

St. Mary's

EARLY CHILDHOOD CENTER



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2021 was a year like no other! While undergoing major changes, we kept our focus on providing the highest quality early childhood experiences for the three to five year old children we serve.

Currently, over 95% of the children attending St. Mary's Early Childhood Center are living in poverty, and **65% are receiving a full \$10,000 scholarship**. While the families are asked to pay \$10 weekly, no child has ever been denied services because the family is unable to pay. We urgently need your help to raise the funds to provide these scholarships! Together, we can change the futures of the children we serve by ensuring success in school and life.

Allow us to introduce Emma. During Emma's first four years, she has lived with three different foster families and no longer has contact with her biological parents. Emma was dismissed from her previous preschool due to her severe behaviors and difficulty with interactions.

Within the first days at St. Mary's, Emma was extremely disruptive. She would often run from the classroom, throw toys, knock over furniture, fall to the floor in tears and even kick, slap and try to bite other students and teachers. When calm enough to join activities, Emma was despondent, showing disdain for her work. She had trouble sharing with peers and following instructions from adults. **Emma was in crisis mode and needed immediate help to keep herself, her peers and her teachers safe.**

Using their knowledge, skills and trained techniques, Emma's teachers swiftly developed and implemented a plan for her. The teachers worked tirelessly to understand the specific triggers of Emma's anger and equip her with calming strategies such as breathing techniques, tapping and gently squeezing her arms.

Emma metamorphosed into a warm, strong, and responsible child. Emma has made incredible growth in several academic areas, is actively involved in classroom activities and demonstrates great creativity in our atelier. Her favorite things to do while at St. Mary's are paint, draw and listen to her teacher read stories. **She now comes to school each morning with a beautiful smile on her face, often inviting others to participate in group activities.**

While serving Emma and her peers is our passion, we continue to reach further by meeting the growing needs of their families. Both resources and referrals have been shared to ease the burdens being felt. We have **recruited families to participate in our 2Generational programming which provides education and workforce development through our partners**. The programming builds family well-being and stability by intentionally and simultaneously working with children and the adults.

While our expenses are lean, the greatest need within the annual budget is personnel due to the low **1:7 teacher to children ratio**. As you can imagine, student growth is slowed when staff turnover is high. The Board of Directors implemented a long-planned pay increase for our teachers on July 1. The goal of the increase is to retain talented personnel while competing with the educator pay available at local schools.

With your help, we can continue to provide scholarship funds for our preschool children that need them most and raise the funds necessary for educator salary increases. **Each and every dollar makes a difference!**

This pay increase was expensive, totaling \$150,000 per year. Due to the importance of these increases, a generous donor will provide **matching funds** up to \$100,000 for this initiative! All gifts given towards the increases will be matched, **doubling the impact of your gift!**

Please consider a gift by year end to St. Mary's Early Childhood Center if you are in a position to do so. Your ongoing support is a critical investment in changing the life of a child and our community.

Thank you for being with us, staying with us and working with us to provide our children the opportunity to reach their full potential both in school and in life. Because of supporters like you, we have been able to continue our mission of critical work to change the lives of our children.

Kindly,

Jon Arbuckle
Board President

Kristin Cavolick
Executive Director

*We strongly believe that each child is competent, capable, and a powerful learner. Research proves that involvement in a high-quality early childhood program can mitigate the horrific results of poverty which include school failure, unemployment, teen pregnancy, and incarceration. **We need your help!** Any contribution, no matter how big or small, works to create a better life for children like Emma.*

P.S. You can support St. Mary's with an online donation by visiting www.stmarysecc.org and click Donate.

