HERE COMES Summer!
We are so excited about the progress being made on plans for the new Family Learning Center on the Children’s Campus in Warminster.

This new 16,000 square foot building will be a facility that will provide the opportunity to serve children in our residential care, as well as kids and families from the greater Bux-Mont region, in more effective ways than ever before in our history.

The Family Learning Center will include:
• A gymnasium/auditorium
• A commercial kitchen
• A computer/tutoring lab
• Activity rooms for children, and teens
• Counseling/Family Meeting rooms
We are excited to share that plans for the project have been approved by Warminster Township. Key components like the kitchen and various tech systems have come in at or under budget. Final construction costs are being bid as of this writing.

Most important, our capital campaign – BUILDING LIVES, TOGETHER – is off to great start. We are endeavoring to raise $2 million for this project, and are excited to share with you at that as of this writing more than $250,000 has been pledged, thus far.

We hope that you will join us in this effort to do something significant to impact the lives of kids and their families for years to come. To learn more, please contact Vernon Wright (717-687-9424) or Paul Baur (215-956-1885) in our Development Department.
I looked into the eyes of nine year old Isabella, and told her I needed her help. “With what?” she said suspiciously looking past me to see what was hidden. “With some homework” I told her as she looked even more incredulous—as my age apparently made the idea of homework even too hard for her to believe.

“Tell me about summer” I said. “You’ve been with us for a couple of years. What do you like most about summers at Christ’s Home?” Her eyes clouded for a moment, and I fought a moment of panic that I had raised the painful memory of yet another year away from Mom and Dad. The eyes squinted and the mouth pursed, as a finger went to her cheek. "Swimming!” she said enthusiastically, “that’s the best part of summer.” “That’s an easy one” I replied. “Swimming was always the best part of my summer too when I was your age. Anything else?” “Horseback riding!” She said just as excitedly. I searched my memory, when did the kid’s go horseback riding? “When I lived with Aunt N------, she took us horseback riding, and I loved it!” Wow, that gave me pause – because that event would have been one of the first summers that Isabella was with us, and while four years may not seem like a long time to you, it was half a lifetime for the child in front of me. “Picnics!” were the next enthusiastic declaration. “Water slides!” Another pause when my adult / administrative fears of children and water recreational hazards gave me a moment of panic which must have registered on my face. Isabella laughed, “The ones the staff do here!” and we both laughed at the ingenuity and the patience of the staff who plan “Water Wednesday” or “Soaker Saturday” events that everyone participates in. Homemade water slides, inflatables, super soaker water guns. As we sat for a couple more minutes, I watched Isabella struggle with anticipating the childish fun of summer and the realization that she might be here for more summer fun. Away from Mom and Dad. With the only family, a group of non-related people, that has been provided for her.
Our Partnership with Good Stuff Thrift

By Vernon Wright – Chief Development Officer

Good Stuff Thrift stores were started by Ed Hudson, Scott Coppola and Robert Clark with the goal of giving to support four area ministries that impact the lives of children. The mission is to operate the most efficient Thrift Stores possible thereby providing the highest level of funding for helping kids in need in our communities. Their goal has been aided by approximately 17,000 of volunteer service in the stores.

As a board member of a local Christian children’s ministry, Ed acknowledged the constant need to raise money to support and expand services. Good Stuff Thrift’s formation is also in response to James 1:22 calling for the Christians to reach out and care for children in need. Ed shared that the mutual desire to help local children brought him and Scott in contact with Paul Baur and Impact Thrift Stores, where they learned many of the details needed to have a successful venture.

Good Stuff Thrift has limited their giving to four organizations so that they can have a significant impact on keeping vibrant services available to the community. In their first three years of operation they have expanded to three locations in Bucks County and have given away $400,000 to date. Christ’s Home has received a total of $81,000 and has assisted GST through several drives each year to collect clothing and household items.

GST also uses its resources to assist other organizations by contributing in-kind donations and delivery services, which have helped 38 families move from homelessness into a new home. Partnering with other charities has resulted in helping dozens of children in needy families with clothing and household essentials. In addition, over 600,000 books have been provided to local charities. Another byproduct of their stores is important job experience, through volunteer support, to special needs students in Bucks County helping them to transition from school to work.

To learn more about Good Stuff Thrift, visit their website at goodstuffthrift.org where you can find store locations, times of operation, and the kind of items to donate.

Christ’s Home is very grateful for the generosity and faithful stewardship of GST. We count it an honor to be one of their preferred organizations and a privilege to serve Christ with them.
New Beginnings
By Cornell Davis – Director of Children’s Services

He was such a kid at heart, and he loved playing games. Although he was bigger than most of the other residents and the staff, it only took 5 minutes of talking to him to realize that he was not the slightest bit of intimidating. As adults we have heard it said to never judge a book by its cover, and in the case of this young man, nothing could have been truer. The act of not judging is really an art and a science for those who work with youth in the child welfare system; you do not want to be completely gullible, but you also do not want to resign a child to what their current demeanor and behavior communicates to the world around them. For many youth in the child welfare system, this is many times a first step on the path to what could be a new beginning. It is a conscious effort to focus on their strengths, creativity, and latent resources, rather than always considering who they are—and could be—through the information that others have presented.

When we first spoke, I was walking with him on campus when he got off of the school bus and he was playing with his world class yo-yo’s. This was not the cheap dollar store stuff, but they represented his personal investment of time and money. In addition to the yo-yo’s he really liked playing Xbox 360, and so did I, so we hit it off splendidly. It wasn’t so much the Xbox that was the connecting point, but it was a shared understanding of the fact that being in a group home setting, does not have diminish the simplest of life’s joys. Simple joys like learning a new trick with a yo-yo and executing it flawlessly, or rehearsing with staff the strategy used to beat the game just purchased for a gaming console—and then watching the light come on as they realize that staff knows exactly what they are talking about. And what is joy in life without food? Yes, he loved food as well. In fact, the last time staff conveyed any news about him, he had gone into the foodservice industry and is doing incredibly well. He moved from Pennsylvania to be closer to extended family, and it turned into an incredible opportunity for him.

However, it was not just an opportunity given to him, but he worked through many emotional ups and downs, and the sadness of not being able to be with his immediate family. He chose the opportunity to make a new beginning with what he was given, and much like the work that he does today, he took the raw ingredients that do not have any meaning on their own, and he mixed it together to make something palatable, life-giving, and joyful. You see, new beginnings are not about getting rid of everything in the past that makes life messy and hard, but it means that you take all of those things and integrate them into a new person who has new experiences. Family will always be family—and nothing can be clearer to a youth in the system. However, it is also just as true that the new person who emerges from the pain that families cause, is also connected to many who because of their shared experiences, have also together partaken of the simplest of life’s joys—and that is what makes them family and an integral part of new beginnings.
Foster and Adoption Program

By Janell Lopez - Program Coordinator

Christ’s Home has worked long and hard to become certified for Foster Care and Adoption. We are currently in the final stage of the certification process, which includes writing family profiles. Family profiles are an important part of the adoption process to determine which family would be best suited for the child. Documents then need to be sent into SWAN, which is the State Wide Adoption Network, to get the final approval for certification. A training curriculum for families willing to become a foster family or adoptive family for children is also in the process of being created.

Our hope is that through reaching out to churches there will be a plethora of families willing to love the children despite what their history says. Our goal is to make sure the willing families receive exceptional training so that they feel confident and equipped to walk with these children even during their darkest moments. In reaching out to churches and in training willing families, we hope that every child will feel and be shown the love of Christ through our foster care and adoption program.
Gifts in honor of

Mr. Seth Humeniuk
In Honor of Eileen Hamel

Mrs. Diane Maurer
In Honor of June Maurer

Mr. Frances Gunser
In Honor of Doctor Gregory Dunlap

Mr. and Mrs. J. Christopher Harrison
In Honor of John Bryant

Voice of Assurance
In Honor of C12 Members

Gifts in memory of

Andrea Korn
In Memory of Erna Finley

Mr. Paul Switzer
In Memory of Joan Switzer

Mr. and Mrs. Mieczyslaw Zalewski
In Memory of Erna Finley

Mrs. Susan Ridyard
In Memory of Hugh Boyd

Mr. and Mrs. Michael Ulrich
In Memory of Gene Bender

Ms. Anita Flanagan
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Ms. Bertie Beiler
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Mr. Matthew Gillespie
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Mr. and Mrs. James Scandlin
In Memory of Florence Uhlig

Mr. Darren Hershock
In Memory of Mae Shaub

Mrs. Donna Garman
In Memory of Rodney L. Garman