



The Yolo Crisis Nursery staff wishes all a happy holiday season. Clockwise from left are Denise Sanchez-Hume, Heather Turner, Heather Sleuter, Oscar Lopez, Connie Cordero, Lisa Young and Jennifer Hungerford. Not pictured are Khris Ramirez and on-call staff members Rose Brewer, Diego Escobar, and Bonnie Fee.

Crisis Nursery ‘changed my life,’ grateful mom writes

Today, let’s hear directly from one of our clients. Amy’s story may sound familiar if you read last month’s column, but this time we tell it from her perspective. She gave us permission to print the following letter she sent to our executive director, Heather Sleuter.

Dear Heather and Yolo Crisis Nursery staff,

I write to you because I want you to know how your support has helped me. Quite honestly, I am not sure my son and I would be here without your help. The Nursery came into my life several times — just when my family needed help the most.

The first time I was in Woodland in the Raley’s parking lot, upset and crying. I was overwhelmed, not knowing where Jacob and I would stay that night or even how I was going to feed him. Heather saw me and came over to us and asked if we needed help. She told me about the Crisis Nursery services. She even went into the store and bought us a sandwich. The Crisis Nursery provided a safe place for my son for a few days until I could find a place for us to stay.

The second time I had just lost my apartment because of a domestic violence situation. The police brought me, Jacob and our dog to the Yolo Crisis Nursery. You found a place for our dog and drove us to a shelter. You took care of my son for me while I looked for a place to live. You were so caring and loving to my son, and gave us so many things like laundry detergent, clothes, toys and toiletries. I really needed help and really appreciated it.

The most recent time was in the Nursery’s Family Life Skills Program. You again gave me many items I needed to be successful with my son, and taught me a lot about parenting and life skills to help me be a better parent.

I just want to make sure you know that the Crisis Nursery changed my life. Thanks to you, my son is with me. We live in an apartment. I am working two jobs, and he is doing well in preschool. I am so grateful to have met Heather that day in the Raley's parking lot.

I am very glad there are programs like the Yolo Crisis Nursery and people like you out there. Your support got me on my feet and kept our family together. I am so, so, so thankful for you.

Love,

Amy and Jacob

Stories like Amy's abound at the Nursery. At this time of year, we celebrate the spirit of love and generosity that thrives in our community. That spirit propels our donors to invest in the well-being of Amy and our other less fortunate neighbors.

Thank you so much if you have lent your support to the nursery in 2016. We were able to achieve so much this year – check out the highlights in our 2016-17 Impact Report at www.yolocrisisnursery.org.

If you haven't made a gift yet, we're still in our year-end campaign and you can do so right now via our website. You may also mail a check to us at Yolo Crisis Nursery, 1977 Drew Ave., Suite 103, Davis CA 95618.

Beginning next month, the Nursery's Board of Directors will change leadership. Jane Eadie, a senior director of external engagement at UC Davis, will serve as president of the nursery's Board of Directors, succeeding Davis business owner JD Denton.

Kim Maslaniak, director of operations at the Sierra Health Foundation, will become vice president.

We are also welcoming four new members to the board: Anna Enriquez, director of the Family Birth Center at Dignity Health's Woodland Memorial Hospital; Dr. Samrina Marshall, a pediatrician and medical director at Evolent Health; Dr. Stewart Teal, a retired child psychiatrist; and JoEllen Welsch, a retired high school English teacher and manager of law firms.

Exiting from the board are founding members Vic Bucher, Becky Heard, Judy Wolf and Jamima Wolk. We thank them for their extraordinary leadership through a challenging time for the Nursery and wish them all the best.

One of the Board's first tasks in the new year will be promoting the fifth annual "Krustaceans for Kids" crab feed on March 17 at the Woodland Community and Senior Center. Sutter Health has signed on as Premiere Sponsor of the benefit event, presented by our fundraising group, the Friends of the Yolo Crisis Nursery.

New this year will be greatly enhanced benefits for sponsors at the \$2,500 level. Stay tuned for details in this space, on Facebook and via our e-news (sign up for e-news at the bottom of our home page at www.yolocrisisnursery.org).

As we head into an uncertain 2017, we take heart from a little story told to us by pediatrician Marshall in her application for the Board:

"Once when I dropped off holiday donations, I came inside and was so impressed by the staff's attentive, affectionate care. Looking into the eyes of these young children, I saw fear and pain mixed with a child's ever-trusting resilient nature, and if ever there's a time to intervene with warmth and kindness it's during that immediate time of crisis.

"Children of this age group are the most likely to be victims of abuse, and yet fortunately (they are) usually quite resilient if intervention is swift and nurturing. Families can be restored and ongoing abuse averted with support, connection to resources and services. It's often that targeted, critically time-sensitive, micro-support that can make all the difference. The mission, vision and values of the Nursery couldn't be more relevant."

As a staff and board, we pledge to the community that in 2017, we will strive to provide the best possible "swift and nurturing intervention" to make all the difference for young children and families in our community.

Warmest holiday greetings to all.