



# THE MESSENGER

Your update from Crossroad Child & Family Services

## Supporting kids & families during COVID-19



**Mackinzie Sharpe**  
Gift Planning  
Director

Most kids count down the days until breaks from school. They can't wait to stay up late, sleep in, and not have to worry about homework. Thanks to the COVID-19 pandemic, children across the country are experiencing an unexpected break from school. While most kids celebrate the time spent outside of the classroom, for others, school is their safe place and

the thought of being home induces fear and anxiety.

Indiana has the second highest rate of child abuse in the country. In January there were 17,540 reports of child abuse and neglect. In February, another 15,892. Data from the Department of Child Services shows that most years, there is a large drop off in child abuse reports during the months that school is out, but the number of reports filed spikes when kids go back to school. This is mostly due to the fact that all school employees are required by law to report suspected cases of child abuse.

The COVID-19 outbreak is creating the perfect conditions for child abuse to go unreported. Children and families are spending all of their time together, in their homes, distanced from those around them. Adults in the home may also be facing increased amounts of anxiety as employees across the country lose their jobs and attempt to find a way to support their families.

Crossroad helps the children in our care cope with the aftermath of abuse. In our most intensive treatment program, 45% of clients have experienced

neglect, 48% have experienced physical abuse, and 35% have experienced sexual abuse.

Crossroad also works diligently with families to prevent abuse and neglect. Each year in our community-based services we provide support to over 150 children and their families. The goal is to keep children in homes and families intact. We want to prevent children's mental health conditions from escalating.

The services we provide to our children and families is essential. We must evaluate our methods and ensure we are maintaining an exceptional level of care and safety. The children and families in our care rely on our services. Each adjustment we make as we navigate the rapidly changing landscape of the current situation is an investment in the futures of those we serve. In recent weeks, Crossroad has purchased software that allows us to provide services to clients in need digitally using video conferencing and we are seeking personal protective equipment for our direct-care and health services staff. We are also preparing to celebrate Easter with our kids and staff.

Like you, we are uncertain what the coming days and weeks will bring. With your support, we can continue to adapt and serve those most vulnerable in our community. Thank you for your continued and generous support of Crossroad children and families. We ask for your financial contributions, donations of hand-made or other masks, items from our wish list, and/or your prayers for the safety of children and those working to help them.

Know that our chaplain, kids and staff are also praying for you! Be well! Together we are creating promising futures-whatever it takes!

# We Need Your Help

If you are able, please consider making a contribution to help our residents.

- Face Masks (youth & adult sizes)
- PG/PG-13 DVDs & Blu-rays
- Snack Items (Takis, Cheetos, Oreos, etc.)
- Activity Books
- Crosswords
- Origami Paper
- Sudoku
- Velvet Art
- Boomawackers
- Plastic Buckets (various sizes)
- Cotton Gloves

If you would like to make face masks for Crossroad residents and staff, please contact Liz Bergren, Development Director, at [ebergren@crossroad-fwch.org](mailto:ebergren@crossroad-fwch.org) or 260.484.4153 ext. 2003.



## Our kids are keeping busy during the COVID-19 shutdown!



# Fundraiser Event Postponed

Crossroad will reschedule the annual fundraiser event, "Shaping the Future," for later this year, due to the COVID-19 outbreak. We hope to notify you as soon as possible with the new date.

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## Our Mission

Crossroad creates promising futures for children in difficult circumstances by providing therapy, education, and family support services.

## How We Can Help You

Crossroad is grateful for your ongoing and generous support, and we want you to know we are here for you too! We understand the needs in our local and global community are vast and many are searching for a way to help. While we observe social distancing for the health and safety of everyone, one very powerful way to help is by praying for one another.

Do you have a prayer request that you would like to share with us? Our staff and our children, with the help of our Chaplain, would be honored to pray with you. At this time, we invite you to share your prayer request by emailing, texting, or leaving a phone message for our Chaplain, Pastor Christina Perkins, at [cperkins@crossroad-fwch.org](mailto:cperkins@crossroad-fwch.org) or 260.209.0204. We look forward to hearing from you!



**Pastor Christina Perkins**  
Crossroad Chaplain

## What We're Doing

Crossroad is taking precautionary steps to help prevent the spread of COVID-19. Our hope for these measures is to minimize the risk to our clients, as well as to our staff. We continue to monitor the guidelines laid out by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, the Indiana State Department of Health, and the Indiana Department of Child Services.

This has caused us to adjust some of our daily routines, just as it has for organizations like ours around the world. However, we know that taking these steps will help prevent the spread of COVID-19.

At this time, we are not allowing visitors on our campus, and we have also closed down our on-site school to help keep our residents safe. In each living unit we are making sure that everyone follows good hygiene practices including washing their hands, using hand sanitizer, coughing or sneezing into their arm or a tissue, and other precautions recommended by the CDC.

A positive note is that we are continuing to accept placements for children in need, including in our Emergency Mental Health Shelter. This means we are still able to commit to our mission, and help children to the best of our abilities.

**For more information on how Crossroad is handling the COVID-19 outbreak, visit our website at [www.crossroad-fwch.org](http://www.crossroad-fwch.org).**

# Looking Ahead

April is National Child Abuse Prevention Month. While this is an issue that persists year round for too many children, we want to take this time to shine a light on child abuse and neglect. In 2019, approximately 678,000 children nationwide were found to be victims of child abuse or neglect.

The children we see every day are a reminder that this problem is not going away. Crossroad's most intensive treatment program serves kids who have been through abuse and neglect with 45% of kids have experienced neglect, 48% have experienced physical abuse, and 35% have experience sexual abuse. In an effort to help reduce the instances of abuse and neglect, Crossroad also provides support through community-based services to more than 150 children and families every year.

Promoting the following protective factors is one way you can help:

- Nurturing and attachment
- Knowledge of parenting and child and youth development
- Parental resilience
- Social connections
- Concrete supports for parents
- social and emotional competence of children

Find out more at [www.childwelfare.gov/topics/preventing/preventionmonth/](http://www.childwelfare.gov/topics/preventing/preventionmonth/)



CHANGE SERVICE REQUESTED



Phone: 260.484.4153  
[www.crossroad-fwch.org](http://www.crossroad-fwch.org)

1825 Beacon Street  
Fort Wayne, IN 46805-4750



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