

cribnotes

What is a Crisis?

WHY FAMILIES BRING THEIR CHILDREN TO THE NURSERY

We are a crisis nursery... but what do we consider a crisis? At the Nursery, it works like this:

We trust that our clients know their families best, and we leave it to them to decide when and why they need help.

By definition, a crisis is a time of intense difficulty, trouble or danger. Yes, we help in true crisis situations. But we are also here when parents are tired, need a break, have to work but don't have anyone to look after their children, and many other situations. The overwhelming majority of parents who partner with the Nursery are single, female, and identify as individuals of color. Last year, 77% of our families had an annual income of \$10,000 or less. These factors make life really stressful and challenging. Many families experience:

- Emotional or physical exhaustion and are in need of a break from parenting
- Physical or mental health concerns requiring someone to care for their children

- Housing problems, homelessness, or the need for someone to care for children when looking for a place to live
- Domestic violence situations and need a safe place for children to stay

If you are reading this, you are likely a Nursery donor, volunteer or other supporter. There's a good chance you have family or friends who can help out if you need a hand with your kids and that you can afford to hire a babysitter when you need one. What would you do if you were isolated and didn't have any help or any resources? Imagine what that would feel like. Where would you turn?

Families can turn to the Nursery for whatever "crisis" means to them and know their children will be safe and cared for, and that they are not alone. Because no other organization in the Twin Cities offers this support, we're grateful that we are here for parents when they need our help.

HERE ARE A FEW REAL-LIFE EXAMPLES FROM PARENTS WHO HAVE TRUSTED US TO CARE FOR THEIR CHILDREN:

1 After giving birth, a mother was discharged from the hospital with her baby. She had medical complications and had to be readmitted, but her newborn baby could not be readmitted. The Nursery cared for her four-day-old while mom recovered.

2 A single mom of three young children doesn't have a washing machine, so she takes her laundry to the laundromat once a month. Bringing three young children with her is stressful and overwhelming, so she brings her children to the Nursery while she does her family's laundry.



In Tough Times, We Stand Together

2020 was such a tough year on so many levels, for so many people. It was hard here at the Nursery too, and we have learned a great deal this past year. I want to thank everyone in our Nursery community – when we needed it most, you were there, and for that we are forever grateful. You reached out to see how you could help, and you checked in to ask if families were doing okay. Our incredible volunteers have been waiting in the wings, anxious to get back on site and brainstorming other ways to help from afar. We received an outpouring of support from both loyal and new donors. Our staff went above and beyond, putting in time and effort that most won't ever know about. Thank you.

Now it's 2021, and yes, it's still hard. We're still reeling from COVID-19, the mourning and anger from the murder of George Floyd, and most recently, the terrifying and violent attacks on our democracy that were fueled by racism and white supremacy. We are committed to acknowledging and addressing these systemic problems and the ways that they disproportionately affect children and families who partner with the Nursery. It is our job as a community to fight for an equitable society that gives everyone the respect they deserve and the tools to thrive.

We look forward to continuing this critical work in 2021 and couldn't be more grateful to have you, this community, by our side as we work to make our community a safe, just place for every family.

This past year has solidified that we're not going anywhere, and that so many good people exist who are right here in our corner, helping the Nursery and the families we work with.



Mary Pat Lee

Mary Pat Lee
Executive Director

MINDFULNESS RESOURCE

Make a Calming Glitter Jar

Many kids staying at the Nursery have experienced trauma or chronic stress, which can result in feelings like anger, confusion or sadness.

We believe that practicing mindfulness in lots of different ways helps reduce stress and regain a sense of calm. Try out your own mindfulness glitter jar using directions here: CrisisNursery.org/glitterjar

Shake, watch, and relax.

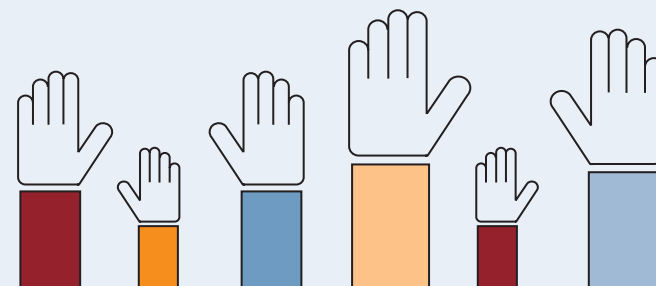


Share your Glitter Jar photos by tagging us on Facebook (@GreaterMinneapolisCrisisNursery) or Twitter (@followGMCN).

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED

Springtime means we are approaching our annual Formula for Hope fundraising event! We are looking for volunteers to help create an engaging and successful virtual event, which will take place on Tuesday, April 27. If you're looking for a new way to be involved, join the Formula for Hope planning committee!

To learn more, please contact Julie Huck at jhuck@crisisnursery.org.



Meet Our Newest Board Member

Rhonda Cox is the Associate Vice President of Human Resources for the St. Paul and Minnesota Foundation. She's a graduate of Howard University and has lived in Minnesota for 23 years. Rhonda is a proud member of Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Inc., and shares the love of her sorority with her line sister, U.S. Vice President Kamala Harris. Additionally, she is an avid runner and a health and wellness business owner. She and her husband, Walter, enjoy traveling, spending time with friends and family, and playing and watching sports – especially basketball.



Q: How did you get connected to the Nursery?

A: I learned about it years ago when I was on the board of the Twin Cities chapter of National Black MBA. A fellow board member volunteered at the Nursery and talked about the amazing work they were doing. I tucked the name away in my memory. Fast forward to this fall when I was working with Nursery board member Libby Doran on a project. I adore Libby, so when she approached me about being on the board, I had to listen.

Q: What do you hope to bring to the Nursery in your role as a board member?

A: What I bring is a passion to serve. My first role is to listen and learn and then offer insights and suggestions. Next, I intend to spread the word about the Nursery and garner financial and volunteer support.

Q: You work at the St. Paul and Minnesota Foundation. What connections would you make to the work you do for the Foundation and the work you will do for the Nursery?

A: I love this question. For me there are a few connections. Both organizations are designed to serve, to positively impact the lives of others, to make the world a better place because we made service a part of our lives. These are just a few ways that the organizations are so closely aligned.

Q: How do you think the Nursery can help address the racial disparities and inequities in our community?

A: Wow – that's a huge question. The Nursery can ensure its systems, processes and thinking don't reinforce the racial disparities and inequities that exist in our community.

COVID-19:

What to Expect at the Nursery

The Nursery is a critical resource for families, so we are taking every precaution to keep our doors open. As the pandemic continues, we are committed to keeping everyone safe. We continue to offer support for our 24-hour crisis line as well as overnight placement and virtual home visits.

INCREASED SAFETY MEASURES

We are strictly following the Minnesota Department of Health and CDC guidelines for all protocols, including all recommendations related to social distancing, mask-wearing and proper handwashing, as well as an increased cleaning and sanitizing schedule. Additionally, we have reduced our adult to child are ratio from 1:4 to 1:3 while dedicating a full-time staff member on each shift to focus on sanitizing children's spaces.



For the most current updates about how the Nursery is handling operations during COVID-19, visit our website. crisisnursery.org/covid-19



ARRIVING AT THE NURSERY

When families, staff and guests come to the Nursery, they must pass a symptom screening and sanitize their hands before entering the building. Adults must wear face masks at all times and maintain social distancing guidelines. We have taken measures to limit in-person exposure during visits, including revised paperwork procedures, requesting only one adult per family enter the building, and recommending that the same family member drop off and pick up their children if possible.



What's inside:

- Reflections from 2020 and the Nursery's commitment to fight for an equitable society
- What's a crisis? Here's what it means at the Nursery
- Meet our newest board member
- COVID-19 update



MANAGING STRESS:

Try a mindfulness exercise that really works!



Do you have questions about the Nursery?
We want to hear from you!

Email us at
info@crisisnursery.org

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