

(Several crises at once)

Watching Joseph and Jan and their two boys gives an onlooker the impression that they don't have a care in the world. The boys are giggling and playing quietly. Husband and wife are holding hands. Yet, three years ago, the year 2001 was the bleakest of times for the family. That was the year Jan became pregnant with their second child. During her pregnancy, Jan suffered a debilitating illness which compromised her health and threatened the pregnancy. Joseph and Jan were determined that she would give birth to their baby, although she would not be able to care for the child after the birth. Adding to the strain, the baby was born with health problems. Without family support and the funds to hire help, most of the care of the baby and Jan fell to Joseph. When Joseph began to miss work, his wages were cut and his job was in jeopardy. The family fell behind in rent and utilities. Determined to sustain his family, Joseph sought help from the OUR Center for past due utilities and rent. At the time, this was a difficult move for the young father, for he had always been able to rely on his own efforts to provide for his family. During his contacts with the OUR Center caseworker, tears would well in his eyes while telling of his fear of losing his family and their home. In time, a family member was able to help and Joseph was able to go back to work full-time. With the rent and utilities caught up and family aid, Joseph now had the hope of preserving his family.

Joseph, Jan, and their boys were among the hundreds of families receiving rent and utility assistance that year. Most of the families had experienced overwhelming crises which would daunt the strongest of families. Through the combined efforts of dedicated volunteers, donors and staff, families in crisis get the resources, support and guidance they need to regain their independence and stability.

The year 2004 has been a good year for the family. Joseph, being a hard worker, and Jan, being a saver, have purchased their own home with a yard for their active boys to play.

(Single Mom of Two)

Five-month-old Landon smiles a broad grin and laughs with a heartwarming giggle when he sees his mom, Larinda, who has arrived at the OUR Child Care Center from work. Larinda, a single parent of two children, makes two trips from Boulder each day, one to breast feed Landon at noon and the last trip to take Landon to their Longmont home. The bond between mother and child is apparent. Strong attachments are important in any close relationship, as between parents and children. But a working parent and a caregiver must form a sturdy link to ensure a child's sense of belonging, of being loved, and of trust in the world, creating another special connection. Studies show that warm and caring relationships with adults provide children with the basis for all types of learning.

Of the care that Landon receives at the OUR Child Care Center, Larinda says, "It was difficult to entrust my child to a caregiver but I can see that the child care staff love Landon. Because I am present at the Center three times a day, I see that they are responsive to his needs and to all the children. They are kind, concerned and respectful of me as his parent, as well. It's not really day care. It's care at a higher level, a level close to the care that I would give Landon if I could stay home with him."

Larinda not only appreciates the quality care that Landon receives at the Center, she is also grateful for the sliding fee scale. Larinda is working hard at being self-sufficient, but without child support for Landon, her budget is tight and any unusual expense puts her budget in the negative. Regrettably, Landon became critically ill at age seven weeks and was hospitalized, causing Larinda to miss weeks of work and pay. Although the family has health insurance, deductibles and co-pays added up to thousands that she now owes in medical bills. The OUR Child Care Center was able to set the fee at a level that will allow the family to survive financially, and the Intake Center has provided emergency groceries.



(Seniors on Fixed Income)

Being near family is important to Virginia and Allen June. Having the refuge of family is one of the reasons the June family likes living in Longmont. But life in Longmont has not always been secure, having lived through the difficulty that many senior couples on a fixed income have faced, that of insecure housing. Although Virginia and Allen, one of the last living Navajo Code Talkers from World War II, have an income, the high cost of living has left them vulnerable to homelessness and food insecurity. Through help from the Outreach United Resource Center, “OUR Center”, the Junes have been able to establish a life in Longmont with their basic needs met.



(Parents of three under three)

Michelle and Scott, the parents of three children under age 3, telephoned “every child care center in Longmont” looking for an affordable center that would take all three children. The family also needed a child care center that could provide their 3-year-old with developmental services and speech therapy. Michelle and Scott express gratitude for having found the OUR Child Care Center and for the partnership that the staff establishes with the parents. “We are appreciative of the open lines of communications regarding our children’s development.”

The OUR Child Care Center is committed to helping parents with limited financial resources prepare children for life. We support children’s efforts to gain confidence, self esteem, and sound relationships with peers and adults. This support lays the groundwork for a successful future and a lifetime of learning. Child care fees are on a sliding scale based on a family’s ability to pay.

The preschool classroom is an exciting new venture for the organization and for the children and families served by the child care center. It will provide the ongoing developmental activities appropriate for children to age six, with a classroom environment and curriculum which promotes school readiness.

Alexis, Michelle and Scott’s 2-year-old, also expresses her gratitude for the care she receives from the staff at the Child Care Center by saying, “I love my artwork here!”