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Northwest Children's Home, Inc. *Building Brighter Futures Since 1908* **Annual Report** 2016 ~ 2017

A letter from a friend of the Children's Home

The Northwest Children's Home (NCH) repairs broken lives. They are helping children that have been traumatized by life to regain their self esteem, to learn how to function as part of society, and to learn how to love. Please look at what these children have gone through thus far in their short lives before placing a negative label on them. Some of them have been through horrible physical and mental abuse by people in their lives who were supposed to love them, care for them, and teach them about moral and societal mores and structure. How would any of us respond, as a child, to being ignored by our family; to see your parents using drugs and alcohol; to be physically and mental beaten on a consistent basis; to have schools ignore the obvious signs of your being abused, malnourished, and agitated. Many of these children have absolutely no sense or basis of understanding for what childhood should actually consist of.

NCH is transitioning into the use of Trauma Informed Care; which is an organization structure and treatment framework that involves understanding, recognizing, and responding to the effects of all types of trauma and emphasizes psychological, physical, and emotional safety for both the child and the facility providers. The goal is to rebuild a sense of control and empowerment that has been eroded and erased by the individual traumas of a child.

NCH is, literally, in the business of saving a child's life. Do some kids act out, have meltdowns, be aggressive and sometimes physical in their road to recovery? Regrettably, yes, and if we'd experienced their lives thus far, I'm sure some of us may have the same attributes. I'm not dismissing nor attempting to minimize the damage caused by the few. (I have known, all my life, and been friends with the person and family of one such victim of a child's misplaced aggression.) I'm suggesting that some of these children know of no other way to get the attention they so badly desire and deserve, but with the help of NCH and Trauma Informed Care, they can be shown that they do have a value; that their lives thus far are not the norm, and that some of their actions are contributing to their cycle of abandonment, fear, and societal rejection.

There are those that feel that NCH is a breeding ground for criminality and social depravity. Some have, through their political and judicial powers, wreaked havoc with the reputation and financial stability of the NCH. They fail to grasp that, by their actions, they are furthering the demonization and ostracizing of children that the NCH is desperately trying to save. Please research their efforts, read about Trauma Informed Care, or take the time to visit the campus before negatively labeling the organization; or those children that are regaining their lives through the treatment received at NCH.

My wife and I have lived in Lewiston all our lives. We grew up with some of the same negative perceptions of those detractors of NCH. We have lived, for 28 years, just a driver and a pitching wedge from the facility. I am in my second stint on the board of directors and have developed a deep respect for the efforts of those that deeply care about the children in their care. It is a difficult yet rewarding job. Please support the efforts of the Northwest Children's Home. Help save a child's future.

William C. Stellmon

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Fun, Fundraising, and so much more at the Children's Home!



Contact us today to join with us in *Building Brighter Futures*, one child at a time!

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