

Spout

Drops of Change for Children

Nebraska Children and Families Foundation | April 2016

Look what YOU did!

Children nurtured,
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and communities uplifted...
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nebraskachildren
AND FAMILIES FOUNDATION

Your work in Dakota County

Great things are happening
for South Sioux City kids.

Your work for older youth

Connected Youth initiative grants
awarded statewide.

Perfect Pour

A speakeasy fundraiser that
was truly the bees' knees.

Mark Zimmerer

Your newest Nebraska Children
board member.

Be a Changemaker

for Nebraska Children

MONDAY
SEPTEMBER 12
2016

11:30 AM to 1:00 PM

EMBASSY SUITES
LA VISTA



Victor Rivas Rivers

Your business can help cultivate the good life for all of Nebraska's children...especially those in poverty, recovering from abuse and living in foster care.

Changemakers 2016 is our annual fundraiser where we bring together the state's most committed philanthropists, volunteers and business owners. Together, we celebrate what a community of contributing citizens can do to benefit kids in need.

Keynote Speaker is Victor Rivas Rivers, former NFL athlete and best-selling author of *A Private Family Matter*, who will speak on the importance of community involvement in child abuse prevention.

In order to make this event a success, we need YOU! Please consider sponsoring Changemakers.

Go to SponsorChangemakers.org now
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khickman@nebraskachildren.org

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Changemakers

| Letter from the President |



Mary Jo Pankoke

Dear Friends,

You really did it this time.

I mean it. The support you've put forward has absolutely changed the game for young people in Nebraska. If you weren't there to help us build up Project Everlast in Omaha to serve kids aging out of foster care, none of this would have happened.

If you weren't there to support the expansion to Lincoln to support victims of abuse, neglect and poverty as they became adults, none of this would ever have happened.

If you weren't there telling us, with every dollar and every message, that young people who go through this kind of trauma deserve help so they can become the people they were meant to be, none of this would have happened.

But you did.

And because of your tireless support, Nebraska Children has just awarded six rural communities with enough support to reach older youth in 40 Nebraska counties. Now, even kids from our state's small towns will have what they need to transition to adulthood successfully...even though they don't have the family support that so many have had growing up.

In this issue, you'll read about the plans of those six communities. You'll also read about the remarkable collaboration in Dakota County. People just like you, who have come together to make sure that the children in their community have every chance at the good life.

I'm always amazed at what can happen when you get involved. Be proud. You did this. And now more than 10,000 young people in rural Nebraska will have a better chance to succeed as adults.

Thank you for this and for everything else you do to make the good life real,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Mary Jo".

Mary Jo Pankoke
President and CEO



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Older Youth

Project Everlast Omaha holds employer training

On March 1, 35 attendees from local businesses joined Project Everlast Omaha and Project Harmony for the first-of-its-kind training focused on youth trauma and how it can impact a young person in the workplace. Employers learned about trauma, characteristics of trauma in young adults, and tools for preventing workplace disruptions with young employees. The goal of the training was to better educate managers, HR personnel and businesses that frequently hire youth on how they can avoid workplace turnover and create more supportive work environments.



Project Everlast
nebraskachildren

Learn to Earn and Achieve Potential (LEAP) grants coming to Lincoln and Omaha

The Annie E. Casey Foundation (AECF) is awarding Nebraska Children \$380,000 each year for up to five years. These funds will implement the national, evidence-based Back on Track framework and career pathways program in Lincoln and Omaha. This initiative will provide the hardest-to-serve youth with access to postsecondary education and job skills training. Nebraska Children will be seeking private match dollars as required by this grant.



2016 Legislative Day

Members of the statewide Project Everlast Youth Council and the Governor's Youth Advisory Council spent a weekend together examining bills in front of the Unicameral. The groups selected the bills that were important to them, developed arguments and presented to senators and the Lieutenant Governor in early February.

"Normalcy" bill for youth in foster care passes

LB 746 passed with a unanimous vote from the Unicameral. This bill is meant to implement parts of the federal Strengthening Families Act. Among the provisions outlined in the bill are a change in regulations that allows foster parents to make more decisions for the activities of their teenage foster kids—like whether they can have an afterschool job, sleep over at a friend's house, or engage in sports or clubs.

These normal activities are critical to the development of character and life skills as teenagers. Until now, all of those decisions were made by a caseworker, which often required young people to ask their friends to submit to background checks. As you can imagine, these barriers made it very challenging for teens in foster care to participate in normal, healthy activities. Thanks to your support, and the voices of young people in our Project Everlast Youth Councils, the rules have changed, and teens in foster care can look forward to more access to the activities every child needs to reach their full potential.

Early Childhood

Sixpence awards 6 new grants

The Sixpence Board of Trustees has announced the recipients of the first round of the new Sixpence Child Care Partnership Grants: North Platte, Kearney, Falls City and a Panhandle consortium serving locations in Chadron, Gering and Sidney. A second round of grants will be announced in 2017.



Rooted in Relationships Annual Report

Nebraska Children's early-childhood mental health initiative has just released its first annual report on its progress. In the first year of the initiative, 20 coaches supported 82 center and home-based child care providers in 39 programs impacting more than 850 children. Providers reported a significant increase in their skills as a result of participation in Rooted in Relationships.



Download the full annual report at rootedinrelationships.org/resources/.

MARK YOUR CALENDARS FOR THESE UPCOMING COMMUNITY GIVING DAYS

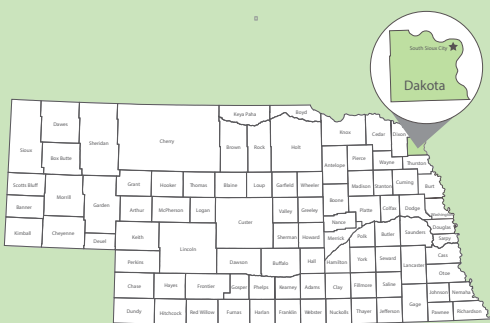
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Everything works better when we work together



The story of collective impact in Dakota County

by Mary Kate Gulick

During a collaborative meeting, a ministerial worker talked about a young man he was working with who wanted to leave gang life. From those discussions grew the creation of a three-year business plan which explores the possibility of a much-needed youth center. How did Dakota County go from a discussion of one situation to working toward meeting a broad-based need—the answer is Dakota County Connections.





“...there’s no competition in Dakota County Connections. We work together to better the children, families and communities of this area.”

—JoAnn Gieselman

What is Dakota County Connections?

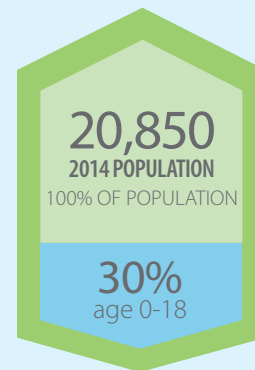
Dakota County Connections (DCC) is the collective impact body created to make positive change for children in the northeast Nebraska county of approximately 21,000 residents. Members include family therapists, child care providers, foster care placement workers, educators, the YMCA, the library, social service organizations, government officials and more.

The glue that holds the group together is Siouxland Human Investment Partnership (SHIP) and its committed partners. The coordinator for DCC is JoAnn Gieselman. She organizes the activities of the multiple organizations so it can operate as one well-oiled machine.

“I have the best job in the world,” said Gieselman. “My job is to support Dakota County Connections. SHIP is the backbone and my role is to support DCC. There’s no competition in Dakota County Connections. We work together to better the children, families and communities of this area.”

It’s this coordination and regular communication that brought the concerns of one ministerial worker forward to a larger group with intertwined resources. Together, they uncovered a larger problem. And together, they’re moving forward with a solution.

ABOUT DAKOTA COUNTY



POVERTY

POPULATION LIVING BELOW POVERTY LEVEL IN 2014

16.7%

ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNERS



36.7%
of children age 5+ live in a home that speaks a language other than English



The magic of an effective meeting

When the ministerial worker brought the case of his client to Dakota County Connections, he talked about the need for a community response. He talked about the doctor he had found who was willing to remove a tattoo at a much reduced rate, he talked about the other services needed in a community to support this young man who had become a parent and wanted to change his life. People talked about training programs and parenting classes.

But the more the group talked, the more they agreed that the gang problem in South Sioux City went beyond the needs of one young man. So those who felt they could help formed a small group called Getting Out of Gangs. And over time, that group's discussion landed on an immutable fact: In South Sioux City, there's not enough for kids to do after school. And 3:00-6:00 pm is when most gang activity is happening.

The group broadened its scope, becoming the Safe and Healthy Youth group. They identified existing resources—the YMCA, the library, and even Boys and Girls Club, across the river in Iowa, where they arranged to have students bussed after school. It was a start, but it wasn't enough. So they engaged more partners, shared what they had learned, and as of today, they've identified a building option that could be the home of a youth center.

"This youth center could really happen," said Gieselman. "It's not just Dakota

County Connections. It's our chamber, our city government, our schools, all working together to build this community. We support each other in all kinds of ways."

With the power of the whole community behind it, there's now a three-year business plan. And the youth center will stand as a shining example of what collective impact can do.

Believe it or not, it's the meetings.

DCC meets every month. The more specialized small groups meet at other times. And despite overscheduled workdays, many DCC members said they made it a point to attend, because it's at these meetings that problems are solved.

"We had a child who wanted to take part in a bicycle safety class, but didn't have a bike or a helmet, so he couldn't do it," said Gieselman. "That came up in the group, and one person said 'I know a guy who fixes old bikes and can provide one,' and someone else said, 'I know someone with a couple of helmets.' In about 5 minutes, the problem was solved. People know that those kind of problems get solved at these meetings."

When change agents come together, everything comes together.

DCC, in partnership with Nebraska Children, has also made an extensive

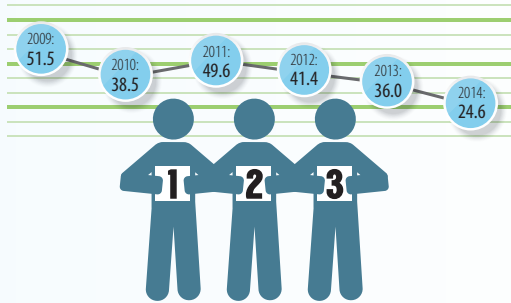
time and capital investment in early childhood care and parent education. Area therapists received the highly sought-after Parent-Child Interaction Therapy (PCIT) training. And because of DCC's focus on collaboration, messages about PCIT are being given across the county. Thirteen child care providers have also taken part in Nebraska Children's Rooted in Relationships initiative. By implementing the Pyramid model, they have created early learning environments that are more supportive for emotional well-being. Teachers and parents in these classrooms have access to resources that assist in improving child behaviors and providing more nurturing care.

When one organization offers parent training, it's not just for that organization's clients...it's for all parents to attend. DCC even provides scholarships to encourage attendance. And the results are nothing short of astonishing. These strategies, including after school programs, parenting education, support for early childhood providers, are all related directly to the DCC goals of reducing juvenile arrests, reducing substantiated instances of child abuse and neglect and improving the lives of children and families. They hope to continue working towards the positive effects already occurring. 🍵

DAKOTA COUNTY

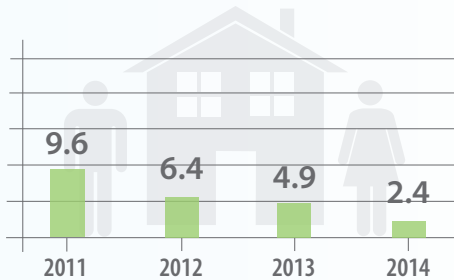
JUVENILE ARRESTS

(rate per 1,000 individuals aged 0-18)

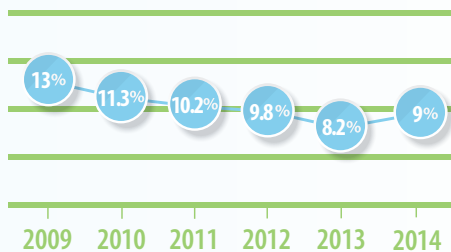


KIDS IN FOSTER CARE

(rate per 1,000 individuals aged 0-18)



TEEN BIRTHS



CHILD ABUSE AND NEGLECT substantiated reports

(rate per 1,000 individuals aged 0-18)



STRATEGIES AT WORK THANKS TO DAKOTA COUNTY CONNECTIONS:

- **Parent-Child Interaction Therapy (PCIT):** Intensive live coaching model with a strong evidence base showing that it dramatically improves family interactions
- **Parents Interacting with Infants (PIWI):** This group education for parents of infants to teach them about child development is shown to reduce instances of abuse and neglect
- **Teaching Pyramid:** Implemented by Nebraska Children's Rooted in Relationships-trained coaches, this model gives early childhood educators the tools and knowledge they need to build learning environments that promote healthy social-emotional development
- **Common-Sense Parenting:** A parent education program developed by Boys Town and made available through several agencies within DCC
- **Social-emotional screenings** for children at their own child care center when needed
- **School-Community Partnerships:** Formalized links between the schools and social service agencies to provide services for children who need them



FLAPPERS, DAPPERS, GIN AND GENEROSITY



On Saturday, February 27, nearly 300 partygoers descended on a pop-up speakeasy in Omaha's Blackstone District. The Pella—an old church converted to a stylish event space—was the place to be for a prohibition-themed night of jazz, craft cocktails and schmoozing.

The Omaha Friends of Nebraska Children were behind this swanky affair, with help from sponsors Ty-Ku Sake and the Nebraska Chapter of the US Bartenders' Guild. Ten of the state's finest bartenders mixed up their most unique concoctions using Ty-Ku as an ingredient. Guests floated from station to station, tasting the spirited sips and voting on their favorites.

The winners walked away with a Stock the Bar Package, a Fancy Fete wine collection and a date night package featuring gift cards to some of Omaha's finest establishments.

Throughout the room, 20s artifacts and prohibition protest signs were stacked up to create the mood. Period photography was exhibited throughout, and auctioned off to the highest bidders. Tasty hors d'oeuvres were provided by Hap Catering.

At the end of the evening, the event had raised nearly \$20,000 to support Nebraska Children's statewide prevention work. Thank you to the Friends of Nebraska Children for all of their efforts! 🍷





▲ View of the party from above

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▲ Karen Hickman and Jen Thielen from Nebraska Children



▲ A bartender mixes a tasty craft cocktail

Friends of Nebraska Children Fundraising Committee pose in the photo area.

Back row: L.J. McElravy, Brenda Beasley, Amy Parks, Katie Triplett, Kristin Lowrey, and Nick Thielen.

Front row: Melissa Carlberg, Jina Picarella, Alysia Radicia, and Sarah Macdissi ▼





6 RURAL COMMUNITIES SELECTED FOR CONNECTED YOUTH INITIATIVE GRANTS



Nebraska Children is awarding grants ranging from \$100,000 to \$150,000 per year to six statewide communities over two years—\$800,000 per year for a 2-year total of \$1.6 million. Each community will use the funding to build a Connected Youth Initiative (CYI) system to serve unconnected young people in need.

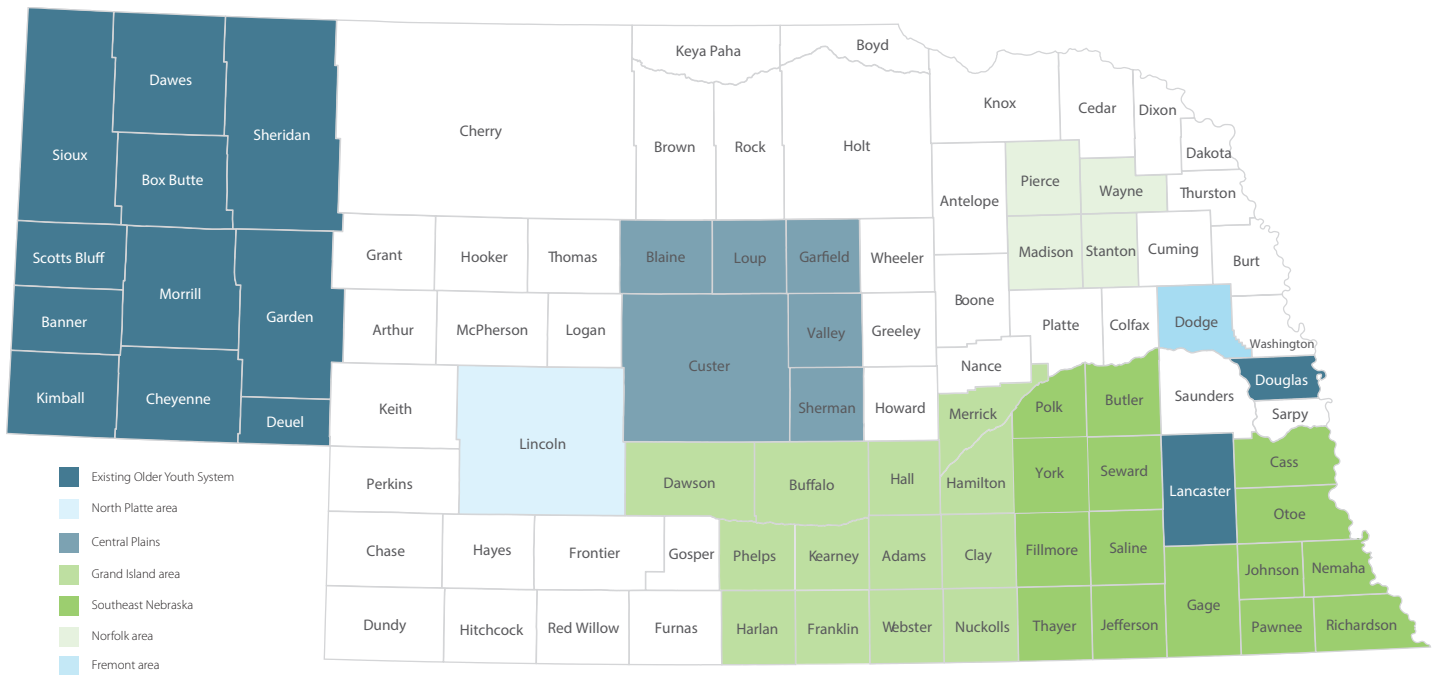
“Nebraska Children has spent the last several years putting systems into place in Omaha, Lincoln and the Panhandle to help vulnerable young people transition successfully to adulthood,” said Troy Gagner, Nebraska Children’s Connected Youth Initiative lead. “We are thrilled to have the opportunity to work with six new communities across the state to expand that work and see even more young people served.”

What is the Connected Youth Initiative (CYI)?

CYI is based on the successful practices of existing initiatives in Omaha, Lincoln and the Panhandle. The initiative targets youth ages 14-23 who are considered “unconnected”—either because they’ve aged out of the foster care system, are exiting the juvenile justice system, are homeless or near homeless, or simply lack the family supports required to transition successfully to adulthood.

“The goal of these Connected Youth Initiatives is simple: to support unconnected young people to become self-reliant, contributing adults,” said Gagner. “Without the support of a family, the barriers to independence can seem insurmountable. These Connected Youth communities will use this funding to remove those barriers, and make success attainable for this vulnerable population.”

Expansion of this model to rural Nebraska is being funded by the Social Innovation Fund, as well as private match dollars from the Sherwood Foundation and the William and Ruth Scott Family Foundation.



How will each community use the funds?

While each community's CYI will look different depending on the needs of youth and resources in the area, required components include:

- **Central Access Navigation** – A coordinated approach that ensures CYI participants get access to all of the services they need in a streamlined, common-sense way. By coordinating service and helping youth navigate them through a central access point, the Families First Partnership can avoid duplication of efforts and effectively track the progress of young people.
- **Opportunity Passport™** – A nationally recognized financial literacy and asset-building program. Participating youth open Individual Development Accounts (IDAs) at a local bank, learn financial literacy skills, and save money for things like tuition, security deposits on apartments, or a car to take them to school and work. Savings are matched up to 4-to-1, helping them reach goals more quickly.

COMMUNITIES RECEIVING GRANTS ARE:

- **North Platte Area** (Lincoln County) - \$200,000 over 2 years
- **Grand Island Area** (Hall, Dawson, Buffalo, Merrick, Hamilton, Phelps, Kearney, Adams, Clay, Harlan, Franklin, Webster and Nuckolls Counties) - \$300,000 over 2 years
- **Norfolk Area** (Madison, Pierce, Wayne and Stanton County) - \$300,000 over 2 years
- **Fremont Area** (Dodge County) - \$300,000 over 2 years
- **Central Plains** (Custer, Garfield, Blaine, Sherman, Valley and Loup Counties) - \$300,000 over 2 years
- **Southeast Nebraska** (Butler, Cass, Fillmore, Gage, Jefferson, Johnson, Nemaha, Otoe, Pawnee, Polk, Richardson, Saline, Seward, Thayer and York Counties) - \$200,000 over 2 years

- **Need-Based Funds** – Emergency cash available to help youth keep small bumps in the road—like broke down cars, class fees, utility bill surges—from becoming catastrophes.
- **Youth voice** – A council of area youth to provide input on how the CYI system should be set up and what services are most necessary.

Each of the six CYI grant communities will begin implementing their work plan immediately. WestEd, in conjunction with the University of Nebraska, will serve as a third-party evaluator to ensure fidelity to the original model, assess outcomes and make sure the community efforts are having the desired impact. 🍷

| Friends of Nebraska Children |

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JOIN THE FRIENDS NOW!

Membership in Friends is open to all those interested in learning more and partnering with Nebraska Children.

Join now at
www.FriendsOfNebraskaChildren.org

A letter from the Friends president

Dear Friends,

In January, we officially launched our first year of the Omaha Friends of Nebraska Children. I can't say thank you enough to the founding members who spent 2015 planning and organizing.

The Friends are a group of volunteers that help to further the mission of Nebraska Children through Fundraising, Service, and Awareness events. We have a number of activities planned throughout the year and we hope you will join us in supporting Nebraska Children.

On February 27, the Fundraising committee hosted their first event. Perfect Pour: A Craft Cocktail Competition was a huge success with 10 bartenders participating in the largest craft cocktail competition to date in the Omaha metro.

This summer, the service committee is planning a "Christmas in July" for the 2016 Holiday Care Package Drive.

Each year, Nebraska Children works to pull together care packages for young people who are in foster care or have just aged out.

In the fall, look for information from the Membership committee as they will be organizing an informational open house for those interested in getting involved with the Friends of Nebraska Children.

We are looking forward to a great 2016!!

Sincerely,

Deyna Rouse





MARK ZIMMERER


Nebraska Children and Families Foundation is proud to announce the addition of Norfolk's Mark Zimmerer to its statewide board of directors.

The CEO of the Norfolk Area Chamber of Commerce, Mark has spent most of his professional career in the Health and Human Services field. He started the Nationally Accredited Northeast Nebraska Child Advocacy Center at Faith Regional in 2003 and ran the program until 2012.

"We are absolutely thrilled to have Mark helping to govern the future of Nebraska Children," said Kelly Medwick, Nebraska Children's Chief of Staff. "With his long history in human services and deep connection to the Norfolk business community, we feel that Mark exemplifies our public-private approach to solving complex problems for Nebraska's families."

"The reason I chose to serve on this board is because of the great work the Nebraska Children does to maximize resources in helping our families become stronger and safer," said Zimmerer. "I believe that communities need to work harder than ever to ensure we are preparing our children to be successful in school and become contributing citizens of our state. This is more important than ever as our need for workforce is greater than any other time in recent history." said Zimmerer.

Mark enjoys getting the business members he works with involved in societal issues impacting the Norfolk community. His own volunteer experience includes the Norfolk Family Coalition Board of Directors, the Prevent Child Abuse Council, Domestic Violence Coalition, Foster Care Review Board, State Child Death Review Team, the Commission for the Protection of Children, and the Nebraska Alliance of Child Advocacy Centers.

Mark is married to Deb Zimmerer and has two sons and three step-daughters. 

In Mark's neck of the wood...

Nebraska Children has awarded \$300,000 to the Norfolk community to build a Connected Youth Initiative, based on the Project Everlast model that's been so successful in Omaha and Lincoln. Nebraska Children also supports the planning process in Madison County to develop a community-based child abuse prevention system. Once completed, the Norfolk-based collaborative of service providers, health care practitioners, businesses, educators and public officials will work together with Nebraska Children on program implementation, training and ongoing evaluation.

Other Nebraska Children initiatives in the area include Norfolk's Project Everlast Youth Council, which provides young people with foster care experience opportunities for growth and development, and the Sixpence Early Learning program which provides professional home visits for babies and toddlers at risk across the county.


Donate Your Way

Every donation you make
has an impact.
Now, there are more
ways than ever to give.

- 1** Go to NebraskaChildren.org and select Donate to contribute online.
- 2** Call Jen Thielen at 402-476-9401 to set up a one-time or monthly gift.
- 3** Mail a donation to the address above.
- 4** Talk to your estate planner about leaving a lasting legacy to the foundation.

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