

## Partnership for Children

Partnership for Children serves children, ages four to 12, in our Rosemary Gallagher and Sherry Mahon Francetich Children's Homes in Missoula. Each home houses 6 youth at one time with an average of 10- 12 youth per year in each home. We also work with over 40 children and families through in-home services, case management, and child and family therapy. These services are managed by offices in both Missoula and Polson. At this time, we have a waiting list for most of our services in both communities.

The children we work with in our two therapeutic homes are severely emotionally disturbed youth due to issues of experiencing violence, neglect or crisis in their early formative years. Our overarching approach with these kids is to act as safe and predictable caregivers so that they may understand what it means to be a kid again. We do this through daily group and individual therapy, behavioral education and interactive play. We do our best to let every child learn what it means to trust, laugh, play and build healthy relationships with adults and their peers.



Partnership for Children's distinct approach to working with young children who have experienced significant early trauma evolved from the combined strengths of two successful youth and family focused organizations, Intermountain and Youth Homes. PFC was founded in 1998 and has had the privilege of accessing resources from both of these organizations, in the form of treatment models, training, community support, board expertise, and so much more. Our primary funding sources are fees for service, grants and private donations.

### Project Description

The Sherry Mahon Francetich Therapeutic Children's Home primarily works with boys and girls who have experienced sexual abuse, domestic violence, caretaker addiction and extreme neglect. At an average age of nine, many of these kids have experienced more grief and heartache than many of us do in a lifetime. To benefit from the treatment we provide, it is crucial that while they are with us, they feel safe, supported, loved and cared for.

The Francetich Home was created to bring together young children to share and move through the trauma of their lives. It was built in the 1960's and today is the oldest home operated by PFC or Youth Homes. Over the past 22 years it has helped over 250 children heal; first as a Youth Homes group home, later as a Partnership for Children group home. It is in great need of updating so that we may better address the needs of

the program, which are to better incorporate additional health and safety considerations for the children living in the home. We are requesting the district's assistance in providing funding for a project that will benefit the Francetich Group Home, but more importantly improve the day-to-day lives of the children who live there each year.

In 1997, shortly before the creation of The Partnership for Children in 1998, the Sunrise Rotary Club chose to "adopt" the Francetich Group Home and 20 years later the Club is still an active supporting partner to our home. Not only does the club donate crucial funding when needed, but the club members also donate their time once a month to participate in community events with the kids at the homes. As the Partnership for Children has expanded over the years, so has the relationship between our home and the Rotarians. Since our founding, PFC (with the support of the Sunrise Rotary Club) has served over 400 children in our Therapeutic Group Homes. Over the years, we have added Family Care Services Program which ranges from promoting and facilitating foster care and adoption to in-home treatment for children and families. The Missoula Sunrise Rotary Board has reviewed and approved the following projects and has committed \$5,000 of club funds towards their completion. This commitment is not only a testament to our strong partnership with our local club, but also to the importance of the many services that PFC provides in this community.

### **Construct Bicycle Shelter**

Over the years, PFC has been the fortunate recipient of several local grants that supply bicycles for our homes so that all youth have a bicycle to ride during their stay at the Home. The bikes are used for recreation as well as teaching lessons. Through learning how to ride a bike, the youth engage in physical activity, learn about rules in a natural setting, learn to cooperate while traveling together and learn about the importance of safety.

For five years, the club has sponsored and volunteered to take the children of the group homes to the Hiawatha bike trail to experience the beauty, fun and serenity of biking on trails. Last summer eight Rotarians from the club attended and assisted in the ride. The club plans to continue this bike ride in the future because it is one of the most fun activities we participate in during the year. To ensure the ride is a success, having the bikes available, secure and out of the elements helps this outing run smoothly.

PFC has asked the club to help fund and assist in the construction of a secure bike shelter/storage unit in proximity to the Group Home. The club has accepted to help fund this shelter along with assistance from the District's matching funds if approved.

The bid to construct a metal structure with a wood frame on a concrete slab is \$12,000. The bike shelter will prominently display a plaque with the Rotary wheel, the year 2017 and "Sponsored by Missoula Sunrise Rotary and Rotary District 5390".

The home and the club have agreed that most of the construction will be done by a professional except the yearly upkeep of the storage unit and bicycles, which the Rotarians will complete.