



# children's hope INITIATIVE

A COMMITTEE OF FRIENDS OF SOMERSET COUNTY YOUTH, INC.

*Newsletter—Fall 2019/Winter 2020*

## What We Will Do in 2020

With your continued generous support, in 2020, the Children's Hope Initiative (CHI) will be able to help Somerset County's abused and neglected children in the following ways:

### *Continue What We Are Now Doing*

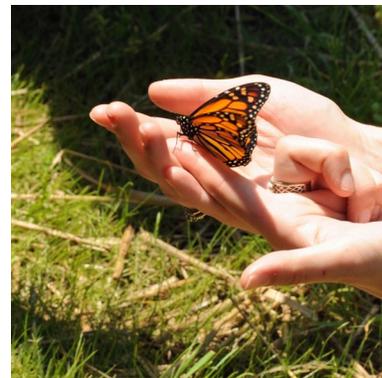
- **Cut waiting time in half for children to begin treatment** at Family & Community Services in Bound Brook.
- **Provide support services for more than 30 traumatized and abused middle school immigrant children in Bound Brook.**
- **Serve ten (10) 18-21-year-old young adults who have “aged out” of the child welfare system** through the Middle Earth Visions Plus Program.
- **Enable 50 children to participate in the Children's Hope Afterschool Program** at Richard Hall Community Mental Health Center (RHCMHC) by providing adjunctive therapies.
- **Provide paid mentors for up to 40 elementary and middle school children** through Middle Earth Lunchtime Mentoring.
- **Serve up to 10 high school students in the Promise Plus Program** offered by Middle Earth.
- **Educate the community in Trauma Informed Care (TIC).** Our effort is known as Resilient Youth of Somerset, and our goal is to empower our community to help children overcome the damage done through abuse, neglect, and other childhood traumas.
- **Provide “Fun Trips” for more than 50 abused and neglected children** to the Liberty Science Center, Dorney Park, Great Adventure, and Schaffer Farm.
- **Provide two sessions of a 3-week, 5-day-a-week therapeutic respite summer camp** at RHCMHC for at least 10 children at each session, offering equine therapy, karate, music/movement therapy, art therapy, etc.

## Our Mission

To meet the unmet needs of abused and neglected children and their families by providing resources for existing organizations in Somerset County.

*“Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world. Indeed, it is the only thing that ever has.”*

Margaret Mead



What We Have Done  
From January 2012 through October 2019

# Total Community Impact To Support Abused and Neglected Children

## CHILDREN'S HOPE INITIATIVE

### The Numbers

**Dollars  
Raised**



>\$465,000

**Programs  
Funded**



13

**Children  
Served**



>850

### The Programs

families mentoring  
tutoring confidence  
succeed overcome therapeutic  
engage real impact youth  
self-determination vision  
relationships

★ Resilient Youth of Somerset Trauma Informed Care

★ 38 children served by CASA Tutors

★ 100 children served by Creative Heartwork

★ Over 240 children served by the Children's Hope Afterschool Program

★ 55 children served by RHCMHC Therapeutic Summer Camp

★ Over 200 children served by Middle Earth Lunchtime Mentors

★ Wait times cut in half at Family and Community Services of Somerset

★ Helped prevent sexual abuse with the YMCA's Darkness to Light Program and training Youth Service organizations

*"Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world; indeed, it's the only thing that ever has." - Margaret Mead*

As of October 15, 2019

To learn more please visit:  
<http://childrenshopeinitiative.org>  
<https://www.facebook.com/Childrens.Hope.Initiative>

## 2019 Accomplishments

2019 reports on all CHI-funded services provided to Somerset County's abused and neglected children can be viewed on our website at [www.childrenshopeinitiative.org/category/programs](http://www.childrenshopeinitiative.org/category/programs)

### SB's Story

SB is an 11-year-old boy whose mother was hospitalized for kidney failure and SB was forced to live with his stepfather. DCPD removed SB from his custody because of his stepfather's drug use, inappropriate touching and physical abuse against SB and his 3-year-old sister. He went to live with his godparents. While there, his mother called and told SB that she was dying and would never see him again. On Mother's Day, "she told SB that he didn't love her, and she wishes he was never born." SB was devastated. He became depressed, had suicide ideations and spent one month in an inpatient hospital program.

SB is one of 46 children that the Children's Hope Initiative sponsors in the Middle Earth Lunchtime Mentoring Program. Amanda became his professional mentor and "an instant bond was formed." She helped SB open up, learn helpful breathing techniques and how to better share his feelings through drawing. "His grades became better and he was able to explain his feelings to teachers and his counselor." When summer came, the program ended. Middle Earth, however, provided a summer mentor, Noah, and gave him a summer camp experience. SB was able to go on several of the CHI sponsored "fun trips". SB participated in swimming lessons and equine therapy. SB not only has a lunchtime mentor, but is now enrolled in the Middle Earth after-school program.

### TA's Story

TA is a 10-year-old boy who arrived in Somerset County legally from Guatemala with his mother and siblings. His father, a successful businessman, sent his family here because of the "trauma caused by natural disasters where they lived. Floods and earthquakes have had a great impact on TA." His own home in Guatemala was destroyed. "A river runs very close to where his home existed and when it floods and overflows, bodies are often found floating on the river. The student shared that bodies are dumped in the river because of criminal activity."

The separation from his father, the loss of the life he lived in Guatemala (wealth), the trauma from seeing dead bodies float down the river, and the relocation to a new country resulted in a great sense of sadness and depression. Though he has the academic skills needed to complete his schoolwork, he was shy and unable to focus because of his feelings of sadness. His attendance in the immigrant children groups offered to 34 children by Family and Community Services of Somerset County has provided TA with an opportunity to make friends and lean on others for support. When his uncle died in Guatemala, in an earthquake, he asked to speak with the FCSSC group leader and later discussed the loss of his uncle in the group. Teachers have reported that they see a big change in him.

## **We Need \$40,000 Between Now and December 31 to Make All This Happen!**

As a result of your generous support, as of October 15, 2019, we have \$57,000 in the bank and in firm corporate pledges for 2020 programs listed on page one! That is a wonderful start thanks, in part, to FinPro, Inc., for its generous donation of \$20,000 and Piper Hill Foundation for its generous pledge of \$10,000.

Total programming costs for 2020 will be \$97,000. Therefore, we need \$40,000 more between now and December 31, 2019, to fulfill our dream of meeting these unmet needs of Somerset County's abused and neglected children. We ask you to join with our Board—and our friends and corporate donors—to make this happen!

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### **CHI Expenses**

Expenses from January 1, 2019, to October 1, 2019, were less than \$3,250. This includes insurance, bookkeeping, tax returns and filings, printing, postage, website fees and fees for donations paid by credit cards. Since we began in 2011, these costs have been paid in full by a Board member. Therefore, every dollar received in donations goes 100% to services for children.

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### **Board Members**

Tom Dilts, Chair	Barbara Barkley	Jim Buccini	Kim Charles
Stacey Cozewith, Esq.	Susan Dilts	Carol Dvoor	Jane Fox
Colleen McCarthy, Esq.	Meghan Musso, Esq.	Dan Puntillo	

### **We Need Your Help!**

Please join with us to continue serving Somerset County's abused children in 2020. Your donation is fully tax deductible, and 100% of your donation goes directly to support the programs described in this newsletter.

To donate, please go to our website:  
[www.childrenshopeinitiative.org](http://www.childrenshopeinitiative.org)  
or make your check payable to:  
Children's Hope Initiative  
and send to:  
Friends of Somerset County Youth  
P. O. Box 8063  
Bridgewater, NJ 08807

### **What is “Friends of Somerset County Youth, Inc”?**

Friends of Somerset County Youth is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit corporation organized in 1981 exclusively for charitable purposes and specifically to benefit the youth of Somerset County. It is the parent organization of the Children's Hope Initiative and Resilient Youth of Somerset.