

A Newsletter from KVC Health Systems, Inc.



# KVC Matters

Fall 2015

## A Big Idea for Changing Foster Care



KVC Sims Family Center



*A new campaign released by the KVC Institute for Health Systems Innovation describes a new vision for strengthening struggling families and helping vulnerable children in America.*

**3** KVC Institute Shares Ideas to Transform Foster Care

**5** Three Leaders Transition to New Roles

**11** Dance Brings Strength and Healing to Youth

Dear Friends of KVC,

I know that my 35-year tenure as KVC Health Systems' leader is unique. When I became CEO of this organization in 1980, Ronald Reagan was Time Magazine's Man of the Year, the computer modem had just been invented, and one of the top holiday gifts was a magna doodle — remember those? Despite tablets and cell phones, I think they're still popular.



B. Wayne Sims

Much has changed in the last 35 years, not the least of which is developing more effective ways to serve vulnerable children and families. Our employees' passion and hard work have helped establish KVC as an international leader on topics that affect millions of people; topics such as healthy child-parent relationships, mental and behavioral health, foster care and adoption.

The best is yet to come. As I and the other members of the executive team mentor the next generation of KVC leaders in anticipation of transitioning responsibilities to them in the coming years, their fresh insights, incredible talent and contagious energy will help us continuously raise the bar in serving children and families. In this issue of *KVC Matters*, you'll read about some of the positive changes happening including:

- **The new KVC Institute** (pg. 3), which is using neuroscience, technology and evidence-based practices to transform the experience of childhood for all children. Learn more about our Big Idea campaign focused on transforming foster care in America.
- **Our 2015 Annual Report** (pg. 7), which includes impressive data on KVC's impact in the lives of children and families. Enormous thanks go to those who make this possible - our partners, donors, foster and adoptive families, and of course, our amazing staff.
- **Real stories about the families we serve** (pg. 11), such as an ex-Marine Dad and Mom who learned parenting skills to safely bring their children home.

Experience is a competitive advantage, but so is fresh perspective. KVC will continue to have both and, with your support, we promise to use those unique advantages to the benefit of children and families in need.

Sincerely,

B. Wayne Sims  
Chief Executive Officer



## KVC MISSION:

To enrich and enhance the lives of children and families by providing medical and behavioral healthcare, social services and education.

## BOARD OF DIRECTORS

David F. Ball — *Chair*  
William H. Dunn, Jr. — *Vice Chair-Finance*  
John N. Barnes — *Vice Chair-Development*  
B. Wayne Sims — *Vice Chair-Program Services*  
Mayor Michael E. Copeland  
Patrick Desbois  
Teresa Markowitz  
Bill Self



## GENERAL BOARD ROSTER

Dave Blankenship	Megan Krier
Michelle Cormack	Don Ransdell
Levi Donalds	Debbie Swinney
Nicole Feltz	Laura Treas
Rupal Gor	Ryan Vaughan
Jared Gulbranson	Richard Webdell
Ryan Hogue	Diane Ball Wilkerson

## MANAGEMENT TEAM

B. Wayne Sims, M.S., M.S.A.  
*Chief Executive Officer - KVC Health Systems*

Jason R. Hooper, L.M.S.W.  
*President - KVC Health Systems*

Anne M. Roberts, M.S.  
*Chief Operations Officer - KVC Health Systems*

Paul W. Klayder, CPA  
*Chief Financial Officer - KVC Health Systems*

Sherry L. Love, L.M.S.W., A.C.S.W.  
*Chief Clinical Officer - KVC Health Systems*

Chad E. Anderson, L.S.C.S.W.  
*President - KVC Kansas*

Jodie Austin, L.C.S.W.  
*President - KVC Nebraska*

Elizabeth Croney, M.S.W., L.C.S.W.  
*President - KVC Kentucky*

Brent Lemon, L.C.S.W., L.I.C.S.W.  
*President - KVC West Virginia*

Ryan Speier, L.M.S.W.  
*President - KVC Hospitals*

Vishal Adma, M.D., M.S., C.M.Q., C.P.E.  
*Medical Director - KVC Hospitals*

Sue Lohrbach, M.S., L.I.C.S.W., Ph.D. Candidate  
*Executive Director - KVC Institute*

Marilyn Jacobson  
*Special Assistant & General Counsel*

Renny Christian Arensberg, M.A.  
*Executive Vice President - KVC Health Systems*

Erin Stucky, L.S.C.S.W.  
*Executive Vice President - KVC Health Systems*

Lonnie Johnson  
*Vice President of Business Technology Solutions - KVC Health Systems*

Michelle Lawrence, C.F.R.E.  
*Vice President of Development - KVC Health Systems*



KVC Matters is published at KVC Health Systems, Inc., 21350 W. 153rd St., Olathe, KS 66061; 913-322-4900. Please send comments, change of address and duplicate copy notices to the attention of the Development Department.

KVC is nondiscriminating in its admission and employment practices. KVC is accredited by The Joint Commission.

KVC is a member of the Alliance for Strong Families and Communities, a member of the National Council for Behavioral Health, and a recipient of United Way funds.

# The KVC Institute Shares a Big Idea for Transforming Foster Care in America

In September, the KVC Institute released its “Big Idea” campaign describing the values and practices it uses to achieve strong outcomes for children and families. The campaign’s goal is to build momentum for transforming foster care in America. See the 7-minute video at [www.kvc.org/bigidea](http://www.kvc.org/bigidea).



More than 400,000 U.S. children are in foster care due to abuse, neglect or other family challenges. KVC trains and supports foster families who care for over 6,500 of these children in four states.

The values described in the Big Idea campaign video are:

- Keeping families safely together with in-home support, preventing the need for out-of-home care when possible.
- Treating each child with urgency.
- Matching children with caregivers they know such as relatives and other familiar people.
- Conducting and implementing research that leads to best practices.
- Safely reducing the use of psychotropic medication for youth in foster care.
- Caring for children in families rather than group homes.
- Working hand-in-hand with foster parents as valued partners in permanency.
- Refusing to stop caring for the youth who “age out” of foster care each year without a permanent family or home.

In May, Suzanne Lohrbach was named Executive Director of the new KVC Institute. Lohrbach has 30 years of experience in child protective services and child, adolescent and adult mental health. She is also the chief developer of Safe & Connected™, KVC’s integrated child welfare practice model that provides a structured way to make decisions with and for the children and families served by the child welfare system.



The KVC Institute’s hub is the \$7-million KVC Sims Family Center in Olathe, KS, funded entirely by private gifts, that is using neuroscience, technology and evidence-based practices to transform the experience of childhood for all children. The facility is named after KVC CEO Wayne Sims in recognition of his 35th anniversary in that role.

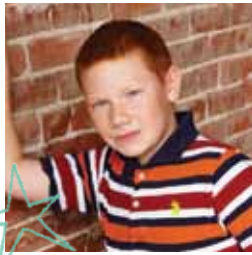
While the KVC Institute has a physical hub, it is made up of KVC’s 1,300 employees across the U.S. who each day do cutting-edge work with children and families. Each interaction is part of the KVC Institute’s vision of expediting research into practice and improving child and family wellness.





## Meet Children Who Need a Forever Family

Each of these children is seeking his or her forever family. Watch videos and search additional child profiles at <http://adoption.kvc.org>. To inquire, call 888-655-5500 or email [adoptionspecialist@kvc.org](mailto:adoptionspecialist@kvc.org).



### ERIC (12)

Eric is a helpful, caring young man who recently won an award for having the nicest smile! He also won an award for the science fair and earned a certificate for the DARE program. Eric is good at sports. He likes to play baseball and soccer and enjoys riding his bike, going fishing and hunting mushrooms. Eric is also very talented in music. He likes to sing, play the violin, and also tried out to play the clarinet. Eric enjoys fixing hair and wants to be a hairdresser when he grows up. Eric would like his forever family to be patient and relaxed, "able to go with the flow." Eric would thrive in a home with no other children and his one request is for a "big bed!" The family should be willing to support his educational and mental health needs, and be open to helping Eric maintain relationships with his extended birth family.



### CALISTA (12)

Calista is bright, insightful, social, and funny. She loves animals, arts and crafts, fishing, and baking treats. Calista likes school and is motivated to do well academically. She needs a forever family who can provide a high level of supervision and structure. She needs a family who is dedicated to caring for her and devoted to being her forever family. Calista would benefit from having siblings that are older.



### MAGGIE (13)



Meet Maggie! Maggie likes doing crafts and organizing things. Her other hobbies include singing and listening to music. She says her social studies class "is awesome." Maggie is most proud of her ability to be kind to others. She thrives with individual attention and would do well with a nurturing family that will help her use the skills she is learning to manage her emotions in a healthy way, keep her connected to supportive services she's receiving, and give her the love she deserves.



### TRAVIS (10)



Travis is kind, good-natured and loving. He likes to play basketball, sing and go to church. Travis enjoys accomplishing tasks and takes pride in doing things on his own. Travis would benefit from the support of a two-parent forever family. The ideal parents would offer a high level of supervision, structure and consistency, and support him as he continues to receive the educational and mental health services that help him thrive.



## Become a Holiday Hero for Children and Youth in Foster Care

For thousands of children in foster care, living away from home during the holidays can be an unsure time.

Kids may wonder "will Santa find me?" or "will I have gifts to open?"

You can make the holidays bright for a child or teen in foster care by becoming a Holiday Hero! KVC is reaching out to individuals, families and the business

community to donate gifts to children this holiday season. Here's how it works:

- Visit [www.kvc.org/holidayhero](http://www.kvc.org/holidayhero) and click on your state to learn more and sign up. You can specify the age, gender and number of children you wish to collect holiday gifts for.
- Your Holiday Hero packet will arrive in the mail with the child's name, age and wish list. Shop for as many items on the lists as you want and invite your friends to help out.
- Place the unwrapped gifts in the bag included in your packet and drop it off at your local KVC office.



## Three Leaders Transition to New Roles



In July, Jason Hooper was named President of KVC Health Systems. He has been with KVC for over 20 years and was previously head of

KVC Hospitals, the organization's \$22-million children's psychiatric hospitals division. One of Hooper's first steps has been embarking on a nationwide listening tour to hear from KVC's 1,300 employees as well as clients, partners and other stakeholders. Hooper was also recognized by the Kansas City Business Journal as a 2015 NextGen Leader this summer.



At the same time, Ryan Speier was named President of KVC Hospitals. He was previously Vice President of Administration.

Speier has been with KVC for over 8 years in various roles, most recently overseeing the hospitals' operations, strategic development and growth, fiscal accountability and quality assurance initiatives. More information on Hooper and Speier's backgrounds and a short video are at [www.kvc.org/newleaders](http://www.kvc.org/newleaders).



Sherry Love, Chief Clinical Officer of KVC Health Systems, announced her retirement effective early October 2015. Love's 40-year commitment

to the field of social work and her emphasis on research and best practice have led to numerous positive contributions in the field. Sherry leaves a legacy of positively impacting the lives of thousands of children and families across the nation, even reaching as far as Singapore through training and consultation.



## KVC Selected for International Brain Science Initiative



KVC Health Systems, which includes the new KVC Institute for Health Systems Innovation and its premier children's psychiatric treatment division KVC Hospitals, is one of 15 U.S. and Canadian nonprofit organizations selected to participate in "Change in Mind: Applying Neurosciences to Revitalize Communities."

Change in Mind is a new initiative of the Alliance for Strong Families and Communities, in partnership with the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation (RWJF) and the Norlien Foundation. The organizations will work together to raise awareness of the latest neuroscience on how life-altering toxic stress affects the health and wellbeing of children and families. Furthermore, they

will lead efforts to align systems and public policy with the latest science with the goal of moving the needle on difficult social issues like poverty, substance abuse, family discord, trauma, and physical and mental health challenges.

Through the participation of its representatives Suzanne Lohrbach, Executive Director of the KVC Institute for Health Systems Innovation ([kvc.org/institute](http://kvc.org/institute)) and James Roberson, Vice President of KVC's children psychiatric hospitals ([kvchospitals.org](http://kvchospitals.org)), KVC will contribute knowledge gained from its 45 years of direct practice in behavioral health, mental health and child welfare to the Change in Mind initiative.

"The participation of KVC Health Systems in this exciting initiative shows that there is no more uniquely qualified sector than the nonprofit to lead larger systems change, by aligning policy, regulatory, and fiscal areas into alignment with the brain science,"

said Susan Dreyfus, president and CEO of the Alliance.

"We're thankful to the Alliance, RWJF and the Norlien Foundation for launching the Change in Mind Initiative," said B. Wayne Sims, Chief Executive Officer of KVC Health Systems. "This is a significant movement that affirms two truths that are important to us at KVC: one, we must infuse the latest neuroscience into human services



work because it is the key to change and healing, and two, the nonprofit sector has a critical role to play in aligning systems and policies to what we know about the human brain."

## Third Annual Bluegrass Wellness at Work Challenge a Success

In August, KVC Kentucky concluded its 3rd Annual Bluegrass Wellness at Work Fitness Challenge.



Bluegrass Wellness at Work (BGWAW) is a competition for Lexington, Ky.-area companies to improve employee health by using a custom BGWAW smartphone app developed by KVC Kentucky staff. Companies pay a small fee to access the app and proceeds

from the program benefit children and families served by KVC. Those companies whose employees logged the most activity in the BGWAW app won awards and brag-worthy designations including "Healthiest Places to Work."

"Bluegrass Wellness at Work has been an excellent program since its beginning three years ago. We have participated every year because this is a program that helps participants work on their fitness level and unites our workforce as a team with a common goal. This is a great program for a great cause and we encourage more agencies and companies to participate next year."— *Ruben Perez, Workplace Wellness Coordinator for the Lexington-Fayette County Health Department*

## KVC Helps States Train Foster Parents on Childhood Trauma

In this country, over 400,000 children have had reported cases of abuse and neglect and are removed from their homes each year. But for many professionals and caregivers, knowing how to help children heal from the damaging effects of childhood traumatic stress has been less clear... until now.



A new initiative funded by the Annie E. Casey Foundation of Baltimore, Md. is aimed at bringing the latest training on helping youth who have experienced childhood traumatic stress to public child welfare agencies across the U.S. and the relatives and foster parents who care for children on their behalf.

The training curriculum was written by Kelly McCauley, LSCSW, Director of Evidence-Informed Initiatives at KVC Health Systems. In the last five years, KVC has gained recognition for its leadership in integrating trauma-informed care into child welfare and related systems. By partnering with Dr. Glenn Saxe of New York University's Child Study Center and adapting his Trauma Systems Therapy (TST) into workbooks for child welfare staff and foster parents, KVC successfully trained every professional and caregiver that comes into contact with children in the child welfare system. While it may seem obvious that children in foster care are those who most need trauma-informed care, **the latest proven-effective trauma treatment approaches had not reached this particular population until KVC adapted the research specifically for them.**

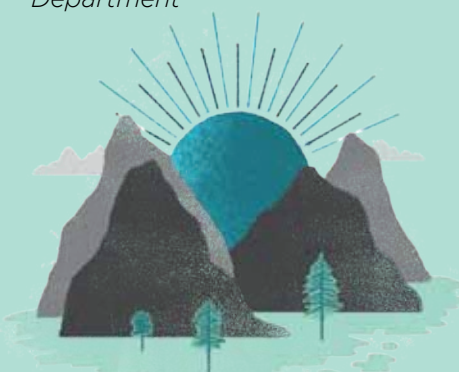


Now the Annie E. Casey Foundation wants to bring the combined knowledge and experience of NYU and KVC to public child welfare agencies across the country. KVC has been asked to travel to states and train agency staff how to, in turn, train relative families and foster parents to help children who have experienced trauma. The training centers on a new batch of curriculum that emphasizes interactive, hands-on activities that will ensure caregivers learn and practice skills that are critical in family moments ranging from the mundane to crisis situations.

The program is beginning with a pilot project in Maryland and Ohio. Following a successful initial implementation, KVC experts will then travel to public agencies throughout the U.S. to share the curriculum using a "train the trainers" approach. In the near future, KVC hopes the knowledge of how to help children who have experienced trauma will be as widespread as the problem of trauma itself.

"We are confident that trauma-informed care is the key to unlocking the brain development and the potential of each child," said McCauley. "We've seen it time and again in the children we serve, and are eager to share this information with others to benefit thousands of children in the U.S. and beyond."

Learn more at [www.kvc.org/trauma](http://www.kvc.org/trauma).



## KVC's Resource Family Conference Approaching

KVC's 2015 Resource Family Conference will take place December 11-12 at four locations across the country:

- The Overland Park Marriott in Overland Park, Kan.
- The Cornhusker, A Marriott Hotel in Lincoln, Neb.
- The Hilton Lexington/Downtown Hotel in Lexington, Ky.
- The Resort at Glade Springs in Daniels, W. Va.



The event is a one-of-a-kind training opportunity for foster families who are caring for children who have experienced abuse, neglect, other family challenges and are temporarily in state custody. Resource families, a term which includes foster and adoptive parents and relatives, will learn about topics such as managing behavior challenges, repairing the effects of stress and trauma, and transition planning into adulthood, while children enjoy fun activities like games, bouncy houses and talent shows. More than 2,000 people participate in the conference each year.

Veteran newsman Dominic Carter will be the keynote speaker for the 2015 Resource Family Conference. Carter, who was in foster care as a child, is one of the most compelling journalists of his generation, and has been described as the best political reporter working in New York television today. As a victim of childhood sexual abuse, Carter released a book on his life titled 'No Momma's Boy', which chronicles his triumphant struggle to overcome his mother's mental illness as a chronic paranoid schizophrenic and years of shocking childhood abuse while growing up in the housing projects in the notorious South Bronx, New York.

Learn more at [www.kvc.org/rfc](http://www.kvc.org/rfc).

## Foster Parents Needed!



At this very moment, a child or teenager in your community is in need of a safe place to stay and support. You can be the one to make a difference by becoming a foster parent with KVC! Foster parents provide a safe, nurturing environment for children who have experienced abuse, neglect or other family challenges. We provide all the training and support you need. Consider opening your heart and home in this special way, and you'll make a life-changing difference in a child's life! Learn more by calling (888) 655-5500 or visit [www.kvc.org](http://www.kvc.org).



## Marking a Year of Impact at KVC's 2015 Annual Celebration

On October 30, KVC will host its 2015 Annual Celebration in Olathe, Kan. Event highlights include the unveiling of the 2015 Annual Report, presentation of KVC's 45th Hero Award to Bank of Blue Valley's President and CEO Bob Regnier, and special recognition of Wayne Sims on



his 35th anniversary as KVC Health Systems' CEO.

The 2015 Annual Report shows that KVC partners, donors, foster/adoptive parents and

staff made a tremendous difference in the lives of children and families over the last year. Together we:

- Matched **485** children with adoptive families
- Supported **6,561** children in caring foster families
- Treated **3,064** youth at our children's psychiatric hospitals
- Helped **26,638** children and adults with in-home therapy and other critical support
- Directly touched **59,638** people's lives

The full report will be online starting October 30 at [www.kvc.org/2015report](http://www.kvc.org/2015report).



## KVC Helps Prevent Nebraska Youth from Entering Juvenile Detention



For more than a year, two KVC Nebraska leaders have been participating in a program of Georgetown University's Center for Juvenile Justice Reform (CJJR). Through their capstone project to CJJR's Youth in Custody Certificate Program, Jodie Austin and Theresa Goley aimed to decrease the number of Nebraska youth entering detention and congregate care settings, as well as maintain or decrease the youth recidivism rate.

The team's strategy for accomplishing this was to implement KVC's unique Safe & Connected™ model as well as a trauma screen and a full array of trauma-informed interventions. Safe & Connected provides a structured way to make decisions with and for the children and families served by the child welfare, juvenile justice and related systems.

The results of this program have been positive, including:

- **Greater Child Safety in Foster Care —**  
The absence of recurrent maltreatment improved steadily from 93% (Aug. 2014) to 95% (May 2015) with an average of 95.44%, which exceeds the 94.6% national standard.
- **Fewer Children Changing Foster Homes —**  
Placement stability improved steadily from 102.25

(Aug. 2014) to 108.22 (July 2015) with an average score of 105.7, which exceeds the 101.5 national standard.

- **Fewer Children Reentering Foster Care —**  
Reentries into care in less than 12 months of discharge remained low, from 6.1% (Aug. 2014) to 8.5% (July 2015) with an average score of 6.9%, which exceeds the 9.9% national standard.
- **Fewer Youth in Detention —** KVC's support for caring for youth in the least restrictive environment and integrating trauma-informed care helped the Douglas County Juvenile Detention Alternative Initiative in the Omaha area reduce the average number of youth in detention by more than 10%.

KVC Nebraska is grateful for the opportunity to go beyond its daily work of supporting youth and families with foster family care and intensive, in-home services to partner with agencies statewide in reforming juvenile justice.



## KVC Selected to Help WV Children through New Safe at Home Program



The state of West Virginia has selected KVC to help children through the state's new "Safe At Home West Virginia" program. Safe At Home is an initiative of the WV Department of Health and Human Resources Bureau for Children and Families. Its aim is to maximize the benefits of home and community-based services for children in out-of-

home care, in conjunction with providing behavioral and mental health services, in order to reduce the use of congregate and out-of-state care.

The state of West Virginia has a high rate of children entering out-of-home care such as foster care each year; 8.6 per 1,000 children in the population, which is nearly three times the national entry rate of 3.3. The state also cares for 71 percent of youth ages 12-17 in congregate care which is shown by research to have negative developmental impacts. By providing

wraparound services to children residing in congregate care settings, the state's goal is to bring children safely back to their home communities and ultimately to their own families.

KVC West Virginia was selected to add eight new Wraparound Facilitators, full-time staff positions that will help implement Safe at Home. These eight are out of a total of approximately 52 total positions in the state. KVC is currently seeking highly-qualified people to fill the positions at [www.kvc.org/careers](http://www.kvc.org/careers).

"We are thrilled to help implement Safe at Home West Virginia because keeping children safe and at home is truly our passion," said Brent Lemon, president of KVC West Virginia. "Our focus is on keeping children safe and connected with people who care about them. This is evidenced by our Safe & Connected™ integrated child welfare practice model which we've implemented internally and shared with our community partners over the last two years. KVC is excited about partnering with the state to help achieve the goals of this program."

## Kansas City Royals Player Hosts KVC Foster Families at Kauffman Stadium

During last year's 2014 MLB season, KVC partnered with the Kansas City Royals, KCP&L, and pitcher James Shields to offer a support program for children in foster care and their families. James Shields now plays for the San Diego Padres, but another Royals player has stepped up to provide a unique experience for children and families during the 2015 Royals season.



Third baseman Mike Moustakas (a.k.a. Moose) invited foster families to sit in the Moose Lodge at Kauffman Stadium during the Friday, May 22 game against the St. Louis Cardinals. Families received tickets to the game, Moose Lodge t-shirts, and free pizza compliments of Papa John's. Prior to the game, Moustakas greeted each family, took pictures and signed baseballs for the children. In addition to

hosting KVC foster families at the game, Royals Charities presented KVC with a \$25,000 check on-field. These funds will make it possible for KVC to conduct interactive child-parent therapy in the new KVC Institute for Health Systems Innovation.



## KVC Hospitals Adds Dr. Anh Vinh as Director of Integrated Health Services

Dr. Anh Vinh has joined KVC Hospitals as Director of Integrated Health Services, a new position for the not-for-profit network of children's psychiatric hospitals. Vinh, who was previously on faculty at the University of Kansas Medical Center (KU Med West), will focus on combining her primary health expertise as a family physician with KVC's world-renowned behavioral and mental healthcare services.



Vinh is based at KVC Prairie Ridge Hospital in Kansas City, Kan. which each year helps thousands of children and adolescents who struggle with depression, anxiety, trauma, substance abuse, suicidal thoughts and feelings of violence. In addition to serving youth receiving acute and residential psychiatric treatment, Vinh will collaborate on outpatient physical health services provided to children and families involved in the Kansas child welfare system through a different division of the organization. This will allow KVC to move beyond assessments and meaningfully address long-term health issues in individuals and communities. Vinh will also enhance KVC's health and wellness programs to improve clinical outcomes for both clients and employees.

"With Dr. Vinh as part of the KVC team, we are better equipped to treat clients' holistic needs which often range from physical to behavioral," said Ryan Speier, President of KVC Hospitals. "From admission, to ongoing care, to discharge and community-based support, we offer patient-centered, outcomes-driven care and treatment. It makes for a very broad continuum of care which is unique and receiving national attention."

## Working to Prevent Suicide in Our Communities

This past June, KVC Hospitals was one of 20 organizations selected nationally to attend the National Action Alliance for Suicide Prevention Zero Suicide Academy in Washington, D.C. During the Academy, organizations were presented with tools and resources to improve care and safety for individuals in their care who are at risk for suicide and developed action plans for saving lives.

"Zero Suicide has the potential to transform health care systems so that anyone at risk for suicide will receive effective and optimal care when they seek help," said Julie Goldstein Grumet, Director of Prevention and Practice, Suicide Prevention Resource Center, and part of the leadership team for the Action Alliance's Zero Suicide priority. "The organizations who attended the Academy are pioneers in their dedication to improved suicide care."



KVC also participated in a community walk to raise awareness for suicide prevention. On October 3, a team of 20 individuals from KVC Prairie Ridge Hospital participated in the American Foundation for Suicide Prevention's Out of the Darkness Community Walk in Kansas City, Mo. to raise awareness about suicide prevention.

## KVC Part of \$3M Early Intervention for Kansas Families with Infants and Toddlers

KVC Kansas is one of five organizations implementing the Strengthening Families program, which provides early intervention to children from birth to age three who entered foster care due to parental substance abuse. The program is part of a larger \$2.9 million, five-year federal grant awarded to the University of Kansas School of Social Welfare.



There's an enormous amount of research on the brain development that happens in the first few years of life. This evidence-based program maximizes this crucial phase of

neurobiological and psychological development by teaching families parenting and communication skills. By forging strong relationships between parents and their children, the program seeks to increase child safety and wellbeing in the home and thus increase the likelihood of reunification and permanency.

KVC has established many community partnerships to enhance the program and

make it more sustainable. As an example, Grace Covenant Presbyterian Church in Overland Park, Kan. generously hosts the groups who meet in the Kansas City area. Each meeting has three parts: first, a group dinner; then, play group for the children while parents learn new skills; and finally, the families are reunited so adults can practice approaches like infant massage, singing and bedtime routines with their children. Other KC-area partners include the Lenexa Police Department, the Regional Prevention Center of Johnson County, Community Corrections and Johnson County Mental Health Center.



While data on the program's impact among families with infants and toddlers won't be available this year, research on the program's previously demonstrated impact among families with children age four and up is incredibly positive. Strengthening Families reduced the length of time a child spends in foster care or other out-of-home care by more than 240 days, saving significant taxpayer dollars while also achieving strong child and family outcomes.

## Hero Luncheon, Golf Tournaments Achieve Record-Breaking Results

More than 500 people attended the 4th Annual KVC Hero Luncheon featuring University of Kansas Basketball Coach Bill Self and Kansas City Chiefs President Mark



Donovan. Other featured guests at the June 18 event in Overland Park, Kan. included 41 Action News anchor Christa Dubill as emcee, "Wonder Woman" foster parent Nicole Feltz who shared her powerful story of overcoming a troubled childhood to achieve incredible success, and Sports

Radio 810 host Nate Bukaty who facilitated a lively discussion about sports, kids and heroes. He also surprised Self and Donovan with a Jimmy Fallon-esque golf putting competition, which resulted in both winner and loser donating VIP ticket packages to KVC's Gala coming up on November 21. Thanks to the support of so many heroes, we raised a record-breaking \$110,000! Learn more at [www.everydayhero.org](http://www.everydayhero.org).

### Kansas City Area Golf Tournament

Over 160 representatives from leading Kansas City area companies perfected their golf game for a great cause at the 14th Annual KVC Kids Classic Golf Tournament at The National Golf Club in Parkville, Mo. on Aug. 24. Thanks to the



generosity of the tournament chairs Scott and Susan Asner, sponsors, golfers and volunteers, we raised \$96,269 to help children and families involved in the child welfare system, including thousands of youth who have experienced abuse and neglect and are in caring KVC foster families.

### Lincoln, Neb. Golf Tournament

KVC Nebraska hosted their 3rd Annual Kids Classic Golf Tournament on Sept. 11 at Thornridge Golf Course in Milford, Neb. Over 70 golfers participated and the tournament raised \$11,001. Thank you to our generous sponsors and golfers!

## Parents Learn Healthy Skills and Safely Reunify with Daughter

An investigation of physical abuse led authorities to remove a Kansas family's elementary school aged daughter from their home. KVC stepped in to offer services and work on safely reunifying the family.

At first, the girl's parents did not want to work with KVC staff. The father, who is a former U.S. Marine, had what some felt was an intimidating personality and was absent for several visits with his daughter. The KVC family support worker emphasized to the mother the importance of both parents being on the same page and invited him to be present for the next meeting. Both parents began to participate, and at one point, the mother broke down crying as she expressed the shame she felt of being labeled as an "abusive parent" and the sickening fear that she and her husband felt the night their daughter was removed from their home. They had no idea where she was going and didn't know when they would see her again.

The father expressed his frustration, saying that he felt that school officials, a school counselor, and other professionals treated him with suspicion and disrespect. He also broke down crying, saying he kisses his children

each night before bed and tells them he loves them. As an ex-Marine, yelling is how he had learned to

communicate when he was upset. The KVC family support worker helped him learn how to calm down and refrain from yelling before addressing his daughter's behavior.

Both parents said they felt like KVC was on their

team in trying to do what was best for the whole family. The daughter was able to safely return home and has been doing well. The parents, who once said that the state was robbing their ability to discipline their child by prohibiting physical discipline, now say they have no intention of using physical discipline at all!

*Did you know that by working with families in their own homes, KVC is able to help the majority of children who enter foster care to safely return to their families? Learn more at [www.kvc.org](http://www.kvc.org).*



## Dance Produces Positive Results for Youth at KVC Prairie Ridge Hospital

Every Friday at 3:00 p.m., music fills the room at KVC Prairie Ridge Hospital as professional instructors teach youth how to express their feelings and discover their strengths through dance. Youth at the psychiatric hospital are receiving treatment for a range of mental/behavioral healthcare challenges including depression, anxiety, trauma, substance abuse, suicidal thoughts or feelings of violence.

The on-site dance classes, which are part of a program called Let's MOVE (Motivate Ourselves Via Expression), were made possible thanks to a partnership between KVC Hospitals, the Kansas School of Classical Ballet (KSCB) and technology leader Netsmart.

Since KSCB began the program in June, the classes have already produced positive results for youth at KVC Prairie Ridge. Dance activity recorded in a Netsmart CareRecord tracks and analyzes the program to ensure children are positively impacted in tangible ways. Some results include:

- The majority of youth reported that they enjoyed the dance group
- Nearly half of youth felt more regulated after group
- 82% of youth discovered dance as a new way to express themselves differently
- The average number of crisis interventions lowered to zero on days of dance group
- Youth on average reported less anxiety, anger and sadness on days when dance group occurred
- Youth on average also reported feeling happier on days when dance group occurred

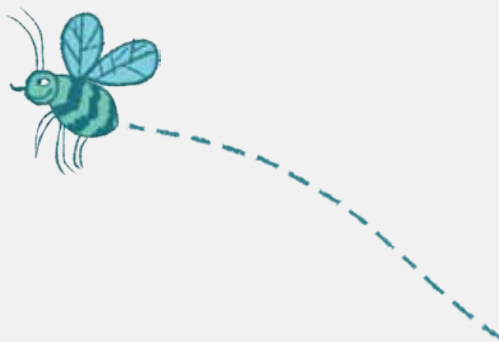




21350 West 153rd Street  
Olathe, Kansas 66061  
[www.kvc.org](http://www.kvc.org)



RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED



Non-profit  
Organization  
U.S. Postage  
PAID  
Kansas City, MO  
Permit No. 1996

Please Recycle



## Save the Date

Visit [www.kvc.org/events](http://www.kvc.org/events) for details on these events and others.

### KVC's 2015 Annual Celebration

October 30

Olathe, KS

### National Adoption Day

November 21

Courthouses Nationwide

### The Gala on Fire

November 21

Kansas City, MO

### 2015 Resource Family Conference

December 11-12

KS, KY, NE, and WV



## The Gala on Fire | Saturday, November 21

The 2015 Gala on Fire will once again take place at the Historic Firestone Building located at 2001 Grand Boulevard in Kansas City, MO. The event will feature captivating performances by MoonDrop Circus, live art by artists Allan Chow and Rebecca Pashia and sensational music from Atlantic Express. It's sure to be *a night that's going to sizzle* and *an experience to warm your heart!*

Drive a brand new  
Mercedes C300W4 for  
one year or win \$10,000!  
To enter, visit [www.kvc.org/car](http://www.kvc.org/car)

**A NIGHT THAT'S GOING TO SIZZLE.**

**THE GALA ON FIRE | 2015**

**AN EXPERIENCE TO WARM YOUR HEART.**

**SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 21**

**Co-chaired by:**

Bonne Illig	Kim Stevens	Debbie Douville
Lenise Ward	Ashlee Bressel	Jenni Howard
Lauren Hunt		

**Benefitting children and families served by KVC Health Systems**

**of VanBrock**

**WWW.KVC.ORG/GALA**