



Hillsides
Creating safe places for children

Keeping Our Promise



Dear Friend,

In 2005 Hillside achieved significant accomplishments, which are listed in this annual report. One specific undertaking we are extremely proud of is our continued commitment to keep our promise of creating safe places for youth who emancipate from the foster care system. With support from the Everychild Foundation, who awarded Hillside the initial inspirational gift of \$715,000, Hillside purchased a 49-unit apartment complex in Pasadena to establish its first transitional living program.

Youth Moving On provides quality, affordable transitional housing, support services and life skills training for an estimated 20 emancipated foster youth per year who have been traumatized by childhood abuse. Particularly, Youth Moving On offers the young adults case management, mental health, independent living skills training, health services, mentorship, individualized transition planning, community building activities, and an on-site resident advisor.

Foster youth, specifically youth with special needs, are increasingly becoming homeless within three years of emancipation. These youth are exiting the foster care system with lack of encouragement, security and financial support that comes from a traditional family support structure. Youth Moving On provides an innovative, cost-effective approach to much needed wrap-around services for emancipated foster youth who, upon turning 18, lose eligibility for government funded programs.

Youth Moving On

A transitional living program for emancipating foster youth to provide opportunity to become self-sufficient, responsible and caring adults by offering affordable, quality housing and providing a comprehensive, goal-directed program in a supportive community.

“Youth Moving On is a self-sustainable program that will make a deep impact on the lives of young people.”

About 25 percent of the apartments are set aside for these youth and the remaining 75 percent of the units are being rented to the community at fair market value.

Last year Hillside began “Youth Moving On: Keeping Our Promise,” a capital campaign aimed to raise \$7.1 million in 18 months.

Everychild Foundation’s gift brought awareness of much-needed transitional housing for former foster youth with special needs in Los Angeles County. So far we have raised \$3.3 million (as of this printing, we have raised \$6.1 million) with the generous support of many of our friends: Ahmanson Foundation, Angell Foundation, Ayrshire Foundation, Bank of America, Bank of the West, California Bank and Trust, California Endowment, California Healthcare Foundation, Crail-Johnson Foundation, Congressman Adam Schiff’s Initiative, Forest Lawn Foundation, Friends of Foster Children, George Hoag Foundation, I.N. & Susanna Van Nuys, Lowenstein Family Foundation, Oak Tree Charitable Foundation, Patron Saints Foundation, The Ralphs M. Parsons Foundation, The Rose Hills Foundation, Schow Family Foundation, The St. Mary’s Church, US Trust, Weingart Foundation, Wells Fargo Foundation, and W.M. Keck Foundation, in addition to our Board of Directors, staff and other devoted individuals. With continued support from exceptional friends, Hillside will continue to keep its promise of creating safe places for children and youth.

With Deep Appreciation,



John Hitchcock, LCSW
Executive Director



Housing

Transitional Living Program

Mentoring Program

Financial Sustainability

Hillsides

KEEPING OUR PROMISE

to create a safe place for youth with special needs emancipating from the foster care system



Mickey Mouse joins a Disney VoluntEAR and a Hillsides child at the Disney Reading Corner during the Hillsides' holiday party sponsored by Buena Vista Television executive team. The Buena Vista Television executive team provided Mickey Mouse and Goofy for a photo backdrop, offered giveaways for the children, presented raffle items, planned arts and crafts, brought cookies and punch, and set up carnival games with prizes along with the Disney Reading corner. Spreading holiday cheer, Disney VoluntEARS were thrilled to spend time with the children.

Music Therapy

When 13-year-old Karen* arrived at Hillsides, she bowed her head whenever she walked, covered her face with her hair, and exhibited poor frustration tolerance. Disconnected from people, distrustful of her surroundings, and angry with her past, Karen challenged the staff that worked with her. Her only motivation to get up in the morning was to play the piano.

“Whenever I’m mad I play the piano and make up my own songs,” said Karen who has been playing the piano for 12 years. “I calm down.” Now at 15, Karen has blossomed into a self-expressive teenager with a yearning to speak her mind. She has made tremendous strides since arriving at Hillsides and is pleased with her new home.

At Hillsides, music therapy incorporates music to help children and youth develop behavioral, social, cognitive, and physical skills. Carol Landau, Hillsides’ music therapist, tailors her intervention with goals and objectives that are identified for each child by an interdisciplinary team. For many children who have been stifled in their verbal expression, the goal is to increase their self-expression. In her process of creating a comfortable environment for self-disclosure, one of the interventions Carol

implements is to encourage the children to choose an instrument and then asks them to describe what emotion they just played.

“The promise I make to the children is that I will always promote self-expression as well

as every other attainable goal through music,” said Carol. “I want to be empathetic, compassionate, a good role model, and treat each child with the kindness and respect they deserve.”

Karen has benefited exponentially from music therapy. Able to express herself and learn coping skills, Karen acknowledges her fondness for the relationship she has with Carol. “With her, I don’t care what I say. I know she’ll understand me,” said Karen. “My time with Carol let’s me express how I feel instead of taking it in a negative way.” With insight into her situation, Karen is extremely glad to be at Hillsides where she realizes she is given options and able to talk about her feelings. “I can celebrate my birthday the way I choose. I have fun and have more outings.”

With a bright smile and cheerful eyes, Karen continues to play several songs on the piano. She knows her music therapist will listen to her performance with every intention to understand her feelings – a promise that Carol continues to keep. “If I can make a difference in the life of every child in some small way, then I will have fulfilled my promise,” said Carol.

* Child’s name has been changed to protect her confidentiality.

Residential Treatment

Provides a comfortable, secure atmosphere for emotional healing.

Residential Cottages

Group Homes

Mental Health Services

Youth Moving On

Art, Music & Speech Therapy

Recreation

“My time with Carol let’s me express how I feel instead of taking it in a negative way.”



Hillsides

KEEPING OUR PROMISE

to provide a safe, secure home for children so they can receive treatment and begin to heal



Newfound friends to Hillsides, Skin Deep Laser Medspa offered the girls living at Hillsides' Girls' Satellite Home with a tour of their facility, a complimentary skincare session, and a keepsake t-shirt. The esthetician took the girls into one of the facial rooms and gave one of them a facial with warm steamy towels and cleansing. She talked very softly to her the whole time, told her what beautiful skin she really had, and shaped and waxed her eyebrows. The young girl said several times "I feel so special." She was really touched by the attention she received. Skin Deep Laser Medspa offered to provide the same skincare session to the boys living at Hillsides' Boys' Satellite Home.

Building Connections

At first, Cecilia* was non-engaged with her four-month-old infant boy. Raising five other children, clearly an overwhelming task, Cecilia was exhausted and emotionally drained. She joined Hillsides' "Building Connections" and within a few group meetings started showing signs of enjoying and connecting with her two younger sons. Irritable, cranky and developmentally delayed, Cecilia's two-year-old boy was beginning to learn how to calm himself down and use words.

Staring into the face of a newborn, playing with hand puppets, or even cooing elicits eye contact and giggles from an infant/toddler that will develop a close and secure relationship between parent and child. This mutual gazing provides the stimulation for positive brain and body development.

Teaching parents and caregivers how to respond and soothe their infants and toddlers as well as offering useful tools to meet their specific childrearing concerns are some activities occurring at Hillsides Family Center's "Building Connections: Prenatal to Five" program.

Made possible through a grant awarded by the California Healthcare Foundation, "Building Connections" talks the talk and walks the walk. Dr. Jill Wiener, psycho-therapist for the Family Center, works with mothers and caregivers to regulate their child's emotional and physical states by being attuned to baby cues, which leads to secure attachments.

Family Center

Serves the community through a variety of outreach programs that provide crisis intervention and parenting education for at-risk families.

School-Based Services

Psychological Testing

Therapeutic Behavioral Services

Building Connections: Prenatal to 5 Program

Intern Training Program

Three Community-Based Clinics

“A mother’s face... can enliven or dampen down a child.”

“A mother’s face, through their eyes, can enliven or dampen down a child. We’re helping parents teach their children to have the capacity to experience, regulate and express emotions that will allow them to feel safe to explore their environment and learn.

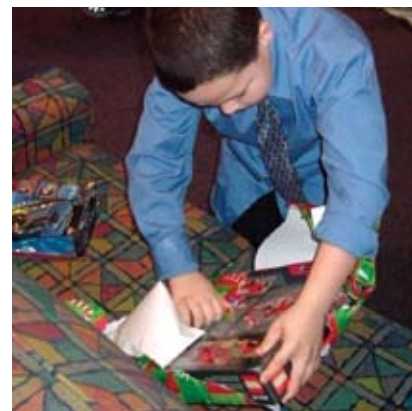
When a child gets this basic foundation, they have a sense of self, curiosity about life, interest, and motivation to learn and grow,” said Dr. Wiener. Activities she uses are geared to identify developmental delayed signs in order to connect the families with the proper community resources for early intervention to enhance their child’s healthy social and emotional development, Dr. Wiener added.

With activities focused on learning physiological regulation such as singing, dancing, and playing the gathering drum, children learn how to have fun, experience positive feelings of joy and interest, then how to unwind to a calm state. This is learning how to regulate their emotional states, said Dr. Wiener.

Maricella,* a mother who brought her four-year-old boy and four-month-old infant girl, was taking it all in. She observed how Dr. Wiener spoke to the children and listened attentively to the therapist’s advice. When the group took a holiday break, Maricella put into practice what she learned. Singing songs, dancing and doing various activities that were suggested by Dr. Wiener, Maricella’s relationship with her children is enhanced as they look to her for encouragement, guidance, and security.

Hillsides, through “Building Connections,” keeps its promise to children and families – to enhance a child’s capacity to get along in the world socially, handle emotions, and learn. Cecilia’s and Maricella’s children are testaments to the work Hillsides Family Center is doing to strengthen families.

* Child’s name has been changed to protect her confidentiality.



Hillsides

KEEPING OUR PROMISE

to prevent abuse in the community by delivering treatment services in the homes of children at risk



Filled with excitement during Hillsides' Christmas, children rapidly tear holiday wrapping to reveal their special wishes. Donated by hundreds of individuals, businesses, and organizations, the holiday gifts and winter outings help ease the children's spirits during a season that is mixed with loneliness, abandonment, and hope for a better new year.

Vocational Training

Instead of teacher-centered lessons, project-based learning is a model for classroom activity emphasizing learning activities that are long-term, interdisciplinary, student-centered, and integrated with real world issues and practices. At Hillside Education Center, Tony Carson, co-teacher of the vocational program, is doing just that – giving students hands-on projects in three vocational classes that will offer them survival skills to obtain and retain a job.

Some HEC students who suffer from severe emotional disturbances may not be college bound, but have the potential to succeed in the real world by learning one of three vocational trades offered at the school. From Adirondack chairs to benches, students in trade science learn to build and construct many projects. In auto technology, students learn the basics of an engine, change the oil, and are building a working model of a V8 engine. Food service prepares students for further education or immediate employment in the hospitality and food service industry.

“Students learn what it means to work and solve problems with others,” Tony said, adding that his classroom is a model work environment that enables students to develop job survival skills. “We reinforce academic concepts in practical applications, introducing students to hands-on, vocational skills. Students are also encouraged to explore careers by identifying and strengthening weaknesses and develop their interests.”

“Hillside gave him time and space to regain self-control by providing structure and really guiding him.”

For Jeremy Ramirez, a student who was unable to find a comfortable learning environment to achieve academic successes, HEC was the perfect fit. Over the course of two years, Jeremy delved into the vocational program and

worked on projects he enjoyed, which gave him, for the first time, the confidence to be successful in school. This confidence crossed over to his other classes and soon Jeremy was successful in his academic classes as well. Today, Jeremy is a teacher’s aide and mentor student to the younger students in the vocational program, which has helped him build self-confidence, increase self-expression, and form lasting connections with adults. He’s assisting the students in building the school’s vocational technical center. So far the students have leveled the entire east side of the lower HEC campus by hand and are in the process of forming the slab for the foundation.

“Jeremy had much insecurity about trusting himself in an unstructured environment,” said Tony of Jeremy’s past learning experiences. “Hillside gave him time and space to regain self-control by providing structure and really guiding him.” Upon graduation this year, Jeremy is enrolling in an accredited auto mechanic and auto upholstery program.

Students at Hillside Education Center, like Jeremy, are given opportunities to further their education or explore vocational interests that they wouldn’t have in another academic setting. With the emotional disturbances that some students have, teachers must find different strategies to manage behaviors while teaching academic standards. Tony is certain of one promise he has made to students – “I want each student to fill up their tool belt by giving them every possible tool that will help them be the most successful person they can be. I want to teach them the value of a strong work ethic, to work well with others, and to provide them with opportunities to build self-esteem through achievement.” Jeremy is well on his way to filling his tool belt with the support of teachers like Tony at Hillside Education Center.

Education Center

Meets the specific needs of emotionally disturbed and learning disabled students with a personalized K-12 curriculum.

Individual Attention

Psychological Counseling

Art, Music & Speech Therapy

Services for Residents and the Community

Vocational Training



Hillsides

KEEPING OUR PROMISE

to provide special educational programs for students with severe emotional disturbances and learning challenges



Every year La Salle High School adopts families in crisis from Hillsides Family Center during the holidays. The La Salle community rallies to collect the families' holiday wishes, including some household items and grocery scrip for a traditional holiday meal. Students host a family day where they present the wrapped gifts, provide activities for the children, and games for the parents. The students' effort during a season that is filled with emotional and financial stress for these families offers the parents and children renewed hope.

Child Advocacy

Three of four siblings living at Hillside were removed by the social worker and placed in the care of their grandmother without any notice or action plan. Soon after, two of the three siblings were removed from their grandmother and placed in two different placements. We were told one child would be returning, which never took place as the social worker did not bring the child back.

Another agency reported that a two-year-old child was removed from placement with a great aunt and her husband. The child was placed with a foster couple who adored her and was willing to adopt her. The child's attorney called the foster couple and told them to bring her to the foster placement agency within one hour to be placed in the great aunt's home again. Within six months of being with her great aunt, the two-year-old child died of blunt trauma to the abdomen.

An eight-year-old girl placed at Hillside after having been in eight prior out-of-home placements was returned to her mother when she was 10, a day after the court hearing and against Hillside's advice. Without any preparation to plan for the child's transition, the mother, not realizing the extent of the child's difficulties and without any support, asked to have the child removed again. The child was referred back to Hillside, but we did not have any openings at the time. She has subsequently been in two other placements and we are now processing her to return to one of our current openings. This means that she has

been in 12 out-of-home placements before she turned 11.

These inappropriate decisions made by social workers, attorneys, and the courts further traumatizes children and causes great

instability and insecurity in their placements. In an effort to bring awareness of systemic changes that need to occur in the foster care system, John Hitchcock, Hillside's executive director, established an e-mail advocacy list, which addresses sound policies developed by the Department of Children and Family Services, however are not upheld.

To avoid poor decisions, John advocates that no child will be moved without a Team Decision Meeting, which includes all the parties involved with the child and the move, including the parents/caregivers receiving the child and the residential treatment staff. In a Team Decision Meeting the following items would be discussed are: 1) That all parties agree that this is a good and reasonable plan for the child's permanency; 2) Who will be involved in insuring that the move goes smoothly and according to plan; 3) What services will be needed in the new home and who will provide it or who will find an agency to provide it; 4) When the move will take place; and 5) Who will do the necessary paper work and connections in the new setting to insure a seamless transition into the community and the appropriate school.

"When it comes to the children living in residential treatment centers, the Team Decision Meeting practice falls short of the policy in place," said John. "Although the policy is right, the practice needs to be in compliance with the policy."

John believes wholeheartedly in keeping our promise to create safe places for children and youth. Holding the Department of Children and Family Services accountable to the policies they set and ensuring the practice reflects the policy is one step in maintaining a safe, secure, and loving home for our children.

To be part of the e-mail advocacy list, visit Hillside's advocacy section at www.hillside.org.

Child Advocacy

Advocates for children when dealing with major political and policy issues – and the system itself – that dramatically affect their lives.

Email Advocacy Awareness

Team Decision Meetings

“Although the policy is right, the practice needs to be in compliance with the policy.”



Hillsides

KEEPING OUR PROMISE

to advocate on behalf of the rights of children in our community with the goal of creating safe places for children and families



A much-anticipated event in the summer, the annual children's picnic is hosted by the Hillsides Guild. The Guild chooses a theme, coordinating decorations, games and prizes, as well as serve a spectacular lunch. Over 60 volunteers help with the day's logistics. A women's support group, the Hillsides Guild brings awareness of Hillsides' mission, plans fundraisers such as the Holiday Celebration at the Parkway Grill and Day at the Races at the Santa Anita Park, hosts other children's events, and donates seasonal support for several children's cottages.

2005 Accomplishments

- > Created and developed the “Youth Moving On” program to support Hillside’s emancipating youth and other youth leaving foster care to transition to independent living in the community. Through “Youth Moving On”, transitional youth ages 18-21 years live in a safe, affordable residential housing facility where they have access to mental health care and case management services as well as other program services designed to facilitate their journey toward successful independence.
- > Purchased a 49-unit gated apartment building complex in Pasadena to house the “Youth Moving On” program where 20 transitional youth now live. The remaining apartment units are rented out at fair market value rates to generate income to sustain the “Youth Moving On” program in the years to come.
- > Raised \$3.3 million (as of this printing, we have raised \$6.1 million) toward the “Youth Moving On” capital campaign goal of \$7.1 million to cover the costs of the acquisition and purchase of the apartment building and the initial three-year program operational costs. Received initial grant from the Everychild Foundation in the amount of \$715,000 to acquire the property.
- > Completed renovations to the Boys’ Satellite Home which included installing new plumbing, renovating the kitchen, purchasing new flooring, furniture and lighting, and adding outside landscaping.
- > Established a Learning Center at the Hillside Education Center which provides special one-on-one instruction and additional support for emotionally disturbed, learning disabled and developmentally delayed students in grades K-12.
- > Served 75 uninsured, at risk families through our Hillside Family Center. These families were turned down for care at other treatment centers due to their lack of insurance and/or Medi-Cal ineligibility. Provided families with crisis intervention, counseling, psychological testing, and case management services.
- > Developed “Transitions” program through the Hillside’s Family Center to help prepare emotionally unstable, at risk 5th and 6th grade students to successfully transition from an elementary school to a middle school environment. Hillside’s Family Center is a comprehensive community-based family resource center that provides a variety of preventive health care, and counseling and skills development services to children from birth to 18 and their families.
- > Received funding to initiate programming targeted at prenatal to five year old children.
- > Expanded our Music Therapy program to include more live musical performances by our children and an increased number of instructional workshops or concerts hosted by professional musicians.
- > Replaced roof on top of the Administration, North and South Annex buildings on Hillside’s main campus. These buildings house Hillside’s administrative offices, Development, Volunteer Services, Accounting and Human Resources departments.



Hillsides

YOU HELP US KEEP OUR PROMISES



Mother Teresa once said “we can do no great things – only small things with great love.”

And that’s exactly what Jean Smart, Emmy Award-winning actress, is doing at Hillsides; she’s volunteering her time to be with the children of Tradewinds Cottage, a group of children who adore their very special friend. Jean brings smiles and love to these youngsters who have experienced traumatic childhoods by celebrating Hillsides’ kids birthdays, providing party favors, cake, decorations, games and gifts. Jean sponsors a mini-holiday party for the children, fulfilling several wishes, bringing the food, dessert and beverages as well as games to play. For Halloween, she comes dressed as a witch and goes trick or treating with the kids on campus.

“The children give me so much more than I give them,” said Jean. “These children know how to read people as a survival instinct and can glean whether the person is a friend or foe. I hope that at their age I can still teach them that the world is a benevolent place.”

Besides sponsoring Hillsides’ annual benefit, Jean has an Easter party with the Tradewinds’ children, has taken the boys to the zoo and the girls to a beauty salon, has sponsored dinner outings, has made cookies with them and had a picnic lunch on campus, reads to the children in the library, and has planted seeds in the spring.

These small things done with great love certainly leave a magical imprint on the children’s memories of their time at Hillsides. The kids will forever remember Jean Smart who made their childhoods one to remember, not one they wish to forget.

To learn how you can volunteer, donate in-kind gifts, or sponsor an outing, call Laura Kelso at [323] 254-2274 ext. 251.

A kind neighbor, Church of the Angels planned emancipation showers for our youth who were leaving foster care and transitioning into adulthood. The Rev. Bob Gaestel along with parishioners supported the event by picking up wish tags and fulfilling them during several consecutive Sunday masses. Household essentials and other basic domestic items such as bedding, kitchenware, and linen were donated. Besides the emancipation showers, Church of the Angels supports Hillsides by donating to several operational needs.

2005 Annual Statement

Revenues & Expenses*

Year ended September 30, 2005 (summarized in thousands)

Revenue

| | |
|-------------------------------|---------------|
| Government Service Contracts | \$ 12,037 |
| Contributions | 3,912 |
| Other | 732 |
| Gain or (Loss) on Investments | 305 |
| Total Revenue | 16,986 |

Expenses

| | |
|-----------------------------|---------------|
| Program Services | \$ 12,160 |
| General and Administrative | 1,547 |
| Development and Fundraising | 774 |
| Total Expenses | 14,481 |

Change in Net Assets \$ 2,505

Balance Sheet

Year ended September 30, 2005 (summarized in thousands)

Assets

| | |
|---------------------|---------------|
| Current Assets | \$ 3,333 |
| Investments | 4,616 |
| Fixed Assets | 12,419 |
| Total Assets | 20,368 |

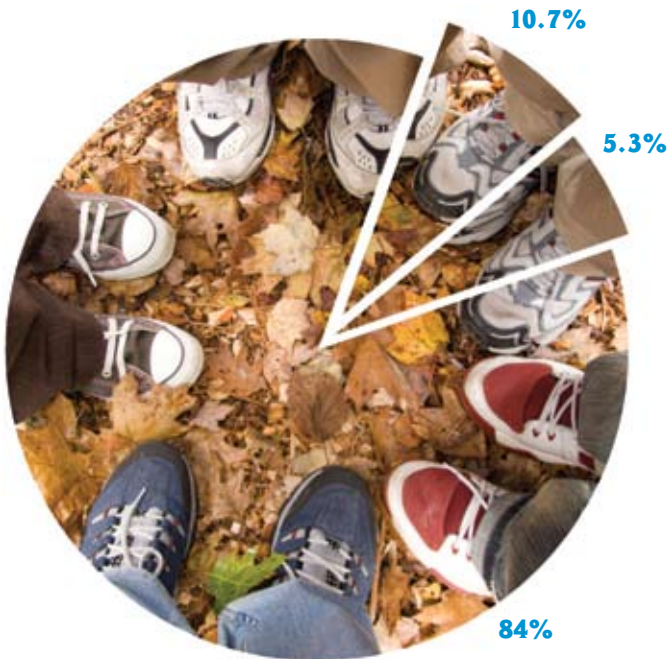
Liabilities

| | |
|--------------------------|--------------|
| Current Liabilities | \$ 2,717 |
| Long-Term Debt | 4,839 |
| Total Liabilities | 7,556 |

Net Assets

| | |
|---|---------------|
| Unrestricted | \$ 11,784 |
| Temporarily Restricted | 289 |
| Permanently | 739 |
| Total Net Assets | 12,812 |
| Total Liabilities and Net Assets | 20,368 |

*Includes restricted Capital Campaign donations



Where the money goes

84% Program Services

10.7% General & Administrative

5.3% Development & Fundraising

