

# CAFA

## CHRISTIANS AS FAMILY ADVOCATES NEWSLETTER



### THIS ISSUE'S FEATURES:

- The Healing Power of the Gospel
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## THE HEALING POWER OF THE GOSPEL

COREY JACKSON, LPC

I recently attended the Murdock Foundation's annual leadership conference which had as its theme: "The Healing Power of the Gospel." The J. Murdock foundation is a philanthropic organization who has blessed CAFA with grants through the years. It was so inspiring to be among directors of other programs that are literally bringing health, safety, and life transformation to people in need all over the world.

As followers of Jesus we have been given a charge to feed the hungry, visit those in prison, give aid to the sick and dying, assistance to those seeking safety as they flee persecution. The conference illustrated how the followers of Jesus have been on the front lines of these efforts from the very beginning of the faith to now. Hospitals, hospice, adoption, and places of refuge for those fleeing violence have their roots in Christian Hospitality. What a great heritage and tradition we at CAFA have as our inspiration to care for those in need in our own community.

CAFA's own origin story involved helping women fleeing domestic violence to find a place of safety and healing from their trauma. Over time, our mission "To Make A Safer Place for Children," has grown to also provide upstream interventions and education for perpetrators of domestic

violence in order to end this deadly cycle. As we embarked on that endeavor we also began providing treatment for victims of relational violence, education for parents to prevent child abuse, and our other community programs designed to preserve family connections and lead families into health and wholeness. This last year has we have also ventured into caring for homeless youth and adults, many of whom are either fleeing family violence, or have become estranged from their families.

Our state and community are facing twin crises of homelessness and mental health issues. At CAFA we understand the bigness of the problem, but also how much bigger is the God we serve. We believe in the power of the gospel to heal and are seeing this power in action every day as we serve our community. We are glad to have partners like the Murdock foundation and like you who believe in our mission. It is through the faithfulness of your support that allows us to be the salt and light that the world needs so badly at this moment. We believe that when we see Jesus he will say to us, "whenever you served the least of these, the poor, the sick, the refugee, the mentally ill, and the homeless, you also did this unto me." What powerfully good news indeed.

# Beauty in Broken Pieces

Using art to connect with & support unhoused youth.



Stephanie Jackson has been providing opportunities for individuals to experience creativity through therapeutic projects at CAFA. Her classes started as a way for older women to connect with one another, their stories, and their inner artist. After the success of an adult program, Stephanie expanded her vision to providing art classes for children during the summer. Recently, the youth art classes have reached beyond CAFA's walls and out into the community where some special creative minds need Stephanie's heart and friendship most.

A 2022 survey reported there are over 500 homeless youth in Eugene. Organizations such as 15th Night and Hosea Youth Services have been reaching out to and providing support to these youth. They provide meals, spaces to rest and connect to services during the day, clothing closets, and safe mentorship opportunities. Hosea Youth Services has recently invited CAFA into their space to join in providing essential support services and

opportunities to the youth who walk in their doors every day. Stephanie provides therapeutic art classes, encouraging youth to process their emotions, trauma, & recognize their potential & dreams. Some of these participants also engage in counseling on-site, also provided by CAFA.





## Healing Hearts and Minds in the Community

If you've known CAFA for a long time, you know our mission is to make a safer place for children. We have hope that our community will be filled with safe homes, safe parents and guardians, safe relationships. Our broken world challenges this hope. Trauma, neglect, distrust, poverty, and addiction impact the ability of individuals to do life well with others. CAFA sees these broken places as opportunities to reach out, connect, and mend. This past year, CAFA counselors have been invited into special places in Lane County to provide group and individual counseling to those hoping to build their lives up from despair and struggle. The staff at Hosea Youth Services and Everyone Village have invited our staff in to meet with those who participate in their programs. Many of those who participate in counseling have also been involved in art therapy groups, which provides additional support and space to process, heal, and dream. We are grateful for the organizations and churches who have not only invited us in, but have worked creatively with us. This has led to beautiful stories of youth and adults recognizing they have a hope and a future.

## New Hosting Opportunity with Safe Families for Children Lane County

The state of Oregon has recently allocated funds to organizations like Safe Families and CAFA to help provide support and services to the youth who are trapped in a cycle of homelessness. This funding is providing the opportunity for training and equipping people like you to support, coach, mentor, and host this population of youth in hopes that we can break them out of homelessness and crisis and offer them a pathway to a life that helps them become the adults and community members they are meant to be. That means we need YOU! If you have a heart for teens, a guest room, a desire to help change the lives of a child, this is your sign to contact us and learn more.

To learn more visit  
[www.safefamilieslanecounty.org](http://www.safefamilieslanecounty.org)  
or contact Cindy Ryan:  
[cindyr@cafaweb.com](mailto:cindyr@cafaweb.com)  
or call 541-515-7233.



# Kids Connecting Beyond Barriers

## Healing, Strengthening, Reconciling

### Kids Connecting traditionally serves kids and estranged parents within the walls of church buildings in our community.

But this year, Kids Connecting Director, Echo Lucas, took on a unique challenge unlike any she has done before. For the first time in CAFA's history, Kids Connecting has been providing supervised visitation for an incarcerated father and his children. Through the care and commitment of the Prison Chaplain and volunteers, we have worked with prison staff and the courts to provide a special virtual space for play and connection between three members of a family who otherwise would not be able to interact.

Incarceration can have significant negative impacts on children and their parents. There is guilt, shame, fear, anxiety, worry, and hopelessness when a parent and their child are unable to interact or communicate. Studies have shown that visitation and communication of all kids between inmates and their families can lead to lower violence within the prison, a stronger bond when inmates return home, and parents are less likely to return to prison in the future. (Haverkate, D. L. & Wright, K. A.; 2020).

Chaplain Ken Ball at Deer Ridge Correctional Institution has played a key role in assisting in the establishment and implementation of these visits. "For me, an important aspect of correctional rehabilitation is re-entry care. At the apex of this concern is restoration of broken family relationships." Chaplain Ball has been the liaison for these unique visits, laying the ground work by providing the same training materials CAFA provides before parents enter into visits with their children in more traditional settings.

After completing the necessary training, choosing a virtual program that fit the requirements of the prison system, and brainstorming some activities for the father and children to do, the virtual visits began. Chaplain Ball shared: "I have witnessed great joy on [his] face when he has the opportunity to "play" virtually with his son and daughter. I know he is always eager for the next chance to interact with them and has expressed a desire for greater levels of freedom to relate naturally with them. His ultimate desire is to one day have the ability to see them face to face. That day is not tomorrow but hopefully it will come."

When that day does come, we are confident this family will have an easier time being together after being apart.

Want to help us continue the good work of connecting to & equipping the local church?

Mail donations to:  
CAFA 921 Country Club Rd #222  
Eugene, OR 97401

<https://donorbox.org/cafagiving>



# Radical Generosity

The impact of sharing the gift of self, space, & resources.



“A generous person will prosper; whoever refreshes others will be refreshed.”

—Proverbs 11:25

Rhonda is a mother who loves her children who reached out to Safe Families when her youngest child was born. She needed respite care so she could navigate the unique challenges her family was facing. She trusted CAFA and Safe Families to protect and support her children and her. “It is so important for kids to have adults in their lives who can love them. Safe Families has done that for me and my kids.” What a gift for Rhonda to know she and her children are loved!

Recently, Rhonda was able to enjoy a weekend with other women through a church she has come to call home. This was possible because of the connection she has made with a Safe Families Family Coach and Host Family. This much needed weekend away left Rhonda feeling refreshed, inspired, and gave her the opportunity to encourage other moms who were struggling. “I couldn’t be who I am as a parent without Safe Families. To be able to have someone to call helps all of us.”

Other moments of joy often come from our OPAC & Parenting After Crisis classes. Individuals and parents enter the room mandated to be there due to mistakes they have made. They are welcomed as members of the community, not as felons or those “less worthy”. As walls break down in their hearts and minds, these men and women share how they see themselves changing in how they related to others and their families. Many will testify they can feel the change in their hearts, that they are inspired to do life differently than before, and that inspiration manifests itself into moments of action. These glimmers give us so much hope and joy!

CAFA would not be able to reach out into the community without the generosity of those in our community who have the capacity and willingness to give. Whether it is tangible items or a financial gift, every action of generosity provides help to someone who needs it.

We asked one of our long-time friends and contributors, Pat Turanski, why she and her family have been so supportive of CAFA through the years with their time, leadership and resources. “It is a great honor to partner with CAFA. We as a family, and a business, respect the commitment to change. Learning from where one has come and setting a goal to go forward sustains the individual and those in their lives. Thank you to CAFA, their team and the commitment to give so that others might receive.”

We are so grateful for all of our partners, great and small!

**We invite you to join in the movement of generosity’s impact on our community:**

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