped by the family and friends they know well. A simple conversation with a friend or mentor can shape us forever. This is precisely why our after-school program matters. Our after-school program provides a helpful resource for children and their parents. The relationships they form here will shape them as they journey through life. These young children will be defined by the connections they make with healthy and loving mentors.

As a result, we are preparing for our fall season by praying for our students by name, planning activities which allow deeper connections, and adjusting our schedule to allow more time in conversation with students and their families. Excellence in our program is important, but we also know that the connections we form with these students is what will impact them in the long run. Paul says it this way: *“If I have not love, I am nothing.”* We are excited to get to know these children and to help them become better students, but we pray that we can show them the love of God in the ways we interact with them.

I'm so thankful for our time with these new volunteers, and for the way their stories moved me. Their willingness to share personally gave me such a beautiful reminder. Family Empowerment Centers is blessed to have these students volunteering this semester.

-Phil Palmer