



It's time to...

Gear Up for Safety!

For most of us, babies and toddlers come with all kinds of safety gear: Pack 'n Plays, power outlet covers, cabinet door locks, car seats, and baby gates, just to name a few. But for families struggling to make ends meet, buying something as expensive as a Pack 'n Play — or even dozens of outlet covers or cabinet door locks — is completely out of the question. “Many individuals we serve simply cannot put their money toward these safety items,” says Libby Martin, Case Management Director at Lutheran Social Services of Indiana (LSSI).

Unfortunately, this lack of safety gear puts children in these families at risk for safety issues that could lead to injury or even death—problems that could easily be prevented with the right tools and some parent education. That is why, for the last three years, LSSI has been running a highly successful program called Gear Up for Safety. Working in partnership with SCAN and referral sources throughout northeast Indiana, we have been able to put vital safety gear into the hands of hundreds of families with young children.

But we don't stop there. LSSI also offers extensive education about each item and even installs the gear properly in clients' homes. “In partnership with SCAN,” says Libby, “we created a model that gives not just safety items but also quite a bit of education about common injuries in the home. Our case managers cover everything from shaken baby syndrome and poison control to car seat safety, water safety, burns, fire escape plans, and babysitter safety guides.” In addition, the LSSI team helps parents build up effective support systems and develop age-appropriate expectations for their children.

“Gear Up for Safety is just one way we at LSSI are responding to community needs and filling in the gap with direct services,” says Angie Moellering, President & CEO. “While assessing possible safety risks, our case managers also connect clients with other services available in their area, helping them improve their families in a wide variety of ways. By combining safety gear with client education and referrals to other social service programs,” says Angie, “Gear Up helps us create a deeper impact for each family we serve.”

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Let's keep in touch

Interested in being kept in the loop? Sign up for our mailing list and you'll have access to regular updates on happenings at LSSI.

Sign up at www.lssin.org.

Please indicate if you prefer to receive updates via email or in your mailbox.

How Can I Help?

Want to help us equip families with the gear they need to keep their children safe? You can make a direct and immediate impact today by contributing to this program – here is what your dollars will purchase:

- 4 Cabinet locks
- 4 Outlet covers
- 5 Appliance locks
- 10 Baby gate
- 13 Carbon monoxide detector
- 17 Fire extinguisher
- 19 Smoke detector
- 35 Fire escape ladder
- 50 Car seats
- 40 Pack 'n Play

Any donations for this program will go directly to the purchase of these safety items for families. Each \$300 donation will allow us to help one more family with safety education and individualized safety items in 2017.



SAVE THE DATE

LSSI Works Breakfast and Motivations Circle

Tuesday, March 28th

Monday, April 17th

Tuesday, May 23rd

The Power of Transforming Grace

A letter from Angela Moellering, President and CEO



“For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith—and this is not from yourselves, it is the gift of God—not by works, so that no one can boast. For we are God’s handiwork, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do.” — Eph. 2:8–10

As I think about the work we do here at Lutheran Social Services of Indiana, I keep returning to one prevailing and consistent theme: the power of transforming grace.

We know that the grace Jesus offers us is so much greater than any sin. Only His grace can draw us to His side. Imagine how transformational this message of grace is to those who have never heard or experienced it before.

So many of those we serve do not know of the transforming grace of Jesus. Instead they have only known judgment, rejection and discouragement. When we demonstrate the love of Jesus to our clients and meet them where they are, we see that God’s grace is life changing. We witness Grace that Transforms!

Although we all know of situations where the transformation is immediate. We can tell of

people who had a Saul to Paul experience. Although forgiveness is immediate, for many of us, transformation in other areas is a process and it can take a long and indirect route. For many of our clients, the path to lasting change involves addressing old patterns and a change in lifestyle. Walking through this change is hard! Our staff respect the time it may take to make right choices and to adjust thinking and behaviors. We focus on lasting change – which can take months or years – as opposed to compliance to a set of standards.

Over time, we have been privileged to see lives changing throughout all of our services. In everything from new and better parenting patterns and increased family stability to educational transformations, we continue to witness firsthand the power of transforming grace. Please consider joining us in making this kind of impact in our community. Your gifts provide the support we need to do the “good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do.” ■

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Thanks to some generous support from our funders, along with private donations, Gear Up for Safety is one of LSSI’s most far-reaching programs. To date, we are working in 14 Indiana counties, and we served a total of 1,246 individuals last year alone. Even better, we consistently see a high success rate through this program. “We ask our clients to complete a survey at closure and again six months later,” says Libby. “Not only are 100% of them, that returned the survey, still using the items, but they are still aware of the risks and how to address them.”

That success rate became very real recently, when we heard from a fellow service provider who had visited one of our Gear Up families. They told us that during the night, the carbon monoxide detector that we installed went off. The family evacuated the home according to

the plan we developed with them. Rescue workers confirmed that without that detector, the entire family would have died.

Thankfully, most families we serve don’t face this kind of traumatic experience, but all are extremely grateful for the Gear Up program. “They are happy about the items we bring,” says Libby, “but they are even more excited about the education.” One client said, “Thank you for telling me this,” while another remarked, “I knew the risks in my home, but I never could address them. Thank you for changing something that I knew was unsafe but didn’t have the tools to change.”

If you’d like to help us keep families in our communities safe, please contact our office at (260) 426-3347. Together, we can help these families Gear Up for Safety! ■

You can donate online with a credit card at www.lssin.org.
Just hit the donate button at the top of the page!

Board Profile

For The Long Haul

Rev. Mike Wakeland has been serving on the board at Lutheran Social Services of Indiana for more than two years now, but his association with LSSI goes back as far as he can remember. Here's a quick look at Mike's history with LSSI and the reasons he serves on our board.

Years on LSSI's board: 2.5 years

First association with LSSI: As a young boy at Saint Paul's Evangelical Lutheran Church and School, Mike remembers meeting LSSI staff and taking up offerings to help the cause. "Our teachers emphasized that living out our faith means serving others. LSSI provided a close example of that kind of service to our community."

Current connections with LSSI: "Since I serve as the Director of Pastoral Care at Lutheran Life Villages (LLV)," says Mike, "I am in daily contact with Children's Village and get to see a lot of the ministry at LSSI up close." Before LLV, Mike served as the pastor of New Life Lutheran Church, where he regularly referred members of his congregation and the surrounding community to LSSI for help. "LSSI is a great partner for our local churches," says Mike. "It's a huge factor in keeping the spark of hope alive for people in need."

Reasons he serves on the board: "Serving on the board at LSSI gives me an opportunity to be part of an organization that is deeply committed to meeting the needs of our community while bringing people closer to Jesus," says Mike. "What God calls us to do is really important. But that doesn't mean it's simple or easy. Serving on the board has been a tremendously positive experience for me, helping me understand all of the dedicated, hard work that makes an impact on children and families for the long haul." ■



Don't Forget to Place Your Justice Bread Order!

If it's been a while since you placed a Justice Bread order, let us tempt you with these specialty breads we're offering in the next few months:

MARCH — Wheat, White rolls, Rye

APRIL — Wheat, Cranberry, Indian Grain

MAY — Wheat, Garlic bites, Cinnamon Raisin

Remember that every Justice Bread loaf you purchase supports LSSI's Cup of Kindness Program, which helps individuals and families move toward financial stability. For a complete listing of breads featured each month, please visit our website and go to the community tab. And if your church doesn't participate in our Justice Bread program, you can still purchase these heavenly loaves. Just give us a call at (260) 426-3347.



Simplicity in Giving

by Dennis Herman, Director of Church Relations



One of the simplest ways of giving a planned gift to Lutheran Social Services of Indiana (LSSI) is through your life insurance policy. Just name Lutheran Social Services of Indiana as the beneficiary. Although this method does not offer the income tax advantages that come with gifting the policy, it does reduce the donor's estate by the amount of the death benefit. And when you name LSSI as a partial or full beneficiary of the policy, you have the added benefit of flexibility, which lets you change the designation if your financial situation changes down the road.

One more reason to name LSSI as the beneficiary of a life insurance policy:

A charitable beneficiary designation also provides transaction privacy. The transfer of assets from an insurance contract is more direct and a much less complicated way to make a designation. Interested in learning more? Just call your life insurance agent, who can share more information on this planned giving option. ■

If you would like to receive an electronic copy of *Perspective*, please contact Rachel Hardesty at rhargesty@lssin.org or (260) 426-3347.

Shop 'til You Drop

Did you know that every time you buy groceries or purchase items online, you can be supporting LSSI? The process is easy. A one-time enrollment/registration is all it takes, and every transaction after that benefits LSSI. Here are two ways to get involved:

Kroger Community Awards. Through this program, a portion of your grocery bill can benefit Lutheran Social Services of Indiana. Just visit krogercommunityrewards.com to enroll, choose Lutheran Social Services of Indiana as your charitable organization, and you're all set. Just remember to swipe your Kroger card each time you shop.

Note: Enrollment in Kroger's Community Awards program needs to be renewed each year, so if you've named us in the past but it's been a year since you enrolled, just return to the community rewards web page and re-enroll. It's that simple.

Amazon Smile. Again, just visit smile.amazon.com to register, then select Lutheran Social Services of Indiana as your charitable organization. All that's left is to shop through smile.amazon.com instead of going directly to amazon.com. You'll find the same products and pricing, the same customer service, the same shopping experience. Only with Amazon Smile, Amazon will make a donation to LSSI for every eligible purchase you make. Even small purchases can add up quickly, so be sure to get registered today!

LSSI would like to thank...

The Lutheran Foundation for providing operating grant dollars that allow us to equip willing families facing the most challenging obstacles with the skills necessary to make positive life choices and move toward economic and family stability. The continued generosity of The Lutheran Foundation allows LSSI to continue to be responsive to client needs and create a deeper impact for those we serve that promotes the overall health of our community.

The Foellinger Foundation for their ongoing partnership by providing funding that includes operating support, limited capital improvement and replacement dollars, and organizational effectiveness funding. This award will have a significant impact on LSSI and the families we serve. Continued support from the Foellinger Foundation will help us with ongoing development of our governance structure and program innovation for families.

The St. Joseph Community Health Foundation for improving the health and wellness of teen parents and their children who participate in the Education Creates Hope and Opportunity (ECHO) program.

PNC's: Grow Up Great Initiative for providing grant dollars that allow us to enhance classroom technology and expand staff training at Children's Village Early Learning Center.

The Flora Dale Krouse Foundation for program support for LSSI Works, our workforce initiative, which provides students with personal and professional skill development and sets them on a career path for long-term sustainable employment.



Mission
Lutheran Social Services of
Indiana expresses the love
of Jesus Christ for all people
through services that empower
individuals and families to move
toward social, emotional, and
spiritual wholeness.



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