



Spout

News from Nebraska Children and Families Foundation Spring 2010

Adding Our Drop

We celebrate children's champion and Grace Abbott Award Honoree Dick Holland

Giving Back

How Betti Robinson became a leader in creating positive change

Starting Early, Starting Now

What we're doing to open doors to high quality early learning opportunities for children at risk

Singing a Song of Sixpence

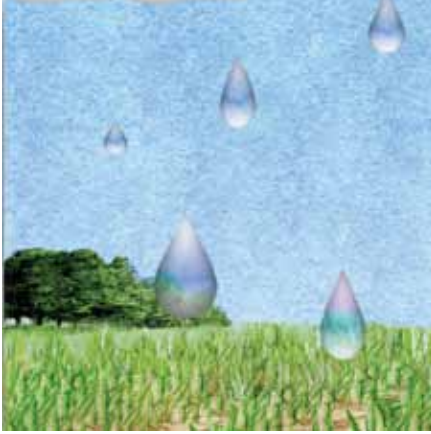
Helping parents give their children a good start

Making a Difference

There are many ways to join our work to help children reach their full potential

Planning for the Future

Lessons for all ages in wills and trusts



Adding Our Drop

"We ourselves feel that what we are doing is just a drop in the ocean. But the ocean would be less because of that missing drop."

Mother Theresa

Sometimes our own, personal contribution to the people in need around us can feel a little insignificant. What can we really accomplish as individuals when there is so much to be done, especially for children who begin their lives facing obstacles that stand between them and their full potential?

But when even a few of those drops are brought together, the results can be enormous. Nebraska Children and Families Foundation sees the value in every drop of support that allows us to carry on our work to overcome those obstacles and create positive change for children through community.

On Thursday, April 22, Nebraska Children and Families Foundation will host its second annual UpPour celebration at KANEKO in Omaha's Old Market. It is a special night to thank our friends and benefactors for their contribution to the work we do on behalf of children at risk. In particular, we will recognize Dick Holland, our 2010 Grace Abbott Award honoree, whose own drop marks him as an outstanding champion for children.

I hope you will join us for an evening of celebration and reflection – and an opportunity to add more drops to a growing shower of support that is changing young lives throughout Nebraska.

Handwritten signature of Mary Jo Pankoke.

Mary Jo Pankoke,
President



Giving Back: Rainmaker Betti Robinson

Now more than ever, people are being called to contribute their talents and resources to the needs of children and families at risk. These persons are commonly known as philanthropists.

At Nebraska Children and Families Foundation, we call them Rainmakers.

As a first-year Kindergarten teacher, Betti Robinson witnessed the tragic disparity between children who were ready for school and those who weren't. It was at that point, she recalls, that she recognized the need to make life more fair for children experiencing the opportunity gap.

When Carol Russell approached her friend about joining Nebraska Children and Families Foundation's Board of Directors in 2007, Betti knew immediately it was a natural fit. For her, it is all about the kids. Even though she didn't know all of the ins and outs of Nebraska Children and Families Foundation, Betti knew serving on the Board would be a unique opportunity to make a positive impact.

Betti had an excellent example for service in her parents' interest in young people in their community. They were actively involved with their synagogue's youth group. They hosted foreign exchange students, and her father spent years entertaining children as a Shrine clown and magician.

"I've always been a giver because that's how I grew up," Betti remarks. "that's the influence my parents had on me."



"It's all about the kids." Betti Robinson and her granddaughter Maggie, 2 years old.

Today, Betti's service and support has truly made a difference in creating change for Nebraska's children. In describing her philosophy of giving, she notes it's not just the recipients who benefit, but the givers as well. "A friend of my husband once said, don't give until it hurts – give until it feels good. That sums up philanthropy. It's all about giving back."

Learn more about how you can become a Rainmaker by contacting Meg Johnson, Associate Vice President of Development, 402.817.2002 or mjohnson@nebraskachildren.org.



Starting Early, Starting Now

Opening doors to high quality early learning opportunities.

Far too many children in Nebraska – almost 50,000, or one out of three ages birth to 5 years old – find themselves on the wrong side of an opportunity gap. They don't have access to high quality early learning environments during their critical developmental years.

As a result, these children soon fall behind their peers both socially and intellectually. The effects of the opportunity gap are already felt by the time children with risk factors such as poverty and low parental education levels reach 18 months of age. In most cases, the disparity continues to grow, threatening their ability to thrive in school and life.

For Nebraska, the need to open up opportunities in these children's lives is urgent. Unless we invest early in opportunities to support their healthy development, they are significantly more likely to enter foster care, drop out of school or become part of the criminal justice system.

Nebraska Children and Families Foundation advances public policy so young children in need have access to high-quality experiences proven to help them be successful in school and yield the greatest return in life. Our work is done legislatively by passing laws and administratively by working with state partners to enhance rules and regulations in the best interest of children. We help decision makers understand early childhood issues and benefits of investing in the first five years – the returns are numerous: school achievement, economic productivity, responsible citizenship and successful parenting.

Singing a Song of Sixpence

One way we're touching young lives in communities throughout Nebraska.

In 2006, Nebraska Children and Families Foundation was instrumental in passing legislation and a constitutional amendment that created a \$60 million early childhood endowment funded with public and private dollars. The Sixpence early learning fund grants are given to school districts in partnership with communities to provide high quality learning environments for children from birth to 3 years of age.

Today, Nebraska Children and Families Foundation works with Sixpence grantee sites in eleven communities around the state. Sixpence grantees received a total of over \$1.7 million to serve families with infants and toddlers in high risk areas.



The staff and children of Wazhinga Ti Zhingia Early Childhood Center, Walthill, Nebraska.

Sixpence Grantee: Wazhinga Ti Zhingia Early Childhood Center

The nationally-accredited Wazhinga Ti Zhingia ("Little Bird House") Early Childhood Center in Walthill, Nebraska focuses on providing children with a safe, nurturing environment that supports their development and milestones.

What might a typical day at the Wazhinga Ti Zhingia Early Childhood Center look like? You might find youngsters planting a garden or clamoring over books during reading time. Sometimes, you could find families gathered for a special literacy night when parents and children share books together.

Wazhinga Ti Zhingia also prides itself on providing resources young parents need in order to grow in knowledge and self-sufficiency as their children's

first and most important teachers. The center organizes activities where children can play while parents learn about car seat safety, nutrition or healthy habits. Over the past two years, all mothers of graduating age with children at the center received their high school diploma or GED.

Through Sixpence, Nebraska Children and Families Foundation is proud to support Wazhinga Ti Zhingia and other programs that open doors to opportunity for Nebraska's youngest, most vulnerable citizens.



Making a Difference

*There are many ways to join our work to help children reach their full potential.**

If you would like to make a gift to Nebraska Children and Families Foundation, please let us know. We would like to work with you, express our gratitude and help you meet your philanthropic goals. For more information, contact Meg Johnson, Associate Vice President for Development at 402.817.2002 or mjohnson@nebraskachildren.org.

Outright Gifts of Cash or Checks

A one-time gift, a monthly gift, or a pledge is a simple way to support our work. Many donors find that automatic withdrawal through their bank is an easy way to make a meaningful gift.

Memorials and Tributes

Honoring or memorializing someone who is near and dear to you through a gift to Nebraska Children and Families Foundation is a wonderful way to pay tribute to a loved one in perpetuity.

Bequests, Wills and Trusts

A gift through your will or trust is a simple way to leave a legacy for Nebraska's children. There are different types of bequests that can ensure your support continues after you depart this life.

Named Funds

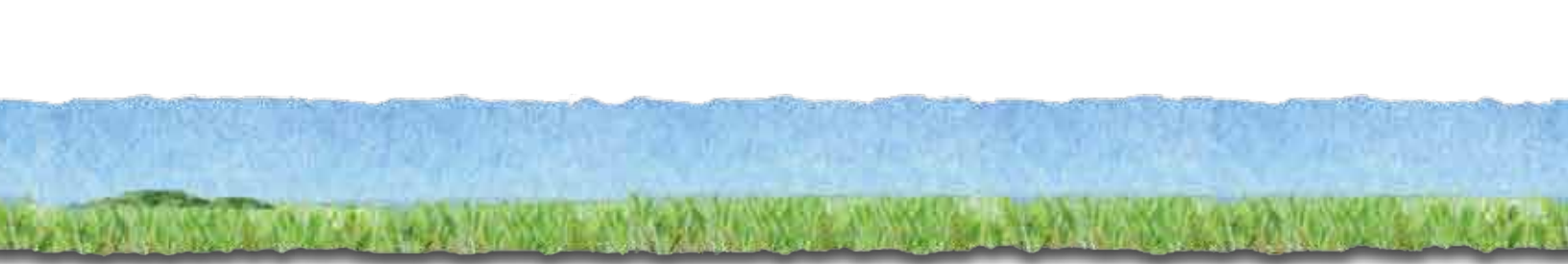
An endowed named fund (e.g. *The John Doe Fund for Children*) allows donors to make gifts during their lifetime and in perpetuity while leaving a legacy to Nebraska's children. Named funds can also be established so gifts are used immediately.

Gifts of Stock

Provided the stock or securities have been held for more than one year, there are tax benefits to donating appreciated marketable stock or securities and closely-held securities. A gift of stock avoids the long-term capital gains tax so the full value of the asset can be put to use.

Life Income Gifts

Gifts such as a charitable gift annuity or a charitable remainder trust provide for those who want to make a gift yet wish to maintain a source of income throughout their life or for a period of years.



Planning for the Future

*Lessons for all ages in wills and trusts.**

A will is one of the most important documents you can have, yet it is estimated that between one-half and two-thirds of Americans don't have one. Many people mistakenly think wills are only for the wealthy. If you are married or single, have children, own a home, bank accounts, stocks or other property, you need a will to help distribute your estate according to your wishes.[†]

A will also provides the opportunity to support organizations you care about after you leave this world.

Life changes may create the need to update your estate plans. Examples of life changes could include birth of a child, marriage or divorce (yours, or one of your children), the death or incapacity of a named beneficiary in your will, changes in your personal net worth, change of your needs or your beneficiaries' needs, new charitable interests, or retirement. Even changes in tax laws could precipitate the need to update your plans.[†]

Having your will prepared by an attorney and executed according to state laws and guidelines is essential. If you don't have a legal will, the state in which you are domiciled (i.e. the state in which you live most of the time) will decide for you.[†]

Remember, a will is revocable until you die. You may change it at any time. Review your will periodically to keep it current according to life changes and your wishes.

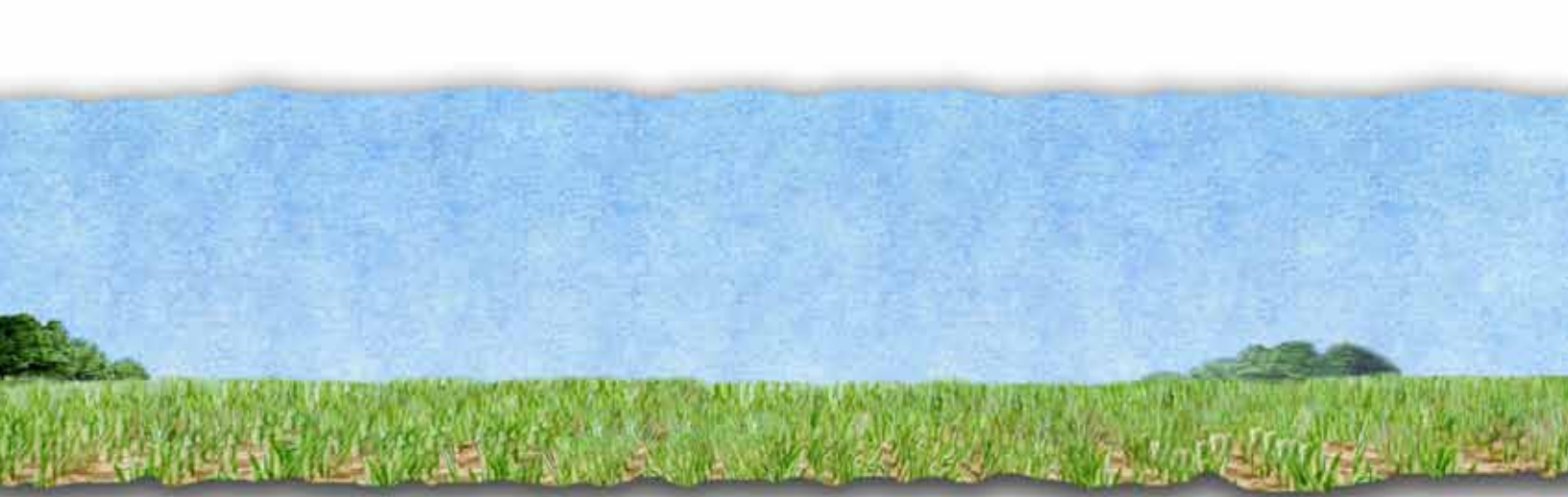
A gift through your will or trust is one of the simplest ways to leave a legacy to children and families at risk in Nebraska. And leaving certain assets can provide tax advantages as well. One way to include us in your plans is to say:

"I, [name], of [city, state, zip], give, devise and bequeath to Nebraska Children and Families Foundation [written amount or percentage of the estate or description of property] for its unrestricted use and purpose."

If you would like to know more about leaving a bequest to Nebraska Children and Families Foundation, please contact: Meg Johnson, Associate Vice President of Development, 402.817.2002 or mjohnson@nebraskachildren.org.

* The information in these articles is not intended as legal advice. We highly recommend you consult your attorney and tax advisors when considering charitable gifts.

[†] Source: The Stelter Company



*Creating positive change for
children through community*

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