

~A Special Letter for Special Friends~



Family Support Network  
*Special Services for Special Families*



## *A Story of Strength and Resilience*



Six months ago, Mary moved from New Jersey to California with only her two children in tow. Mary was determined to acclimate quickly to Orange County, and found housing and employment almost immediately. However, a month later, Mary returned home to the news that no parent wants to hear--her children had been taken into custody by the state. Unable to afford childcare, Mary had left

her two children at home for a few hours while she worked her shift at the local restaurant. Determined to get her children back, Mary began her services through the Parent Mentor Services Program at FSN. It was difficult for her to sleep at night, and the stress of learning the public transportation system in California in only a short amount of time was overwhelming. However, she had the perseverance and strength to make positive changes in her life by cooperating with her FSN Parent Mentor, Lorena (pictured far right), and her social worker, Yilin.

As a former dependent herself, Mary was determined to break the cycle and give her children a better life. In a short amount of time, Mary was able to find a job and complete each court-mandated service. She remained positive and communicated regularly and respectfully with her children's caregiver. According to Lorena, her Parent Mentor, "Mary never complained. Even when her feet were raw, she remained persistent in her goals. I had never met someone with so

much grit." By mid-March, Mary was on-track for reunification with her two children. With the approval of both her social worker and Lorena, she was promptly discharged from the Parent Mentor Services Program. Mary has expressed her gratitude to her Parent Mentor, social worker, and each of those who have helped her on this path to reunification. Yilin, the social worker working on the case with Lorena, shared: "It was my first time having a parent mentor be so involved. I have no doubt that this mother would not have been able to make such great strides, in such a short period of time, without Lorena's constant encouragement and support." FSN's Parent Mentor Services Program serves as a pillar of support for parents yearning to reunify with their child.

-Melanie Knorr, FSN Student Intern



## Your "One-Stop Shop" for FSN News

### FSN's 2017 Crib Drive: "100 Cribs in 100 Days"

Save a newborn and donate a crib today! This past week, FSN launched its 2nd annual crib drive to collect cribs for families with newborns in need. The campaign promotes safe sleeping habits and discourages parents from co-sleeping with their child due to the dangers associated with this practice. According to the American Academy of Pediatrics, 3,500 infants die annually in the United States--more than 50% of cases which could have been prevented by the use of a crib. To find out more facts about co-sleeping and how to donate, please [click here](#). The crib drive will continue for 87 more days, and will conclude on July 9th. Promote healthy sleeping habits and act now!

FAMILY SUPPORT NETWORK  
PRESENTS

### 100 Cribs in 100 Days

#### MISSION

Join Family Support Network (FSN) in raising \$5,000 to ensure 100 newborns have a safe place to sleep every night. Your contribution enables FSN to fulfill one of the most fundamental needs in a child's life: a safe place to sleep.



#### WHY IS THIS IMPORTANT?

According to the American Academy of Pediatrics, approximately 3,500 infants die annually in the United States from sleep-related deaths, including sudden infant death syndrome (SIDS), ill-defined deaths, and accidental suffocation and strangulation. Co-sleeping (sleeping in the same bed as an infant) can lead to SIDS or accidental suffocation. These unfortunate deaths can be prevented by placing the child in its own crib, where the child may sleep safely and soundly.

#### HOW DO WE HELP?

As a member of the "Safe-to-Sleep" campaign, FSN provides families in need with cribs through its Emergency Needs Program. A one-time service, the Emergency Needs Program provides items, such as food, diapers, car seats, and strollers, to families in financial hardship. Families are referred to the program by social workers, case managers, nurses, and parent partners. In this way, the Emergency Needs Program ensures that families are concurrently receiving services that promote successful and healthy futures for their child.





## Parent Mentor Attends Family Voices Seminar

This year, with funding provided by CalOptima, FSN sent Parent-to-Parent Outreach Mentor, Mo Byron, and Mary Thompson to Sacramento to attend the FVCA's 2017 Health Summit & Legislative Day. The annual conference brought families, youth, providers, and other stakeholders together to identify and address the health challenges that

affect one of California's most vulnerable population: children and youth with special health care needs. Both women are the mothers of daughters who have significant health care needs and developmental delays. The issues addressed were all pertinent to the current situation in California with the realignment of services for California Children's Services (CCS), potential changes in the Affordable Healthcare Act, and various other issues that would impact their daughters and thousands of other vulnerable children all over the state and country.

In addition to attending FVCA's scheduled workshops, Maura and Mary attended meetings with their local legislators, Senator Patricia Bates and her Chief of Staff, Jeff Montejano, and Assemblyman, William Brough. Both offices were very interested in the stories of their children and the first-hand accounts of how CalOptima provides the medical coverage their children need. Overall, the conference was informative and has inspired our FSN representatives to get more involved in the legislative process.

## FSN Screens 80 Children at Fullerton Office

This past week, FSN hosted its largest developmental screening of the year at its own office in Fullerton. For each child screened, a family received a resource item. On Friday, April 21, FSN will again pass out a single resource item for each child screened. Families that live in the qualifying cities of Fullerton, Placentia, Yorba Linda, Brea, and Buena Park will be eligible to receive either a stroller, car seat, or crib as their resource item. This screening will be held at the Center for Healthy Neighborhoods at Richman Park in Fullerton, and will begin at 8:30 a.m. Supplies are limited!



Note: Screenings are for Orange County residents only. Screenings are FREE to all who attend. No appointments necessary. Please call us at (714) 447-3301 with any questions or [click here](#) for the most recent screening schedule.

## Love Placentia



### Join FSN for Love Placentia 2017!

On Saturday, April 29th, thousands of community members from the city of Placentia will join together to support their neighborhood nonprofits, schools, and sports teams. As a participating nonprofit this year, FSN has provided a re-beautification project for the "Love Placentia" event. 10 volunteers are requested to help paint FSN's downstairs lobby. All volunteers of "Love Placentia" will

receive a free T-shirt, breakfast, lunch, and entertainment! FSN greatly appreciates any help. If you wish to sign up for the FSN project, please [click here](#). Questions? Contact Caroline at [carolinep@familysupportnetworkca.org](mailto:carolinep@familysupportnetworkca.org) or (714) 447-3301 ext. 214. We would love to see you there!

### FSN Calls for Camp TLC Volunteers

Interested in working with children who have special needs and their families? Then, volunteer for Camp TLC 2017, a unique weekend-long camp for children 0-5 who have a significant medical condition or disability! In the past 23 years of the camp's existence, volunteers have found camp to be "fun, exciting, and very hands-on," as well as

"an overall rewarding experience." Responsibilities will include working one-on-one with children who have special needs and their siblings. Volunteers must be of high school age or older, and willing to commit to Saturday, May 20- Sunday, May 21. Meals, equipment, and Camp TLC shirt will be provided. Overnight accommodations may be provided, but are first-come, first-serve. [Click here](#) to access a volunteer application.



## A Thank You to Our Sponsors



Cornerstone United Methodist Church

**Rite Aid Foundation  
Kids Cents Program**

Thank you, Rite Aid Foundation, for your support of \$5,000 towards our Parent-to-Parent Outreach Program! We are grateful to have been a part of this year's Kid Cents Program.

This year, we received a record number of applications from families interested in attending Camp TLC. Thanks to a donation from Cornerstone United Methodist Church, we may now welcome more families to Camp TLC .



*Learning to Lead, Leading to Serve*

**Eastside Christian Schools**

FSN is very grateful for the support of our neighborhood schools, including Eastside Christian Schools in Fullerton. We value your donation and respect of children with special needs!



**Cal South Soccer Association**

Without the support of community partners such as our neighbor, Cal South Soccer, we would not be able to provide for our families in need. Cal South Soccer recently provided over 300 shorts, shirts, jackets, and hoodies for our families.

**Upcoming Events  
Spring 2017**

- Easter Eggstravaganza at La Habra Family Resource Center.....Apr. 15*
- Developmental Screening at Center for Healthy Neighborhoods.....Apr. 21*
- Love Placentia Project at Family Support Network.....Apr. 29*
- Community Resource Fair at Irvine Valley College.....Apr. 29*
- Developmental Screening TBD.....May 5*
- Developmental Screening at La Habra Family Resource Center..... May 12*
- Developmental Screening at Miraloma Family Resource Center.....May 19*
- Camp TLC 2017.....May 19-21*

*Memorial Day- Office Closed.....May 29*

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[Click here to visit our website!](#)

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