

May 2020



Letter from the President



Hard decisions are being made by many of us in our community in relation to COVID-19. One that Rainbows had to make recently was how to move forward with our staff. After

studying the situation around us and all our options, Rainbows made the decision to continue our current staffing plan, with 65% of our staff telecommuting through July 31. We believe this is the safest, most conservative approach in protecting families and employees.

Staff have adapted well to telecommuting. They are using technology to deliver vital services to children and families. Others are serving families where they need it most – in their homes or in our Early Care and Education Center. We continue to frequently sanitize all areas of our buildings and are doing deep cleanings in frequently used spaces.

The most painful decision we have had to make is in regards to Camp Woodchuck. This is Rainbows' 8-week summer day Camp for more than 100 children and youth. Providers such as Rainbows have received guidance from Kansas Department for Aging and Disability Services (KDADS), the State governing agency for services like those provided through Camp Woodchuck. Their direction is very clear - congregate settings (10 or more participants) must be

closed immediately. This means that Camp Woodchuck cannot be held at our Kids' Cove location this summer.

Many tears were shed on our part as we know families depend on Camp Woodchuck to work, provide structure and social interactions for their children, and/or to have a little free time to take care of other things in their lives.

We all love seeing and interacting with the children served through Camp Woodchuck. While we know this is in the best interest of those we serve, it will leave a big hole in our hearts this Summer.

The good news is that we have landed on a plan to keep summer services functioning in a different and exciting way. Rainbows will be offering these same families a Direct Service Provider to come into their homes with a Camp-like theme. Rainbows staff are putting together some special hands-on and virtual options that will give the children and youth a fun, structured, social experience both outside in nice weather and inside family homes this Summer. We want to help each child have a Camp-like summer experience.

More details for Summer Services are forthcoming. Till next month and more updates, stay safe and take care.

Deb Voth, President

Breaking the Mold

Don Hall was a longtime friend of Rainbows. His relationship with Rainbows began while he was working with KAKE Radio and started the 45 year tradition of the Blarney Breakfast.



Don Hall
1949-2020

His fresh ideas and devotion to Rainbows' children and families always brought new energy and fabulous fun, including 2020 when the event went virtual and he stepped up to help fill the funding gap with special on-air promotions and recording social media videos.

"Don Hall had such a positive influence on our community and I cherished the years I got work alongside him," said Margaret Shook, Chi Epsilon Chapter ESA and Blarney Breakfast organizer. "His focus was about making a difference for children with special needs. I can't fathom the community and the Blarney Breakfast without Don Hall, he was truly a friend to all."

He was always first to tell a Rainbows' family story and invite others to support the mission. We will miss his creativity, generosity and big heart.

Our condolences to Don's family and friends, including the Entercom team.

Essential Services Pivot to Include Video Chats and Virtual Hugs

By Miss Autumn, Classroom 6 Teacher

As a teacher of three-to-five year-olds at Rainbows' Early Care and Education Center: Kids' Point, I try to be prepared for anything. I realize I cannot anticipate every challenge, every opportunity or every individual child's need, but I know to expect the unexpected.

However, I was not prepared for a global pandemic. In March we look forward to Blarney Breakfast, March Madness basketball, spring weather and fun spring break vacations. The only problem, this year March brought COVID-19.

One month prior, Classroom 6 was full of 18 spunky, energetic, little friends learning new things they would need for Kindergarten readiness. We sang, danced, learned our alphabet and discovered through play, but soon the classroom

numbers started to decline. When the Stay-At-Home Order went into effect, the number of children in my classroom was half of the number enrolled.

I understand why, but the classroom wasn't the same and the friends who were still attending didn't understand why their friends weren't coming to school. As teachers, we have children in our care for eight or more hours a day throughout the week. We have a special bond with each and every one of the children. Teachers and classmates were sad because we didn't know when we were going to see our friends again. Some of the students are set to graduate Pre-K, and they have so much more to learn and discover.

Rainbows took precautions right away. They ordered new cleaning supplies, cancelled all current and future field trips, and added additional cleaning to the classrooms.

Then Rainbows took extra precautions by adding hand sanitizers to all the entry doors, posting signs about what to look for, and scheduled deep cleaning twice daily throughout the facility. They limited the amount of people in the building by asking those who can work from home to do so.



Classroom 6 will be keeping in touch with each and every one of our friends. We will continue to learn together, share together and know that we are here for each other.

Donor Profile: Need for Support Continues

It's donors, like Dana, who faithfully support Rainbows' mission that keep the Agency strong all year long.

"Children are always learning. I love watching them as they accomplish a new task or learn a new skill...their eyes just light up with delight!" said Dana. Dana has a passion for children and believes in the importance of early intervention. "I come from a family of educators and I've seen firsthand the impact early intervention can make on a child and family. When I learned about Rainbows, I knew I wanted to support their mission," said Dana.

Rainbows provides early intervention to infants and toddlers with developmental delays and disabilities. Those services include speech therapy, physical therapy,

and other services based on the needs of the child.

In April, when it came time for Dana to make her annual contribution to Rainbows, she didn't hesitate. "Rainbows services have not stopped during the pandemic and Dana's gift will help us continue early intervention services through tele-therapy," said Angela Kessler, Vice President of Development. "We are truly grateful for her continued support."

"I hope others will continue to give because it's a great way to help during this uncertain time," said Dana.



"Rainbows means everything to me and my daughter. Now more than ever. She is my princess."

-Jeffrey, Le'Toyia's Father

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