



VISION for  
CHILDREN  
at RISK

# Vision in Action

Creating a better future for children through research, collaboration and advocacy

Spring 2015

give  
STL  
Day.org™

## Support VCR on Give STL Day Tuesday, May 5

All Donations to VCR will be  
matched 100%

Join in 24 hours of online charitable giving on Tuesday, May 5, for the second annual Give STL Day. Organized by the Greater Saint Louis Community Foundation, Give STL Day features nearly 800 nonprofit agencies. Please help the St. Louis community make a strong showing by supporting Give STL Day. And, please choose Vision for Children at Risk when you donate. **All contributions to VCR on Give STL Day will be matched 100% by an anonymous donor.**

## Joining to Prevent Child Abuse

During April Child Abuse Prevention Month, Vision for Children at Risk and the St. Louis Family & Community Partnership, along with community partners, are reaching out to educate the community and engage families to prevent child abuse and neglect.

More than 90 families attended the first-ever Family Resource & Fun Fair on April 18. They received information

on a variety of resources and services available to promote healthy and strong families from the 33 agencies staffing information tables. Children enjoyed entertainment ranging from face painting and dog petting, to doing hula hoops, building a small toolbox and seeing a fire engine up close. Organizing the event were the St. Louis Family & Community Partnership, the St. Louis Area Council on Child Abuse & Neglect, the Center for Violence and Injury Prevention at the Brown School of Washington University, the Children's Permanency Partner-



ship, and Irons in the Fire. Thanks to the Youth Learning Center and Biome School in the Central West End for hosting the event, and to Kenrick Meats & Catering for providing food. See more photos at [www.stlfamilycommunity.org](http://www.stlfamilycommunity.org) or on the VCR Facebook page ([visionforchildren](http://visionforchildren.org)).

Hundreds of agencies, churches and individuals are displaying "Every Child, Every Family, Secure and Safe" yard signs this month to show support for Child Abuse Prevention Month. Check the VCR Facebook page ([visionforchildren](http://visionforchildren.org)) for regular posts featuring participants in the observance.

In the year ended June 30, 2013, a total of 13,180 reports of abuse and neglect involving 19,019 children were made in the four Missouri counties of the St. Louis region, according to the Missouri Children's Division. Of these, 843 cases involving 1,139 children were substantiated as abuse and neglect. For a complete fact sheet including prevention tips, [www.stlfamilycommunity.org](http://www.stlfamilycommunity.org).



## Parent Information Fair May 9 for Children's Mental Health Month

Project LAUNCH invites parents and families from across the community for a Parent Lunch & Learn and Information Fair on Saturday, May 9, in observance of Children's Mental Health Month. The event will be held from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. at the YMCA O'Fallon Rec Center, 4343 West Florissant Ave. Lunch and learn presentations will cover "Perception of Mental Health in the African-American Community" and "The Effects of Community Trauma on Our Children." Community organizations will have displays on health and mental health services, and free child care will be available. For more information, contact Bree Schubert at 314-534-6015, [bschubert@visionforchildren.org](mailto:bschubert@visionforchildren.org).

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## In Brief ...

▶ Vision for Children at Risk Director Rich Patton received the Outstanding Child Advocate award for lifetime achievement from the Missouri Alliance for Children, Youth and Families. The award was presented April 1 during the annual Child Advocacy Day in Jefferson City. Four hundred child advocates from across the state gathered at the Capitol that day to contact legislators and their staffs about issues of concern for children.

▶ Mark your calendar for May 5-7 for "Promoting Racial Equity in Child Welfare Policy and Practice," presented by Khatib Waheed, from 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. at the William L. Clay Early Learning Center at Harris-Stowe State University. Designed to help reduce disproportionality in child welfare services, the seminar is sponsored by the Disproportionality and Disparities Workgroup of the St. Louis Family & Community Partnership. For more information or to register, [Bobie.Rice@dss.mo.gov](mailto:Bobie.Rice@dss.mo.gov), or 314-877-2311. The training is FREE and CEUs are available.

▶ VCR Director Rich Patton gave a briefing to the Ferguson Commission on the status of children in the St. Louis and the long-standing socioeconomic disparities. See his presentation slides at [www.visionforchildren.org](http://www.visionforchildren.org) in the Blog.

▶ The Ready by 21 collective impact initiative for the St. Louis community continues to move forward. The United Way of Greater St. Louis has been chosen as the backbone organization. Vision for Children at Risk will provide assessment data support to Ready by 21 with the United Way.

## Project LAUNCH Team Presents at National Conferences; Honors Parents and Supporters

The St. Louis Project LAUNCH program is being recognized nationally for its outstanding work, particularly in developing Parent Cafés which provide parents with peer support in the Strengthening Families model. Sanaria Sulaiman, project director, and Sam Blue, family engagement specialist, shared St. Louis' successes in Strengthening Families to a conference of new Project LAUNCH grantees March 3-5 in Washington, D.C. Sam also helped give a session on Parent Cafés for the Parent Advisory Council of the Community-Based Child Abuse Prevention program March 7-8. Sam is one of 10 members of the national Parent Advisory Council.

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*(Right) Parents and community members were thanked for their support of Project LAUNCH at a Feb. 19 luncheon at Vision for Children at Risk. Awards were presented to parents and community members*



*for their support. Dr. Vetta Sanders Thompson of Washington University gave a presentation on the background of Black History Month.*

## Important Children's Issues at Stake

As the Missouri Legislature heads into the final weeks of the 2015 session, important issues and funding affecting children are being debated. Among these are protecting the child-care subsidy, as well as maintaining funding gains achieved in 2014 for early childhood programs and other critical child welfare and mental health services. Also important is opposing proposed welfare reform that will harm children. Advocates for children must be engaged in policy making. For current information about legislation and calls to action, tune into the Missouri Children's Leadership Council's weekly conference call at 9 a.m. each Friday. For the call-in number and password, please contact Ruth Ehresman at 314-534-6015 or [rehresman@visionforchildren.org](mailto:rehresman@visionforchildren.org). The Missouri Children's Leadership Council is a coalition of over 40 children's agencies statewide working on a common legislative agenda. VCR facilitates the Council.



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