

Life takes you to unexpected places. **But love brings you home.**



Life took Ben to many unexpected places—seven moves and eight placements in five years, to be exact.

His mother brought him and his seven siblings to the Department of Social Services and requested that, for the sake of her children, they take custody of them. Her boyfriend's physical abuse of her and the children, substance abuse, and poverty had taken a toll. Photos from police reports showed the home to have trash, alcohol bottles, no running water or working toilets, and moldy mattresses. From here, the children would enter foster care.

Ben was separated from his siblings as all the children were placed in several different foster homes. A few weeks after his placement, the family asked that Ben be removed because of significant behavioral issues.

Five more moves involved families caring for Ben. But even after several of these families served as long-term placements, ultimately they all requested he be removed from their care because of his extreme emotional and behavioral issues.

continued on page 2 ►

Anne and Ben celebrating his "Student of the Month" award.

Love Brings You Home continued from page 1

A referral was made to Black Hills Children's Home (BHCH) for Ben to receive the treatment he needed to deal with his anger and deep hurts. With time, and following his discharge from BHCH, Ben was placed with a CHS Therapeutic Foster Care family who would continue to provide consistent care, and support the gains he had made at BHCH.

When Ben was referred to Children's Home Society's Wendy's Wonderful Kids program (WWK), he was the last sibling in need of a permanency plan. The two youngest siblings were adopted by their foster family. Three other siblings were in a pre-adoptive placement out of state, and his two older brothers were in the process of being adopted by their grandparents.

Ben's WWK recruiter, Anne, shares: "I'll never forget the first time I met Ben. He was so endearing and sweet. Shortly after being introduced, he asked me if I was going to help his grandma adopt him. We spent time together every week playing games, talking, and just getting to know one another.

"I remember how adorable he looked in his Christmas onesie pajamas. I remember hooping and hollering as the only adult there to cheer him on when he accepted his "Student of the Month" award at school. And we worked together on his adoption workbook.

"Ben shared about feeling lonely, and he didn't think much of himself. But each time we visited he would perk up when we talked about his grandma. It became clear to me early on that Ben's grandparents were who he wanted to be with, along with his older brothers."

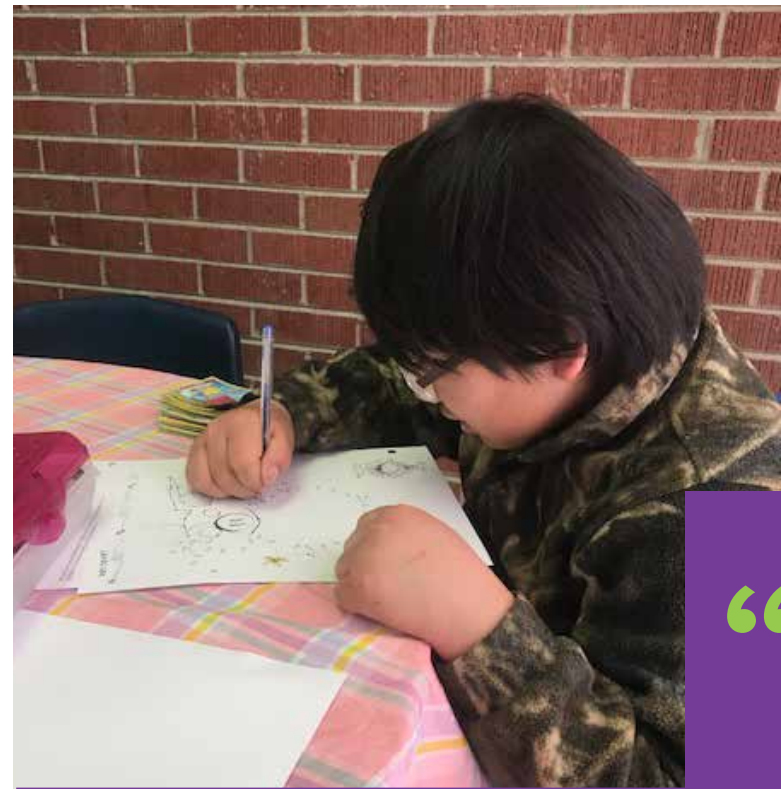
Anne began visits with the grandparents. She would bring beads on her visits, as Ben's grandmother beaded traditional Native American jewelry. His grandparents did express their desire to raise him and the importance of Ben belonging with family, if possible. They were introduced to Ben's CHS foster parents at a pow wow, and a relationship with them began. They started talking on the phone, and the foster mother would update them on how Ben was doing, and how they handled his behaviors.

Through her work, it was clear to Anne that Ben was strongly connected to his grandparents, he hoped to be adopted by them, and he found a strong sense of belonging living in a tribal community.

As part of the adoption process, Anne spent time building trust and strengthening the relationships between Ben, his foster parents, his grandparents, and his two older brothers. Not without its challenges, Anne found this family network to be loving, protective, thoughtful, tenacious, and committed to making a good life for this little boy.

Ben was elated beyond words when he learned that he would be going to live with his grandparents and brothers!

Ben now describes himself as being "kind and gentle." He enjoys traditional dancing, being around horses, listening to music, and participating in lacrosse and boxing.



Ben spends time filling out his adoption workbook.

FROM ANNE:

Since I began my work with CHS as a WWK recruiter, I have helped finalize 24 adoptions. Twelve of those adoptions were with relatives or families already known to the child.

I had permission from Ben's grandparents to share this story. It is their hope that they can motivate other American Indian families "to step up for their little relatives."



WWK Reaches 100 Adoptions!

The CHS Wendy's Wonderful Kids (WWK) program helps find families for children in need of adoptive homes. The children in this program present one or more of the following challenges: They are older, have medical needs, are in a sibling group, have behavior issues, or have endured extensive trauma.

On February 27, 2020, CHS's WWK program hit a milestone of 100 adoptions!

"We reached 100 adoptions back in late February, but COVID changed the timing of our celebration with CHS staff. I'm happy to report that as of today, we are actually now at 103 adoptions!" says Ondrea Patzlaff, Program Director for Community Based Services in Sioux Falls.

On Wednesday, September 2, at both ends of the state, CHS staff celebrated these 100 finalized adoptions. The two CHS WWK staff recruiters—Anne McGovern (Rapid City) and Tina Graber (Sioux Falls)—served cake to staff in all CHS programs.



Meet Lonnie—Number 100!

(You're not a "number" at CHS. But in this case, we'll make an exception!)

Lonnie was born with a variety of medical challenges and needed a family who could meet his current and, most likely, lifelong health needs. Due to the severe nature of his medical condition and the associated risks, there were concerns about Lonnie's life expectancy.

Meet Lonnie: Number 100!

Lonnie was eventually matched with a family in Colorado. His mom, Pam, is a nurse and has exactly the level of experience and knowledge needed to help him thrive. In addition, Lonnie also now has siblings to grow up with.

"We had such an amazing experience and hope to adopt again in the future with the assistance of Wendy's Wonderful kids in South Dakota. Everyone involved made it such a wonderful experience."

— Pam

A note from Ben's Grandma...

I'm glad we have three of the eight grandchildren. I thank Child Protection Services, Bridgett with the foster parent classes, Anne at Children's Home Society, and the other foster parents. I am honored to be a part of this entity toward protecting children. *Wakanyeja*, or children, are sacred. God bless all the children, foster parents, the department, and Children's Home Society. ”



“Caring for the Kids” Kicks C

COVID-19 has altered plans for weddings, fall football schedules, school openings, and so much more. At CHS, we could add The Orion Classic golf benefit to that list. It didn't happen this year.

But what did happen? CHF Foundation staff, with assistance from the CHS Marketing team, created an alternative event that netted over \$440,000!

There were various components to this event that were spread throughout the summer.

Foundation staff called on the extensive list of businesses and families who, previously, had been SPONSORS of The Orion Challenge. With the exception of just a few, almost every sponsor signed back on to support Caring for the Kids!

Below: Mike Schulte draws the winning name for the Car Raffle.



RESULT: \$234,000

The first event was the CAR RAFFLE for a new Subaru Forester donated by Schulte Subaru of Sioux Falls. 400 tickets sold out in a week!

RESULT: \$40,000

Next up, the virtual SILENT AUCTION allowed participants to bid online on trips, experiences, certificates, furniture, accessories, quilts, and more.

RESULT: \$21,236

Also online, CHS friends could view a catalog of classroom and unit WISHES they could sponsor.

RESULT: \$8,800

CHS friends GORDON SPRONK and RANDY SPRONK became CHALLENGE DONORS for the culminating television event, offering to match gifts given during and following the program, up to \$50,000!

CHALLENGE GIFT: \$50,000



Above: Gordon Spronk, a Challenge Donor featured on the television event.

If you missed the TV program and would like to

OVID to the Curb!

GIVING FROM THE HEART

We're thankful to our Caring for the Kids sponsors for providing a solid foundation to launch this effort!

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Marsh & McLennan Agency • SilverStone Group • Bob & Maureen Suga
UPS • Bob & Marilyn VanDemark • Waterbury Heating & Cooling

MEDIA SPONSORS

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Midwest Communications • Sisson Printing

And finally, for the first time ever, CHS had a 30-minute, statewide TELEVISED EVENT on KELO-Land TV on Monday, August 10 with staff answering phones during and after the TV program.

GIFTS GIVEN IN RESPONSE
TO THE CHALLENGE: \$ 97,360

see it, go to: caringforthekids.com



CHS Chief
Executive Officer
Michelle Lavalley

What a year 2020 has been!
I celebrated my one-year
anniversary as CEO of Children's

Home Society on September 30, 2020. And while this year has seemingly flown by, it has been filled with so many monumental events in our world. It feels more like a decade-worth of experiences!

Addressing the COVID-19 Pandemic required urgent action and is ongoing. It has added stress to staff and kids and forced limited visitations. Those in need of emergency shelter also faced increased hurdles in seeking help due to both fear and limited opportunities to leave.

Across the country, we've seen peaceful protests and escalated riots, both of which have increased awareness within our own agency. Changes in state contracts required us to reposition our Community Based Services program. And staff recruitment and retention efforts continue to be a challenge with increasing levels of stress due to COVID precautionary measures.

In the midst of these challenges we also celebrate positive momentum.

Due to the diligence of our staff, we have had no community spread of COVID-19. Positive cases are minimal and contained due to social distancing, diligent mask-wearing, temperature taking, good hygiene, and enhanced disinfecting practices.

We've launched a Diversity & Inclusion Council to broaden awareness and implement policy change for equity for all. Our DSS reviews have been incredibly positive and client satisfaction remains high in all programs. Our Community Based Services program is transitioning to serve a wider clientele base, which will allow us to rely less on state contracts for funding. We've integrated comprehensive compliance oversight for all programs in all locations. And our leaders are developing new skills through our new CHS University program.

As we look forward to the new year, we turn our focus to the three pillars of our strategic plan: our people, our financial positioning, and our operations. As these pillars guide our decision-making, we aim to create a leadership culture among staff, create a sustainable business model to fuel innovation, and create a consistent experience throughout our agency based on best practices to provide the best outcomes for all those we serve.



Guardians *of the* Children

GUARDIANS OF THE CHILDREN is a legacy program established to recognize and honor those people whose vision, philanthropy, and love of children has been demonstrated by a planned estate gift to Children's Home Foundation. Funds from the Foundation support programs of Children's Home Society including Children's Inn, Black Hills Children's Home, and Sioux Falls Children's Home.

You've got to love a guy who has the self-confidence (and self-deprecating humor!) to unknowingly wear two different shoes to an annual CHS Board Meeting—and then laugh about it!

Over the course of the last 30 years, George and Donna Roberts have become cherished friends of Children's Home Society, and are two of its biggest cheerleaders!

George served as a Children's Home Society (CHS) board member from 1989–1995, and from 1997–2009, for a total of 18 years. He then served an additional seven years as a board member for Children's Home Foundation (CHF) from 2010–2017, and was Board President from 2014–2015. To date, George has logged 25 years of service! You will also find George working as a faithful volunteer at CHS fundraising events.

“Though it now seems like only yesterday, it was over 30 years ago that Dennis Stene asked me if I would consider serving as a board member for Children's Home Society. I said, ‘Yes!’— and it was one of the greatest decisions I ever made.” – George

Donna has served in her own right by introducing many friends to the CHS mission, as well as assisting with many CHS fundraising events, such as The Orion Classic. Most notably is her time as a member of The North Pole Elf Squad—helping with a variety of Christmas activities and gift preparation for the kids at Sioux Falls Children's Home.

“Working with CHS is so rewarding. I had the privilege of joining The North Pole Elf Squad to help with Christmas-giving activity in December. It's amazing to see the generosity of our community. So many give their time and energy to make the holiday special for the CHS kids!” – Donna

To learn more about making a gift through your will, trust, or retirement plan, please contact:

Rick Weber
Development Director
P: **605.965.3127**
E: **rick.weber@chssd.org**



George and Donna Roberts

“A number of years ago, CHS started the GUARDIANS OF THE CHILDREN program. The idea is simple, but powerful. You can make CHS part of your estate plan, and it is not complicated at all. People can put CHS in their will, add CHS as a beneficiary of a life insurance policy, or maybe include CHS as a pension beneficiary. Some options are very simple and have little or no cost.

Because the CHS mission is so important to us, Donna and I have done this in our own planning. We love the idea that we will be able to help children far beyond our time on this earth! I would encourage anyone who feels the same way to consider doing the same.”

– George Roberts

To include Children's Home Society in your will, the most common bequest language is:

I bequeath (description of gift) to Children's Home Foundation to be used to support the operations of Children's Home Society.

GeorgeTown: A Legacy of Gifting

“Do our kids ever get to know the joy in giving a gift to someone they care about?”

George and Donna knew that the kids at Sioux Falls Children’s Home (SFCH) would have enough Christmas presents, thanks to so many people who help provide gifts for them.

But their question went to the other end of the gift spectrum—wanting kids to know the joy found in **giving** a gift.

So what began as a question in 2009, has evolved to become one of the favorite Christmas traditions at SFCH!

For the past 11 years, and with funds provided by the Roberts, several staff members scour Sioux Falls for gifts in the \$5–\$9 range, and set up a store—affectionately named “GeorgeTown”—where SFCH kids come to shop for up to four people who are special to them—parents, siblings, grandparents, social workers, teachers, Big Buddies, etc.

There was one other thing important to George and Donna—that the kids somehow earned the gifts they selected and gave, so it would truly feel like a gift from them.

So each year, the four living units put together a “Christmas Kindness Activity Plan” that gives opportunities for the kids to do things for others, thereby earning shopping privileges.

Some examples have included:

- Make homemade dog treats for the Humane Society
- Read books to the younger children
- Make Christmas cards for nursing home residents
- Make ornaments for patients at the VA Hospital
- Make special treats for the housekeeping and maintenance staff
- Make and take treats to the Fire Department down the street
- Brush car windows for staff on a snowy day (a staff favorite!)
- Go caroling in the neighborhood

GeorgeTown shopping day bristles with excitement! With Christmas music playing in the background, kids shop with the help of staff and volunteers. They take their selections to a volunteer who helps them wrap and tag their gifts. Their time ends with a decorated Christmas cut-out cookie!



*Thank you, George and Donna,
for establishing this wonderful
Christmas tradition!*



Children’s Home
Foundation
Development Director
Rick Weber

We are so fortunate to receive gifts from a wide variety of friends which include individuals, families, businesses, churches, civic groups, and others. And very often, handwritten notes of encouragement and appreciation for our work also come with your gifts. Those acts of kindness are beyond special!

We never take it for granted that people work hard for the money they have. That we are entrusted with a portion of that is something we take very seriously. Each and every gift is a blessing.

Recently we received a very special letter from a brother and sister who had a lemonade stand, and put up a sign that read, “50% of sales will go to Children’s Home Society.” These two kids were very proud to share with us what they had done and enclosed a gift of \$7.14. Their parents sent their own very nice note with a “matching gift” of \$1,000!

It is especially heartwarming to receive gifts from those whose lives have been impacted by Children’s Home Society (CHS). Going back to our orphanage days, we have gotten gifts from people around the country with notes about how they or their parents were adopted through CHS and are so very thankful for the life they had because of it.

Parents and grandparents of children served more recently in our residential and school programs have sent donations, along with kind and supportive notes thanking us for the work we do, and for the difference we have made in their family. Their words are so very appreciated and uplifting. Those of us who come to work here every day feel like we are making a difference for kids and families. But when you get affirmation from a family we have served—well, that is golden!

There are so many kind, caring, and generous people—young and old alike—helping us in so many different ways. And with the continued help of friends like we have, each doing what they can, the future of Children’s Home Society is in very good hands!

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— With Our Thanks —

We recognize these outgoing board members for their dedicated service!



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Marilyn Van Demark*
Doug Wells

**Current Board Member*



With Gratitude

For all these friends who help support our work!

GALA AT MOUNT RUSHMORE

This COVID-altered non-event still raised \$32,728 to support endowment for the CHS Child Advocacy Center in Rapid City.

THOSE GUYS ABATE POKER RUN

The 11th Annual Poker Run was held July 19 and raised \$11,668 for CHS.

SCOOTER'S "DAY OF GIVING"

Scooter's in Sioux Falls donated 100% of their proceeds on July 27 to four programs in the Sioux Falls area that work with foster children and families. CHS received \$4,400 from this promotion!

ROTARY GOLF TOURNAMENT

The 31st Annual Rotary Club of Rapid City Rushmore Golf Tournament was held July 27 and raised \$61,489 to support endowment for the CHS Child Advocacy Center in Rapid City.

THE RED ROCK "BIKE NIGHTS"

The Red Rock Bar & Grill in Rowena, SD, held summer "Bike Nights" raising \$29,500 through the generosity of their customers, partners, and friends.

BLACK HILLS WIND & FIRE MOTORCYCLE RUN

The 8th annual Black Hills Wind & Fire Firefighters Motorcycle Run was held August 6 and raised \$3,675 for Black Hills Children's Home. Members are firefighters who ride Harley-Davidson bikes.

CARING FOR THE KIDS

This summer-long fundraiser netted \$440,000 through sponsorships, a car raffle, a virtual silent auction and special wishes, a challenge donor match, and gifts given in response to the August 10 statewide televised special on KELOLAND TV. *(See story on pages 4 & 5.)*

KIEFFER SANITATION TRASH CAN OPEN

The 7th annual event was held August 27 and raised \$38,489 to support endowment for the CHS Child Advocacy Center in Rapid City.

JON CRANE BENEFIT ART AUCTION

The 14th Annual Jon Crane CHS Benefit Auction will be a virtual event on October 2nd. Pre-auction donations to date exceed \$25,000 and will support Children's Home Child Advocacy Center in Rapid City.

UPCOMING EVENTS

2020

NOV 16–
DEC 24 Little Red Stocking Round-Up
Nyberg's Ace
All 5 locations in Sioux Falls

DEC 4–24 Children's Inn Gift Wrap Booth
Empire Mall, Sioux Falls

2021

JAN 16 Cleaver's Chef Challenge
The Atrium at Blue Haven
Sioux Falls

JAN 22 & 23 Media One Funski
Great Bear, Sioux Falls

TBD Gala at Mount Rushmore
Will be a non-event fundraiser—
more to come!

LEARN EVEN MORE ABOUT CHS



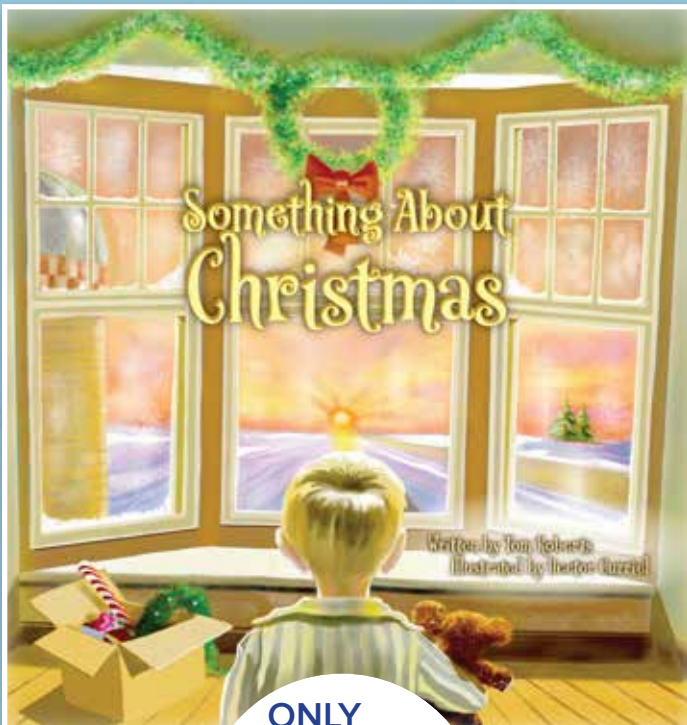
Sign up to receive Children's Home Society's monthly e-newsletter: A Letter From Home. Go to our website: chssd.org



Watch our videos on CHS' YouTube Channel: youtube.com/user/ChildrensHomeSD



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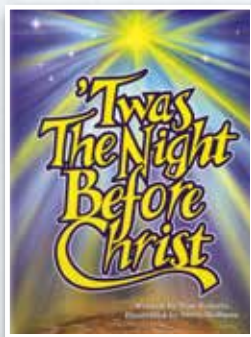
Something About Christmas

The newest Christmas story by Tom Roberts and illustrated by Hector Curriel

Add to your collection the newest book in a set of heartwarming Christmas stories from Children's Home Society: **Something About Christmas**, written by author/storyteller Tom Roberts and illustrated by Hector Curriel.

Something About Christmas is a poetic story of a little boy who is sad that Christmas is over and it is time to put away the decorations. His parents help him realize that Christmas continues to exist in the dawn of each new day.

Visit our website for a complete list of retail locations, to schedule story-telling programs and book signing events, or to purchase books: chssd.org/books



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SPOTLIGHT ON STAFF



Tammy Johnke

EMPLOYEE OF THE YEAR is awarded to someone who not only demonstrates exceptional abilities in their job, but also personifies the CHS core values of Better Together, Kindness, and Tenacity. Tammy is a Teaching Assistant at Sioux Falls Children's Home Loving School.



Carmen

RISING STAR OF THE YEAR is awarded to someone who has been with the agency for at least one year, but less than two. In that time, co-workers already see "star quality" in their job performance, and exceptional qualities as a person. Carmen is a Brave Beginnings Youth Care Provider at Children's Inn.

SERVICE AWARDS

Each year, Children's Home Society celebrates the milestone anniversaries of its 350+ statewide employees. This wealth of skill, experience, institutional memory, and community connections has helped to define the strength and character of Children's Home Society.



40
YRS

Sue Andrews
Therapist

Black Hills Children's Home



30
YRS

Lynne Bauske
Secretary

Sioux Falls Children's Home



30
YRS

Dave Helseth
*Residential Treatment
Counselor*

Sioux Falls Children's Home



30
YRS

Deb Moritz
Senior Writer

CHS/CHF



30
YRS

Jan Wullstein
Housekeeper

Sioux Falls Children's Home



25
YRS

Kris Murray
Secretary

Sioux Falls Children's Home



25
YRS

Staci Kropuenske
*Development
Coordinator*

Children's Inn



20
YRS

Julie Blain
*Assistant Program
Supervisor*

Children's Inn



20
YRS

Michelle Carlson
Unit Director

Sioux Falls Children's Home



20
YRS

Roxie Schmitz
Relief Worker

Children's Inn



15
YRS

Steve Feild
Team Coordinator

Black Hills Children's Home



15
YRS

Loree Crawford
Relief Worker

Black Hills Children's Home



15
YRS

Beth Keizer
Therapist

Black Hills Children's Home



15
YRS

Rachel Kraft
Teacher

Black Hills Children's Home



15
YRS

Sam Singer
Teacher

Sioux Falls Children's Home



10
YRS

Kim Caswell
Home Visitation Nurse

Bright Start



10
YRS

Renee Gorsuch
HR Representative

Black Hills Children's Home



10
YRS

Theresa Schreiner
*Development & Events
Manager*

Children's Home Foundation
- Black Hills

CHILDREN'S HOME SOCIETY OF SOUTH DAKOTA

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Children's HOME-Work: For All of Us!

This is a message shared by Sue Williams, the Program Director for Sioux Falls Children's Home. It sheds light on a key component of the CHS residential treatment philosophy.

"Given the political differences and social justice issues facing our nation, I want to shine a light on "The Six Core Strengths" we are trying to instill in the children we serve who have suffered trauma. These come from an amazing man—Bruce Perry, MD, PhD—who has dedicated his professional life to studying and treating children who have endured abuse, neglect, exploitation, abandonment, parental chemical dependency, and family violence.

Dr. Perry says we can diminish violence if we focus on these Core Strengths when working with children:

Attachment	The ability to make emotional connections to fellow human beings
Self-Regulation	The ability to think before acting
Belonging	The ability to join in and belong to something
Empathy	The ability to think about fellow human beings
Tolerance	The ability to accept differences
Respect	The ability to value both self and others

It is likely each of us holds strong opinions about potential solutions to these problems. Working hard to teach kids these Core Strengths is a way we might contribute to a solution. Equally important, we will be contributing to inner peace and outer decency in the children we serve at CHS."

Sue's message also offers hope, and a course of action for anyone who may feel powerless to effect change on a larger scale. We can all begin with ourselves, our own children and families, and our neighborhoods and communities.



Established in 1893, Children's Home Society (CHS) is South Dakota's oldest human services, nonprofit organization. Our mission is to empower children, adults, families, and communities to be resilient, safe, healthy, and strong.

CHS provides residential treatment and special education, emergency shelter, forensic interviews, foster care and adoption, and prevention services.

In addition to serving victims of child abuse and domestic violence, CHS also partners with caring parents to help children with emotional or behavioral needs.

CHS is accredited by the Joint Commission and licensed by South Dakota Department of Social Services.

PROGRAM SITES

Children's Inn

605.338.0116

409 N. Western Ave, Sioux Falls, SD 57104

Bright Start

605.274.0233

4402 E. 3rd Street, Sioux Falls, SD 57103

Black Hills Children's Home

605.343.5422

24100 S. Rockerville Road
Rapid City, SD 57702

Sioux Falls Children's Home

605.334.6004

801 N. Sycamore Ave, Sioux Falls, SD 57110

Community Based Services

Black Hills: 605.343.2811

1330 Jolly Lane, Rapid City, SD 57703

Sioux Falls: 605.965.3192

801 N. Sycamore Ave, Sioux Falls, SD 57110

Children's Home Child Advocacy Center

605.716.1628

1330 Jolly Lane, Rapid City, SD 57703