



United Methodists of

Illinois Great Rivers Conference
Speaking and Acting on Behalf of Children
PO Box 19207, Springfield, IL 62704-9207

Volume 27, Number 1

Spring/Summer 2013

Attend the UVC Pre-Conference Workshop Wednesday, June 5, 2013
Peoria First UMC, 116 N.E. Perry Avenue, from 10:30 am – 12:45 pm
Facilitators are

At 10:30 am **Molly Berendt**, Program Director for Compass, who will tell how this program for homeless and low-income children has been set up in her community and how it has grown from being a part of one school to servicing children from 6 schools in the area. What can happen in your community?

At 11:45 **Dana Pfeiffer**, Executive Director of Grounds of Grace, will share about this program for young persons 16 and older who have been caught up in human trafficking. Human Trafficking is a little talked about but a very real problem in our society today.

Registration for the workshop including lunch is \$15.

Send to Lisa Graves, 1200 N. 13th St.

East St. Louis, IL 62205. Phone: 618-874-0777 ext 1113

Email: lgraves@lessiebatesdavis.org.

Please make checks payable to **United Voices for Children**.

The Annual United Voices for Children Breakfast will be Friday, June 7 at 7:15 am at the Peoria Civic Center. The recipients of the Mary Renfro Life Time Achievement Award for an outstanding Child Advocate and the Karleen Dude Essay Contest for Youth will be presented and honored.

Reservations for the \$11.50 breakfast may be made On-line at www.igrc.org/AC2013

Or Call: Nancy Patton at the UM Center 217-529-2040.

See Flyer & additional information on pages 2 & 3
Please post and use as bulletin insert.

Send UVC newsletter changes and updates to:

Editor: Karleen Dude, 901 Randall Drive, Normal, IL 61761, Karleendude@ayhoo.com

Illinois Great Rivers Conference Chapter UVC Attn: Lisa Graves, 1200 N. 13th Street,

East St Louis, IL 62205. Phone: 618-874-0777 ext 1113., Email: lgraves@lessiebatesdavis.org

REACHING "THE VERY LEAST OF THESE"

United Voices for Children
Child Advocacy Workshop
Wednesday, June 5
First United Methodist Church
116 E. Perry Ave., Peoria, IL
10:30 am – 12:45 pm

United Voices for Children has two presenters coming to their preconference event who oversee programs in the Springfield community which address the needs of "The Very Least of These"

Molly Berendt, a member of Douglas Avenue UMC, is the Program Director of Compass. Compass is a free after school program for homeless and low-income elementary students in Springfield. It began in one local church & is now in five locations.

Dana Pfeiffer, the Executive Director of Grounds of Grace, will be outlining the topic of violence, abuse and human trafficking: Also **A victim**, who is now an advocate for victims rights will join Dana Pfeiffer and together they will share the process, trauma and initiatives taken in overcoming violence, abuse and human trafficking.

Registration for the workshop including lunch is \$15.

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On-line at www.igrc.org/AC2013 **Registration**

Call: Nancy Patton at the UM Center 217-529-2040

? Contact: Karleen Dude - karleendude@yahoo.com, or call: 309-452-3838

Highlights of the Programs to be Presented at the June 5 UVC Workshop



Compass is a free after-school program for homeless and low-income elementary students of Springfield District 186. Compass began in Fall 2011 as a ministry of Douglas Avenue United Methodist Church, whose members wanted to connect with in their neighborhood. They already had the

beginnings of a partnership with their neighborhood school, Dubois Elementary, but adding the Compass program greatly deepened the relationship.

The Compass program includes both academic and enrichment components. Compass dedicates time to tutoring but also works on educating the children as whole persons, and recognizes that social, emotional, and Life Skills contribute to overall well-being and academic success. Compass aims to help all participants perform at or above grade level in school. In addition, Compass provides a full balanced dinner, served family-style. This offers adult mentors the perfect time to develop meaningful relationships with the children.

Douglas Avenue UMC provided space to hold the program, committed volunteers to run it, and the financial resources to support it. Due to the program's success, Compass was approached by a social service agency in Springfield, the Family Service Center, about possible expansion. Recently, the Family Service Center received funding from United Way to expand the Compass program to five more schools. Douglas Avenue UMC will continue to be involved as a program site.

Thoughts on Human Trafficking:



This modern day slavery occurs often and in your back yard. Laws abolished slavery that seemed to be inhuman in the time of President Lincoln. What is modern day society doing today for slavery?

Enslaved victims (girls and boys) are in the sex industry, working for little or no money. Human sex trafficking happens locally in cities and towns, both large and small, throughout the United States, right in citizens' backyards. The pimp traffics victims against their will by force or threat of force; **this is human sex trafficking.**

Notify Grounds of Grace hisgrounds@groundsofgrace.com. Contact your local police department, U.S. Attorney's Office, ICE for assistance and resources to help address this problem. Your concern and action may save a life.

“Where’s the Love?” — Foster Kids Want to Know

“Where’s the Love?” is a hard-hitting message from the “Foster Kids Are Our Kids” campaign about how bad things can happen to kids who aren’t given enough love & support. The campaign shows how kids in foster care are more likely to become homeless, drop out of school, or become incarcerated because they often don’t receive the love & support that all kids need in order to help them live up to their full potential.

Foster Care is the placement of children by the Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS) outside their homes due to abuse, neglect, or dependency. Foster care is provided to children from infancy through the teen years. Foster homes are licensed and trained.

There are three types of Foster Care programs:

- **Home of Relatives:** Abused and Neglected children who cannot remain at home safely are placed with relative caregivers until those children can safely achieve permanence through return home, adoption, subsidized guardianship, or gaining adult independence.
- **Traditional:** Abused and neglected children who cannot remain safely at home are placed with licensed, trained, and supervised care providers when no appropriate relative placement is available. Placement continues until the children can safely achieve permanence.
- **Specialized:** Specialized foster care is the placement of a child with significant behavioral problems with a licensed foster family. This is the most intense level of care within the foster care program.

Foster parents are people just like you. They are:

- Married or single
- Parents of little children, teens or adults, or adults with no children
- Working outside the home or in the home
- At least 21 years of age
- From various cultural, ethnic, or religious backgrounds
- Financially able to provide for their family’s present needs
- Homeowners or renters
- Able to pass a criminal background check
- Take part in an agency’s licensing process.

An effort is made to place children with a relative or in neighborhood-based, culturally sensitive home where children coming into foster care currently live.

Foster Families are needed for brothers and sisters to stay together, for teenagers, African Americans of all ages, children with special medical and behavioral needs, and teenage mothers and their babies. Children are supported with financial assistance depending on their needs, medical care, educational services and personal support.

“Foster families are invaluable, volunteer safety nets who catch and care for thousands of society’s children at a most vulnerable time in their lives.” Charles E. Freeman, Chief Justice, Illinois Supreme Court

Marcus Holland, UMCH Development Coordinator, writes about youth foster care.
United Methodist Children's Home is asking churches and child advocates to help play an active role in searching for safe, stable, and loving foster parents for teens in need.

What do our foster kids need?

- A safe, stable, and structured home to heal from trauma experienced through abuse, neglect, rejection, and loss.
- An opportunity to learn, grow, and succeed in all aspects of their life.
- Caring and supportive adults who provide a sense of belonging.
- Foster parents who are actively involved in their life.
- Parents who meet the teens' physical, emotional, and mental health needs.
- Foster parents who are committed and will see things through to the end no matter how difficult it may be.

UMCH has a Family-Supported Adolescent Foster Care program serving teenagers who are moving from residential treatment or need more intensive services from their current placement. We believe that on-going therapeutic services, combined with long-term, consistent, and non-judgmental caretaking helps these teens prepare for a successful adulthood and self-sufficiency. Our program provides on-going training and support to professional foster parents, who are an integral part of the teens' treatment team.

Where do you come in?

- **Help your local church identify healthy families** and/or individuals who would be available to open their homes to a foster child/ren. You may help them be in touch with a foster care agency in your area or to be in touch with one of the UM agencies listed below.
- **You may be a support system:** One may mentor a foster child to help them through a difficult period and/or give the foster family encouraging support,
- **Donate money and volunteer time to the UM agencies.** All resources help an agency to provide the support children and foster families need.

Contacts for Foster Care programs of the UMC Child care agencies, who oversee the placement of children and youth on behalf of DCFS

The Baby Fold – Karen Blum, 309-557-1018, email: kblum@thebabyfold.org

Cunningham Children's Home - Tammie Roedl, 217-367-3728 ext 199

email: troedl@cunninghamhome.org

Chaddock - Deb Roberts 217-592-0451 email : droboterts@chaddock.org

United Methodist Children's Home – Audrey Buescher 618-242-5600 ext. 243,

email: abuescher@umchome.org.

Lessie Bates Davis Neighborhood House Hosts Illinois Kids Count 2013 Conference

On February 14, 2013, at the Lessie Bates Davis Neighborhood House (LBDNH), there was a press conference that announced the newly released Illinois Kids Count 2013 annual report. LBDNH Board President and Brother Earl McDowell, Jr. led the press conference and Brother Mayor Alvin Parks, Jr. served as a co-host and expert panelist. Fox 2 News and the St. Louis Post Dispatch also covered the event. There was a full-color feature in the February 15th edition of the Belleville News-Democrat.

Reviewing the 2013 Kids Count Report and the Illinois State Legislature was the topic of the interview which the BND had with Gaylord Gieseke, president of Voices for Illinois Children. Ms. Gieseke shared with reporters: "Illinois lawmakers grappling with the state's budget mess must make funding preschool a priority because after a decade of gains enrollment has slipped 20,000 over the past four years.

Speaking on the 2013 Kids Count report done by the Anne E. Casey Foundation. Gaylord Gieseke urged legislators to do what it takes to rid Illinois of the "very sobering distinction - the nation's worst in state funding for education."

"We, at Voices for Illinois Children, feel we are at a crossroads. Budgets are about hard choices, and we challenge Illinois to do the right thing," Gieseke told The Associated Press, singling out increasing the ranks of early childhood education as "our highest priority."

"We believe it can and should be done, if you set your mind to it in this difficult time," she said noting that Illinois school districts got \$200 million less in state funding for this school year, given the states budget crisis. "We challenge them to make it a higher priority. All the research on this topic shows that the return on such an investment is very significant." The 2013 Kids count Report, which also details lingering educational, poverty and other challenges affecting Illinois' young people, dovetailed with President Obama's statements in his State of the Union speech. as he pushed for universal pre-school – notably for 4-year-olds from families with low or moderate incomes – that perhaps ultimately could boost graduation rates, reduce teen pregnancy, and curb violent crime.

Budget cuts have moved the number of children enrolled in pre-school in Illinois from more than 95,000 between 1998 - 2009 to 81,000 according to the report and if current budget cuts go through another 6,000 children would be cut.

"It wasn't long ago that investments in children were a high priority in Illinois," Gieseke said; "We can't continue to allow the state's fiscal crisis to justify policy choices that put our children, families and communities at risk".

Mailing List Update

Date _____
Name _____ Home Phone _____
Address _____ Work Phone _____
City _____ Zip _____ E-mail _____

Return to: Karleen Dude, 901 Randall Drive, Normal, IL 61761

Phone: 309-452-3838 E-mail: karleendude@yahoo.com

or Doug Stone, P.O. Box 19207, Springfield, IL 62794-9207

Please check and return if you no longer wish to receive this mailing.

This newsletter automatically goes to each local United Methodist Church, Outreach/Mission chairs and Local Church Child Advocates in the Illinois Great Rivers Conference.

If you are interested in being placed on the UVC Enewsletter List

Contact Karleen Dude karleendude@yahoo.com

Illinois Kids Count 2013: “Moving Policy, Making Progress”



Illinois Kids Count 2013 — “Moving Policy, Making Progress” — focuses on 25 years of achievements and challenges in early childhood education, health care coverage, access to child care services, and seven other featured policy areas. Illinois has made significant strides in improving the lives of children and families, but that progress is now at risk, jeopardizing the health, safety, and well-being of our children and threatening efforts to build a more prosperous future for the state as

a whole.

KIDS COUNT State Organizations

The Annie E. Casey Foundation funds a network of state-level organizations that provide a community-by-community picture of the condition of children. The network organizations also monitor budget and legislative decisions in the states and provide policy analysis based on evidence of what works for children and families.

*Learn more about Illinois 2013 KIDS COUNT and the children in your community.. Go to Voices for Illinois Children www.voices4kids.org and there **under “Illinois Kids Count 2013” you may download part or all of the report.** A limited number of Illinois Kids Count 2013 report hard copies are available by request. Please contact Yassi Baharloo for details at ybaharloo@voices4kids.org or (312) 516-5577.*

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United Voices for Children
Illinois Great Rivers Conference

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Protect Children Not Guns

For more than 20 years, the Children's Defense Fund has produced a gun report "[Protect Children, Not Guns](#)" which documents the epidemic of gun violence in America. A child or teen dies or is injured from guns every 30 minutes. Gun violence saturates our children's lives. More children and teens die from guns every three days than died in the Newtown massacre. The number of children under 5 killed by guns in 2010 was more than the number of law enforcement officers killed in the line of duty that same year. Between 1979 and 2010, 119,079 children and teens died from guns. This is more deaths in 32 years than U.S. soldiers killed in action in the Vietnam, Korean, Afghanistan and Iraq wars combined.

Download the Children's Defense Funds new fact sheet "[The Truth About Guns](#)", [distribute the most up-to-date key facts](#) on child and teen gun deaths and injuries and [take action by signing a petition](#) at www.childrensdefense.org to the President and members of Congress demanding they [#ProtectChildrenNotGuns](#).

Children's Defense Fund..
25 E Street, N.W., Washington, DC 20001 | 800-CDF-1200 | www.childrensdefense.org