

Mockingbird Times



Building a world class foster care system while serving our neighborhood youth

July 2005

Foster Care and Homeless Youth Speak out Across the Nation

Volume V, Issue 7

Visit us online at www.mockingbirdsociety.org or call 206-323-5437 (KIDS)

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Mockingbird's Foster Care Model Set for Replication

MISTY LOU
COOK



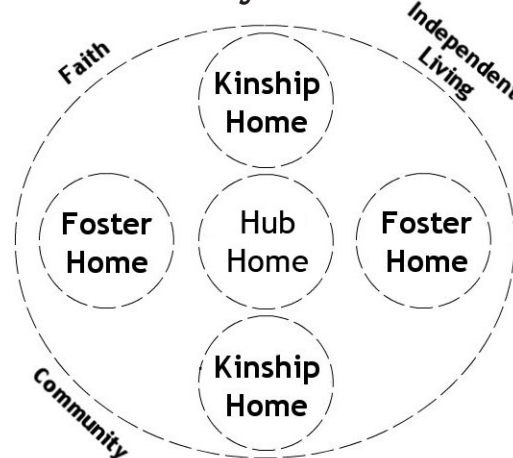
THE MOCKINGBIRD FAMILY MODEL, formerly known as The Mockingbird Foster Family Constellation Project (MFFCP), has recently been blessed with the great fortune of receiving a very significant donation. Thanks to the generosity and commitment of an individual who wishes to remain anonymous, we are replicating the Mockingbird Family Model in 2006 and distributing this new and evolutionary foster care model throughout King County in five different sites. The *Mockingbird Times* is excited about this great opportunity. We are proud of Jim for doing work on behalf of children and families in the foster care system and for having dreamed and implemented this extraordinary foster care model.

The Mockingbird Family Model is based upon the philosophy that "unconditional and community based care" will lead to fewer foster care placements. The main goal of the Mockingbird Family Model is to "implement a foster care service delivery model that is practical, replicable and increases stability for children, youth and caregivers." In other words, the key goals of the Mockingbird Family Model are to decrease the amount of times a child in the foster care system has to be moved and placed with a new family and increase the likelihood of this child staying with a loving, caring, nurturing and healthy family.

The Mockingbird Family Model gathers four to ten foster families in a neighborhood,

with each home serving one to four youth, allowing up to 40 youth to be supported in the same "constellation" or network. In the middle of this neighborhood network is a Hub Home that is operated by licensed foster parents. The Hub Home coordinates special events and activities for the youth and parents so that the constellation can become a strong and interconnected community. The Hub Home also acts as an emotional resource to both foster youth and foster parents in the constellation. One of the

The Mockingbird Family Model



main reasons for having a Hub Home is to reduce the feeling of isolation so commonly felt by foster families by giving them consistent support, access to various resources, planned

and respite care and opportunities for involvement with the rest of the constellation community.

"So, even if your sister Shaunalee doesn't live with your foster family, if she lives in the Constellation Project, she does live down the street or next door to you."

Every effort is made to place siblings with or near each other and keep families together through the Mockingbird Family Model. Through the Constellation Network,

a child can still be connected with their siblings, cousins and extended family even if they don't share the same household! So, even if your sister Shaunalee doesn't live with your foster family, if she lives in the Constellation Project, she does live down the street or next door to you. That is what the Constellation Project is all about: building community and strong families. The Mockingbird Family Model does its best to connect foster children with families that are culturally relevant and support the people who support these children. The philosophy of the Mockingbird Family Model is that foster youth who grow up around siblings or extended family are far more likely to feel safe, secure and happy about their placements. These positive feelings allow the individuals to survive and thrive in a lively and connected community.

The outcomes of the Mockingbird Family Models have spoken for themselves, and they have spoken loud and proud. An evaluation of the Mockingbird Family Models was conducted by the Northwest Children's Institute of the University of Washington and had excellent results! Results came out on December 31, 2004, stating that the project was a complete success! The Children's Institute, with its

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Individual Development Accounts for Foster Youth

COURTNEY
KONIETZKO



THE INDIVIDUAL DEVELOPMENT ACCOUNT (IDA) PROGRAM is a matching funds program through United Way, similar to a savings account. The difference is the state matches the funds put in by the individual for goals like owning a home, furthering your education, and starting a business. An individual with low-income has a greater chance of reaching their goals faster with this program.

The IDA program is open to all people with low-income regardless of age but the program was going to end in July and there would be no more matching funds. Fortunately, there has been legislation introduced to keep this important program alive.

House bill (HB) 1408 was introduced which means that the IDA program is still going to receive funds and will be able to help people with low-income reach their goals. Also there is a new piece written into HB 1408 which focuses on foster youth and needs specific to

this population. According to HB 1408 "foster youth" means a person who is fifteen years of age, but not more than twenty-three years of age, who was a dependent of the Department of Social and Health Services for at least twenty-four months after attaining thirteen years of age.

The IDA account is an especially important tool for foster youth who do not qualify for ETV or Chaffee dollars. The foster youth have unmet needs like the money needed for the move in fee on their first apartment and first month's rent. IDA money can cover this need. This is not true for adult IDA accounts. There are differences between how IDA funds can be used for adults and what they can cover for foster youth. For adults money can be used for furthering education, starting a business, and/or owning a home. For foster youth money can be used for these things, moving into your first apartment, warding off an eviction, healthcare, and pre-assets like a computer or a vehicle. Pre-assets are things that make accomplishing assets possible. An example of this would be: a person needs to make more money in order to become a home owner, but in order to take a higher paying job for the house payment, they need reliable transportation instead of 4 hours on the bus each day. Healthcare is an especially important

piece because it is the foundation that must be in place before a person can achieve other things with their life. Often Medicaid coverage is lost as foster youth age out of the system and health care options are limited or non-existent. HB 1408 will hopefully help foster youth become healthy so they can accomplish goals.

Some important things to know about IDA accounts for foster youth:

- There is no income cap on what foster youth can make to be eligible for the IDA dollars; there is an income cap for adults.
- A person with an IDA account can make a partial withdrawal for an allowable use but United Way has to approve it first which can take up to 6 months; there is a small clause where foster youth can pull the money out for emergencies like a medical situation or eviction.
- People can work towards accomplishing their assets if their pre-assets are met.
- One requirement of getting an IDA is going through a financial education class – the Fremont Public Association offers an excellent one. Their number is (206) 694-6864.

In order for the IDA account program to be a success, it is important for agencies who serve foster youth to work together.

Letter from the Editor

Mockingbird Society is proud to announce that a private philanthropist has made a substantial donation to facilitate the replication of the Mockingbird Family Model (MFM) (formally the Mockingbird Foster Family Constellation Project). While we continue to operate the original model in partnership with **UJIMA Community Services** we will expand into five new sites within the Seattle/King County area. The **University of Washington's Northwest Institute for Children and Families** will continue to conduct the evaluation of the project. The plan is to replicate the project with a combination of private child placing agencies that provide foster care services as well as within Washington's public child welfare system. The Mockingbird Family Model is based in the philosophy of unconditional and community based care, normalization and providing caregivers with the support they need in order to give the best care to the children and youth in their homes. Frequently, the social services industry follows the example of the medical field in terms of identifying a problem or disease and then creating a theory to cure that particular disease. When creating the MFM I tried to avoid the pathology based approach and instead focused on the natural systems that human beings have relied on over the course of time. The most obvious is the family system and in particular the extended family system. The extended

family model is one that is familiar to many racial, ethnic and religious cultures including working class families who have survived and thrived over time because of the inherent strengths, resources and commitment contained within the family. The first 18 months of the UJIMA model continue to demonstrate excellent results, including stabilizing and reducing the number of "placements" (homes) that children experience, allowing siblings to remain together and providing safe and accessible respite. I'd like to also offer a very special "thank you" to the family who has made this remarkable opportunity possible through their generous support. I also want to give a special "thank you" to **Misty Cook** for writing such a wonderful article on the MFM (see page 1). With your support the Mockingbird Society continues to strive toward "building a world class foster care system while serving our neighborhood youth." Finally, a heartfelt "thank you and good-bye" to **Franisa Johnson** and **Jasmine Caldwell**. They did an excellent job as Youth Reporters and we all wish them well and remind them to come and visit.

 Jim Theofelis
jim@mockingbirdsociety.org

Passages 2005 Celebrates New Beginnings

JAMICA HENDERSON



JUNE 2, 2005 WAS A DAY OF CELEBRATION for teens who aged out of the foster care system. The Passages 2005 celebration was sponsored by DSHS, Casey Family Programs, Treehouse, the YMCA, and Mockingbird Society. It was held at the 2100 Building from 4:00 - 6:00 PM. On this day the teens who are aging out of the system were able to attend a resource fair, get photos taken with friends and families, enjoy a big barbecue dinner, and receive household items for their next step in life.



Jamica Henderson and volunteer Sam Ballmer

I, Jamica Henderson, was a part of this event. It really opened my eyes to show me that I am about to be an adult. At the event we got to pick things like dishes, pots and pans, towels, pillows, accessories for the house and more from the Treehouse Warehouse. It's more than

enough to start off with. Once you finish there all you'll need is a television, mattress and what ever else you want to get. When you're starting out, it's hard when you have to get everything on your own. So this event is a big help to those who are aging out.

Before this day came, our case workers informed us to go to Amazon.com's website and make a wish list of up to \$150.00. We had to rate everything on our list according to how

badly we wanted it. So I chose things like a clothes hamper, a clothes rack to hang things up, a mini DVD player, another piece to put clothes in, and a CD player. Out of all those things, I got both of the clothing products and

the mini DVD player. I was excited and in shock again because this is it. I am about to be out on my own. I still remember when I was just starting kindergarten now I am about to move out on my own. This is scary but then again exciting. I am excited that this time has arrived now I am about to go to college and start my career in nursing.

Letter to the Editor

Dear Editor,

My name is Zachary Prillhart. Darius Reynolds, a *Mockingbird Times* reporter/writer, wrote an article on me starting an open gym in the U-District. I wanted to say that since his article was published, KING 5 News read the story and decided to cover the story on TV news. The TV news segment will air on KING 5 News sometime within the next week at 5:45pm.

The story will also air on KONG TV and UPN.

I want to thank Mockingbird Times for writing and publishing my story. Also, let me say that people do read your paper and keep up the good work.

Sincerely,
Zachary Prillhart

Mockingbird Society: The Story Behind the Name

The 1962 American classic *To Kill A Mockingbird* by Harper Lee is the inspiration for our name, Mockingbird Society. Atticus, the widowed father of Jem and Scout, joins Miss Maudie in teaching his kids that it's a sin to kill a mockingbird because "...Mockingbirds don't do one thing but make music for us to enjoy. They don't do one thing but sing

their hearts out for us." What if we created an organization, a community, indeed a world in which our most vulnerable children and youth were protected and valued with the same commitment that Atticus had for mockingbirds? Join the Mockingbird Society today and help us give young people a safe place to nest and sing.

THANK YOU'S

Virginia R. Blayney, Kathryn Brooks, Sherri Bloomer, Frances DeMarco, Richard Beishline and Anne Dodd Beishline, Evelyn Allen, Senator Pat Thibaudeau, Margaret-Ann & Mark LeRoy, Washington Women's Foundation, St. Jude Parish, Microsoft Matching Gifts, Northwest Network for Youth, Goldman Sachs Philanthropy Fund, NPower Seattle & Verizon Wireless Scholarships, NPower Seattle & the Alice C. Tyler Perpetual Trust, 2100 Building Management, Barry Poirrier & Ticon Inc., Sam Ballmer, All Our Open House Attendees, Sound Youth Americorps, Leah Kosik, Sylvia Black, Dyana Eckstein & Treehouse, Ducky's Office Furniture, Stephanie Garlich & Jeff Ried

ABOUT US: The Mockingbird Society is a private non-profit organization dedicated to building a world class foster care system and improving the other systems that serve children and adolescents involved in homelessness and foster care. The *Mockingbird Times* is a monthly newspaper written and produced by youth who have experience in foster care and/or homelessness. All youth employees of Mockingbird Society are paid between \$7.50 and \$8.50 an hour. Additionally, youth from across the country submit articles, art work, poetry and are compensated up to \$25 per published piece. The *Mockingbird Times* has a monthly circulation of 40,000 copies being distributed across Washington State and the U.S.A, through a private distribution list and as an insert in *Real Change*, a Seattle-based community newspaper. Youth involvement is the key to the philosophy, values, and success of The Mockingbird Society and, as such, youth are involved in all aspects of organizational development and decision-making. Donations to The Mockingbird Society may be tax-deductible and are greatly appreciated. No part of the *Mockingbird Times* may be reproduced without the written permission of The Mockingbird Society. All contents copyright 2005 The Mockingbird Society.

A Mockingbird Inside Your Mailbox

Make a difference in the lives of our most vulnerable youth and support the Mockingbird Society!

Donations may be tax deductible and all donors receive the *Mockingbird Times*. Enclosed, please find my check made payable to Mockingbird Society in the amount of: \$ _____

Suggested Donations:

\$ 1,000+..... Protector \$500-999.....Caretaker \$250-500.....Organizations
\$50+.....Supporter \$25.....Foster Parent

- Please bill me for the amount indicated.
- My employer will match my gift; enclosed is my matching gift form.
- I am interested in receiving information on the advantages of planned giving.

NAME _____ PHONE _____
ADDRESS _____ EMAIL _____
CITY _____ STATE _____ ZIP _____

Please do not include my name on published donor lists.

Please fill out and mail this form with a check or money order payable to: The Mockingbird Society, 2100 24th Ave South Suite 240, Seattle WA 98144

MEET OUR STAFF

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Billie Holiday's Life Still Inspires Today

FRANISA
JOHNSON



BILLIE HOLIDAY MADE IT FAR AND HAD A WONDERFUL LIFE. Born 1915 in Baltimore, Maryland, she was left with her grandparents and older cousin while her mom moved to New York City. Her dad played the banjo and guitar. He left his family to play in a jazz band.

Billie was abused and neglected by her relatives. Other supportive people around her helped her get a job running errands and cleaning apartments around her neighborhood. Billie Holiday traveled to New York to live with her mom, but her mom had other plans. Billie was moved, by her mother, to a room in an apartment house where she was left to take care of herself. Billie Holiday got into trouble with the law and spent a few months in Jail. When she got out, she didn't have any money so she started singing in clubs to earn money to survive. When she was fifteen, customers wanted her to sing the same songs over and over. To keep it interesting, she changed her voice and timing slightly while repeating the same lyrics.

She learned how to use her voice like a instrument by listening to Louis Armstrong and Bessie Smith. Billie tried to be a dancer in a nightclub but she got turned down. When she was leaving from auditions one day, she was overheard singing a blues song by the owner. He then hired her to sing in the nightclub. That was a big step for her because a lot of musicians wanted to perform in Harlem's hot jazz scene.

Billie Holiday got a record deal with Vocalion Records. In 1935 she began making music with Teddy Wilson, a really talented jazz singer, for six years.

After getting familiar with the industry, Billie Holiday went on tours with The Count Basie orchestra for a year. In 1938 she went on the road with Artie Shaw's all-white band. While she was on the road in the south, Billie Holiday would have to stay on the bus while the band went into the "whites only" restaurants. Those days were hard for Billie Holiday so she decided to begin a solo career.

Billie made some nice music despite her personal struggles. By her 30's, she suffered from depression and mood swings. She was also addicted to drugs and alcohol. Billie tried to recover from her addiction, and had a comeback period during the 1950s. She performed at

Carnegie Hall and toured in Europe. Billie made a lot of great music and records in her time, despite her physical and emotional problems. She never overcame her drug addiction. Her health began to fail and Billie Holiday died when she was 45 years old.

Billie Holiday went through a lot before she made it big and still went through a lot after. Those who want to be successful should never give up. There is always going to be

something or someone trying to hold you back. We all should always walk **with** the positive and walk **past** the negative. Although I have not gone through what Billie Holiday did, there are a lot of people who had to go through a lot to get to where they are now. In this world, you can not always take the easy road.

While there are some fortunate people who get ahead in life, for others the road is rougher and sometimes even closed. For all of you, stay on the right track and "keep-on keeping-on". Don't let anyone tell you what you will or won't be in life, because you have your own life to live.

Like Billie said, "If you copy, it means you're working without any real feeling. No two people on earth are alike, and it's got to be that way in music or it isn't music."



Billie Holiday

Quote of the Month:

It takes a lot of courage to release the familiar and seemingly secure, to embrace the new. But there is no real security in the adventurous and exciting, for in movement there is life, and in change there is power.

—ALAN COHEN

Mockingbird Graduates Fly High

JAMICA HENDERSON

Well, Well, I finally made it! It feels so good to have accomplished one big step in my life. My high school years were the best years ever. I would not replace them for anything. In the beginning of my high school experience, I watched the higher classmen to prepare me for my upcoming years. The class that I liked the most was the class of 2003. They were so organized and had very good leadership skills. By my senior year, I became that student that younger classmen looked up to. My senior year, I was elected to be apart of the student body as ASB Secretary. That was a big part to play. I loved it. We got to create activities for the whole school to enjoy. This was our last year at the old school on Beacon Hill so we wanted to make the best of it. All the staff enjoyed our school spirit. The class of '05 went out with a memory that no other could. I'll miss all the staff and young ones who looked up to me. I'll see them in the bigger world. Hey you never know, I may be their nurse in the future.

Calling all Youth Writers & Artists

We are looking for articles, poetry, artwork and photography from our young readers who have experience in the foster care system and/or homelessness. If you want to be published in the Times, contact us at 206-323-5437 or via email at newspaper@mockingbirdsociety.org. For more info and to check us out, go to www.mockingbirdsociety.org.

JASMINE CALDWELL

I've been at Rainer Beach High School for four years and have had such a great time. I've grown from a freshman skipping class and not caring about anything to a young woman ready for the world. Ever since I was a freshman, I had so many dreams of becoming so many things. As I have gotten older, I have come to the conclusion that I want to be a professional chef and own a restaurant before I reach age 35. I will always remember Rainier Beach for the teachers who pushed me and told me, "you can do it and never let anyone tell you you can't." I remember when I first walked into "the Beach." I was scared and shy, but once I got to know everyone I enjoyed my time there. Now don't get me wrong, there were a couple of times that I just wanted to quit because things were hard and I was having problems with other students. I got through it because I always had someone there to tell me that everything was going to be okay and that I have too much going for myself just to give it all away behind some "drama."

Twelve years of schooling has been difficult because I have faced so much in my lifetime. I have chosen so many wrong roads to go down, such as following the wrong crowd and skipping school just to

fit in, but I seem to make it through every trial I go through.

I would like to give an honor to God for giving me the chance to see this very special day, because without him there would be no me. I would also like thank my mom for being the woman that she is because she has put up with so much of my mess and has never left my side. I am so grateful for her and I would never want to trade her for anyone else because she's the best mom a girl like me can have. **I LOVE YOU** and thanks for being there. To my best friends, Sharday Ross and Franisa Johnson, thank you guys for being there for me when I needed you the most. You guys are great! When I become famous I will never forget you because you stuck by my side and never left it. I love you. I would also like to give thanks to my Pastor and First Lady. Thank You both for all the help you have given me and my family **I LOVE YOU**. Please keep being the wonderful people that you are.

I would like to give a shout out to my all my homies who keep it real on a daily basis: Jamica Henderson, Ashley Grant, Larishica Asher, Lonell "G Baby" Price, Brian Ransom, and to anyone I forgot I'm sorry but for those I didn't I won't forget you guys. Thanks for being you and don't never change. So I'm going to leave now but I'm not going to say goodbye, I'm going to say see you later.

ASHLEY GRANT

In reflection of my high school years I can honestly say that I left having learned many life skills. The most important thing I learned was that you only grow up to do one thing and that is to take care of yourself. You come in high school being just a baby, 14 years old, and leave being either a young man or a young lady. How much you go through during the four years you are in high school has a lot to do with your maturity level once you are complete with that portion of your life. For me it all worked out. I came into high school competing with the best, but slowly but surely that faded. I ended up scuffling just to graduate. But the good thing is I made it, YEAH!!! I had lot of trials and tribulations. Most of them came in the last semester of my senior year. My only advice to give to people that will be in the same shoes that I was in is to stay on top of your game. I'm out, but before I go I would like to give my shot-outs to a few people who are the ones who helped me when I most needed the extra push and encouragement. Those people are my family first and foremost, my best friends, my mentor, my dean of students at my school along with the principle and assistant principal, my counselors, and everyone else who helped me along the way. I thank you all for the bottom of my heart and I love you all. Ashley The Graduate, c/o 2005!

Farewell Mockingbird

JASMINE
CALDWELL



I'VE BEEN AT MOCKINGBIRD FOR TWO MONTHS and have had a wonderful time. Meeting new people was the hardest part of coming to Mockingbird because I'm shy when it comes to meeting new people. Since my time at Mockingbird, I've learned how to express myself without getting angry and how to keep a positive attitude around my boss and employees. Coming to Mockingbird has had a huge impact on my life and it's taught me so much. I am thankful to be a part of something positive that is so inspiring to children and adults who have a rough time living the life they want. I love the fact that Mockingbird is around because it gives teenagers something to do instead of being out in the streets. Here, we have a place to express ourselves when we're going through things that can be hard to explain.

My experience here has been great and fun because I got to meet new people and make new friends. I'm honestly glad that I had the chance to participate in Mockingbird and will always remember all the great things they've done for me and all the great times I had. I appreciate all of you, thanks.

All incoming Letters to the Editor should be addressed to Mockingbird Editorial Staff and will be opened by Editorial Staff. All incoming correspondence to reporting staff under 18 years of age will be opened first by Mockingbird Editorial Staff.

Runaway's Reality

RAQUEL GRANATH

RUNNING AWAY. IT'S A COMMON PROBLEM amongst troubled youth in twenty-first century America. Some people underestimate the true experience of running away. Whether you are literally on the street or staying in various places, it is extremely stressful wondering where you are going to put your head down at night. I speak from personal experience as I'm quite familiar with the anxieties of hunger and loneliness. The streets, although very appealing to some, are not friendly nor will they take care of you in your times of need.

So why do so many young kids flock to the "hoods" and the "blocks" in our society? "I think kids run away because something is wrong at home. If everything was right at home then why would they need to (leave)?" says Ashley, a Cleveland High School graduate. This is somewhat true, according to National Runaway Switchboard, 36% of the calls they receive from runaways claim that their family dynamics are unsatisfactory. Other reasons include peers, school, drugs, neglect, sexual assault, physical/verbal abuse, and economics.¹ Most kids only stay on the streets for a few days but some survive up to six months or more. So what do these kids do to make a living? Disturbingly 3% sell drugs or use sex as a means to fund themselves.¹

I was on the run for around two months before I willingly came into custody so that I could be placed with my mother. I was tired of living in group homes and frustrated because it seemed like those were the only options my social worker would offer me. I left the group home suddenly, totally fed up with their rules and regulations. Consequently, I didn't have any necessary food or hygiene items that one would generally need. It was a very difficult time for me. I stayed with family and friends who luckily were

very supportive of me and helped me attain basic provisions. I did have periods of time in which I was lacking but I still consider myself to be more blessed than most. I ran into problems while on the run, but because I had a warrant myself I couldn't notify the police even if I had wanted to. The most detrimental part was the fact that the warrant also prevented me from attending school. In the end, I proved my point and was placed with my mom, although I have come to realize it isn't the most ideal situation now that I'm in the middle of it. In my case, I got what I thought I wanted. Given the opportunity to go back to the beginning and recreate the situation I think I would have used a different method to get my way.

Since returning from the streets, I've started the long hard process of starting over with a new life. I'm proud to say that I've been accepted with full scholarships to two schools of my choice: Lakeside, and Seattle Academy of Arts and Sciences. I declined Lakeside's tempting offer and have decided to attend SAAS for my high school career. In addition I have discovered Mockingbird Society which has provided me with the respite I need from my challenging life. I am so thankful for the blessings that have been bestowed on me and I hope that they continue into the future.

Being in the system has taken a toll on my life. Despite the hard times I've endured, I always try to maintain a positive outlook on life. Like Tupac Shakur said in his song *Baby Don't Cry* "you got to find a way to survive because they win when your soul dies." You never know who may enter your atmosphere in attempts to help your situation. Even though sometimes it feels like the end to the hard times will never come and the depression is just too much to handle, you can make it through the rain.

If you would like more information on running away visit <http://www.scn.org/crisis/youth.html> for a list of resources in the Seattle area or call 1800-RUNAWAY for the National Runaway Switchboard.

¹ From National Runaway Switchboard <http://www.nrcrisisline.org/2004stat.asp>

Summer Events in Seattle

COURTNEY KONIETZKO

Summer Sack Lunch Program – free lunches for youth age 18 and under. Lunch is served between 12 and 1 at various sites across Seattle. For more info call (206) 386-1360 or go to <http://www.cityofseattle.net/parks/events/summerncitykids.htm>

Punk Rock Yoga – Location: The Vera Project located in Belltown at 1916 4th Ave. Every Tuesday night from 6:30 to 8pm. Bring your own towel or mat or you can rent one for a buck. Suggested donation is \$5. For more info go to <http://www.punkrockyoga.com/>

Free African Music Night – Location: HIDMO Eritrean Restaurant located at 2000 S. Jackson St. Every Sunday from 8 to 10pm. Non-smoking venue, for more info go to <http://www.seattle.craigslist.org/eve/80692333.html>

Free Out to Lunch Series Concerts – kicks of July 1st! Takes place at various parks and plazas in downtown Seattle. All concerts are from noon to 1:30pm.

For more info go to <http://www.downtownseattle.com/content/special/OTL/schedule.cfm>

Fremont Outdoor Cinema – located at North 35th and Phinney Ave. N. Free movies projected on a giant wall. Every Saturday at dusk. For more info go to <http://www.fremontoutdoormovies.com>

Seattle Center Outdoor Cinema – Free films on the lawn of the Mural Amphitheatre, 45-foot screen. All movies start at dusk. For more info go to http://www.seattlecenter.com/events/festivals/detail.asp?EV_EventNum=41

Seattle Peace Concerts – free but people are encouraged to bring a donation of a non-perishable food item for Northwest Harvest food bank. Family events, no alcohol allowed. All concerts take place Sundays from 12-6pm. For more info go to <http://www.seapeace.org/events/html/>

2005 Bite of Seattle – Location: Seattle Center, free. July 22, 23, and 24th. 3 days Friday and Saturday 11am to 9pm Sunday 11am to 8pm. For more info go to <http://www.biteofseattle.com/home/default.aspx>

10th Annual Seattle Music Fest at Alki Beach - free and all ages. August 12,13, and 14th. Friday 4-10pm Saturday and Sunday 11am to 10pm. Location: Alki Beach in West Seattle. Suggested donation \$5.

Don't forget Seafair celebrations this month! Go to www.seafair.com/ for more details.

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excellent history and record of conducting research and evaluations of projects regarding children in the foster care system, has responded with much enthusiasm to the Mockingbird Family Model. The Northwest Children's Institute (NWCII) reported that, due to the Mockingbird Family Models, "Siblings did remain together in placements", "parents reported feeling supported in their roles as foster parents and caregivers were very satisfied with the availability and quality of respite care" and "Parents of the children who received tutoring reported that the children showed improved attention in class and increased

concentration that resulted in improved grades in the majority of classes."

More importantly, the results of having a constellation, or community of foster parents and children, have resulted in a reduction of foster care placements, helped ensure cultural relevancy and increased educational stability and academic performance. It makes sense, when you think about it; you need a strong family and community in order to grow into a strong and independent individual. I guess the old saying is true then, it really does take a village to raise a child. The revised version for today's world is that it takes a connected community to raise a foster child and make it feel like a genuine home.

CREATIVE CORNER

Calling out the Ages

COURTNEY KONIETZKO

Looking for something that isn't there
Calling a silent language out
A name that is known from the ages
But fails to pronounce itself on today's tongue

I know you are there
I know I will find you
In the right time
When I make my time

Cold metal concrete and piss stained alleyways
Back reflecting windows that see nothing
Blank stares of eyes that are afraid to see
Look back at me
Look once, twice, did you see what you wanted to see?

I know you are there
I know I will find you
In the right time
When I make my time

Underneath the chemical
In the flesh and blood and soul
Lies something bigger than the sum of its parts
Something that thrives on beauty not hatred

I know you are there
I know I will find you
In the right time
When I make my time

I hear you in my dreams
I feel you threaten to burst through the confines of society
I hear you in the rhythms of my successes and the downfalls of my delusions
I know you watch over me in sleep and consciousness

I will find you until the day where you keep pace with my heart and run parallel in my head

The day I know you are me
I will be free.

We Are Not Druggies

SARAH MCCURRY

Our peers look at us
like we're some kind of disease.
Just cause we're in foster care
does not mean we're messed up.
You think we're people
who do drugs or drink.
Just cause our parents do
doesn't mean we do.
Most of us don't want anything to do with that crap.
Next time you want to talk crap about foster kids
think again



Message to the Youth

RAQUEL GRANATH

- I can't leave this earth until I've left my legacy
- But what will it be? Posted on the block drinking Hennessy?
- Naw I can outdo that
- A doctor or lawyer surpasses a hood rat
- These cats walk around like they're obsessed with gats
- Rap about how they're strapped with two macks
- Bout to blow you off the map
- Cut the crap where is being a gangsta gonna take ya?
- I'm tired of hearing "yo I'll pop and shank ya"
- These people here are our kids' role models
- Teaching 'em how to rob, steal, and load up them hollows
- Is this the example that we want children to follow?
- Little girls thinking it's cute to wear short skirts and boots
- Little boys thinking it's cool to smoke weed and skip school
- We need to watch what the media feeds our young people
- Cuz they are our future and they should fly like eagles
- Tell our youngsters they can have the world and all its luxuries
- You don't have to lower yourself to be who you wanna be
- Any dude that won't respect ain't worth it baby
- You don't have to give it up for him to love you lil lady
- Guys you don't have to pay her way
- If she likes you for who you are through thick and thin she'll stay
- Just take this as a lesson learned
- And you'll get what you deserve
- You deserve the world