

Better Futures

WINTER 2020 PUBLICATION OF



casa de los niños



Take Care of Yourself During the Holidays

During the holidays, we are so quick to give our time and energy that we can end up feeling completely depleted afterwards. In the best-case scenario, we meaningfully bond with our families and friends, cook delicious food, share experiences and talk about what we wish for in the coming year.

This holiday season is upon us with unprecedented challenges. The best intentions might dissolve into a period of anxiety and stress. As you go through this season, take the time each day to practice some self-care so that you can best help others. When you practice self-care, you are

really practicing self-compassion. As you offer compassion to yourself, you can offer compassion to others. It is empowering to be able to make small daily choices that have positive effects in your own life that then ripple out to others.

With the increased stressors and challenges we are all facing, one can really struggle with how to best manage their mental health during this time of year, as self-care and your mental health become forgotten in times of stress and difficulty.

Here are some great ways to help manage your mental health during the holidays:

- **Keep your expectations** for the season **realistic**
- **Seek professional help** if you are overwhelmed by stress
- **Eat healthy** foods and exercise
- **Set a budget** for gift giving
- **Meditate**, breathe deeply, listen to music
- **Volunteer** with a local organization
- Find ways to **help those in need** (see page 6 for ways to help)



Message from Susie Huhn, CEO



There has been frequent news of rising levels of depression in children and teens and the high number of children that are not attending online school during the pandemic. According to the recent article in the *Arizona Daily Star*, educators are burdened by 1,000+ kids missing from school. It provides critical insight into the high numbers of students unaccounted for and highlights the troublesome implications for their mental health and emotional well-being. This burden falls heavily on the shoulders of teachers and counselors who are often the first to see issues arise.

As the CEO of Casa de los Niños, I am concerned with the increase in demand for mental health services and fear we could be facing an overloaded Behavioral Health system that is not prepared to meet this growing demand. We are seeing a dramatic increase in requests for therapy services for both anxiety and

depression. Particularly of note, there is a huge need for help for young children, ages 6–12.

Since early fall, we have been working with over 50 schools in five school districts and charter schools to help students who are struggling. Our Community Engagement Coordinators are available to teachers, school counselors, and administrators to offer support and link children and families to mental and community health services. Casa de los Niños has close to 50 therapists on staff, and we also provide case management, virtual support groups, and counseling for children and adults.

These services are crucial, and we rely on the community to support our work as the need continues to grow.

This will be a difficult holiday season for many. We are here to offer support, resources, and urgent services when needed. If you are able to help, please do. These are unusual and trying times. We need to come together to help those in need.

Thank you for your support,

Susie Huhn



Community Education and Outreach Classes VIA ZOOM | DECEMBER 2020

Importance of Praise

Friday, Dec. 4 | 4 – 5:30pm

Ages and Stages of Infant and Toddler Development

Monday, Dec. 7 | 3 – 4:30pm

Ways to Enhance Positive Brain Development

Tuesday, Dec. 8 | 4 – 5:30pm

Developing Morals, Values and Rules

Wednesday, Dec. 9 | 4 – 5:30pm

Communicating with Respect

Thursday, Dec. 10 | 3 – 4:30pm

Positive Ways to Deal with Stress and Anger

Friday, Dec. 11 | 4 – 5:30pm

Raising a Confident Child

Monday, Dec. 14 | 4 – 5:30pm

Discipline, Rewards, and Punishment

Tuesday, Dec. 15 | 4 – 5:30pm

Loving Discipline: Ages 1 – 5 Years

Wednesday, Dec. 16 | 4 – 5:30pm

Grandparents: Roles and Responsibilities

Thursday, Dec. 17 | 4 – 5:30pm

Tips and Resources: For Parents and Caregivers to Support Learning From Home

Friday, Dec. 18 | 4 – 5:30pm

Developing Personal Power in Children

Monday, Dec. 21 | 3 – 4:30pm

Establishing Nurturing Parenting Routines

Tuesday, Dec. 22 | 4 – 5:30pm

Expectations and Development in Children **NEW**

Wednesday, Dec. 23 | 4 – 5:30pm

Helping Children Manage Their Behavior **NEW**

Monday, Dec. 28 | 4 – 5:30pm

Problem Solving, Decision Making, Negotiation, and Compromise

Tuesday, Dec. 29 | 4 – 5:30pm

Surviving Your Adolescent

Wednesday, Dec. 30 | 4 – 6:00pm



After planting an outdoor garden, the students at the Early Education Center learn about fruits and vegetables.

Early Education Center Open for Families

We have remained committed to keeping the Kelly Early Education Center (EEC) open during the COVID-19 pandemic to ensure high-quality early education and childcare for families.

The need is greater than ever as some centers have closed their doors, and there is increased pressure for parents to seek and maintain employment.

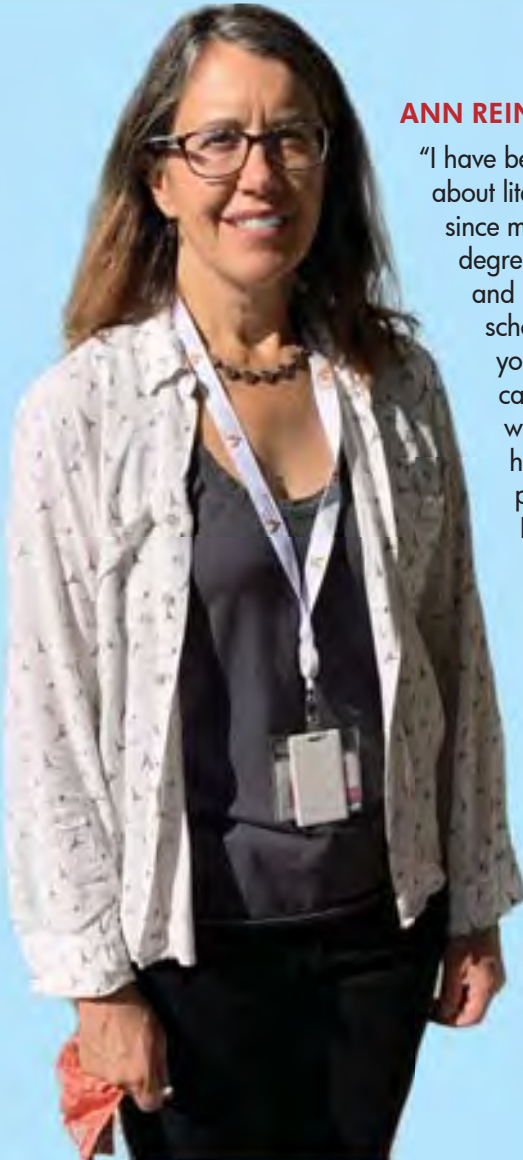
Our stellar team at the EEC has introduced new educational activities including a gardening unit that teaches the kids where their food comes from and how to grow and take care of vegetables, and a space unit fused with dramatic play that incorporates literacy and math!

The Early Education Center is an incredible resource for families in-need in Tucson and we are looking forward to all of the future adventures and learning experiences to come!



Nurse-Family Partnership: From Home Visits to Telehealth

Nurse-Family Partnership (NFP) is an evidence-based, home visitation program focusing on first-time, low-income mothers and their infants. We start visiting mothers during pregnancy with in-home support for the family until the infant turns two years old, providing information, education, and support on parenting, child development, and health topics. As nurses, we also perform health assessments on our clients and infants at every visit. At the heart of NFP is the relationship we forge, visit by visit, with the mothers in our program. With March came the COVID-19 pandemic and home visits came to a halt. Reinventing how we deliver our services and nurture our relationships with our clients who are expecting or are new mothers has been very challenging. Three years ago, we began using telehealth as a convenient alternative to home visits for the mothers we serve, but in March, telehealth became the only way to serve our clients. Gradually, with our nurses' ingenuity, we began doing porch drops of program materials during which we could also see our clients—although at a safe distance—and do some health assessments of mothers and infants. With the reopening of the zoo, one of our nurses organized small group outings with mothers and infants while maintaining masking and social distancing. Still, we find that we struggle to keep the connection with our clients strong in the absence of home visitation, and several have disengaged and left the program. However, our dedicated nurses are undaunted and continue to provide all that we are able in these transformed times. A few of our great team members offered to share their experience and perspective with us.



ANN REINHART, RN

"I have been passionate about literacy and education since my twenties. I have a degree in English Literature and became a high school teacher in my younger years. My career path changed with my interest in health education and prevention. The years I chose to work in the hospital as a nurse were very demanding and disappointing to me, as they didn't seem to address my individual patient's healing process and learning how to prevent becoming sick again.

When I learned about the Nurse-Family Partnership Program, I was drawn to the fact that I would be able to truly spend time with clients, to hear what they needed and be more thorough in providing healthcare. And it's not just for the mom—it's for the whole family. When COVID-19 hit, it was all very confusing and daunting to try to adequately provide our services through Zoom. But, we worked through the technical issues very quickly, and I was immediately impressed with how well it actually works! It frequently provides more uninterrupted time with our clients, and we are able to really focus on each other. I continue to provide important health assessments and monitor pregnancies, but equally important... I listen. People are nervous and isolated. I want my clients to know that I am here for them, I will show up, not judge, and always support them."



AUDREY LEVY, RN

"I have been part of the Nurse-Family Partnership Program with Casa de los Niños for 6½ years. One of the most important tenets of this program is that each mother is the expert in her own life. I support my client's heart's desire and focus on the topics that she chooses. We have found that many of our program materials translate well to telehealth. At the beginning of the pandemic, very few of my clients were comfortable with Zoom, but as the pandemic has continued, many more are choosing video conference visits. Unfortunately, many do not have access to internet at home, and for those we are providing phone visits. This has made it very difficult to feel as close to many families. However, we are also seeing that for some clients, particularly for clients with anxiety, telehealth is preferable! It alleviates the concern for some of having someone physically in their home. I always assure clients that 'I am coming to see you, not your home.'



In order to safely conduct some assessments—such as for intimate partner violence—we need to be certain that no one else is in the home or with the client. Unfortunately, this is not always possible,

and some of these assessments cannot be completed. I always want to be sure that my client is safe. The amount of uncertainty can be very unsettling for a pregnant woman. Hospital policies are changing frequently. More than ever, our clients need support. While they are still seeing their doctors, those visits can be pressed for time, and if they forget something or have questions or worries, they can always call me. Their mental health is as important as their physical health, and the two cannot be separated. An occasional distanced and masked porch visit to drop off a board book and a toothbrush can truly brighten a client's day during these difficult times."

Dawn Kasarda, Nurse-Home Visitor, meets virtually with a client.

KATHRYN CARMEN, RN

"Before I became a Nurse-Home Visitor, I worked at Tucson Medical Center on the mom/baby unit. When I learned of an opportunity with Casa de los Niños, I was drawn to the fact that I could truly focus on prevention and help mothers to avoid so many of the health challenges that affect birth outcomes such as pre-eclampsia and gestational diabetes. I have always been committed to addressing health disparities, and this job has allowed me to do that in a real way. I wondered if I would miss the acute aspect of providing care in a hospital setting. I did not have time to miss it! I immediately felt that I was helping by really listening to moms and meeting them where they are. The transition to virtual health care definitely presents some challenges such as not being able to personally check vitals like blood pressure, weight, and swelling. I have been having to make sure that moms are writing these down at their doctor visits and sharing them with me. Since the pandemic started, some moms are feeling overwhelmed and not consistent in their sessions—they dip in and out a bit. I assure them that I am here when they need me. I certainly do not want to add stress or pressure. And some clients are actually checking in more. They really need someone to talk to. I always offer the option of a regular phone call or Zoom as I want to be respectful of their comfort level in the new environment. I am having to slow down more to concentrate on how moms are really feeling during this time, letting them just talk and supporting them with their feelings and concerns which can be more intense during this time. Slowing down has been a good thing. This new way of providing care really seems to encourage some clients to share more about how they are feeling first."



Ways to Help for the Holidays

The holidays are fast-approaching, and we know that things are going to look a bit different this year due to COVID-19. We all have been affected by this pandemic, and it is something we are learning to navigate day by day. All of this uncertainty is amplified for children and families who were struggling prior to the pandemic—families are bearing the weight of these challenges.

This is a time when generosity and giving is front and center, and now more than ever, children and families need your help! You can help with **new**:



TOYS



HYGIENE ITEMS

CLOTHING, ALL AGES AND SIZES



GIFT CARDS TO FRY'S, SAFEWAY, TARGET, OR WALMART



BOARD GAMES

ART SUPPLIES OR CRAFTING KITS



Your generosity will change a life and can make the holidays brighter for kids, teens and families!

Holiday Donation Drive-Thru Event for Kids and Families!

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 12TH | 10 AM – 3 PM

Have you heard about our Holiday Donation Drive-Thru Event? Stop by the Cole and Jeannie Davis Family Center (1120 N. 5th Avenue) and drop off your donations on the day of the drive! Please be sure to wear a mask at drop off.

We look forward to seeing you!



THANK YOU to our Partners!

Community partnerships are crucial to the work of Casa de los Niños!

These partnerships ensure that we continue to provide vital services to at-risk children, teens, and families of the Tucson community.

Thank you to **AT&T Arizona** for supporting Casa de los Niños with a generous grant! Your gift will go a long way to ensure help is available during this time of great need.

We are grateful to the **The Jasam Foundation of Arizona** for their ongoing generosity and vision to help kids in the most meaningful way! This foundation continues to make an incredible impact in the Tucson community, and we are so fortunate to partner with them!

In-N-Out Burger Foundation is truly committed to the health and well-being of children and families. They demonstrate this through generous support of our Behavioral and Mental Health Services. Thank you for your partnership.

Thank you to **AFNI, Inc.** and **Intuit** for your generous gifts to support the children and families in our community.

Thanks to these groups who have provided art supplies for kids and teenagers, board games, gift cards, toys, and more to help struggling families.

- Micha's Restaurant
- Karnas Law Firm
- Commonwealth Electric Company of the Midwest
- Renee Rupp
- Leidos, Inc
- Mt. Olive Church of God in Christ
- Old Pueblo Rotary Club of Tucson
- 655th AMXS and the 355th EMS/ Age Flight from Davis-Monthan Air Force Base

ARE YOU Dedicated, Solutions-Focused, Compassionate?

JOIN THE CASA DE LOS NIÑOS TEAM and Be a Voice for Children • Change • Advocacy

- WE HAVE CURRENT OPPORTUNITIES FOR:
- Child and Family Therapists
 - Behavioral Health Care Coordinators
 - Registered Nurses
 - Home Visitors

www.casadelosninos.org



THE MISSION of Casa de los Niños
is to promote
CHILD WELL-BEING and
FAMILY STABILITY in our community.

the
voice
for change
advocacy
children



casa de los niños

CHANGING LIVES FOR GENERATIONS

Casa de los Niños
1120 North 5th Avenue
Tucson, AZ 85705

casadelosninos.org
520.624.5600

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TWO WAYS TO HELP

Please Make Your Tax Credit Gift to Help Children and Families

Please consider making your tax credit gift now to help families during this difficult time.

Casa de los Niños is a **Qualified Charitable Organization**. Your gift may entitle you to a credit of up to **\$400 as an individual** or **\$800 as a couple** on your Arizona State tax return. **QCO Code: 22048**

For more information regarding your state tax credit, please visit azdor.gov or consult your tax advisor.

To make a gift, email lcanez@casadelosninos.org or call 520.624.5600.

Thank you!



Sign up is easy!

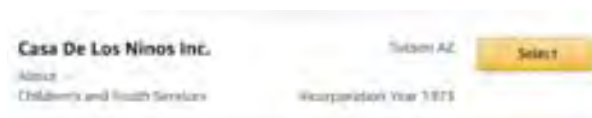
- Go to smile.amazon.com
- Log into your account, and you'll be prompted to select your charity. Type "Casa de los Ninos Tucson" into the search box, and click the "Select" button.

After that, simply shop at smile.amazon.com, or set the Amazon app to activate AmazonSmile to have them donate from your purchase to Casa de los Niños!

Shop to support Casa de los Niños!

When you shop at Amazon, the AmazonSmile Foundation will donate .5% of your eligible purchases to our organization.

It's the same Amazon. Once you sign up for AmazonSmiles, the foundation does the rest.



**THANK YOU FOR
YOUR SUPPORT!**