

The mission of Youth First is to strengthen youth and families through evidence based programs that prevent substance abuse, promote healthy behaviors, and maximize student success.



SPRING 2011 • VOLUME 7, ISSUE 1

Upcoming Programs:

Communities That Care Coalition Meeting

September 13, location to be determined

Strengthening Families 6-9

YWCA – July 11
Newburgh Elem. – August 30
Resurrection – September 12
Loge Elem. – September 13
Lynnville Elem. – September 15

Strengthening Families 10-14

McGary Middle School – Sept. 6

In It to Win It

Boonville Library – September 12
Dunigan Family YMCA – Sept. 15

Meet Billy, the \$2,000,000 Kid!

Everytime Youth First helps a teen turn away from a life-time of drugs, dropping out of school, and criminal behavior, our community saves over \$2,000,000 in consequences, according to the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention.

Billy is one of Youth First's \$2,000,000 kids. He's on the right path now thanks to Sasha Kendall, one of 30 Youth First Social Workers providing life-saving services to 50 schools in Southwest Indiana.

This is Billy's story, told in his own words:

I kind of think of it as a "Rocky" story. I was down and out, but I didn't give up, and Mrs. Kendall came along, and she gave me the moral support that: "You can do it. You might have given up on yourself a long time ago, but I'm not going to let you give up on yourself now."

She seemed to care, and it's something I wasn't used to seeing. Somebody that I didn't know cared about what I had to say and what had happened to me in the past.

Up through 5th grade, it was the typical mother/father life. They were never married, but it felt like they went through a divorce, and the house was broke in two. My Mom and my sisters moved away from Indianapolis, and I turned to bad influences. I turned to drugs, alcohol and gang affiliation, and it slowly went downhill.

My 7th grade year I really got into bad usage with pills. I abused them quite a bit, and my gang affiliation picked up, and my 8th grade year, it was downhill from the get-go. School didn't matter, and all I did was hang out smoking marijuana and stuff like that.

Billy moved to Evansville during his freshman year of high school, and



Billy with Youth First Social Worker, Sasha Kendall.

though his family re-united, he still struggled with substance abuse. During his sophomore year, he met the Youth First Social Worker, who invited him to enroll in her Reconnecting Youth (RY) class, a semester-long drop-out prevention program.

The RY class really helped, because she always had me set goals of what I wanted to improve, and I thought that was really neat because over time I could see it getting lower and lower, my usage. I liked that because I was achieving things that I never thought I could achieve, and she always had praise when I'd accomplish something new.

Now I'm heading down the right path. Monday was March 28th and that was a year for me being clean from marijuana. I intend on going to college for music education when I graduate, something that I never thought I'd be interested in doing, but college is definitely in the near future for me. Youth First's Reconnecting Youth class really helped turned my life around into something that I had always wanted to be.

Youth First does a tremendous job of putting the people in place that know how to connect and turn somebody's life around. It's amazing what can be done with the help of somebody else, and that's what I really appreciate, and I would recommend it to anybody that needs it.

I would like to say thanks to any and everybody who has donated and in the future will donate to Youth First. Without their help, it wouldn't be possible, and I'm very grateful for it.

Donors can be confident that an investment in Youth First's evidence-based prevention programs returns a huge savings to the community in the form of \$2,000,000 kids like Billy.

To donate, use the envelope accompanying this newsletter or donate online at www.youthfirstinc.org or Youth First's Causes page on Facebook.

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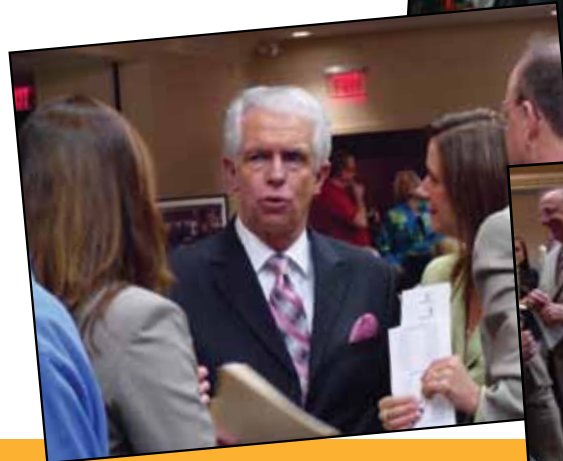
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9th Annual "Passport to Adventure" Auction A Record-Breaker

This year's "Passport to Adventure" Benefit Auction presented by United Companies certainly lived up to its name with a fantastic assortment of unique items and rare opportunities. Youth First's largest fundraising event saw a crowd of close to 300 and raised a record \$121,000 to support our programs for young people and families.

Auction Committee Co-chairs Krista Greenfield and Stephanie Lefler are thrilled with the huge success of the event, and grateful for the tremendous support of our sponsors and the hard work of all the committee members.

Be sure to mark your calendar for next year's event which is set for April 12!



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Ron Romain Receives 2010 Champion of Youth First Award



Ron Romain, President and CEO of United Companies was joined by his family members as he was honored at Youth First's annual Champions Breakfast on October 21st. Mr. Romain received the Dr. William Wooten Champion of Youth First Award for his philanthropic support of youth and families through Youth First and other good causes.

Youth First Receives Statewide Award for Non-Profit Achievement



In October Youth First was named one of the top non-profit organizations in the state of Indiana. The Indiana Achievement Award recognizes non-profits for exemplary practices and demonstrated effectiveness.

School Social Workers

- Laura Arrick**
New Harmony School & Mt. Vernon High School
- Kathy Baker**
Castle High School
- Mary Ruth Branstetter**
Holy Redeemer Elementary
- Joan Carie**
EVSC Alternative Academy
- Elizabeth Christmas**
North Posey High School
- Valorie Dassel**
Mater Dei High School
- Lori DeLeo**
Mt. Vernon Middle and High School
- Alissa Eastham**
Central High School
- Dena Embrey**
North & South Terrace Elementary (North Posey)
- Sherry Fisher**
Castle North Middle School & South Middle School
- Audrey Fleck**
Heritage Hills High School & Middle School
- Tiffany Harper**
Reitz High School
- Sasha Kendall**
Bosse High School
- Laura Keys**
Washington Middle School
- Vicki Kirkman**
Gibson Southern High School & 3 Catholic Elementaries
- Lauren Leshar**
Holy Rosary & St. Ben's Catholic
- Teresa Mercer**
Wood Memorial High School
- Sarah Swartz**
Princeton Middle School & Princeton High School
- Dianna Miller**
Ft. Branch, Haubstadt & Owensville Schools (South Gibson)
- Alice Munson**
Corpus Christi, Holy Spirit, Westside Catholic
- Kate Murray**
Evansville Day School & Joshua Academy
- Sarah Postlewaite**
Thompkins Middle School
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Tecumseh Jr. & High, Elberfeld & Lynnville Elementaries
- Theresa Schneider**
McGary Middle School
- Amy Steele**
Resurrection
- Christine Weinzapfel-Hayden**
West Elementary (Mt. Vernon), St. Philip Catholic
- Jayne Walters**
St. John the Baptist & St. Wendel Catholic Schools
- Linda Walters**
North High School
- Nichole White**
Harrison High School
- Donna Wolter**
Memorial High School

Meet Our Newest Team Members



Jana Pritchett joined Youth First as our Development and Administrative Assistant in July 2010. She has a Bachelor's Degree in Computer Information Systems from the University of Southern Indiana.



Melanie Atwood joined Youth First in March as our Director of Strategic Alliance. She has a Bachelor's Degree in Computer Science from the University of Evansville.



Carol Young joined Youth First as our Operations Director in July 2010. She has a Political Science degree from the University of California, Santa Cruz (UCSC).



Steve Holzmeyer has joined Carol in the Youth First Business Office as Controller/Office Manager. He has a Bachelor's Degree in Accounting from the University of Southern Indiana.

Thank You to our Supporters

Gifts to Youth First (July 1, 2010 - April 30, 2011)

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Youth First Receives 100th Vehicle Donated by Audubon Chrysler Owner Larry Bennett

With the donation of a 2011 Jeep Wrangler Sport 4x4 to Youth First, Inc., Larry Bennett has achieved one of his goals in life—contributing 100 vehicles to charity before he retires. This is the third car given to Youth First by Bennett’s Audubon Chrysler Center and the 100th vehicle he has donated to community causes in the Henderson and Evansville area over the last 20 years.

“Thanks to Mr. Bennett’s generosity, every dollar raised by the jeep raffle supports Youth First instead of first going to pay for the car,” said Parri O. Black, Youth First’s President & CEO. “We are honored to receive his 100th vehicle donation, a truly amazing philanthropic feat.”

The raffle drawing was held on February 15 at Reitz Memorial High School. Congratulations to **Bob Tiemann**, the winner of the beautiful red 2011 Jeep Wrangler.



The Jeep raffle raised over \$51,800 for Youth First!

Thank you Larry Bennett and Audubon Chrysler Center and thanks to everyone who bought tickets, too.

Wok n Roll Rocks for Youth First

Wok n Roll’s owner Jane Tang supports Youth First by donating 20% of her sales on the first Saturday of each month. Her restaurant features quick, casual Chinese food, and you can dine in, carryout, or drive through.

Address: 311 South Green River Road, Evansville
Phone: 812-479-3118
Website: www.woknrollroks.com
Hours: Monday – Saturday, 10am – 9pm
(Closed Sunday)



A big Thank You to Kohl’s West Associates in Action who helped with our “Passport to Adventure” Auction mailings, event set-up and table monitoring.

Why I Support Youth First

As the father of three daughters, I am very aware of the challenges our youth face every day, including peer pressure, academic stress, difficult home lives, popular culture, and the explosion of technology. I also see the consequences, including broken families, school drop-outs, substance abuse, anxiety, depression, suicide, accidents, and crime.

As the Chief Financial Officer of United Companies, I recognize the impact these consequences have on the region's work force, employers, and taxpayers. I support Youth First, because the organization's programs and services are changing lives, strengthening youth and families, preventing substance abuse, boosting healthy behaviors, and maximizing student success.

An investment in Youth First is an investment that will impact generations to come. That's why I am both a volunteer and a donor, and I encourage others to do the same.



*Rick Schulz,
Chairman of the Board, Youth First, Inc.*

www.youthfirstinc.org



Find us on
Facebook
at Youth First, Inc.

Did You Know?

In 2009-2010, Youth First's School Social Workers:

- **Performed 469 crisis interventions.**
- **Assisted 9,579 students.**
- **Served 2,042 parents.**
- **Provided 7,696 faculty/staff consultations.**
- **Made 3,171 referrals to community resources.**



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Youth First would like to thank these major supporters:

Welborn Baptist Foundation, Holiday Management and Toyota Motor Manufacturing, Indiana

Partnership Salute!

Youth First is proud to partner with Joshua Academy, the only K-5 charter school in Evansville. Youth First serves the school through Social Work services and the Strengthening Families program with funding support from the Welborn Baptist Foundation and Joshua Academy.

Joshua Academy believes all children are born achievers if given the right environment and tools for learning. The school provides a nurturing learning environment guided by the core values of dedication, innovation, integrity, and respect. Founded by Rev. Larry Rascoe, pastor of Nazarene Missionary Baptist Church, Joshua Academy is sponsored by the Evansville Vanderburgh School Corporation. To learn more about the school, visit www.joshuaacademy.com.

Thank you for making sure Youth First's results last!



Joshua Academy students enjoy Youth First's Strengthening Families program!