

THE GIFT OF GIVING

A Message From Our Executive Director



The Gift of Giving

When I was a little boy I was always so excited when the holiday season approached. It started at Thanksgiving and our family would gather, aunts, uncles, cousins, grandparents, and friends to celebrate the day. It was more about the coming together than the food, but the food was always plentiful and very good. We put up our tree and started decorating the house the day after. There were pageants, concerts, parties, and lights, hot chocolate, eggnog, and more lights. The opening of gifts was the culmination of the season and my siblings and I got up early on Christmas morning to see what Santa had brought for us.

I remember on year in particular, Santa brought me a set of small, plastic, battery operated signal lights, like the kind used on ships. I thought they were the best gift ever. My father, who was my hero, had been in the Navy during World War II and told me stories about life aboard a Navy vessel and how they used the large signal lights to communicate with other ships. I played with them until they were worn out.

“She told us that it is truly better to give than receive and her hope was that we would come to really understand that someday.”

As we got older the presents changed but the thrill was just as awesome. But when I turned twenty-one my Mother changed the rules on giving presents to her. She told us that instead of buying a present for her, she would like for us to find a person, family,

We've Been Busy!

"It's all because of you!"

You may have noticed in the past few months that we have lengthened our name to Ouachita Children, Youth, and Family Services. Not only are we continuing to provide shelter and emergency services to children, but we also offer new programs for youth and families who are in crisis in, and around, the Hot Springs area. We now have a homeless youth day program for youth under the age of 24 who are homeless or at-risk of experiencing homelessness, a domestic violence shelter and advocacy program, a homelessness and poverty reduction program, as well as a substance abuse prevention program, along with our children's shelter you have grown to know and love.

It's all because of you! You have provided us with the courage and support to expand our services to reach as many children, youth, and families as possible. We cannot do any of this without a caring community that uplifts and provides so that we can better serve those who are seeking our services. We thank you, and look forward to the future with you by our side.

Please follow us on social media and take a peek at our new website to view all the ways you have helped us make a difference. Not only will you see some changes to the site, but you'll get the chance to find a program that speaks to your heart. If you feel that you would like to help a specific program, or OCYFS in general, let us know.



@ochotsprings



@occonline

or organization that could use an extra and bless them in some way. At first, my brother and sisters thought it was not a very good idea but we did it anyway because she insisted. Our gift that we actually gave to her was the telling the story of the people we had chosen and how it made a difference in their lives.

She told us that it is truly better to give than receive and her hope was that we would come to really understand that someday. So, we would sit in a circle and told our stories. As time passed it almost became a competition to see who could make Mom smile the biggest with our stories. Our family time together went from us all spouting "Mom likes me best," to "Mom liked my story best." In those times, my Mother had changed all our lives in a drastic way. Helping us to see that in the giving we would find a better way of celebrating the season and all the while making the world a better place.

My daughter now follows that tradition for her gifts to me and someday I hope my grandchildren will do the same. I pray that they will see the wonder of how giving to others is really a gift to ourselves.

My Mother turned 86 years old this year and our gifts to her are still the same. A few years ago, I started donating to organizations in her honor because of that legacy she has left to me and our subsequent generations. This Christmas I hope you can find some person, family, or organization to give to. If it is Ouachita Children, Youth, and Family Services, great! We now have more ways than ever to help those who need it. In the subsequent pages you will find the ways that you can give to the people we serve. But my hope and prayer for you is that you find someone to bless and in turn to be blessed by the Gift of Giving. Thanks Mom and Merry Christmas and Happy Holidays to you all.

Blessings,

Mark Howard



Our Programs

Ouachita Children's Center

For over 40 years Ouachita Children's Center has been *the* organization providing safety and shelter for the abused, neglected, runaway, homeless, and at-promise children in this area between the ages of 6-17. Along with short-term emergency shelter and case management, we continue to provide children in crisis unmatched programs including ACT2 after school programs, support groups, counseling and aftercare. Not just for the children we serve, but for their families, as well. For those who have been incarcerated, our after-care services extend to those ages 10-21.



“We mean well, but we are broken. Thank you for understanding, and thank you for trying.”

Through structured activities that encourage personal growth we provide early intervention in an attempt to support as much of a childhood as these children may ever experience. “We mean well, but we are broken. Thank you for understanding, and thank you for trying. You recognized we needed change.”

Contact OCC

Call (501) 623-5591

Email info@occnet.org

Located at 339 Charteroak St. Hot Springs, AR

Ouachita Youth Center



The Drop-In

The Drop-in is a low barrier, inclusive, accepting space for youth under the age of 24 who are at-risk or experiencing homelessness. Youth can come into the day shelter for advocacy and case management to work towards housing, education, employment, medical care, etc. They can also take a shower, do laundry, grab a snack and get involved in the community.

OYC will be celebrating the one year anniversary in December and since its' opening in December 2018 there have been over 290 individuals served, approximately 200 survival kits given out, and more than 6 family reconciliations completed. Not only that, but we have given over 70 referrals to other services such as substance abuse, mental health, domestic violence and medical providers.

Street Outreach

Our dedicated staff go directly into the community to locate, identify, and make connections with homeless youth and provide appropriate services directly where the person is, wherever that may be. From the first encounter the youth are given referrals to The Drop-In and other services around the community, along with collaborations with other organizations in our area to work towards reducing homelessness and poverty.

Contact OYC

Call or text (501) 282-0292.

Located at 115 Crescent St. Hot Springs, AR

Ouachita Family Center

Our Program

On a beautiful estate of several acres, Ouachita Family Center provides safe, secure shelter and supportive services for all victims of domestic violence and their children. Our goal is to empower victims to work toward their goals and get the opportunity to live a life free of violence.

Within two hours of opening in January of this year, we received our first hotline call, which then resulted in our first shelter resident. Since then we have served over 500 victims through the hotline, 200 women and 225 children in the shelter, and 50 men, women, and children through our outreach advocacy program. Recently a shelter guest confided in staff, "You are my light in a once dark world."

What sets us apart is that we do not limit the number of children a woman brings with her to the shelter, and we do not limit the age of the child allowed into the shelter. A hotline is available 24/7 and residents of the domestic violence shelter, as well as those seeking outreach support (those not requiring shelter) are available to utilize court advocacy, assistance with order of protection, counseling with a licensed therapist, support group services, education and prevention education programs.

Contact OFC

24 Hour Hotline: 501-865-3939

Ouachita Family Center Office: (501) 701-4253
202 Third St. Hot Springs, AR 71913

*"You are my
light in a
once dark
world."*

Homelessness Reduction Program

We are the lead agency in that serves 28 counties to reduce homelessness in Arkansas. Our goal is to promote community-wide commitments to the goal of ending homelessness by providing funding efforts through federal, state, local governments, and non-profit organizations. We ultimately want the opportunity to re-house homeless individuals and families rapidly while minimizing the trauma and dislocation caused to individuals, families, and communities as a consequence of homelessness. Through this we hope to promote access to, and effective use of, mainstream programs by homeless individuals and their families. This is empower and encourage self-sufficiency to those who are experiencing homelessness, regardless of the cause.



*"When we know where
the hungry, homeless
and sick exist, then we
can help."*

- Jan Schakowsky

Public Awareness Prevention Program



Our goal is to decrease the use of alcohol, tobacco, and other drugs and provide prevention education to local schools, civic groups, and communities within Region 8. Our prevention program not only serves Garland County, but Montgomery County, Pike County, Clark County, and Hot Spring County as well. You may have seen the RAAD billboards and t-shirts around our area that say “Rise Above Alcohol and Drugs!”... That’s us! Our prevention team will create youth and adult coalitions, and support pre-existing coalitions, in each county to let the citizens of those areas take the lead in educating their peers in the fight against substance abuse. While we do not provide substance abuse treatment, we do provide resources and referrals for those seeking services beyond prevention education, just as Ouachita Children, Youth, and Family Services does with all of our programs. If you would like to be a part of our prevention efforts, please contact us!

Contact Public Awareness

Call (501) 623-5591 ext. 223

Located at 339 Charteroak St. Hot Springs, AR 71901

Ways To Give

Year End Giving

Year-End Giving refers to the charitable giving during get last few months of the year. It greatly impacts nonprofit fundraising due to the rise in awareness of each cause. This can be in the form of donations both monetary and material, or in-kind.

Memorial

A memorial donation is a donation made in memory of a loved one. You can donate directly to us on behalf of the person you are remembering, and we send a card to loved ones to notify them of your memorial donation.

Honor

A unique and special gift for a special someone. You can donate to us and we can let them know that you have donated in their honor. These make great birthday, anniversary, or holiday gifts!

Legacy

Part of planned giving is what is called a legacy gift. A legacy gift is a donation made by an individual through a will or other formal designation. Legacy gifts can be material goods, property, stocks, money, or anything of value to the beneficiary.

Volunteering

Money is always great, but not everyone has an opportunity to donate financially. But everyone does have a gift. If you have a special passion, talent, or heart for service, we can use it! Not sure where to start? Call us and we'll get you matched with the program that fits what you're willing to give.

AmazonSmile Charity List

If you already shop on Amazon, you can look up our Charity List for donation options. Simply browse our list, order, and it gets sent directly to us! *Due to privacy rules, Amazon does not let us know who the sender is, so please fill out the gift box information so we can thank you for your gift!*

In-Kind Donations

In-kind donations can take various forms such as services, goods, etc. Each of our programs has their own specific needs, but if you aren't sure which program speaks to you directly OCYFS will gladly take any in-kind gifts and disburse them to the program where it will be best utilized.

Ouachita Children's Center

Shampoo & Conditioner (for all hair types)
Body Wash
Bar Soap
Bar Soap Containers
Toothbrushes & Toothpastes
Coloring Books
Journals
Coats
Clothes Hangers
Gel Pens/Markers
Underwear

***“No one has ever
become poor by
giving.”
- Anne Frank***

Ouachita Youth Center

Beanies/knit caps
Gloves
Cup-O-Noodles
Non-Perishable Snacks
Strong Vacuum (in working condition)
Hooded Jackets
Travel-Size Hygiene Products
Socks
Blankets
Hot Hands

Ouachita Family Center

Liquid Laundry Detergent
Bras
Shampoo & Conditioner (for all hair types)
Bars Soap
Women's Razors
Women & Children's Socks
Standard Sized Pillows
Large Bath Towels
Women & Children Pajamas
Paper Towels
Dish Liquid
Phone Chargers (Android & iPhone)

All of us at Ouachita Children, Youth, and Family Services
would like to wish you a

Happy Holiday Season!