



*Helping Children-Connecting Families*

**Our mission: To strengthen communities by building strong youth and families**

## There is Always HOPE

In December 2003, Project HOPE's Street Outreach Team met Derrick, a homeless youth, during their daily visits to Lynn Park in Birmingham. The team developed a relationship with Derrick and encouraged him to visit Family Connection's Day Shelter for further assistance.

Eventually, Derrick came to the Shelter and as he put it, was "impressed by how nice it is and how it really feels like home." After several visits to the Shelter and support from the Social Worker, Derrick established three goals: find a place to live, get his GED, and learn to manage his money. Derrick was receiving a disability check due to an accident which left him with a prosthetic foot. In July 2004, Derrick moved into an apartment and began attending GED classes.

*"He was all smiles and thanked the staff. He was happy to know that someone really could help him leave life on the streets."*

Derrick's relationship with Project HOPE did not end there. Unfortunately, even with encouragement from the staff, he had difficulty managing his money, and lost his apartment in 2005.

After many moves, Derrick returned to the Shelter and requested help. The team provided transportation and assisted Derrick in completing apartment applications as well as employment applications.

In September 2007, the staff at Project HOPE helped Derrick move into his new apartment. Again, Derrick thanked the staff for not giving up on him.

**Project HOPE staff works diligently to help youth leave life on the streets. They work at the youth's pace and develop a plan that meets the youth's needs. The staff does not give up hope on any young person, even when it may appear that things will not work out because THERE IS ALWAYS HOPE.**

PROJECT HOPE: A program of Family Connection

Article By: Marilyn Jones, Project HOPE Director

### **PROJECT HOPE:**



***INSPIRING YOUTH TO MOVE  
BEYOND THE STREETS!***

# Youth Make a Difference by Helping Hospice Patients

A unique partnership between Family Connection and Alacare Home Health and Hospice inspires hope and comfort for Hospice patients. With this partnership, the youth in our Group Home/Emergency Shelter program create crafts and cards to be given to the hospice patients. The response from the patients has been extremely positive. The patients love the designs and thoughtful messages. Some examples are “God Bless You,” “Thinking of You,” and “You’re a Super Star.” The designs have featured sports themes, rainbows, stars, and flowers. The residents have all proven to be very talented. They not only create items for the patients, but they also have a discussion about Hospice Care and the importance of helping others.



## Family Connection is Blessed by Community Support!

THANK YOU for your generous support during our CAN YOU SPARE A DOLLAR? fundraiser. These funds will support our group home and emergency shelter program. The following individuals made donations:

Edwina Aaron

Dan & Judy Acker

Danny & Martha Acker

Commissioner Lindsey Allison

Joseph & Mary Arledge

Don Armstrong

Bill & Peggy Best

Teresa Byars

Tom & Carole Davidson

Paul & Tommie Ann Edwards

Barbara Forrest

Gloria Jackson

Stuart & Ann Johnson

Judge Mike & Cathy Joiner

Billy Jones

Bridgett Jordan-Smith

Doris & Melvin Lamons

Beverly Leach—ADK

Bruce Ludwig

Gerald & Katharine Nichols

Susan Schein

Patti Smith

Ralph & Shirley Thomas

Jean West

Robin & Paula White

Town of Wilton

### Family Connection Welcomes New Advisory Board Members

Commissioner Lindsey Allison

Jennifer Trammel, Greater Shelby Chamber

Sheriff Chris Curry

Wallace Williams, Kahn South

Debbie Hawkins, Alabama Power

### YOU CAN HELP US SAVE MONEY! HERE'S HOW...

Go to [www.familyconnection-inc.org](http://www.familyconnection-inc.org) and sign up for our e-mail database. We will send your newsletter electronically, which saves us the cost of printing and mailing the newsletter.

## Is Your Church, Civic Group, School, Business, or Family Looking For a Holiday Project?

Family Connection is looking for individuals or groups to help organize fundraising events/drives during the holiday season. This may include canned food, paper products, personal hygiene items, or clothing drives. We welcome one-time or long-term projects!

**Contact Family Connection today to get involved!**

Contact Carol Williams, Program Administrator, at 205-663-6301 ext. 208 or e-mail her [carolwilliams@charterinternet.com](mailto:carolwilliams@charterinternet.com) to volunteer or learn more!

## Recent Grants Provide Support for our Programs

Through a generous grant from the **Junior League of Birmingham**, the Group Home/Emergency Shelter has new mattresses for youth's beds. The Junior League responded immediately when we asked them to replace our worn mattresses. **Thank you Junior League of Birmingham** for allowing us to ensure the comfort and safety of our residents!

The **Shelby County Coalition for Safe and Drug Free Communities**, through a grant from the **Alabama Department of Public Health**, will be organizing many community awareness events throughout the year. Coalition staff, Meschelle Johnson, will also be teaching LifeSkills to middle school students at four Shelby County middle schools.

**The Children's Trust Fund** awarded Family Connection a grant for the RECONNECT Project. A ceremony was held on September 6. In attendance were Jessica Jackson with Children's Trust Fund, Representative Greg Canfield, and Phil Cain, Associate Director of Family Connection. RECONNECT is a Saturday intervention program for first time non-violent juvenile offenders and their parents. RECONNECT classes focus on anger management, decision-making, and communication skills while including community service projects and teambuilding exercises.



Pictured L to R: Jessica Jackson, Phil Cain,  
and Representative Greg Canfield

# FAMILY CONNECTION: HELPING CHILDREN—CONNECTING FAMILIES

## Project Safe Place Welcomes New Sites

Project Safe Place has recently grown with the addition of four new sites in Shelby County. We would like to thank the following locations for joining the Safe Place network:

- Chelsea Fire Station #32
- Columbiana Library
- Harrison Regional Library
- Pelham Fire Station #5



Project Safe Place provides immediate help and safety to young people in crisis. It is a wonderful resource for our community, and it is only possible through the participation of local businesses and community volunteers. Family Connection began Project Safe Place in 1996, and we currently partner with 64 sites (including 9 Clastran buses) in Shelby County, Hoover, and Irondale. Our program assisted 491 youth in 2006.

## Project Safe Place Helps Turn Trash Into Cash

Through National Safe Place, Family Connection is able to recycle items to receive cash that we can use for our programs and services. Please donate the following items:

**Cell Phones, Inkjet Cartridges, Laser Cartridges**

If your business would like to help, we can provide you with pre-paid, addressed collection boxes!

## I would like to make a donation!

- Check—payable to Family Connection
  - On-line secure donation at [www.familyconnection-inc.org](http://www.familyconnection-inc.org)
- We accept VISA, MasterCard, American Express and Discover*



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**All Donations are Tax Deductible**



Please include Family Connection in your will and tell us when you do!