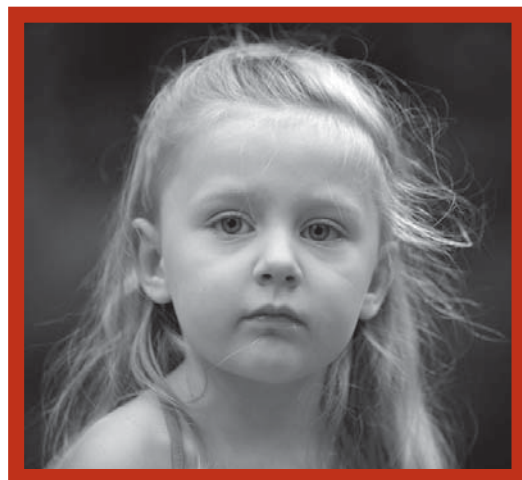




FIVE YEAR REPORT
TO OUR COMMUNITY

2003 — 2008



Even on the best of days, being a parent is a challenge. When things go wrong, it is even harder. During a crisis, the constant needs of caring for children can place extreme stress on a family.

Keystone Crisis Nursery can help.

A program of:



Uniting the Community to ensure all children grow to their full potential.

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Keystone Crisis Nursery's goal is to help parents keep children safe and healthy in times of family crisis.

FIVE YEAR REPORT



A Message from Child Care Action Council Executive Director

As a single parent myself for several years I know parenting can be overwhelming. In a time of crisis, an empathetic voice at the other end of the phone and a day of free child care can open a door for families and keep their children safe.

Keystone Crisis Nursery, a program of the Child Care Action Council, enables parents to take the time they need to organize their thoughts, create a plan and, with the help of our resource specialist, arrange services to resolve a crisis. Children are most often very happy to be welcomed into an environment designed just for them. Toys and friends, a nutritious lunch, a nap and a caring adult mean a lot to a child living with stressed parents.

Keystone Crisis Nursery has been a successful program and a critical resource for parents in need over the last five years. By sustaining our program and conducting outreach to families in need, Keystone will continue to be an essential component for strengthening families and reducing child abuse and neglect in Thurston, Mason & Lewis Counties.

Child Care Action Council is grateful to the community partners who make Keystone Crisis Nursery possible and especially to Judi Hoefling & Margie Reeves for their vision and persistence.

Annie Cubberly, Executive Director

We Believe:

- All parents want their children to have safe and loving care.
- Asking for help is a sign of strength.
- Any parent may face a crisis and desperately need a break from the responsibilities of caring for young children.
- When no friends or family are available to help, Keystone is key to keeping children safe.
- Service should be available without regard to family income.

Funding for this report was generously provided by the Thurston Community Network

Keystone Crisis Nursery Overview

Why are Crisis Nursery Services Needed?

According to Washington State Department of Social and Health Services, in Thurston County during 2007 there were 928 Child Protective Service referrals for child abuse and neglect, impacting 1,275 children. Two of every five children involved were age five or younger—the most vulnerable, most often unseen and under reported victims. This is precisely the group Keystone Crisis Nursery is reaching out to help.

Keystone's services reach low-income families including teen parents, military parents, domestic violence victims, homeless families and parents with mental illness. The majority of families requesting service experience difficulties in multiple areas increasing the risk to children.

In the past fiscal year Keystone served 291 children. Those children were safe while in our care and their parents were able to access services to resolve their crises. Eight families attended the annual forum in June 2007 and stated that, without the support of Keystone, it is likely they would have neglected or abused their children out of frustration or as a result of their circumstances. All families who returned our survey said they were helped significantly by their contact with Keystone and would refer others.

Without a crisis nursery operating in Thurston County, parents and caretakers lack a potentially life-saving resource enabling them to care for and protect their children in times of crisis or stress.

Research on Protective Factors Preventing Child Abuse & Neglect

The Center for the Study of Social Policy spent two years investigating those factors that keep children safe. They reviewed research in the field of child abuse and neglect and family resiliency, conducted a national study of twenty-one exemplary early childhood programs and interviewed hundreds of experts, researchers, practitioners and parents. They linked research about the prevention of child abuse and neglect with early childhood education. The in-depth investigation led to a breakthrough: we now know that the way to prevent child abuse and neglect is to strengthen families, then support them so they can keep themselves strong. According to the Center for Social Policy:

“Building early childhood programs that reach out to parents may be the best child abuse prevention strategy.”

Keystone puts the protective factors into practice. Parental resilience is enhanced when parents seek help in times of need. Parents and children have opportunities to develop supportive relationships in child care, teachers are able to share their child development knowledge and, most significantly, Keystone provides concrete support when families are in crisis. In addition, Keystone child care sites are trained to foster the social emotional competence of children and to promote healthy parent/child relationships.



Protective Factors:

- Enhance Parental Resilience
- Develop Social Connections
- Build Knowledge of Parenting and Child Development
- Offer Concrete Support in Times of Need
- Foster Social and Emotional Competence of Children
- Promote Healthy Parent/Child Relationships

How Keystone Crisis Nursery Works

Every person’s ability to deal with stress and change varies, as do the circumstances of daily life. A crisis may be triggered by:

- Medical problems
- Car accidents
- Family conflict or violence
- Housing problems
- Unemployment
- Mental illness
- Exhaustion
- Life changes, such as a new job or a new baby

Keystone Crisis Nursery connects parents with temporary, short-term child care during a crisis that is making it difficult for them to care for their children. Keystone is a service rather than a place. Child Care Action Council referral specialists and child care providers work as a team with parents to provide a safe place for children. Keystone child care providers are licensed and must be trained to work with children experiencing a family crisis.

The referral specialists help parents decide if Keystone is right for their family and situation. If so, the specialists connect parents with child care providers and helps parents access other available resources. Each day children are in care, the referral specialists and parents talk to make sure the crisis is being resolved. Children receiving care join children of similar ages, while caregivers make every effort to meet the children’s needs—whether they need a nap, a snack, outside play time or a hug.



Keystone Crisis Nursery Success Stories

Stories from Families Served by Keystone Crisis Nursery

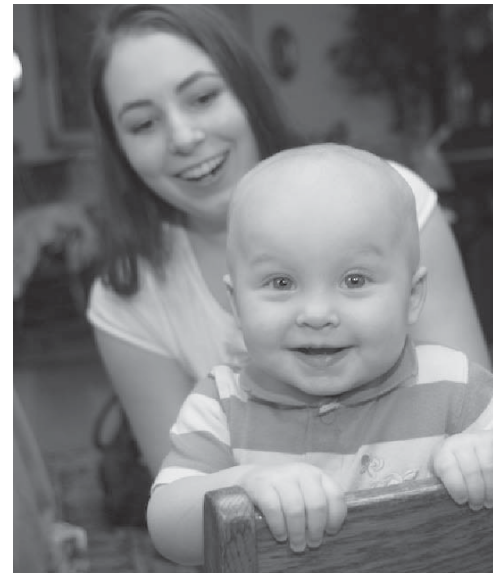
One mom used Keystone in order to attend psychotherapy appointments for treatment of a chronic mental illness. Her experience with Keystone helped develop trust in terms of seeking care for her daughter. The daughter is now enrolled in a permanent preschool program which she loves.

One father received primary custody of his three daughters, ages 4, 7, and 11. He was unemployed, facing eviction and bankruptcy, and felt desperate. He used Keystone services while he applied for several jobs, accessed information about housing options, and made plans for parenting his three daughters. He is now employed and in stable housing.

Stories from Keystone Crisis Nursery Providers

Providers say that the majority of children are relieved to be away from the family stress and delighted to be in a place with other children, in an environment with food, toys and equipment set up just for them. They run into the room anxious to play.

Karen Theilbar, from St. Mike’s Tikes Child Care, says, “It is always a joyful occasion to see the families reunite after a day of care refreshed and glad to see each other. Both the parents and the children grow through their participation in Keystone’s Community Cafes and by accessing other parent resources.”



Keystone Crisis Nursery Data 2003 – 2008

Total Number of Admissions2,001

Percentage of Admissions by Reason

Death in the Family	3%
Marital / Relationship Discord	21%
Natural Disaster/ Housing	11%
Labor & Delivery	9%
Military.....	3%
Mental Health Counseling	14%
Parental Incarceration	3%
Other.....	36%

Percentage of Admissions by Referring Agency

CCAC Resource & Referral	27%
Head Start ECEAP.....	7%
Counseling.....	2%
Support Groups.....	5%
Village Vans.....	1%
Community Agencies	11%
Other / 211	47%

Percentage of Admissions by County Served

Thurston	90%
Mason.....	8%
Lewis.....	2%

Gender of Children

Male.....	52%
Female	48%

Gender of Guardians

Male.....	5%
Female	95%

Admissions by Racial / Ethnic Background

American Indian	4%
Black / African American	4%
Asian	2%
Hawaiian / Pacific Islander	1%
Spanish / Hispanic / Latino....	8%
Caucasian	75%
Multiracial	6%

Keystone: A History of Community Collaboration

Primary Referring Agencies

- DSHS Community Service Offices and Children's Administration
- Head Start and ECEAP
- The Family Support Center
- Behavioral Health Resources
- Safe Place
- Community Youth Services
- Family Education and Support Services Kinship Program
- Thurston County Health Department WIC
- CCAC Resource & Referral
- Homeless Shelters
- Churches and other child care facilities

The need for a crisis nursery in Thurston County was determined in late 1999 after a study was conducted by the Task Force on Child Abuse and Neglect. The study revealed a clear need of a crisis nursery to serve parents and children in need. Additionally, the Thurston County Network's Continuum of Care Report, updated in 2001, noted crisis nursery as an effective model for preventing and intervening in child abuse and neglect. They further noted it could reduce the social and economic isolation of parents and help improve parental understanding of early childhood development.

A feasibility study was conducted in 2001. The study committee, including representatives from DSHS, Thurston County Juvenile Court, the Housing Authority and at-large community members, reviewed therapeutic, intervention, recovery and child care services available in Thurston County and concluded:

There is a strong and compelling need for crisis nursery services in our county.

Behavioral Health Resources began a pilot project with an onsite crisis nursery open 24 hours, seven days a week. Unfortunately, the crisis nursery was under utilized and parents felt there was a stigma attached to leaving their children at a mental health facility. It became clear this model was not meeting the needs of families and was prohibitively expensive. The nursery was subsequently closed.

In 2002 the community partners reconvened to explore a different model. The new crisis nursery model utilized existing child care facilities. In this model, selected child care facilities would receive a placement fee and specialized training to work with families in crisis.

Child Care Action Council was selected to implement the new Keystone Crisis Nursery. It was funded by a series of local businesses and foundations and, in the first year, 200 children were served. CCAC then negotiated with the Department of Social and Health Services Division of Children and Family Services for a portion of their Alternate Response budget to cover some Keystone costs. However, the contract was discontinued in less than a year when DSHS experienced budget cuts.

To continue the program, CCAC was awarded a grant from the Washington Council for the Prevention of Child Abuse and Neglect (WCPCAN). This three year grant allowed CCAC to expand services to include two new centers in Mason County and one in Lewis County. The WCPCAN grant required CCAC to operate Keystone 24 hours per day. Because there are no centers open 24 hours a day, CCAC contracted with licensed family homes to provide the service on a rotating basis. Safe Place Domestic Violence Shelter agreed to cover the phones from 5:00 p.m. – 8:00 a.m. Transportation was contracted with a local taxi service to drop off and pick up children. In the three years 24 hour care was offered, fewer than ten families used the service. When the WCPCAN grant concluded, care hours were reduced to 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.

Through generous support of regional donors and various foundations, Keystone currently operates from 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., Monday through Friday. Fifteen child care centers, across Thurston, Mason and Lewis counties, now participate in this vital community service.

Keystone: Outcomes

Measuring data on crisis nursery parents is challenging. When families are experiencing a crisis their focus is on immediate needs. Many families served by Keystone are transient or experiencing life changing events making follow-up difficult. Parents are often reluctant to give much information, out of fear of being reported to Child Protective Services.

CCAC tracks information from telephone screenings and parents are asked to complete satisfaction surveys when they pick up their children. Based on follow-up surveys:

- 45.4% of parents secured safe and permanent “paid” child care services.
Of those, 16% enrolled in the child care where they received Keystone care.
- 45.4% of parents had a spouse providing the family’s child care needs.
- Only 9.2% of parents had not secured ongoing child care services.

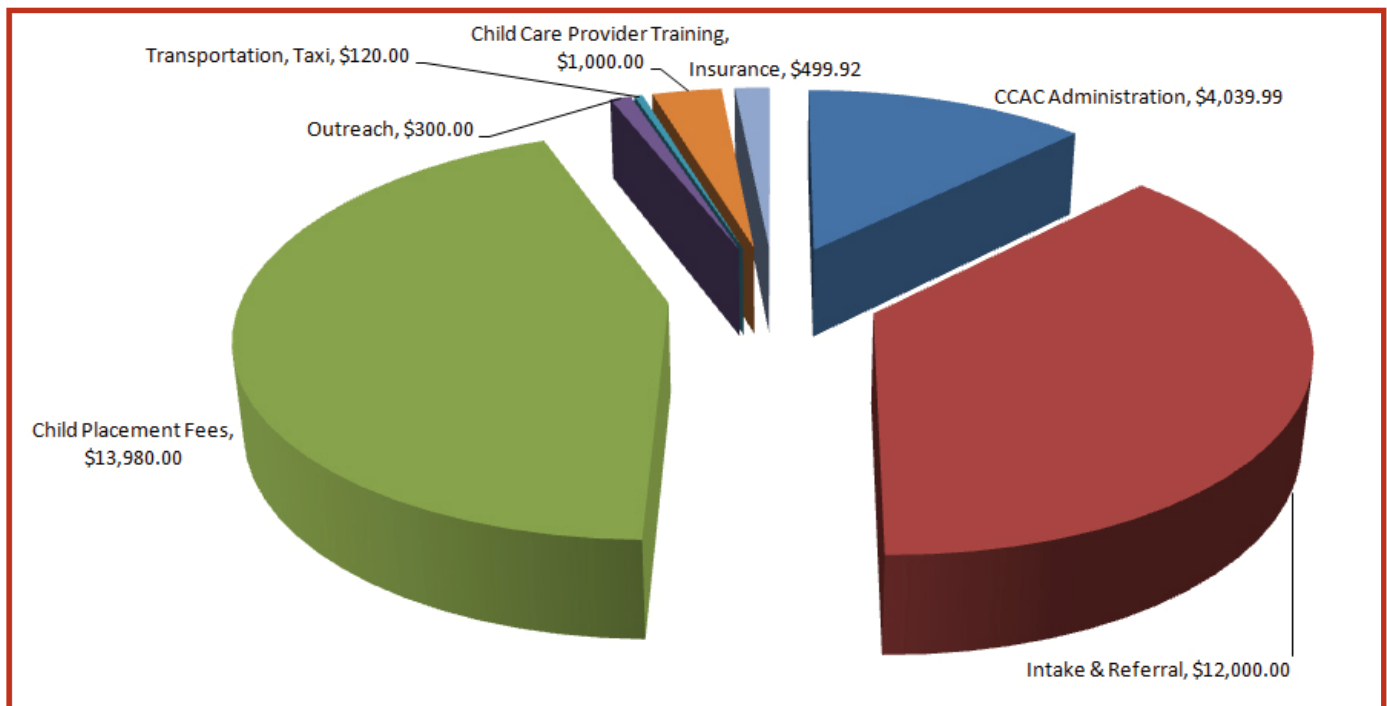
The study also determined:

- 36.3% of Keystone parents followed through with the referral recommendation and received the offered services.
- 100% of Keystone parents stated they were very satisfied with the level of service they received and would refer others.


Additionally, Keystone Provider Trainings are evaluated annually. Training for Keystone child care providers included a wide range of workshop, such as: *In Her Shoes: Working with Families Affected by Domestic Violence*; *Recognizing and Responding to Symptoms of Child Abuse and Neglect*; *Strengthening Families Through Early Care and Education*; *Out of the Darkness and into the Light: Prevention of Child Sexual Abuse*; and *A Framework for Understanding the Culture of Poverty*. Follow-up surveys from child care providers indicate they found the training very valuable, understood the challenges facing families and were better prepared to recognize and respond to their needs.

Keystone providers are offered the opportunity and support to host Community Cafes to cultivate a responsive parent community and to develop parent leadership. Parents that attended the Community Cafes indicated that it helped them feel more confident in their parenting.

Keystone: Budget



Keystone Crisis Nursery Funders



The Irving A. Lassen Foundation
 The Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation
 The Community Foundation of South Puget Sound
 The Marguerite Casey Foundation
 Heritage Bank
 The Horizon Foundation
 Junior League of Olympia
 Washington Council for the Prevention of Child Abuse and Neglect
 Olympia Federal Savings
 The Weyerhaeuser Family Foundation
 Zonta of Olympia
 Simpson Timber Company
 Red Wind Casino / Nisqually Tribe
 Target Foundation
 Kiwanis Club of Olympia
 Thurston County Human Services Resource Council
 United Way of Thurston, Mason & Lewis Counties

Keystone Crisis Nursery Child Care Providers

Creative Discovery — Lacey
 Faith Community Child Care — Shelton
 Gateway Christian Child Care Center — Shelton
 Jump For Joy — Lacey, Downtown Olympia
 Olympia Early Learning Centers — Downtown Olympia, Westside Olympia
 Pope's Kids Place — Centralia
 Shelton Valley Christian CDC — Shelton
 Small Wonders Child Development Centers — Lacey, West Olympia
 Sound to Harbor Head Start — West Olympia, Lacey
 St. Mike's Tikes — Olympia
 Wellspring Child Care Center — Chehalis
 YMCA/SPSCC Campus Child Care — Olympia

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