



FALL 2018
newsletter

Where Compassion Meets Action

family is
STRENGTH

MISSION

Florence Crittenton provides innovative, comprehensive services and nurturing programs that engage and empower children, young adults and young families to thrive and build productive lives.

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WHO WE ARE

Florence Crittenton is a leader in providing family centered parenting and early childhood services. With the support of partners like you, Florence Crittenton offers a comprehensive array of services including therapeutic residential care, home visiting, community parenting classes, outpatient treatment services for co-occurring mental health and substance use disorders and early education opportunities for children 0-3.

A very special thank you to our outgoing Board Member, **Gayle Butler**.

Thank you for your service and your commitment to ensuring young families have every opportunity for a bright future!

Dear Friends,



If you Google the term “Family Preservation,” you are likely to get articles about the separation of families at the border. But the term has been used for decades to refer to ways to ensure families are not separated. Most frequently it is used within the child welfare system. We have been concerned for years about the effects of separating children from their parents. Now we know this is a leading indicator in how children will fare emotionally, physically, and socially.

But what happens when the challenges faced by the parent have an effect on the safety of the child? How can we minimize the effects of removing children from their homes while ensuring they are safe?

This is largely the work we have done at Florence Crittenton for the past 118 years. The challenges over time may have changed, but the reality is they are ultimately risks to the wellbeing of the family.

Most recently our nation has been faced with an epidemic in drug use. Our goal at Florence Crittenton is to work with the entire family to ensure the safety and needs of the children are being met, while supporting the parent in overcoming the trauma that likely resulted in substance use or mental health challenges.

Ask any number of people about their first priority and you are likely to hear it's their family. Regardless of how we define our family, having a family who supports and loves you creates a safe space to grow and thrive. This is the work of Florence Crittenton.

I hope you enjoy the articles in this newsletter as we discuss these important topics affecting our communities and how, with your help, we are working make lasting changes for families.

Thank you for your support of this important work.

Barbara Burton, Executive Director



**CHECK OUT
OUR NEW
WEBSITE!**

florencecrittenton.org



FOLLOW US! Florence Crittenton Home & Services



WHY SHOULD FAMILY COME FIRST?

Keeping families together is more than a moral conversation, it is also the best opportunity for lifelong success for children.

It has been a summer full of unrest and discord across the country as we as a nation grapple with the ideas about how to support families in crisis. The challenges facing our country on the U.S. border have raised the discussion of how best to work with families when parents are facing challenges, and how those decisions effect the children caught in the crosshairs for the rest of their lives. “Family preservation” has become the latest buzz word. But what does this all mean for our communities, and what lessons can we take from this broad national topic?

First, what is family preservation? While this can mean many things to many people, for this purpose we are talking about keeping children with their parents, or immediate family and caregivers during difficult times. The Department of Health & Human Services defines family preservation as “family-focused efforts designed to assist families in crisis by improving parenting and family functioning while keeping children safe.” Essentially, it means if we provide support for the challenges they are facing and ensure safety of their children during this time, we can keep

children with their families and not risk the disruption of removing them from their home.

What does this mean in our state? Do we have families that are struggling with challenges that may put their children at risk of losing their parents? Unfortunately, yes; and at an alarming rate. In 2016 there were 3,396* children in foster care. The most recent state statistics show a continued increase in the number of children in foster care in Montana. The number one factor for this increase has been linked to substance abuse in parents, with 65%* of the total out of home placements due to substance use challenges. Parents challenged with substance use disorders and mental health challenges often struggle to find support and therefore are often unable to provide a stable home environment for their children, despite their best intentions and efforts to do so.

Why should we risk keeping children in a family if their parents are “doing bad stuff”? Research proves that children need a safe and stable home environment and are adversely affected by toxic stress. In fact, the American Academy

of Pediatrics recently made a statement on child separation, indicating the trauma of a separation can be considered a form of abuse. The Adverse Childhood Effects (ACE) study brought this to glaring light, as we are now able to directly correlate brain development, the onset of physical ailments, behavioral problems, and school success to the trauma a child is exposed to from birth to age 5.

Our philosophy at Florence Crittenton is that families deserve the opportunity to heal and build healthy, thriving lives...together. This belief was one of the driving factors that led us to examine our programs and ensure we are doing everything we can to help families find the support they need. With your support we are helping families that are struggling with homelessness, trauma, and substance abuse become the very best they can be for their children. We are giving support to help families maintain stability in their own home. We are providing a loving, safe learning environment for children as their parents head to work and school. Because of you, we are putting the compassion of our communities to action.

*Information from the DPHHS Child & Family Services Division website.

Florence Crittenton is for Everyone

Whether you are looking for a meaningful career, in need of family-based services, or are a donor or volunteer that wants to give back to their community, there is a place for everyone at Florence Crittenton.

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JOIN OUR TEAM!

We are always looking for amazing, compassionate individuals that want to change lives and join our team. For a list of current job opportunities, visit our website at florencecrittenton.org/careers

FACES OF FLORENCE CRITTENTON

Jessica Karstadt • Residential Staff



Jessica is a Residential Counselor at Florence Crittenton. She has an Associate's degree in Social and Behavioral Science and is currently pursuing her Bachelor's in Social Work through Northern Arizona University. Jessica has a passion for advocacy and young families. She enjoys working at a place that emphasizes creating healthier futures and being a part of a team that feels more like family.

Mary • Residential Client Snapshot



Our Case Manager received a call from a social worker just recently. Her client, Mary*, was about to turn 18 and would be aging out of the foster care system. She was pregnant and had nowhere to go upon her 18th birthday. Her baby was not involved with Child Protective Services, yet she could be very soon if this client was not able to find a safe environment to carry out her pregnancy and have a healthy birth. Mary is a bright, vibrant young lady that wants to be the very best mom she can be to her baby. But her past is heartbreaking...her mother had some challenges and struggled to care for her. Mary was sent to live with family members for a while when possible. Eventually her mom's struggles led to a permanent removal for Mary, and she joined the foster care system at age 4. She had been in 10 placements by her 18th birthday. Mary's dream is to raise her child in a safe, stable, and loving environment. The programs at Florence Crittenton that you support can be the reason that Mary and her daughter can stay together, instead of being separated due to their unsafe living situation. Like every family, Mary and her baby will hit bumps along the way, but their story is one of hope for a bright future.

*Note: names and details have of this story have been changed to protect client privacy.

Cristina Fowler • Outpatient Staff

Cristina has been with Florence Crittenton since April 2016. She began her social work experience in Missoula interning at the YWCA Planet Kids. After relocating to Helena, Cristina joined Florence

Crittenton as a clinical intern in 2015, where she worked in clinical aspects of care for young mothers and their families, as well as direct care services.

Cristina finds her work at Florence Crittenton not only compelling, but an environment truly dedicated to helping families through their individual challenges as well as a team that focuses on individual's strengths. Cristina's compassion to help young women and their children live positive, healthy, and successful lives lead to her becoming a member of the Maternal Mental Health Coalition helping to advocate for woman's resources and mental health.

John • Outpatient Client Snapshot

John is just like many of us... working hard to make his mark at work, loves sports and being outdoors. John has also battled depression most of his life. Since age 19 he has used various substances to help him cope

with his depression. While he has been able to beat his addiction challenges in the past, he recently had a setback that got him into some trouble with the law. John is also a new dad and wants nothing more than to be a great father. If he can get the help he needs to stay on the road to recovery he knows he can build a wonderful life with his son. Therapy and groups through Florence Crittenton's Outpatient Services can help with his recovery, while teaching him great parenting tools.

**Note: names and details have of this story have been changed to protect client privacy.*

Sarah Mitchell • Childcare Staff

Sarah Mitchell is the Early Childhood Program Manager for Florence Crittenton's Community Preschool and Child Enrichment Center. Sarah brings over 11-years' experience in early childhood

education. She received a BA in Psychology and M.Ed. in School Counseling from Valdosta State University. Sarah has developed a strong sense of devotion to supporting children's development as a program manager of early prevention and intervention services. This experience has provided her with a deep appreciation for collaborating with educators, parents, and community partners to meet each child's developmental needs. She believes early exposure to learning opportunities that are fun and engaging enhance children's social-emotional, cognitive, communicative, and physical development. She is committed to providing a safe and nurturing environment where children develop a love of learning and feel a sense of belonging.

Jeff, Brittney, & Greer • Childcare Testimonial

From Dad: "Allison, Denice and Olivia are amazing! I know that our daughter is playing, reading, and they are taking care of our baby girl. I feel so comfortable knowing that she is in such a loving environment with people who absolutely love the kids they work with."

From Mom: "It is so hard to leave your child with anyone else, but I could not have handpicked a more loving, wonderful group of people to care for our daughter. I know that she is learning, playing, reading, and that her needs are being met in a loving manner. I am so grateful for the care these wonderful women provide. They truly love these babies and enjoy helping them learn and love to watch them grow!"

Your Support at Work

Florence Crittenton works every day with families to ensure they have the tools they need to give their children every opportunity to succeed and be successful members of our communities. This work is only possible with YOU, our loyal donors and partners. The success of each family is a direct reflection of your support of the organization and their hopes and dreams. Here are a few statistics on the ways YOU made a difference for families across our communities:



349

Individuals served in community-based and residential programs in FY18



181

Families served in community-based and residential programs in FY18



4

New programs launched over the last year with your support*



17

Children currently receiving high quality early education and extensive nurturing through our community childcare and new preschool services

*Transitional Living Program, Recovery Home for Women & Children, Family Outpatient Substance Use Recovery Services, Community Childcare and Preschool

For more information on all our services please visit www.florencecrittenton.org

SUPPORT OUR GIRLS RECAP



The 8th Annual Support Our Girls was a smashing success! Sponsored by Crafted Aesthetics and Wellness, this wonderful evening included our hilarious emcee Shane Larson, beautifully decorated bras with endless extras, an auction of gently used designer handbags, and a raffle that included a beautiful necklace donated by Diamond Dream.

Thank you to Shane Larson, our generous corporate sponsors, amazingly talented bratists, our handbag and raffle donors, and our incredible volunteers.

The creative energy and time that goes into just one of our "bras" is limitless. Thank you to all of our bratists: Great West Engineering, Christine Armstrong Mills, Troy & Kris Brandt of Eagle Electric, Sarah Ludtke-Heagle, Anderson ZurMuehlen, Westmont Flower & Trading Co., Blue Cross Blue Shield, Lori Keck, Erica Johnston and Leslie Amundson – YOU ARE AMAZING!

Our events would not be nearly as magical without the amazing artistic styling of the fabulous crew at EDGE Marketing + Design. We love the logo this year!



Florence Crittenton is proud to be a member of the State and Federal Employee Giving Campaigns!

CFC #: 55815 SECGC #: 3706

Be Part of the Change

Philanthropy means something different to everyone. No matter how you give back to your community and the organizations you hold near to heart, we encourage everyone to Make Philanthropy Your Own. Florence Crittenton is for everyone, let's move forward together!

PLANNED GIVING: TRANSFORM LIVES FOR YEARS TO COME

1 There are many ways to make an impact for young families at Florence Crittenton today and for many years to come. One of the easiest ways to ensure families can receive the care they need for generations, is to make a gift to Florence Crittenton in your will. Making a designation in your will can be very simple and can complement your plans to care for your heirs. These gifts can be directed however you wish, from endowment gifts, to everyday operational funds.

2 Please visit www.florencecrittenton.org for sample language, tax ID's and to learn about other planned gift opportunities, such as deferred gifts, that can benefit you and your family now and support life-changing programs for young families in the future. Note: To qualify for the Montana Endowment Tax Credit, gifts must be made to the FCHS Foundation.

3 You or your financial advisor may contact us at (406) 442-6950 x255 or carriek@florencecrittenton.org or to discuss a planned gift.



Families Need Gift Cards!

Gift cards are a great way that you can assist young families: Target, Walmart, or Visa gift cards are a HUGE help during the holiday season and throughout the year! YOU can help young families purchase clothing, food and household items they need as they recover and learn skills to build healthier, happier, more productive lives for their families.



Host a Giving Tree

Does your office, church or civic group share treats and goodies during the holiday season? How about hosting a giving tree to collect donations, gift cards and other items for young families in need? If you send cards and gifts to clients or colleagues, explain your "gift" this year: "In lieu of Christmas treats, we have donated to Florence Crittenton in the name of all of our colleagues, constituents, and friends who help make our business successful." If you would like more ideas or assistance in making a gift to FCHS on behalf of your clients or colleagues, please contact Brittney Shirley at brittneys@florencecrittenton.org or 406.442.6950 x205.



SAVE THE DATE FOR PINK!
SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 9, 2019



OUR DONORS

All financial gifts made in FY2018 (July 1, 2017 – June 30, 2018)

We sincerely apologize if we missed you in this recognition and do hope you will let us know. Due to limited space, we must limit gifts to \$100 cumulative and above for the year.

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\$25,000 and above

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Montana Healthcare Foundation
OP & WE Edwards Foundation
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Treacy Foundation

\$10,000 – \$24,999

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Mark's Madness
Our Lady of the Valley Parish
St. Peter's Cathedral
Soroptimist International of Whitefish

\$500 – \$999

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Presbyterian Women's Association Wolf Point
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St Johns Lutheran Church of Helena
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St Paul's United Methodist Church
Soroptimist International of Glasgow

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*For more information
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meets action***