



Spring Newsletter

Teaching Our Kids to Dream: A Former Client's Story of Success and Healing

When children come back to Chamberlain's to visit us, it is always a big deal. Our staff members spend so much time investing in the success of each and every one of the children in our care that it is very rewarding to hear how well they do after they have moved on. We recently had a visit from one such young lady that had especially touched the hearts of the staff who had worked with her. Elena Martinez, who came to us in 2003 and was here for four years, came to Chamberlain's earlier this month to speak with the children and visit with staff. It was a great opportunity for the kids who are currently with us to learn from someone who was in their shoes not so long ago. She spoke a little bit about herself and told the children about her experiences now that she is in college. She says that her success story is about "the girl who grew up with so much heartbreak and sadness and anger who learned to forgive



herself and in turn, others. Once she got through that, she accomplished so much and to this day is still trying to reach her goals." She touched on the many lessons that she learned at Chamberlain's. In speaking about her time here, she said that it was obvious to her that the staff members who guided her while she was here were not here just for the job. Because she realized that the staff members were also personally invested in her success, she walked away from her experience here learning the value of setting goals and accomplishing them so that she can live a successful life. It was clear that she was able to heal from some of her experiences. "Most of my life," she said "I blamed myself

for not being with my mom or my sisters but after ten years of thinking about it and missing them and crying for them I realized that people make bad decisions in life and it ends with bad consequences on their part. Once I understood that, I was able to forgive myself and understand that is was not my fault. What happened was just a consequence of my mom's decisions and I was just caught in the middle. That is key. Once you are able to forgive yourself you will have the choice and ability to forgive others." After she graduated high school, she enrolled in a junior college close to her home. Her goal is to graduate from that school and transfer to a university to pursue a degree in criminal justice. She hopes to one day become a crime scene investigator. We are so proud of all of the hard work that she continues to invest in herself for an amazing life that we know she deserves!

A Look Inside

- Work Day Success
- Manager of the Year
- Message from our ED
- Good Eats
- Music and Movement Unveiling

Chamberlain's Children Center empowers at-risk children in a home-like environment to heal from past trauma, discover their strengths, and develop the skills they need to achieve life-long success.

Mission Statement:

Chamberlain's

Nonprofit
US Postage
PAID
Hollister, CA
Permit No. 49

Mari's FUND Day BBQ Fundraiser is on May 18th, 2013 from 12pm-3pm. This is a fun event with activities for children, a raffle, and a silent auction. Proceeds directly benefit the programs at Chamberlain's. Sponsorship opportunities are available. For more information contact Kim Meininger at kim@chamberlaincc.org or 831.636.2121, ext 129.

Save The Date!



Chamberlain's Children Center
1850 San Benito Street
Hollister, CA 95023
www.chamberlaincc.org

Another Way to Make A Difference – Join Our Board!

I have been a member of Chamberlain’s Children Center’s Board of Directors since 2007, serving as its President for the past 3 years.

During my time on the board I have seen many significant improvements in Chamberlain’s operation. As a board member I can’t take credit for these positive changes because the day-to-day work needed to make them happen is the responsibility of our Executive Director, Robert Freiri, and his staff. Yet there is satisfaction in the role that I and fellow board members have played in overseeing Chamberlain’s fulfillment of its mission. Along the way I have also learned a lot and enjoyed getting to know many wonderful people who truly care about Chamberlain’s children.



If you care about children, want to give back to the community, and believe that you have expertise, talent, or life experience that could make you a valuable addition to our Board of Directors, please call us at Chamberlain’s Children Center.

Nancy Kops
Board President

What a Difference a Day Makes

Every year we are amazed at the hard work and dedication that our volunteers exhibit in cleaning up our campus and completing major projects for us on work day, and this year was no exception. We had many projects that we were hoping to work on this year, but we managed to narrow down the major focus to phases of our gardening program located in back of the administrative office. We also completed some more general but very necessary clean up around our gazebo, park, and baseball field.

The day began with many more people showing up than we had even anticipated and they



Back Garden Before

really managed to hit the ground running. We had several groups participating—many members of the local LDS church came out once again this year, joined by Kohl’s Department Store’s Associates in Action team, and some local students.

In the back garden, pictured below, the irrigation was installed, the Dalia ‘s were transplanted to the circle you see in the foreground and the living teepee was constructed . Around the base of the teepee structure, edible vines were planted to grow up the bamboo, providing a nice structure



Back Garden After

for our children to visit. Thanks to all who participated in the day. Your hard work has once again transformed our campus!



4th Annual Mari’s FUNd Day

Date: May 18th, 2013
Price: \$20 adults, \$5 kids
Time: 12:00pm—3:00pm

Chamberlain's Children Center
Mari Davis Memorial Park & Pavilion
1850 San Benito Street, Hollister, CA



BBQ fundraiser, silent auction, children’s activities, and entertainment

Two Raffles to choose from!

2nd Gen. iPad Raffle Tickets - \$20 each or 5 for \$50
General Raffle Tickets - \$2 each or 15 for \$20

Silent auction and raffle items include: a mini computer, San Juan Oaks golf for 4, a limited edition SF 49ers Throwback Football and four tickets to a 49er game, 2 California Great America tickets, 2 Gilroy Gardens tickets, 2 Happy Hollow tickets, San Jose Giants ticket package, 2 Premiere Cinemas passes, SF Catamaran trip for two, 2 SF Zoo passes, lunch or dinner for two at Dona Esther’s in SJB, and more!

PLEASE NOTE: Prizes have not been designated for the raffle or the auction yet. Several items listed above will end up being auction items. Tickets will be drawn at the event. No need to be present to win. Please list your name, email address, and phone number on the portion of the ticket entered in the drawing.

For questions or to purchase tickets, contact Kim Meininger:
kim@chamberlaincc.org or 831-636-2121

Good Eats and A Great Volunteer



When people think back to their childhoods, the memories they recall often include gathering around in the kitchen or at the dinner table. Families have been gathering and connecting around food related activities for centuries in all cultures. It is a foundational experience of growing up. At Chamberlain's, we are always looking to provide our children with experiences of a typical childhood. They should not be deprived of family experiences just because they needed to live in a group home setting. It is for this reason that a critical element in our mission statement is to provide a home-like environment to our kids. Our staff does an amazing job at providing these experiences, but we are always excited when we find someone who is willing to volunteer their time to invest in our children. Supraporn Ketchang, who goes by Pooh, recently approached us with an interest in mentoring a child. As we learned more about her and she learned of Chamberlain's, it became clear that a bigger role was in store for her.

Pooh loves to cook, and her specialty is Asian cuisine. When she learned about the many children here who could benefit from her involvement, she collaborated with our Clinical Department and the Good Eats Program was born. Pooh committed to come once a week to cook for a group and the houses participated on a rotating basis. Pooh lead instruction teaching them how to cook healthy cultural dishes such as spring rolls, Won Ton Soup, and Tom Yum Kai Soup. After the kids helped cook the meal, they would all eat together. The 12 week class produced a number of benefits for our kids. We have seen a greater bond between the children and staff, and a great bond among the children. The kids have tried new foods and are learning how to express their desires in an appropriate way. The children participated in the cooking process and staff was coached about how to keep the kids entertained, how to help the kids take their turns in a fair way, and what to do when issues arise. The kids also learned that they can make tremendous change in their own house by helping, listening and enjoying the time with each other. This has been an amazing experience for our kids, and we are very grateful to Pooh for helping us. She has made a huge impact on our children!



Unveiled: Our Music and Movement room is complete!

If you have been watching our news and Facebook page, you have seen that we have been adding a Music & Movement Room to our Wellness Center offerings. We just held an unveiling for our children, our staff, and some community supporters. We created the Music and Movement room as another outlet for our children to express themselves. Words can often be difficult to find when you are experiencing emotional upheaval. This room will be another way for them to learn to process their feelings in a health way. We have had amazing support from Ted Davis at Teknova who donated funds and musical instruments, members of the Gavilan College art department who donated paint and had students participate in painting the mural, Robert who supported the vision, and Patrick who oversaw all the elements of getting the room completed. It will be an amazing tool for our children to use in their path to healing!



Supervisor Awarded Manager of the Year Award

In her eight years with Chamberlain's, Vanessa Arroyo has made an amazing impact here. Her hard work and dedication recently earned her the title of Chamberlain's Manager of the Year. Vanessa was among 4 nominees for the award. Over the past year, Vanessa has found strength-based ways to meet the goals of our mission. She oversees a well-structured approach that values staff and children's creativity. Her team uses fun and interactive ways to involve the children in cooking, home-décor, and outdoor activities. By result, the children learn to take pride in caring for their home and receive a boost in self-confidence with each new skill gained.



Chamberlain's YouTube Channel

We are constantly adding ways for you to stay connected and up to date with Chamberlain's news. Did you know we have our own channel where you can check out our videos on YouTube? We have several posted that we have made with the help of CMAP, including the recent Mari's FUNd Day promotional video. We also have an informational video about our residential and non-public school and a PSA for our mentoring program. The channel is easy to find by going to our website and clicking the YouTube button. Come check us out!

Join Our E-news List

Joining our email subscriber list has never been so easy! Just scan the code to the right with your phone and enter your email! You can also text to join by texting the word **CHAMBERLAINS** to 22828 to get started! We send out newsletters as well as special announcements and event invites.



Handing Out Wisdom Before Moving On...

When one of our girls was preparing to leave Chamberlain's, she decided she wanted to leave some encouragement behind for any new children who come here. Children who have moved on from Chamberlain's know better than anyone else what new children must feel when they first move here. Although this particular child is much younger than Elena, she echoes the same sentiments. She advises her peers to keep their hearts and minds open for the crucial lessons that are imparted here and the staff who kids come to love as family. We are so proud to play a part in such amazing children's lives in such an important way.

Dear new comer,
Welcome to Chamberlins Children Center. My name is [redacted] a resident here for about 9 months. I am graduading on level 4 with the most amount of point before. Chamberlins is a place you wouldn't expect to learn valuable life lessons. Here I guarantee you will experince good and bad days. For me it changed my way at looking at life. There will be Staff that will drive you ensane and other Staff will be really hard to part with in the end. Others will sneak up on you and be your friend for the rest of your life. So don't give up because there are always going to be worse situations than yours. I am proud to say that throughout every thing I made it out on top



DONATION FORM

Name _____ Amount Donated _____

Address _____ City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Please make your tax-deductible check payable to:

Chamberlain's Children Center, Inc.

Federal Tax I.D. Number 94-2357401

Mail to: Chamberlain's Children Center

PO Box 1269, Hollister, CA 95024-1269

We appreciate your support!

Executive Director Report:



The other day, while we were celebrating the unveiling of the Music and Movement Room, my article's theme came to me: "Transformation." As I absorb the happy vibe when I see Chamberlain's children playing the drums and strumming the guitars, I remember that only a short time ago this room was just an empty shell. Because of a group of creative, dedicated individuals and the financial support of Ted Davis, Teknova, and the Safeway Foundation, dreams became reality! When I walk into the Wellness Center Kitchen I get the same feeling —what was once an antiqued, unused kitchen is now a state of the art Learning Lab! What was once a storage space collecting dust is

now a vibrant Fitness Center!! I look out over the Wellness Center deck and see what was once a weed patch; now a Tee Pee Garden! I look out my office window and see what was once an empty, dangerous, condemned building is now garden boxes with vegetables our children are growing. In fact, we now have a gardening therapy group. That's transformation in action!!! Finally, I see pictures from less than a decade ago and see an open dust bowl, which now has four sturdy homes, a ball field, a playground, and a BBQ Pavilion!!

I also reflect back on the contributions of an amazing person, Mari Davis. Mari's leadership, vision, compassion and grit are primary reasons for Chamberlain's transformation! In Mari's memory, we are committed to continue our campus development and continue to provide a safe, nurturing "home-like" environment for the children in our care. I urge you to join us on Saturday, May 18th to not only raise funds for our program, but to see these transformations in person, to feel the "vibe" in the air, and get the sense of all the loving hands that have spent their blood, sweat, and tears in order to transform Mari's vision into reality!! See you there!!

Robert



Panoramic view of our Music & Movement room mural