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816-420-9005 phone

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Northland

EARLY EDUCATION CENTER

SHAPING THE FUTURE OF CHILDREN

Spotlight



Chris and I became part of the NEEC family in May 2006. We had 4 children of our own and we were current foster parents. We received a phone call stating that there was a 2 week old baby girl in the NICU at Children's Mercy hospital who needed a foster family. After a very grim explanation of her special needs and prognosis, we decided to meet her before making up our minds. Her name was literally "baby girl". As soon as we saw her, we knew that we were going to make her ours. On Mother's Day 2006 we got to bring her home and give her the name Ryan Lynn - the gift of a lifetime. Her adoption was final on St. Patrick's Day 2008.

Ryan has a rare neurological condition called bilateral open-lip schizencephaly and optic nerve hypoplasia. In English it means about 10% of her brain never developed and she is legally blind. As soon as we brought her home, we knew that we had to find a preschool to take care of her during the day since we were both working full time. CCVI recommended NEEC. I called to see if they had any openings and they told me they were full. After explaining her condition they immediately said "she is in" She began her journey in the purple room with Ms. Christy. At about 6 months of age we started to notice the delays that Ryan had. She immediately began just about every kind of therapy there is and has since made great strides. She walks with a walker, she army crawls and her vision keeps

getting better year by year. Ryan has severe muscle tone and is currently on a 3000 calorie a day diet to help overcome the calories she burns just sitting in her chair all day long.

In June 2008, CJ came into our life and was quickly adopted within a year. When CJ started at NEEC he was lucky to be in the purple room also with Ms. Christy. CJ is healthy and has no medical issues which we are very thankful for. Having two kids at NEEC was fun. Transitioning him to the different rooms has not been as hard as Ryan. CJ is always quick to help his friends and his teachers. CJ is two and is having fun in the brown room with Ms. Tasha. After CJ we decided we were finished having children (6 was enough) but then Chris received a phone call regarding a two week old baby girl. He first said no and then they told him it was CJ's biological sister. Syndie joined us in July 2009 and the adoption shortly after. NEEC was very accommodating with another child from the Gardner clan. Syndie is developmentally delayed by a few months. She is now 16 months old and just started waving, sitting up on her own and standing. She still won't crawl on her knees but she gets around quick. She is able to receive therapies in the pink room as well.

Our family is very thankful for the positive progress our kiddos have made. Chris and I feel that our kids are not lucky to have us, we are lucky to have found them. They have made our life more enjoyable and make us laugh every day. We are also very thankful to the entire staff of NEEC. Without them our kiddos would not have made the progress they have. It is their dedication to these kids that makes all the difference in the world.

Written By:
Chris & Tracie Gardner



Calendar of Events

2010

December 24 – Christmas Eve – NEEC Closed

December 31 – New Year's Day Observation – NEEC Closed

2011

February 21 – President's Day – NEEC Closed (teacher in-service)

April – NEEC Garage Sale

May 7 – 9th Annual Walk in the Park

May – Family/Teacher Conferences

May 30 – Memorial Day – NEEC Closed

June – United Way Day of Caring

June – Community Wellness Day

July 4 – Independence Day – NEEC Closed

July – Graduation

August – Enrollment

September – Community Helper's Month

September 5 – Labor Day – NEEC Closed

September 10 – 9th Annual Diamond K Ranch Party and Auction

October 10 – Columbus Day (teacher in-service)

November – Family/Teacher Conferences

November 24 – Thanksgiving Day – NEEC Closed

November 25 – Day after Thanksgiving – NEEC Closed

December 26 – Christmas Day Observation – NEEC Closed

9th Annual Diamond K Ranch Party and Auction



On Saturday, September 11th a record breaking 175 friends, family, staff and community members of Northland Early Education Center enjoyed a gorgeous evening at Mark and Lorry Kelly's Diamond K Ranch for the 9th Annual Diamond K Ranch Party and Auction. Guests relaxed in the great outdoors while indulging in a delicious dinner compliments of Outback Steakhouse on Barry Road, cookies from Lou's Catering and ice cream from Cirque d' Alex. Children were entertained throughout the evening with hayrides, a moonwalk, face painting as well as a balloon artist. With outstanding auction items to bid on guests left with treasures in their arms and warm hearts knowing they had helped NEEC raise over \$27,000 to continue providing essential services to children with special needs in the Northland. We would like to thank everyone who attended this fun and meaningful event. Please join us in thanking our sponsors, all of the businesses and individuals who donated items for our auctions as well as the volunteers who donated their time. Without their overwhelming generosity and support this event would not be possible.

Cowboy Sponsors:



Ken & Roswitha Schaffer

Wrangler Sponsors



Buckaroo Sponsors

The Astra Group
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Dobberstine Custom Homes



Love and Logic Tip

Sometimes a typical parenting technique with children is a use of warnings and threats. A typical scenario is warning about something that's going to happen by threatening to take something away or limit a special activity. It's easy and convenient to threaten in the hopes that it will work. And occasionally it actually does. Of course, this is much like playing a slot machine. With an occasional payoff, we are tempted to continue to play the game. Unfortunately, we all know that the slot machine usually wins in the long run. And kids usually learn to ignore hollow threats. Or if it has worked even one time, they continue to "pull" your lever knowing it might pay off again. Unlike the slot machine, kids don't win in the long run. They become conditioned to either require more and larger threats, or they learn to simply ignore us. Because through experience they have learned (from us) that we don't always follow through and just keep warning, or FALL through on our intended length of time for our threats. Parents who use warnings and threats soon wonder why their kids ignore others such as their teachers. Kids who ignore the advice of teachers soon fall behind in school. But why should they listen to others? They don't have to listen to their parents. You might also notice the same routine when you count down...or count to three! Will they always wait until the 3? Of course they will, because they have learned it works! They will always take you right to the mark, won't they? What a shock it must be for kids who grow up like this to discover that their bosses don't give a lot of reminders and warnings. How unfair this must feel to young adults. I've seen many young adults lose their jobs. They view their employers as totally unfair, and complain that they weren't warned about the impending loss of the job. Do your kids a favor. Tell them what you expect just once. If they don't respond or remember, allow a reasonable consequence to follow. When they complain, simply say, "Not to worry, I'm sure your listening will get better." Parents who run their home this way will get many rewards in the future, as will their children.



Fall Costume Party and Parade

"Trick or Treat" and laughter could be heard throughout the school as excited students dressed in costumes paraded through the halls during our Fall Costume Parade. After showing off their costumes students enjoyed a tasty treat during their classroom Fall Parties. The Fall Costume Party and Parade has become an annual tradition at NEEC and preparation begins early with classrooms carving pumpkins, baking pumpkin pies, making pumpkin playdough and learning about the fall season.

GoodSearch & GoodShop



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What if NEEC earned a donation every time you searched the Internet? Or how about if a percentage of every purchase you made online went to support our school? Well, now it can! GoodSearch.com is a new Yahoo-powered search engine that donates half its advertising revenue, about a penny per search, to the charities its users designate. Use it just as you would any search engine, get quality search results from Yahoo, and watch the donations add up!

GoodShop.com is a new online shopping mall which donates up to 30 percent of each purchase to your favorite cause! Hundreds of great stores including Amazon, Target, Gap, Best Buy, eBay, Macy's and Barnes & Noble have teamed up with GoodShop and every time you place an order, you'll be supporting NEEC!

And if you download the GoodSearch – Northland Early Education Center toolbar, our school will earn money every time you shop and search online – even if you forget to go to GoodShop or GoodSearch first! Add the Northland Early Education Center toolbar at <http://www.goodsearch.com/toolbar/northland-early-education-center-need>

Community Careers Month

September was Community Careers' Month at Northland Early Education Center. During the month of September, students learned about careers in which people protect, serve and beautify our community. With the use of the Project Construct curriculum NEEC strives to incorporate the community into our daily lesson plans.

This year students were visited by a herpetologist, dog enthusiast and firefighters. George Pisani, a herpetologist, came to NEEC to share exciting facts about reptiles. The children were able to touch, see and smell a long snake skin, as well as reptile bones and shells. Jo Hickey from The Humane Society of Greater Kansas City shared dog safety as well as the appropriate way to approach and pet a dog. Students then had the opportunity to put into practice what they have learned with Jo's favorite dog Cooper. And the excitement didn't end there. The Kansas City Fire Department came to NEEC allowing the children to explore a fire truck, equipment and gear as well as taught the students the importance of fire safety. The children gained valuable knowledge about those who serve in our community and we appreciate everyone who took time out of their busy schedules to enrich the lives of our students.



William T. Kemper Foundation

NEEC has been fortunate enough to have created a long-lasting relationship with the William T. Kemper Foundation through generous grant funding. The Foundation is dedicated to continuing Mr. Kemper's lifelong interest in improving the human condition and quality of life. Most recently NEEC received funding from the William T. Kemper Foundation to replace our malfunctioning washer, dryer and refrigerator at the Center. With this generous support NEEC was able to purchase a larger capacity and environmentally friendly washer, dryer and refrigerator that will sustain the center for many years. Since the purchase of the larger capacity washer and dryer NEEC staff has seen a decrease in the volume and frequency of our daily laundry needs which has dramatically decreased the amount of water used at the center. The new larger capacity refrigerator has also provided NEEC with much needed storage space and the ability to purchase more food in bulk. Please join the NEEC Board of Directors and staff in thanking the William T. Kemper Foundation for the overwhelming support they continue to show NEEC.



SPECIAL THANK YOU TO MEMBERS OF THE KANSAS CITY COMMUNITY

The administration, staff and teachers at NEEC would like to extend a special thank you to the foundations, corporations and individual members of our community who have generously donated funding, time and/or services over the past several months:

ARC of Clay and Platte Counties
Antioch Printing
Bart's Electric
Camochic.com
Cirque d'Alex
Dobberstine Custom Homes
Dr. Alan Grimes
Dr. Ganesha G. Gupta
Faubion United Methodist Women
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Outback Steakhouse on Barry Road
Soroptimist International of Liberty Missouri
State of Missouri Childcare Facility Improvement Grant
The Astra Group
The Platte County Eleemosynary Society
Tucker Painting, Inc.
William T. Kemper Foundation

Northland

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In the Spirit of Giving... and Tax Credits!

As a 501(c)3 non-profit organization, NEEC is dependent upon the generosity of our local community not only for a portion of our programmatic and general operating expenses, but also for specific projects and classroom needs. While there are many advantages for giving to NEEC, one you may not realize is that your donation will also provide you with a tax deduction. Many experts advise that charitable giving is a great tax planning strategy and your donation is deductible the same year in which it is made. So as the 2010 year comes to a close consider supporting NEEC and the very special children we serve while also taking advantage of valuable tax credits.

Neighborhood Assistance Tax Credits

The Northland Early Education Center has the opportunity to once again receive tax credits through the Missouri Department of Economic Development's Neighborhood Assistance Program. The Neighborhood Assistance Program helps not-for-profit organizations raise private-sector funds by providing partial state tax credits to businesses that make contributions to approved community improvement projects. Through the Neighborhood Assistance Program, businesses can donate cash, materials, supplies or equipment; technical and professional services, labor, real estate, or stocks and bonds to assist with NEEC's Early Intervention Services program, which provides early education and therapeutic intervention for children with special needs. Credits can equal 50 percent of the total amount contributed, providing a state tax savings for businesses who participate, while making a difference in the lives of children with special needs.

Monetary Donations

NEEC is able to achieve our mission thanks to the support of generous individual donors. We welcome all levels of donation, whether it's a one-time gift, a monthly donation

or the establishment of a matching gifts program through your employer. Making your donation is as easy as filling out the attached envelop and remember NEEC is exempt under Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code, making this gift tax deductible.

Sponsorships

Corporate sponsors are essential in helping NEEC accomplish its mission. Through the generosity of local businesses we are able to ensure all children in the Northland have access to high quality early education and therapy services regardless of their developmental level or socioeconomic status. NEEC offers several sponsorship opportunities through our two annual fundraisers, the Walk in the Park in May and the Diamond K Ranch Party & Auction in September.

Donate Treasures

While our ultimate "wish" is for Ty Pennington from Extreme Home Makeover to appear at NEEC, demolish the current structure and construct a new building - we know that this is highly unlikely! Realistically, NEEC would be extremely grateful for the following items or any item you feel would be useful for the center.

Operation Wish List

Office furniture and supplies
Oven/Stove
Kitchen utensils
New carpet in Administration area
Floor mats for entryway
Countertop at the front desk
Blinds throughout the building
File cabinets for children/staff files
Large storage shed for playground
Playground toys and equipment

Classroom Wish List(s)

Each classroom has a wish list with items such as a play kitchen, board books, puzzles, puppets, and bibs. Each classroom will have a wish list posted with specific items needed for the classroom.

Volunteering

Volunteering is a great way to help and is just as important as a monetary donation. We invite you to join NEEC in making a difference in the lives of the very precious children we serve whether you can give a few hours each month or a few days each year. NEEC offers a wide variety of volunteer opportunities including Program and Non-Program opportunities;

- Program Volunteer Opportunities
- Participate and assist with classroom "Circle Time" activities
 - Read to children
 - Lead or participate in classroom activities or projects
 - Teachers Aid

Non-Program Volunteer Opportunities

- Grounds Maintenance
- Building Maintenance
- Office Assistant
- Annual Walk in the Park Fundraiser
- Annual Diamond K Ranch Party Fundraiser
- Annual NEEC Garage Sale
- Annual Wellness Day

If you or your business feels compelled to support Northland Early Education Center in any way or if you would like more information on how you can make a difference in the lives of the very special children we serve please contact Sally Kellam, Development Director, at 816-420-9005 or via email at sally@neec.us