



# The Southside Spirit

Southside Family Nurturing Center  
 May 2006  
 Volume 1, Issue 1

## PUPPETS, MASKS, AND FUN OH

Collaboration with In the Heart of the Beast Brings Arts Programming to Family Nights

Lions, tigers, and bears have invaded Southside Family Nurturing Center (SSFNC).

With the help of In the Heart of the Beast Puppet and Mask Theater (HOBT) and through funding from local Target Stores and the Metropolitan Regional Arts Council (MRAC), we have continued to offer arts programming on Family Nights to the children and families we serve.

puppet and costume making, we are exposing our families to the arts while providing a new way to peacefully communicate and spend time together as a family unit.

We have learned through this partnership with HOBT that art can be a particularly powerful way to inspire dialogue and promote intercultural understanding.



Tre, 4, paints his puppet while HOBT helper looks on  
 (Story continues on page 2)

Through puppet shows and hands-on This is especially important as we

## SOUTHSIDE'S FRESH NEW LOOK

When a building reaches 113 years of age, it requires a little extra love and attention.

Our glorious building, "the mansion of the Phillips neighborhood," is undergoing a comprehensive facelift so that we can continue to offer a safe, nurturing environment to our children

and families.

In 2005, we completed a major roofing project, which included new shingles, a custom ventilation system, and a copper cornice, gutter and downspout system.

The new roof respects the architectural and historical integrity of our spectacular building, and by the way, kept all of us nice and dry during the record rainfalls in the fall of 2005!

We are all looking forward to the upcoming renovation of our third floor this summer. This project will allow for much needed increased staff office space, meeting rooms, and storage.

A number of partners have

helped make this work possible. SFNC has worked closely with our project managers from Partners Three Consulting Company and with the architectural firm, LHB, Inc. to make our capital dreams a reality.

Financial support has come from many generous sources, including a major gift from the Bush Foundation, to help us meet our \$1.8 million dollar goal. With continued support, we are confident we will reach this fundraising milestone.

Our plan is to wrap up our capital efforts in the fall of 2007.

Other major improvements that have been completed include a new boiler and heating system, and the installation of code-compliant fire safety doors and hardware.





Dear Friends of Southside,

It is spring, that seasonal declaration of possibility and a fitting time for our newsletter.

I welcome this opportunity to share some of the exciting changes happening in our blessed old building. Through careful preparation from our Board of Directors, the management team, and The Center for Policy and Planning, we completed our important transition to a new leadership model.

The decision was made to promote me with my 20 years of investment in SSFNC from my role as Center Base Director to Executive Director. Our goal was to assure the stability of our culture and mission. I officially accepted the position of Executive Director in March of 2005 with enthusiasm, humility and a grateful nod to our founding Directors, Jean Christie and Bev Blinde, my friends and mentors.

This process also led to the development of a new supervision model for our Family Services and the hiring of Brad Hanson, LICSW to the newly created position of Family Programs Director. He is a gift and he leads with care, skill, vision and good humor.

We also saw the need to create a full-time development position, and in February 2006, I hired Meghan Bethke as our Development Director. Meghan has a strong background in fundraising and is enrolled in the graduate program in Non-profit Management at Hamline University. She brings great skill and energy.

Throughout my time here one thing has been a constant- a dedicated skilled staff. They have this urgent optimism that illuminates their work. I love Southside because it represents to me the kind of world that I want to live in--a world that sees kindness as a necessity, persistence as essential, a world where peace is mandated and community is everything, where diversity is relished, adversity diminished and humor explosive.

Sincerely,  
Barb Olson, Executive Director

*Puppets, Masks, and Fun Oh My!*  
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work with families at risk for abuse and neglect, and help them begin the healing process and restore their trust for each other.

Not only is the arts programming a great way for families to bond and express feelings, but HOBT stresses the diverse and ancient history of puppetry, which is especially important to our families who represent many different cultures and ethnicities.

Arts in Action is also an excellent literacy tool, because the written word and dialogue are also seen as critical components of the puppet and mask theater.

Through creative writing and poetry exercises, families have yet another means of artistic expression.

The Arts in Action program culminated this year with the colorful and diverse May Day Parade in Powderhorn Park produced by HOBT, in which a number of our families participated.

SFNC hopes to secure ample funding in 2007 to offer the Arts in Action

program on Family Days as well, which will greatly increase the number of families and children served by this most valuable program.



*One of our moms paints a beautiful elephant*

## THE FOUNDERS' FAREWELL

A Tribute to Jean Christie and Bev Blinde, Trailblazers and Extraordinary Women

After two exquisite celebrations, we had to say goodbye to two of our dear founders and tireless leaders, Jean Christie and Bev Blinde, as these amazing women moved on to the next stages of their lives in retirement.

With more than 60 years of service between them to Southside and the children and families of South Minneapolis, Jean and Bev will truly be missed, but their work and passion will live on due to the indelible mark they made on this neighborhood, this community and all of our collective spirits.

We had two excellent opportunities to celebrate these pioneers: an intimate get together at Jean's house just for staff with food, friends, music, candles, and well wishes, and a big glittering final event for the many colleagues, family, funders, and old friends who wanted to honor our founders for their intense commitment and infinite heart.

We knew it would be challenging when Jean and Bev left, but we braced ourselves for the change and looked to one another for solace and memory.

We shared a united sigh of sadness when the parties were over, but we will forever see them here as a flash of color or a splinter of memory. Each time we open those great pink doors and see the words "peace to all who enter here" they will return.



*The History of Leadership at SFNC (From L to R: Linda Haugen, Sandy Heidemann, Barb Olson, Jean Christie and Bev Blinde)*

On behalf of all of us at Southside, we wish Jean and Bev every happiness and thank them for their innovation, service, and undying commitment.

# SOUTHSIDE'S PROGRAM CORNER

AN OVERVIEW OF THE PROGRAMS WE OFFER FAMILIES



**Center Base Early Childhood Education Services.** In this program toddlers and preschoolers are served daily in a therapeutic, early childhood education program. Children learn social skills, learning readiness skills, problem solving skills, and play skills; they learn to resolve conflicts; and are helped to identify and express their feelings. Individual play sessions, speech therapy, and occupational therapy are also provided for children who need these services. Our child/teacher ratio is never more than 1:4. Each family is assigned a case worker, who conducts weekly intensive home visits with parents and provides referral services, parenting education, support, and counseling. Weekly parent groups help parents form additional support systems and learn important parenting skills to break the cycle of family violence and support their children's healthy development. Weekly Family Days encourage parents to share in their children's classroom activities. **In 2006, the Center Base Early Childhood Education Program expects to serve 45-55 families, comprised of 75-85 children and 45-60 parents.**

**Home Base Services.** This program serves 20 families at a time and provides intensive abuse and neglect intervention. Families in this program receive weekly intensive home visits for 12 – 18 months. These home visits, conducted by a family worker, focus on discipline techniques, family support, advocacy and referral, healthy parent-child interaction, and community recreation and resources. Working together, each family and its family worker determine what the family needs. Weekly Family Nights for parents and their infant, pre-school, and school age children are held eight months of the year. All families receive support as they leave the program to transition to SFNC's Center Base Program or other community programs. **In 2006, the Home Base program expects to serve 25-35 families, comprised of 60-80 children and 35-45 parents.**

**Father's Program.** The importance of developing a strong, secure attachment between father and child has too often played a secondary role in programs addressing the needs of at-risk children. The success of SFNC's Fathers Program demonstrates the strong commitment men have to becoming good parents. Two parent workers work specifically with the fathers whose families are enrolled at SFNC. Core program components include group parent education meetings, home visits, weekly Dad's Nights filled with father-child activities and field trips, and community referrals for employment services and other specialized needs. **In 2006, approximately 30-40 Fathers are expected to participate in this program, which is tailored specifically to meet the needs of the fathers or male caregivers in client families.**

**Want to do your part to help Southside?** Consider making a financial contribution!! All donations are completely tax-deductible, and you will be making a substantial difference in the lives of the children and families we serve. Simply detach the portion below and mail it with your check to the address given. If you have any questions, feel free to call Meghan Bethke, our Development Director, at 612-721-2762, ext. 241.



## Yes! I want to contribute!

My check payable to SFNC is enclosed in the amount of:

\$50

\$100

\$250

Other \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Email \_\_\_\_\_

Southside Family Nurturing Center, 2448 18th Avenue S, Minneapolis, MN 55404 612-721-2762

## RESEARCH SHOWS THAT OUR APPROACH WORKS!

Research shows that community-based, early intervention programs that encourage positive experiences at an early stage in the development of the parent-child relationship are the most successful in preventing child maltreatment and abuse and in reducing its harmful consequences.

According to a study published in the *Journal of the American Medical Association*, families involved in comprehensive early intervention programs that provided parent-modeling techniques, home visits, and child-rearing assistance showed better family planning in terms of the number and spacing of their children, less need for welfare, less child maltreatment and fewer arrests of their children during adolescence.

Southside practices all of these healthy techniques in the treatment of the families we serve.

Also, mothers who participated in the study developed or changed their understanding of child health and development, their expectations for their own development, and recognized their own personal strengths and skills.

In other related research, John Eckenrode, PhD, from the Family Life Development Center at Cornell University, posits that "prevention must be viewed as part of a comprehensive approach to the total problem of child maltreatment in countries and communities."

Eckenrode also says that an over-emphasis on detection and protection has diverted attention away from primary prevention

strategies that provide necessary support and assistance to families who are in distress or not functioning effectively.

At Southside, we use an asset-based approach and recognize that every family has strengths. Using positive prevention techniques and while providing support for every family member, we reach our clients where they are, and we don't impose our ideas of where we think they should be. All are active participants in our intervention strategy.

*Sources:*

*"Long-term effects of home visitation on maternal life course and child abuse and neglect: Fifteen year follow-up of randomized trial." Olds, Eckenrode, Henderson, et al. JAMA-Journal of the American Medical Association.*

*"The Prevention of Child Abuse and Neglect." John Eckenrode, PhD. Encyclopedia on Early Childhood Development.*

**Our Mission: "Together with families and community, we nurture children, build on family strengths and find alternatives to violence."**

For 32 years, Southside Family Nurturing Center, located in the Phillips neighborhood of south Minneapolis, has served culturally diverse families suffering the effects of child abuse and neglect. As one of the first private, nonprofit agencies to implement holistic family treatments in the state of Minnesota, SFNC pioneered programs based on our belief that child abuse and neglect are treatable and preventable. Our programs help to establish and nurture self-respect, healthy family relationships, and self sufficiency by involving children and parents as active participants.

For information about SFNC, please call 612-721-2762



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