



# Family & Youth Initiatives

Empowering Families, Providing Hope

## Contact Us:

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Quarterly Newsletter

March 2020



## Greenon concert to benefit FYI

Greenon High School will be joining forces with FYI to raise funds for the school's new FYI Mentoring Program and to purchase equipment for the band through its Showcase Concert on March 4 at 7 p.m. in the high school gym.

The school's orchestra and ensemble jazz band will both be performing that night. The concert is free, but donations will be accepted.

All proceeds will be divided between Greenon's FYI Mentoring Program and the school's fund for purchasing band equipment.

FYI's Greenon Mentoring Program is in its first full year after an earlier pilot program proved very successful. Currently, FYI has several volunteer adult mentors working with groups of four to six fourth- and fifth-graders. FYI also has adult mentors ministering to five Greenon students on a one-on-one basis. More adult mentors are needed to help us grow our program's effectiveness.

Please come out and support FYI and the Greenon music department, which share the mission of empowering and educating our youth.

## Meet & Greet board, staff on March 16

Are you interested in learning more about FYI, volunteering, or becoming a member of our advisory board?

Come and meet staff and board members at our Meet & Greet on March 16 from 6:30-8 p.m. at FYI's main office (468 N. Dayton-Lakeview Rd., New Carlisle).

You can find out how our programs are empowering and educating families and providing hope as we rescue children from the pre-born to teenagers.

This event is free and open to the public! Refreshments will be served.

Please RSVP by March 13 by calling us at (937) 845-0403 or emailing [nikki@fyiohio.org](mailto:nikki@fyiohio.org).

**Family & Youth Initiatives**  
Empowering Families, Providing Hope

Family & Youth Initiatives is currently looking for a few missing puzzle pieces to help complete us.

**HOW CAN YOUR PIECE OF THE PUZZLE HELP?**

Please join us for a Meet & Greet on Monday, March 16th from 6:30 pm - 8:00 pm  
468 N. Dayton-Lakeview Rd., New Carlisle, OH

CALL PAT OR NIKKI AT 937-845-0403 TO RSVP BY MARCH 13TH

FAMILY & YOUTH INITIATIVES

**Mother's Day Flower Sale**

Order Now by calling 937-845-0403

## Churches sought to partner on Flower Sale

FYI is looking forward to again honoring the mothers in our community on Mother's Day, May 10. Our annual Mother's Day Flower Sale provides an affordable way to bless moms on this special day while at the same time supporting FYI programs such as the Parenting Network. We will offer a single decorated rose for \$3, carnations in a vase for \$8 and a bouquet of a dozen roses for \$24. All flowers are fresh and delivered the week of Mother's Day.

We are asking churches to be part of the sale. Churches play a major role in the sale by taking orders and helping us distribute the flowers on Mother's Day. Several churches also purchase flowers from FYI for their congregations.

To sign up a church or place an individual order, call us at 937-845-0403.



## Community gardeners getting ready for 2020 growing season

The weather is getting warmer, which means our community gardeners are busy planning and preparing for a new growing season.

Last year, we had eight active gardeners with plots in the garden and we ended up donating nearly 1,300 pounds of fresh produce to the Park Layne Food Pantry, which distributed it to the area's needy.

We have free plots available for any new gardeners who wish to be a part of the program this summer. All you need is the desire to work your plot faithfully. You can keep some or all of what you grow.

Meanwhile, the group has even been doing a lot of outside work this winter - trimming down brush and trees to make room for more sun to shine in and more plots for potential gardeners.

If you are interested in joining our tight-knit gardeners group for this growing season, to either get your own plot on which to grow your own vegetables or to help occasionally, give us a call at (937) 845-0403 or email Jim at jim@fyiohio.org.

## DEFY project aims at Child Abuse Prevention

For the fourth straight year, our DEFY Mentoring Program will be doing a project in observance of National Child Abuse Prevention Month in April.

The DEFY teen group at Tecumseh High School plans to decorate a tree on the property where FYI's community garden is located.

"I want this to have the most impact possible, and joining forces with our growing community garden program, to give kids a place to be kids while their parents are gardening," said Mentoring Program Director Julie Driskill.

April has been designated National Child Abuse Prevention Month in the U.S. since 1983.

Child abuse is not just physical, but also mental and emotional. Because of that, it often goes unnoticed.

"Child abuse is prevalent on multiple levels and no one is noticing that," said co-executive director Nikki Stefanow. "Our kids are at risk every single day. And some are at risk in their own home, which is sad because that is supposed to be their safest place. We have to stand up for our children!"

## FYI joins forces to cut infant mortality rates

FYI has joined Start Strong Clark County, a newly formed coalition of nearly 20 local groups with the shared goal of reducing the county's infant mortality rate.

For 2011-17, Clark County's infant mortality rate was six deaths per year for 1,000 live births, compared to seven for Ohio. However, six is still six too many.

The first meeting was in September, and by Christmas the coalition had established mission and vision statements, done extensive strategic planning, and identified four main goals for 2020.

The vision is that all babies born in Clark County will be healthy at birth and thriving at 1 year of age. Start Strong identified three areas of focus as part of its strategic plan: pre-term births, sleep related and birth defect prevention. FYI is specifically involved in the safe sleep aspect, since we give out cribs and sleep sacks and other sleep-related items to our clients as part of our earn while you learn program.

"Our focus with our Parenting Network clients has always been reducing infant mortality," said co-executive director Nikki Stefanow. "We are all in for anything we can do to reduce that. Our clients may be at a higher risk because of poverty and other social determinants that have a negative effect on their lives."

Start Strong's four specific goals for 2020 are:

1. Provide evidence-based services that aid in the reduction of preterm births.
2. Reduce the amount of sleep-related infant deaths to zero.
3. Raise awareness of the importance of pre-conception and first-trimester health.
4. Foster continuous coalition quality improvement.

Other entities involved include the Clark County Combined Health District, the City of Springfield and Mercy Health, plus non-profits Community Health Foundation, and Pregnancy Resource Clinic.

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You shop. Amazon gives.

## Kroger, Amazon programs can help fund FYI

If you shop at Amazon or Kroger, you can sign up to make FYI your charity of choice, which enables those companies to donate money to FYI based on what you spend – and it doesn't cost you anything! Kroger will donate 4 percent of all your purchases to FYI. Then every time you swipe your Kroger Plus card, the donations are automatically calculated and directed to FYI accordingly.

Enrolling in Kroger Community Rewards is easy as 1-2-3:

1. Log into your Kroger Plus Card account.
2. Click "Community Rewards," then "Enroll Now."
3. When prompted, enter the charity number EG496 into the search bar.

The AmazonSmile program enables you to donate one-half percent of all your Amazon purchases to FYI at no extra cost. Here's how to sign up:

1. Go to <https://smile.amazon.com/>
2. Log in with your Amazon username and password OR create a new account.
3. Type "Family and Youth Initiatives, New Carlisle, OH" into the search bar. When our name appears, click "Select." (Our name will then appear in the top left corner of your AmazonSmile account)
4. Remember to always shop through your AmazonSmile account.

Please help us help others. If you have any questions, just call us at (937) 845-0403 or email [nikki@fyiohio.org](mailto:nikki@fyiohio.org).

## Here are 10 top ways to help FYI

FYI stands poised to make a huge community impact in 2020, but we can't do it without your help! Here's the top 10 ways we need you to help 2020 be a successful year:

### 1. Donate funds:

One-time donations are a significant part of our yearly donor receipts, and we are very thankful for every one of these dollars. We are asking people to consider making monthly donations this year. These donations can be automatically withdrawn from your account or mailed to us.



Monthly pledges give us a more reliable way to budget for our projects.

**2. Donate items:** If you have new or gently used items you'd like to donate, we can find a home for them with the families we support in this community. The most useful items are strollers, car seats, diapers, wipes, clothes, toys and other baby or infant care items for our Parenting Network families. We can even use food donations to provide snacks for students in our Mentoring Program and Real Life ... Teen Choices program.

**3. Mentor a parent:** We look for mentors to spend time with struggling parents to give them the benefit of their parental experiences while reviewing pregnancy or parenting lessons. Just providing someone a young mom can talk to without fear of judgment is vital.

**4. Mentor a student:** It's a disturbing trend, but more and more students are not getting the benefit of having an adult they can count on for quality guidance, encouragement and friendship. One hour per week during the school year is all it takes to redirect a young life onto a path to success.

**5. Pick up weekly donations:** We have local businesses that donate excess items, but we have to pick it up ourselves. The more volunteers we have who can do this for us, the greater our potential is to increase these needed in-kind donations.

**6. Office help or receptionist:** Running an effective nonprofit is a lot of work. There are always things that can be done at our three offices to help us run more efficiently.

**7. Warehouse organization:** While we have been gifted with a great amount of in-kind donations through the years, storing them can be a challenge. With items constantly coming in and going out, our warehouse needs consistent organization and upkeep.

**8. Events:** Whether it's a fundraiser or a community service initiative, FYI is constantly working on events throughout the year. That means there is also a constant need for helpers who like to use their unique gifts to further our mission.

**9. BINGO volunteers:** On the first Wednesday of every month from 5 to 9:30 p.m., FYI helps with the BINGO event held at Mary Help of Christians in Fairborn. A portion of all proceeds is donated to FYI as a thank you for our help. We need five volunteers each month for the event. To date, that donation averages around \$300 monthly.

**10. Prayer:** Last and certainly not least, please remember us often in your prayers. God has a limitless storehouse of blessings, and your intercession on FYI's behalf has grown our nonprofit, our mission and our impact greatly throughout the years.

Other unique opportunities pop up all the time, and we are open to creative new suggestions. For more information on any of these helpful ways to impact local families and students, just call our office at (937) 845-0403 or email [nikki@fyiohio.org](mailto:nikki@fyiohio.org).

## PROGRAM UPDATES

**PARENTING NETWORK:** Thanks to new funding from the Ohio Parenting and Pregnancy Grant, FYI will be extending hours at two of its three Parenting Network offices.

Hours at the Fairborn office (934 N. Maple Ave.) are 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. on Tuesdays, from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. and Thursdays from 3 to 7 p.m. In Springfield (1027 W. High St.), office hours are Mondays and Thursdays from 1 to 6 p.m. and Tuesdays from 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. The New Carlisle office (468 N. Dayton-Lakeview Rd.) is open Tuesdays from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. and Wednesdays from 3 to 7 p.m.

“This is a very important step for us,” said Parenting Network Director Diana Hobbs. “It will allow us to reach more in-need parents and children and impact more families.” Due to the expanded hours, FYI will need more volunteer mentors. Key strengths are the ability to love our clients passionately and steer them in the right direction. Call Diana at (937) 879-3313 or 845-0403 or email her at [Diana@fyiohio.org](mailto:Diana@fyiohio.org) if you are interested in helping.

**REAL LIFE ... TEEN CHOICES:** Our program has added two new part-time educators, thanks to funding from a new Ohio Adolescent Health Centers grant from Ohio Department of Education.

Both Amy McMahan and Dawsen Patton (picture to the right) are in the process of training to teach our impactful week-long curriculum. Dawsen has a background in youth ministry, while Amy’s background is in education and social work.

“This will allow us to get into more schools and ultimately help more students,” said Real Life Director Rebecca Swearingen. She added that her team of educators is mostly booked up for the second semester, so the timely addition of Patton and McMahan is much-needed.

**MENTORING PROGRAM:** Tecumseh Middle School is planning an information night this spring during which Mentoring Program Director Julie Driskill will be giving any 8th grade parent who attends an opportunity to walk through “The Path” curriculum. Participants will receive a workbook and have an opportunity to take an online assessment that helps target personality temperament. Parents will begin to understand the unique elemental make-up of their homes and be better equipped to motivate positive behavior in their children. Julie has met with 8th graders in the health classes this school year and taught “The Path” leadership curriculum, which dares students to stop talking and start doing. Watch for an announcement that will be coming soon about the upcoming date of this great event, and come get involved.



## COUNTING OUR BLESSINGS

During the process of serving those who God brings to us, we constantly see Him provide many blessings to FYI. While these blessings are truly countless, it is inspiring to highlight them. Some of the latest and greatest of these have been:

- \* Our Grinch For Good event at New Carlisle Middle School in December allowed us to serve 170 local families. More than 50 new pairs of shoes were distributed, thanks to a first-time partnership with Shoes For The Shoeless. Many parents shared how thankful they were that they were able to get gifts for their family at no charge. Volunteer Rick Perkins did an Oscar-worthy performance as our Grinch. The words that best captured the day were “family atmosphere,” ... a major part of FYI’s DNA.
- \* Guest speaker Kelly Gunter’s presentation at our annual spaghetti dinner fundraiser at Mary Help of Christian Parish Center in Fairborn in January was impactful. Her transparency in telling her story was inspiring. Silent auction proceeds, donations and ticket receipts allowed us to raise about \$3,600 for FYI.
- \* Our year-end appeal letter asking you to consider FYI in your holiday gift-giving plan had an incredible response. Your passion for our mission is truly inspiring!

Thank you for all you do that allows us to do what God calls us to do!

## VOLUNTEER SPOTLIGHT



One of our loyal volunteers at FYI is Judy Yarwick. She has been a volunteer receptionist at FYI’s main office for 14 years. We asked her a few “get to know you” questions:

**Background:** Judy was an office manager for 25 years; she holds an secretarial sciences associate degree.

**Fun Family Facts:** Been married to husband, Harry, for over 50 years; has two children, Michael and Brenda, and five grandchildren.

**PASSIONS:** “I love my family. I’m happiest when I spend time with them. I love cooking, but I don’t like to clean up. I enjoy learning more about computers, as part of my overall passion for learning.”

**Why Did You Join The Team?:** “I wanted to do something that would help others, and I knew Pat had this ministry. She was good enough to find something for me to do, to keep me busy and out of trouble (she added with a laugh).”

**How Do You Hope To Impact**

**FYI:** “I want to use my skills to help FYI run more efficiently, and spread the word about what FYI does.”

## Dominic’s giving bike away weekly

FYI’s annual Dominic’s Bikes For Kids program is back for its fourth year but with a new twist. Due to increasing donations of bikes, we are expanding the Dominic’s program by starting a “Bike-A-Week Giveaway.”

We will draw a name weekly starting in March. Any local child is eligible for this first-time giveaway. Call our office at (937) 845-0403 to enter the drawing. If you registered for the bike giveaway at last year’s Safety Day at Tecumseh High School, you are automatically entered for this drawing.