

## **Helping Our Children is a Habit of the Heart**

**By Janet Haley**



With a tight economy, many people are taking their charitable giving even more seriously. Finding a charitable organization that utilizes effective fundraising and giving practices which lead to measurable results is important. The women who run our Habit of the Heart (HOTH) Fund at the Community Foundation understand the need to know who their targets are and how to effectively administer grants. They strategically partner with businesses and other philanthropists. They continue to grow their network of area doctors, dentists and others to further leverage the Fund. They can see the outcomes of their grant giving and they make sure their donors see them too. The result is a phenomenal growth not just in dollars raised, but in those being able to be served.

The Habit of the Heart Fund focuses on helping women and children in emergency need who are in Hendricks County. At their annual fundraiser, Habit of the Heart Weekend, the women focus not only on pulling at your heartstrings, but making you aware of the need in a county where some may think that need does not exist.

I would like to share with you a story of one of our recipients to illustrate the difference this fund makes to our county's children.

**At the middle school medical clinic, Nurse Julie looks up as Kyle walks in.**

**Julie asks, "Hi, Kyle, what's going on with you?"**

**"My toooff huts," he replies.**

**"Jump up on the table and let's have a look."**

**Julie immediately knows there is a serious problem when Kyle jerks back and lets out a moan as she tries to open his mouth wider with the tongue depressor.**

**"How long has it been hurting?" she asks.**

**"Tree weeks," he replies.**

**"Oh, Kyle, have you been to the dentist?"**

**"No insurance," he says as he winces in pain.**

**After confirming with Kyle's father that there is no insurance or money to pay for a dental visit, Julie picks up the phone and starts calling her resources. Kyle and his dad do not qualify for county social services because he makes too much money**

**despite qualifying for free and reduced lunch. And the local free dental clinic has a three-month waiting list. Julie knows there is no way Kyle can wait three days let alone three months!**

**Determined not to give up, she ventures down the hall to the school counselor, Ben. He suggests that she apply for a grant from the Habit of the Heart Fund whose focus is to help women and children in emergency need.**

**In less than 10 minutes, she has completed and faxed the Habit of the Heart Student Emergency form to the Hendricks County Community Foundation (HCCF).**

**Just before noon the next day, the executive director of the HCCF calls to ask several follow up questions. She explains that the request will be reviewed by the Habit of the Heart grant committee and an answer would be received possibly within 24 hours.**

**Just after two o'clock, Julie receives a call that the committee has approved to pay for Kyle to go to a dentist. As luck would have it, a local dentist has a cancellation and Kyle goes to the dentist that afternoon. A diagnosis of an infected tooth is made and the Habit of the Heart Fund pays for the antibiotics to immediately treat the infection and for the tooth to be removed the next week.**

**The Habit of the Heart Fund had helped meet Kyle's emergency need!**

This is just one of the many grant requests that are funded during the school year. The Habit of the Heart Fund is making a huge difference for children and families in Hendricks County.

I encourage you to get involved. The Habit of the Heart Fund is always looking for more members, business partners, and those with big hearts in Hendricks County. Reservations for the events on Friday, September 24, and Saturday, September 25, at Five Star Catering at Primo's West in Plainfield are now open. To learn more, visit the Habit of the Heart Event page at [www.hendrickscountycf.org](http://www.hendrickscountycf.org) or call the Community Foundation office at 317-718-1200.