



# Providence House

Every child is your child.™

EVERY CHILD IS YOUR CHILD

SUMMER 2014

Dear Providence House,

This letter is so long overdue. Better late than never I always say. I want to take the time to thank you for saving my family from disaster more than once. I am a single mother of a 4yr. old and a 1mo. old, both girls. It has not been an easy road. I have a very weak support system.

You have helped me care for my oldest daughter so I could get help for my addiction. Because of that my beautiful daughter has a mother almost 9mo. sober. it's been a long journey, recently you helped me care for my children while I was admitted to the hospital for a life threatening infection. You are the family I never had, there for me when no one was around. An ear to listen when I'm down. Without your support there's no doubt in my mind my children would be another statistic, lost in the system.

I have become a better woman and mother. I have worked hard and did what I was told. Now I could never be more grateful. My family is strengthened instead of weak. My daughter loves you and I do too; more than words could say.

Sincerely,  
A Truly Grateful Family



picture by:  
a very grateful 4yr. old girl!!

Thank you  
♡



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# A Note From Natalie: The Lifespan Effects of Child Maltreatment

Dear PHriends,

Nearly 700 people packed the Renaissance ballroom and experienced a roller coaster ride of emotions at our Every Child Luncheon on April 4th. Our goal with this year's luncheon was to tell the story of child maltreatment in a new way, focusing on its adverse effects across the lifespan of a child.



Featured speaker, writer and comedian, Greg Fitzsimmons,

shared his story of living in a "dysfunctional" family, bringing guests to tears of laughter and sadness. Bookending Greg's story was a five-minute animated video that has been described as a powerful, heart wrenching depiction of the long-term effects of child maltreatment.

Our video introduced Michael and Tasha, two children born in the same community who lived very different lives. As the story unfolds, we see how each child's experiences impact his and her path through life.

Born into a loving, nurturing family, Tasha is rocked and soothed when she cries. A shift to Michael shows him alone in his crib, crying with no one there to soothe him. Frame by frame we see their stories unfold, every age sealed with a stark statistic, such as, "children are 70 percent more likely to have poor attachment to their parents when they are not nurtured as infants."

At age two, Tasha is walking and knows more than 100 words. Michael neither walks nor talks. Fast forward to age 10: Tasha is playing little league baseball while Michael is suffering from childhood obesity. Tasha continues her pattern of healthy development; Michael's early troubles mushroom into more serious problems during his life.

We developed this video to tell a very complex story in a simple way. Extensive research shows that adverse experiences in childhood can cause excessive or prolonged activation of stress response

systems in the body or "toxic stress." These stresses ultimately weaken a child's system, adversely affecting his or her development, and eventually leading to physical and chemical mutations in the brain and body with lifelong and even generational implications.

But we know it doesn't have to be this way. The story can change. We see the story change every day at Providence House. Our direct services to children and families truly do help the Michaels grow up more like the Tashas. Nurturing relationships and quality intervention for the whole family does change the story. In the video, we recast Michael's life with Tasha-like experiences, and see with quality early interventions that Michael can live a healthy, happy life.

Our message is that our community must protect our children from maltreatment. The costs are too great not to do something. Every child like Michael who doesn't receive intervention will cost the community more than \$200,000 in his lifetime. Last year, 30,000 children in Ohio were substantiated victims of child maltreatment. That's

\$6 billion in lifetime costs - for just last year's children.

Early intervention doesn't just change the story for children like Michael. It's an investment in our community's future, and it's the work that we do everyday at Providence House. Together with your support, we can – and do – change the story.

**"It doesn't have  
to be this way.  
The story  
can change."**

Please visit [provhouse.org](http://provhouse.org) to see Tasha's and Michael's story. And know how very grateful we are for your support in helping us change the stories of over 200 children who will stay with us at Providence House this year.





Providence House 2014 Luncheon For Every Child  
**THANK YOU TO EVERYONE INVOLVED!**

**33<sup>rd</sup>** ANNUAL  
**PROVIDENCE HOUSE  
 LUNCHEON  
 FOR EVERY CHILD**



**THANK YOU TO OUR ANNUAL CORPORATE PARTNERS AND OUR 33<sup>RD</sup> ANNUAL LUNCHEON FOR EVERY CHILD EVENT SPONSORS.**

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Couldn't make it to the Luncheon this year? Visit our photo and video gallery at [provhouse.org](http://provhouse.org) to see what you missed! Hear from Nick Swisher and Paul Dolan from the Cleveland Indians, meet Tasha and Michael to learn about how Providence House is "Changing the Story" for children in crisis, and check out photos from the event.

**SPRING EVENT WRAP-UP**

April was Child Abuse Prevention Month and a busy one for Providence House! We launched our 2nd annual "Every Child Awareness Campaign" with banners in Tower City, hosted our signature annual Luncheon, partnered with a group of local agencies to host the first ever Cuyahoga County Child Maltreatment Prevention Resource Fair, and received a very special gift from the Swisher Family Foundation at the Cleveland Indians Home Opener!



Greg Fitzsimmons with Natalie Leek-Nelson

- On April 4th nearly 700 guests joined us for the **33rd Annual Providence House Luncheon For Every Child** to celebrate our recent achievements, learn about new research around the lifespan effects of child maltreatment, and hear from our guest speaker, Greg Fitzsimmons, about his personal journey to stop the "cycle" he grew up in. We also honored this year's Every Child Awardees: The Reinberger Foundation, The Sherwin-Williams Company, Kiwanis Ohio – Division 14, and Nick and JoAnna Swisher – thank you all for your commitment to helping children in crisis!

- At the **Cleveland Indians Home Opener – also on April 4th – Providence House was awarded a \$50,000 gift by Nick and JoAnna Swisher** through their Swisher Family Foundation. Joining Nick and Jo Swisher on home plate were Providence House Founder, Sr. Hope Greener,

Trustee Karen Dolan, and CEO Natalie Leek-Nelson. We were thrilled to once again be a part of the Opening Day ceremonies and cannot begin to express our sincere thanks to the Swisher Family!

- This April, in support of child abuse prevention month, nearly 15 agencies partnered to host the first ever **Cuyahoga County Child Maltreatment Prevention Resource Fair at Great Lakes Science Center on Sunday, April 27th.** The collaborative community event was designed to educate families about child maltreatment – including how to prevent and report it – and to provide resources and information to help keep all children in our community safe.



The Swisher Family Foundation check presentation

**Thank you to our partners for an excellent event!**

Providence House • Ohio Children's Trust Fund • Department of Children and Family Services • Invest in Children • Defending Childhood • Cleveland Rape Crisis Center • Domestic Violence & Child Advocacy Center • Family & Children First Council • The Collaborative to End Human Trafficking Program • Renee Jones Empowerment Center • Ohio Attorney General's office • Ohio Internet Crimes Against Children Task Force • West Shore and Allies Against Human Trafficking



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## WISH LIST CRITICAL NEEDS:

- **Gift Certificates to Dave's Supermarkets, Giant Eagle, Walmart, Target, Office Max, and Gas Cards are always helpful and provide the most flexibility to meet immediate needs.**
- Nasal Aspirators
- Boys and girls shorts sizes 6-10
- Diaper wipes & diaper rash cream
- Baby bottles with slow-flow or medium-flow nipples (Avent or Tommee Tippee brand)
- Baby wash
- Paper towels
- Latex and non-latex gloves, size medium
- School supplies
- Summer outfits for boys and girls size 6-12

## Save These Dates...

### **August 2014** *(date TBD)* **Ohio City Back-Pack to School Fair**

3rd annual back-to-school "fair" hosted by Providence House, West Side Catholic Center, Cleveland Public Library (Carnegie West Branch), Ohio City Inc., Franklin Circle Church and St. Paul's Church to provide backpacks and school supplies to children in need. Have school supplies to donate that could benefit those students? Contact a participating agency today!

### **September 12, 2014** **2nd Annual pARTy with PHriends**

Join our PHriends Group at Red Space art gallery in downtown Cleveland for the 2nd annual wine and beer tasting event, featuring original art by the children at Providence House. Be sure to get your tickets early - last year's event sold out!

### **December 9, 2014** **19th Annual "Deck the House" Live & Silent Auction**

FirstEnergy Stadium (home of the Cleveland Browns)  
City View Lounge – 5:30 - 9:30pm