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Founder/Executive Director
Lia Rowley

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November 24, 2009

Dear Friend of the Village,

As you know, The Children's Village helps rebuild the fragile lives of youngsters who have grown up too fast and sometimes missed being a "child" in their tender impressionable years. These children are in our care because their parents were not able to care for them. Victims of abuse and neglect, many of them suffer from post-traumatic stress and serious attachment disorders. With our community's help, we are helping them rebuild their lives.

Let me introduce you to some of our foster children.

Children like:

Alex and Derrick, brothers, age 7 and 8. These young boys were victims of various placements and a painfully failed adoption, but since they have been at the Village, we are seeing improvement in their destructive behavior. They are starting to create healthy bonds with their Village parents, teachers and social worker.

James, age 15, emotionally disturbed and prone to violent outbursts, has connected and formed a close relationship with a surrogate male grandparent. He is learning to trust again, and is beginning to manage his temper more effectively.

Three sisters, who had grown up very isolated, clinging to each other and fearfully refusing to talk or participate in any activities at time of placement, are now smiling, joining other children in play and talking to adults.



These are just a few examples of the healing we see every day. It is very hard work, but it is so rewarding for the staff, hundreds of volunteers and supporters to know we are making a difference for these kids. What could be more important?

Child welfare experts agree that The Children's Village is a unique and innovative approach that may serve to transform how society deals with the devastating problems of children in the foster system.

Using a home-like setting involving volunteers and seniors (acting as "Village parents and grandparents"), case management professionals and teachers work together as a "family" to provide each child with love and nurturing, socialization skills, basic education toward high school graduation, recreational and community youth activities. The Board of Directors and Village staff is hard at work developing a vocational training and independent living skills program to provide our older children with a smooth transition after they "age out" of the foster system at 18 years old, preparing them for life beyond the safety of The Village.

With the holidays approaching and the season of gift giving upon us, I hope you will consider a gift to The Children's Village of Sonoma County. Please join us in helping salvage the lives of these children and the future children we will serve.

In these tough economic times, we need your help more than ever. The Village has faced a 10% cut in foster care funding by the state of California. Please help us continue the vital services we provide for our children. Thank you very much.

Wishing you happy holidays,

Lia Rowley,
Executive Director and Founder

P.S. As part of our thank you to you, we are enclosing a special poem, written 15 years ago by a teacher who shares our passion for children.

We think you'll find it as special as we do.

Enc: A Prayer for Children

