



Newsletter, December 2018

CCF Success Stories

In its 10-year history, the Center for Children and Families has positively changed the lives of thousands. Here are some of our stories. *Thank you for making these stories possible.*



Ina's Story: Applying Classroom Lessons to Real-Life Situations

My name is Ina Kavrakova. I am an undergraduate student at UT Dallas, studying Speech-Language Pathology and Child Development. I have been involved with CCF for three years now. I discovered the Center through its resources fair. The Center's friendly student volunteers grabbed my attention instantly. They encouraged me to take an information packet and sign up. I'm glad I started volunteering right away, as it's given me a community within the larger university. I've made so many connections and friendships because of the time I've spent with CCF. Most of my time at CCF is spent working for Play With Me. I am passionate about this program because it allows me to apply what I learn in my classes to real-life situations. I love seeing the progress the children make and the connections between program facilitators and the parents. I'm looking forward to sharing what I have learned with others. The program has made me excited to work with children as a Speech Pathologist in the future.

Patricia and Ana's Story: A Developmental Screening Sets Ana on a Better Path

Patricia and her 1-year-old daughter Ana joined our Play With Me program in the Summer of 2018. Ana was very quiet and liked to stay close to her mom. It took mom's encouragement for Ana to participate in the activities. Patricia shared her concerns about Ana. Ana was not eating well and not gaining weight properly. Patricia said she had talked with Ana's pediatrician, but had only been given general feeding recommendations. CCF developmental specialists and Patricia still had concerns about Ana's physical appearance and noticed she often fell down when walking. We referred Ana to Early Childhood Intervention services, where she qualified for physical therapy and nutrition. Patricia told us, "If not for CCF, I wouldn't have taken these steps to make sure Ana was on the best path possible for her development."



Maggie's Story: "The One Who Really Learned How to Play Was Me"

My name is Margarita, but everyone calls me Maggie. I want to share my experience in Play With Me. This program has helped me have a better relationship with my daughter, Alejandra, and with my husband. It has been about 2 months and the changes have been big. Before I knew this program, I didn't play with my daughter. I didn't have patience, and I was a person who didn't tolerate children. I only wanted to see them from a distance. With difficulty, I took care of my daughter, and I loved my nephew, Joseph, but in those days, I was a very cold aunt. It hurts to recognize what I was, but it was my reality. I brought my daughter and nephew to Play With Me. I used to say that I wanted them to come so that they could learn how to play, but the one who really learned how to play was me. Now I enjoy playing with them and spending time with them. I feel like a little girl. I believe this program even helped heal my inner child. I share this with others to say that we should take advantage of our time with our children and see that it is super healthy to give our time to them. They will grow healthier developing all of their skills. I am very grateful.

From the Director

I'm so proud of these and the many other stories we could tell about the impact we've made on students, parents, and children. In the last decade, over 1,300 children have been given a developmental screening. Over 3,000 children and parents have participated in Play With Me, our impactful playful-learning program. Over 125 students have been trained to bring CCF's research and expertise to the community. If you have not yet already, please take a moment to [invest in us](#).



[- Margaret T. Owen, PhD, Robinson Family Professor, Director, Center for Children and Families](#)

STAY CONNECTED:



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