2016 Little Heroes’ Parade & Fair

More than 250 little heroes and 400 parents, friends, supporters and volunteers attended the Lourie Center’s first annual Little Heroes’ Parade & Fair on September 17, 2016 at Veterans Plaza in Silver Spring, Md.

The little heroes and their families visited various stations, engaged in child-friendly activities and received fun giveaways. Little and big heroes alike delighted in making super power buttons, building 3-D structures, and decorating their superhero capes and visors. Families were able to learn more about the Lourie Center and enjoy delicious, healthy snacks provided by one of the sponsors, Sodexo. There was also face painting fun, a photo booth and creative balloon designs, too!

The event built to a peak when little heroes and their families gathered for the parade. Dr. Jimmy Venza, Executive Director of the Lourie Center, welcomed everyone and expressed thanks to one and all for joining together as a community in celebration of children, families and growing!

Continues on page 6.

Problems

Early Head Start Program—Federally funded program for early intervention with at-risk children 0-3 and pregnant mothers. Serves more than 208 children and family members per year.

Parent-Child Clinical Services Program—More than 350 children and 650 caregivers per year in individual, dyadic and group therapy.

Therapeutic Nursery Programs—Pre-school program serving 21 children and family members in Montgomery and Prince Georges Counties.

The Lourie Center School—Elementary school serving more than 48 children and families.

Partnership with Montgomery County Infant and Toddlers Program (MCITP)—The Lourie Center partners with the MCITP, which serves 5,000 children and families each year. MCITP offers early intervention services to assist families with their efforts to address their children’s developmental and special needs.

University Affiliations

The Lourie Center trains social work, education, psychology and psychiatry graduate interns and externs from local and national universities such as:

- Georgetown University
- George Washington University
- University of Maryland
- University of Notre Dame (IN)
- Smith College (MA)
The Lourie Center for Children’s Social & Emotional Wellness

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2016 Financials & Donor Recognition

Total 2016 Operating Revenue...... $11,380,746
Total 2016 Operating Expenses...... $11,297,946

** Note that the Lourie Center is a sub-contractor for a Montgomery County contract which solely supports Lourie Center staff and supplies for this private-public partnership.

** Note that the Lourie Center is a recipient of a federal grant to operate an Early Head Start program. These funds are solely used in support of this effort.
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Little and big heroes alike delighted in making super power buttons, building 3-D structures, and decorating their superhero capes and visors.

Research Update

The Lourie Center celebrated its decade of research with its first peer-review publication titled, *Practicing attachment in the real world: improving maternal insightfulness and dyadic emotional availability at an outpatient community mental health clinic (attachment and human behavior).*

The Lourie Center’s research represents a direct response to the NIMH’s strategic plan to examine interventions “in the care setting in which they are delivered.” It demonstrates that a collaborative model between research and practice in an ecologically valid setting is viable and produces results. The Lourie Center represents a place where the community comes for aid and help, and receives services that are continuously being evaluated for efficacy. The presentation highlights the possibility of bringing contemporary knowledge from developmental science into community-based interventions, despite the multiple challenges and obstacles that come with the territory of conducting theoretically-informed practice and research in the real world.

The Lourie Center has remained faithful to its original vision of Drs. Lourie, Brazelton, and Greenspan that work in the real world with youngsters with complex developmental and environmental challenges is best practiced through an integrated approach of research and practice informed by developmental science.
Helping Little One’s Overcome Learning Challenges

At only 2 years old, Vinnie Griski and Cameron Knight knew their adopted son Brice had emotional and learning challenges to overcome.

After consulting with several doctors and education specialists to accurately pinpoint Brice’s condition, Vinnie and Cameron sought out a school that could help their young son thrive despite his dyslexia and take a therapeutic treatment approach to his past emotional trauma and behavior challenges.

When Brice entered pre-school in 2010, he struggled to read, write and communicate with others. He also had difficulty regulating his emotions and behavior. “Brice was devastated when he realized he couldn’t read or write like the other students,” said Vinnie. “He wanted so much to be like the other students.”

Brice was enrolled at the Lourie Center School in 2014. The Lourie Center’s multidisciplinary staff provides the individualized care that children with trauma or social and emotional challenges need to achieve their fullest potential. “When I picked up Brice after his first day at the Lourie Center School, I could see a look of joy had returned to his face,” said Vinnie. The staff at the Lourie Center School provided the emotional support and speech and language development Brice needed to feel more confident when communicating with his classmates and teachers.

Today 11-year-old Brice has successfully transitioned out of the Lourie Center School. He is a bright and social boy who enjoys making new friends and is much more engaged with his parents and older brother at home. He is also very proud of the progress he’s made academically.

“I am grateful to the Lourie Center School for fostering a sense of community and support that helped my son feel safe exploring his emotions and overcoming his learning challenges,” says Vinnie.

Circle of Security Partnership

The Lourie Center continues to provide Circle of Security, an evidence-based group parenting program developed to assist caregivers in understanding and supporting their child’s emotional world. Clinicians in the Lourie Center School, Therapeutic Nursery Program (TNP), Parent-Child Clinical Services, and Montgomery County Infant and Toddler’s Program have integrated Circle of Security groups into program offerings for parents and caregivers. Further, an interdisciplinary team of Lourie Center employees collaborated with two Montgomery County homeless shelters to provide Circle of Security Groups to the County’s most vulnerable families.

On October 6, 2016, Isabelle Rowe, LCSW-C, and Julia Wessel, LCSW-C, shared their presentation, “Bigger, Stronger, Wiser, Kind: Using the Circle of Security in Community Mental Health Setting to Support Healthy Caregiver-Child Relationships” at the Maryland Association of Resources for Families & Youth Conference (MARFY) 36th annual conference in Ocean City, Md. Isabelle and Julia’s presentation spotlighted the Lourie Center’s work in supporting parents and caregivers parenting practice and offer the professional community a road map for replication.

More information about Circle of Security can be found at https://www.circleofsecurityinternational.com/.

Pictured above are Cameron, Brice, and Vinnie
Your gift to the Lourie Center will help at-risk infants, young children and their families get a healthy emotional start in life. All contributions are tax-deductible in accordance with federal law. There are three simple ways to make a contribution:

1. Visit our website at louriecenter.org and click on the ‘donate now’ link
2. Email us at givingtothelc@louriecenter.org
3. Call Alan Ezagui at 301-984-4444.