



CONNECTIONS FOR HOPE



THE CHILD RESCUE CENTRE



MERCY HOSPITAL



**HELPING
CHILDREN
WORLDWIDE**

JULY 2010
WWW.HELPINGCHILDRENWORLDWIDE.ORG

Providing **HOPE** to impoverished children, their families, and their communities.

Connections for Hope Serving the Community, Living the Vision

In the first five months of operation, the partnership of organizations at Connections for Hope have provided tremendous service to our Northern Virginia community. The HOST (Housing Opportunity Support Team) team through Reston Interfaith served 88 households and 196 individuals from 106 referrals. Foreclosure prevention services saw 26 new cases and continued with 20 on-going cases. (The Herndon area has one of the highest foreclosure rates in Northern VA.) The Jeanie Schmidt Free Clinic served 2,235 patient visits with 349 children and 201 adults seen. That is an increase of 25% from that same time in 2009. 52 clients were seen by Just Neighbors for immigration legal services. 793 homework assistance sessions were provided by Vecinos Unidos serving a total of 45 children. The Literacy Council provided ESOL to 21 adults and 3 children. Since coming into the center in June, the Community Services Board has provided a valuable source of inter-agency referral for 29 clients. CSB and the Jeanie Schmidt Free Clinic have coordinated a parenting class, with fifteen parents (including some fathers) in the Spanish speaking class and three in the English speaking class. These clients originally came to the program through the clinic, the homework assistance program and the ESOL program, in addition to some that came simply because of the center. This is the first program that truly integrated referrals from multiple agencies.

The impact of Connections for Hope continues to grow, as we build relationships with other non-profits and other county agencies that will provide services at the center.

The Benefit of Private Schooling in Sierra Leone

A few years ago, the Child Rescue Centre made the decision to move the residential children from the public schools where there were often 80 children in a class with no teaching resources to private schools where there are about 40 children in a class. That decision has had a lasting effect on the educational success of the residential children. Reduced class size and a continued tutoring program have brought significant results. Four years ago, 10 children did not advance to the next class. We are pleased to announce that this year, 57 of the 58 residents will move to the next grade level. 25% of the CRC residents sat for National Exams, which is another example of their educational success. For all who have given so generously to support the CRC, thank you for making this life changing opportunity available to the children at the CRC.

(One of the classes is shown in the picture above.)

*Did you know?
In Sierra Leone, only
35% of the population
aged 15 and older can
read and write.*

Telemedicine at Mercy Hospital

We are excited to announce the partnership between Mercy Hospital and the Swinfen Charitable Trust in England. This partnership will allow Mercy Hospital to use a telemedicine service linking them directly to over 400 specialists. Mercy will be able to send clinical photos, a patient's history and any other relevant materials such as x-rays. This is a great opportunity for the staff at Mercy Hospital to be able to partner with other doctors to assist with a patient's diagnosis and treatment options.

The Corporate Community Supports Connections for Hope in a Big Way!

Deloitte Impact Day Strengthens Partnership Efforts

In June, seven Deloitte executives came to Connections for Hope for a day of training and strengthening the partnership between the six non-profits and one county agency that work together at Connections for Hope.



Together, the group developed goals for the center and identified areas where economies and efficiencies may be realized. This type of management training was an extraordinary opportunity for specialized planning for the groups involved in this new and somewhat unique community service model called Connections for Hope.

Lockheed Martin Volunteers Provide IT Support

Ten volunteers from the Herndon office of Lockheed Martin, led by Ben Daniels and Matthew Royal, came to Connections for Hope to help solve IT issues. The computer lab is up and running with internet connectivity and they worked on the server. Each volunteer gave 3-4 hours of assistance, which was not only an enormous help for IT usage, but this donation of time and expertise saved Connections for Hope a significant amount of money that would have been spent on IT support. We are all very grateful to those who gave their time, and we are most appreciative of the community involvement/partnership that Lockheed brings to our community.

RIVERCREST SWIM TEAM RAISES FUNDS IN "SWIM FOR SIERRA LEONE" EVENT

Rivercrest Riptide of Sterling, VA held a swim-a-thon on June 25th to support the Child Rescue Centre (CRC), a cause that Coach Heather Flor holds very dear. They raised \$1,655 for school backpacks and educational support of the centre. The children were asked to collect pledges, either lump-sum or per lap, from sponsors. Over 100 swimmers swam as many laps as possible during practice. Some of the 6-7 year old swimmers made it through 500+ yards in 30 minutes and some of the teenage swimmers got through almost 2 miles in one hour. It was a great endurance exercise for the kids, and it was also a lot of fun! Thank you Coach Heather Flor and all the swimmers for supporting children in Sierra Leone!



Mercy Hospital through the Eyes of a Patient

Anna Rediger is a 21 year old nursing student who spent 10 weeks at the CRC and Mercy Hospital this summer. *"I felt hot and my body ached all over – so I went up to Mercy Hospital. I walked into the outpatient department and registered. Then I went to the lab for blood work. It was confirmed, I had seen it myself, I had malaria. I was really surprised. I have been taking medication to prevent malaria since May, I use bug spray every day and I sleep under a mosquito net every night. Even with*

all that I still got a few mosquito bites, and one of them gave me malaria.

It was really interesting to be a patient and see Mercy Hospital from that perspective. They took such good care of me. If there is one thing I want to share about this experience it would be that malaria is very common. It reminds me of strep throat back home – everyone

gets it at some point, and some people even get it every year. Malaria is very common, but it is also very easy to treat. Unfortunately a lot of people do not have access to health care and without treatment malaria is deadly. Mercy Hospital has a malaria outreach program where they go out into surrounding villages to test for malaria and give treatment to those individuals who test positive.

In May we went to one of the local villages to help with the malaria outreach. I think it is amazing that Mercy does this. The people that Mercy reaches might not ever receive treatment otherwise. I really just want people to understand that malaria is a big issue that people in West Africa face, and Mercy is doing its part in providing care to a lot of people who get malaria."



Mercy Hospital serves nearly 900 patients a month regardless of their ability to pay.

Did you know?

75% of hospital patients and 65% of villagers test positive for malaria, a deadly disease if not treated.

UPCOMING EVENTS:

- **CRC Benefit Golf Tournament:** Monday, September 13th at noon, Hidden Creek Country Club, Reston. To learn how you can be a sponsor, donate auction items or volunteer at the event, please call us at 703-793-9521, or visit us on the web at: www.helpingchildrenworldwide.org/events
- **African Programs Quarterly Partners Meeting:** Sunday, September 19th from 2PM-4PM. The primary host site will be Galilee UMC in Sterling, other sites will join the conference via Webex. For other sites, please call African Programs Director Jennifer Hamilton at 703-793-9521.



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