



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

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Final Printed Issue, Spring 2014

Caring for God's Family?

Golden Cross Agencies - United Voices for Children/IGRC Alliance are planning a Luncheon on Friday, June 6, 2014. This will be the coming together of the agencies in the Illinois Great Rivers Conference who relate to the same initiative, caring for God's children, youth and adults in their times of need in the name of the United Methodist Church in the IGRC. The program is being planned by the Golden Cross Agencies..

**Reservations for the \$15.00 luncheon may be made On-line at www.igrc.org/AC2014
Or Call: Nancy Patton at the UM Center 217-529-2040.**

This the Final Issue of the printed copy of United Voices for Children Newsletter

Effective at the end of Annual Conference in June United Voices for Children will no longer meet as a Committee the newsletter will come as an Electronic Newsletter through the Illinois Great Rivers Conference.

An effort will be made to keep persons informed through an E-newsletter on issue which affect the future of children and youth on the state and federal level. If you are not connected to the internet you are encouraged to contact persons within your community, local church, senior center, public library, and/or good friend and see if they would be willing to pass information on to you or may help you get set up to receive it. Fill in the form on back page with name and email and send it to

Karleen Dude, 901 Randall Drive, Normal, IL 61761, karleendude@yahoo.com

If you need other arrangements made, PLEASE be in touch .

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 ,

Around at Our Agencies

Lessie Bates Davis Neighborhood House's was awarded a grant for an Anti-Violence Focused After-School Program to serve high school aged students. The purpose of the programs is to expand the range of choices and opportunities that enable, empower, and encourage youth to achieve positive growth and development, improve expectations and capacities for future success, and avoid and reduce risk taking behavior.

Through the program Neighborhood House will provide a "safe haven" where caring adults will help youth minimize risky violent behaviors, improve educational performance, enhance community involvement skills, enhance leadership development skills, and interact with parents and other adults to promote positive life experiences

Contact: Lisa Graves, 618-874-0777 x1113, lgraves@lessiebatesdavis.org,
www.lessiebatesdavis.org

The Baby Fold is a part of a collaborative effort with Mclean County Unit District No. 5 and United Way of Mclean County so Fairview School in Normal may become a **Community School**.

A **Community School** is both a place and a set of partnerships between the school and other community resources. With the school building as a hub, a Community School brings together many partners to offer a range of expanded supports and opportunities for students, families and community members – before, during and after school, as well as during evenings and occasionally weekends. Community Schools are designed around three primary goals: 1) align out of school time with classroom learning; 2) bring communities, families, and school together; and, 3) coordinate resources for children and families.

The Community Schools model has been highly successful in other communities throughout the nation in working to ensure that students are ready to learn and to achieve high standards, in preparing young people for success and in helping parents and community members become more engaged with their respective schools.

Contact: Julie Payne, Vice President, Development and Public Relations,
309-451-7203 jpayne@thebabyfold.org, www.thebabyfold.org

Kumler Outreach Ministries operates a food pantry each weekday from 9 am to noon at the Outreach Center, 303 N. Grand Ave. East, Springfield, IL.
Contact: Anita Ashcroft 217-523-2269, anitasotheremail@yahoo.com,
www.kumlerministries.org

Agencies are Planning Building Projects

As they Celebrate over 100 years of faithful service - agencies need healthy space in which to serve the infants, children, adolescents and families who depend on them. God gives us the opportunity to invest in their future through these three agencies. Check their websites, contact agencies for speakers, enable your local church & community to support these programs.

United Methodist Children's Home is initiating a program which begins with roofs on three residential buildings on main campus, and at Bright Star, their day Care Center. Planning ahead they are wanting to buy the building they are now leasing at 4112 N. Water Tower where they serve over 1,000 people annually. The hope is to continue with the Community Service projects they now have in place.

Contact: Marcus Holland at (618) 242-1070 ext. 234. www.umchome.org

Chaddock is beginning a new era of growth with the planned construction of a new school on their 32-acre campus in Quincy, IL. This \$12 million project will replace the current K-12 education facility. It will allow Chaddock to dramatically increase the number of children they're currently are able to serve, pave the way for the construction of more residential cottages, & set the stage for the development of a national training facility for mental health professionals on their campus.

The demand for Chaddock's specialized treatment and services continues to grow in the Quincy-area, in Illinois, and across the nation. Many families have tried several options for healing, including psychiatric hospitalization, before they find Chaddock. The construction of a new school is critical to their ability to meet this challenge.

Contact: Rev. Jeff Rasche, 217-222-0034, jrasche@chaddock.org, Website: www.chaddock.org

The board of **Cunningham Children's Home**, because programs have expanded and facilities no longer fill the current or future needs of the young people coming to them, has reviewed the issues, hired architects, appointed committees and is ready to go with a new Educational and Recreational Center. The multi-faceted building will have a school for residents, a school for young people living in Champaign-Urbana and surrounding communities, a gymnasium and a dining hall. Children and Youth will be in rooms designed to meet their special needs and will not need to move all over a campus to attend their daily activities, something that is very distracting to young people with behavioral and emotional issues. The cost of this wonderful structure is \$25,000,000.

Contact: Bernice Dallas, 217- 367-3728 bdallas@cunninghamhome.org, www.cunninghamhome.org.

United Voices for Children as a Committee will No Longer Meet

Effective at the end of Annual Conference in June there will no longer be a United Voices for Children Committee. We will continue to have an electronic newsletter through the Illinois Great Rivers Conference.

UVC came together in 1982 when leaders from our child care agencies, the Boards of Global Ministry, the Board of Church and Society, United Methodist Women and others were called together by Bishop Leroy Hoddap to meet with Cloyd Taggart, CEO of ChildServ and Kay Greene, an officer in Northern Illinois Conference United Methodist Women. At this time they had established a United Voices for Children Committee in NIC and felt that it would be more effective if the organization went statewide.

It was established with the plan that the needs of children are often not heard and that they need adults who will speak for them. This is particularly true when it comes to speaking and acting on their behalf when it come to state and national legislation. Thus the Theme: 'United Methodists Speaking and Acting on Behalf of Children'

For several years all three conferences met together, shared ideas, supported a newsletter and had Statewide Rally's in Springfield with workshops which helped local churches to address the needs of Children and Youth. For many years Mary Refro, reminded us as to what we were about, Gary Livesay, Chaplin at Chaddock, as chair, gave the group faithful leadership and Lisa Grave, kept records for the committee.

As the years went on it was decided to stop meeting as an all state organization. Central and Southern Illinois groups met separately until the conferences combined and became Illinois Great Rivers Conference. Through a resolution passed at 1992 Annual Conference each Local UM Church was encouraged to appoint a Child Advocate. To this date there are about 110 in the Annual Conference. An effort has been made to resource these persons through the UVC newsletter, and workshops.

Because our conference is larger and travel has become more costly and it has become harder to get persons together to share information and training, it was decided that the committee would be disbanded. It is hoped that other organizations will offer resources for Child Advocacy. Currently a resource is being developed on 'Bullying' by board of Church and Society.

As Child Advocates Our Responsibilities Continue
In the Gospels Jesus reminds us to 'Let the children come'”

The Social Principles of the United Methodist Church States
Each child is entitled to the basic necessities of life: food, clothing, shelter, health care love, security and nurture. Children are the least powerful people in our world today. They do not vote. They make no laws. They do not manufacture drugs. They do not drive drunk. They do not cheat on taxes. They do not make the rules. Yet they are our future. The results of the neglect of children will be felt in the days ahead. But we can make the days ahead bright if we work with our children today in the spirit of love and honesty as Christ taught us.

As one considers Child Advocacy it is like the young boy in John 6:1-13, the story of the feeding of the 5 thousand. The needs seem so great, the legislators foreboding, the problems impossible, but when it comes to Child Advocacy we, church members, community workers, caring individuals stand like the small boy with his five loaves and two fish offering our meager gifts, in the light of the needs, for Jesus to bless so they may multiply and become miracles. God calls us to trust in the story of the loaves and fish.

It may be picking up the phone to remind legislators that the health and well being of children should be a priority in their decision making; seeing how you can best support your local school system; or you may identify one child, pray for that child, be ready for the open doors God presents you with.

REMEMBER

The Child's Name is Today

We are guilty of many errors and faults but our worst crime is
abandoning our children, neglecting the fountain of life.

Many of the things we need can wait. The child cannot.

Right now is the time bones are being formed, blood is being made,
and senses are being developed.

To the child we cannot answer Tomorrow.

The Child's Name is Today.

Adapted from a poem by Gabriela Mistral, Nobel Prize winning poet from Chili.

Take Action

Voices for Illinois Children reminds us

- That on January 1, 2015, Illinois will experience a revenue collapse that will likely result in a budget shortfall of at least \$2.3 billion this coming fiscal year?
- A budget shortfall of \$2.3 billion means instability for our kids, families, and communities. It means our state's backlog of bills will continue to grow—a move that will lead to further downgrades to Illinois' credit rating.
- It means that lawmakers have two choices: They can make at least \$2.3 billion in cuts to education, human services, public safety, and other essential services—cuts that our families and communities cannot afford, or they can avoid the cuts and get Illinois back on the right track by maintaining stable and sustainable revenue to educate our children, fund essential services and pay our bills.
- Take Action: Tell lawmakers to maintain stable, sustainable revenue for kids and families. Go to voices4illinoiskids.org or contact you state legislators direct.

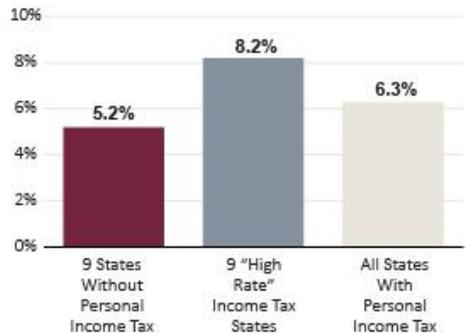
David Lloyd sums up in the March 2014 Policy Report from Voices for Illinois Children by saying

Lawmakers must choose between two diverging paths this year. If lawmakers follow the path of allowing current rates to expire, there will be massive revenue collapses, further credit downgrades, billions of dollars of cuts to education and critical services, an increase in the backlog of unpaid bills, and more uncertainty for investors and businesses. All of this in pursuit of the unfounded hope that tax cuts will somehow spur our economy. Down the other path, Illinois will maintain stable and sustainable revenue that will get us back on the right track by paying our bills, educating our children, and funding essential services. Given Illinois' precarious situation, the right path is clear. www.unitedvoices4kids.org

"Low Tax" States Don't Outperform

Nine "high rate" income tax states experienced faster per capita economic growth in recent years than the nine states without a personal income tax.

Average Growth in Per Capita Gross State Product, 2002-2011



Source: Institute on Taxation and Economic Policy

A Time To Speak for Children

- President Barack Obama and National legislators at www.usa.gov
- White House 202-456-1111 - Capitol Switch Board 202-224-3121
- Find Gov. Quinn & Illinois Legislators at www.illinois.gov, phone:217-782-0244

E-Newsletter Update

Date _____

Name _____ Contact Phone _____

Address _____

City _____ Zip _____ E-mail _____

*The E- newsletter will automatically goes to each local United Methodist Church,
Outreach/Mission chairs*

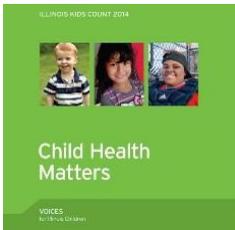
Local Church Child Advocates in the Illinois Great Rivers Conference.

To be placed on the UVC E-Newsletter List

Contact Karleen Dude karleendude@yahoo.com

901 Randall Drive, Normal, IL 61761, Phone: 309-452-3838

Illinois Kids Count 2014: “Child Health Matters”



The Illinois Kids Count 2014 report—“Child Health Matters” * —examines the health status of the state’s children. Since children’s physical, emotional, and social well-being can be affected by a wide range of factors, the report includes indicators on access to health care, early childhood outcomes, family environment, healthy living, social and emotional well-being, oral health, special health care needs, and personal and community safety.

The report documents some positive trends for children’s health in our state—fewer children without health insurance, declining infant mortality rates, fewer young children with lead poisoning, and fewer teen deaths from accidents, homicide, or suicide. Illinois Kids Count 2014 also shows disturbing disparities related to household income level, race and ethnicity, special health care needs, and other factors. Reducing disparities is imperative for improving the lives of children and their families and for building a stronger future for the state as a whole. –

*This report is researched by the Annie E. Casey Foundation gives information county by county. An on line copy is available at voices4kids.org

* A limited number of *Illinois Kids Count 2014* 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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This the final issue with the UVC Committee and Newsletter in this form

Special THANKS to:

- Chaplain Gary Livesay for his leadership in chairing the committee.
- Lisa Graves, who has served as secretary and treasurer since 1982.
- IGRC Child Care Agencies, who have provided caring representatives and helped cover the cost of the UVC newsletter.
- Other members of the UVC Committee whose support was always welcomed.
- Workshop Leaders and Participants, one can't happen without the other.
- Mary Renfro, who was a part of the committee from its inception, gave leadership and secured leadership to move it forward.
- For the staff, at the IGRC Center for their friendship and caring service.
- For Voices for Illinois Children, www.voices4kids.org, Children's Defense Fund, www.childrensdefense.org and Community Renewal Society, www.communityrenewalsociety.org, organizations who have helped resource UVC and provided professional information on issues affecting children.

YOU the Faithful readers who have responded on behalf of children

THANKS