Two summers later, and the efforts have paid off! In 2008, volunteers from Youth In Need and children’s service agencies around St. Louis County gathered more than 58,000 signatures on a petition to add Proposition 1, the Putting Kids First sales tax initiative, to the November ballot. The proposition passed.

Today, the St. Louis County Children’s Service Fund collects and administers the tax money and awarded Youth In Need more than $1.8 million to provide transitional living, crisis intervention and counseling services to at-risk, underserved youth over the next 17 months.

The Children’s Service Fund was created after 61 percent of county residents voted in favor of the Putting Kids First ¼-cent sales tax, which increases access to mental health and substance abuse programs for youth in St. Louis County. It’s estimated that more than $35 million will be made available each year as a result of the tax increase.

Social service agencies are grappling with tough economic times, shrinking donor pools and cuts in federal and state funding. In this first round of funding, 87 organizations submitted 162 proposals to the Children’s Service Fund. Because of the Putting Kids First initiative, an estimated 163,000 St. Louis County youth will be helped by agencies like Youth In Need. Youth In Need received 5.4 percent of the $35 million awarded to 44 local agencies.

“The Children's Service Fund is going to have an incredible impact on the County,” said Jim Braun, Youth In Need’s President and CEO. “This much-needed funding will be used to offer high-quality, effective services to St. Louis County youth who are dealing with significant mental health issues and at risk for slipping through the cracks.

“Just with Youth In Need’s grant, hundreds of middle school- and high school-age youth will have access to no-cost mental health counseling, which is a significant need for this age group. Our crisis outreach services will link youth who are homeless or in crisis to safety and crisis services. We also will expand our transitional living program for homeless youth, addressing a huge problem in the community.”

Youth In Need’s professional mental health counseling will provide family and group counseling to children and youth in grades pre-kindergarten through 12. Services will be available before and after school in six county school districts (Hancock Place, Lindbergh, Normandy, Pattonville, Ritenour and Valley Park). With the availability to expand counseling services in these districts, nearly 1,800 youth will be served in the first 17-month funding period.
Sit. Stay. Visit. These are all common words spoken in the 3- to 5-year-old classroom at Youth In Need’s Head Start and Early Head Start Center in Wentzville, Mo. But these are not instructions for the preschoolers there. They are directions for Youth In Need’s newest employee, an endearing, brown-eyed 2½-year-old chocolate Labrador retriever named Waco.

Waco, who was named for a city in Texas just like all of his fellow trainees from his Support Dogs class, patiently waits each morning with wagging tail for his classmates to arrive, when they greet him with rubs, pats and hugs.

He calmly sits with the active preschoolers during story time and has become an essential element to a restful nap time, helping those students who have a hard time settling in for sleep find an easy way to catch their Zs.

Waco is involved in the classroom in whatever capacity the children need him. As typical in most Head Start programs, the children come from low-income families. And because they often experience emotionally challenging situations at home (a terminally sick parent, poverty, potential homelessness, domestic violence, and possibly incarcerated parents—just to name a few), his calm and comforting presence is making quite a difference in the classroom.

Waco has surpassed all expectations in his classroom role, where his job is to provide emotional support and a comforting presence to the preschoolers there. This groundbreaking project is the first time in the country that an assistance dog has been trained to work with an entire early childhood classroom on a full-time basis.

Staff has noticed a significant decrease in the number of challenging behaviors and an increase in the ability to learn. Waco’s classmates have embraced him, insisting he have his own cubby for his leash, brush and work vest, his own spot to lie in the classroom and a journal where they can draw him pictures or write him letters.

In just a few short months, Waco has adopted these children as his own in some sense. When asked if he’s ready to see his kids, he visibly perks up, ready to go to work offering consistency and unconditional affection for children who need it. Under the training of St. Louis-based Support Dogs, Inc., and his handler and caregiver, Youth In Need’s Community Collaborations Director Ann Young, Waco is fully certified as an Assisted Therapy Dog and has skills ranging from obedience to advanced service skills.

The teachers fully expect Waco to have a long-term impact on the students’ academic performance. Social-emotional growth is one of the core aspects of the Head Start program, and staff knows that when children feel safe, secure and emotionally cared for, their academic scores drastically improve. Over the coming months, staff will be collecting the data that should illustrate Waco has made the grade.
How Are We Doing?

That’s a question Youth In Need is always asking when it comes to gauging the positive impact we’re having on the children and families we serve. It’s also a question we need to ask the people in the community who contribute their time, talent and treasure to our mission. How are we doing as stewards of your support?

To help answer that question, Youth In Need created a short survey that is now available for anyone to complete online at www.surveymonkey.com/s/youthinneed. The survey, which will be tabulated at the end of September, also can be printed from our website, requested by mail or completed through a question-and-answer interview process by telephone or in person.

The stewardship survey also is being used to help launch a renewed effort at introducing supporters to the idea of planned gifts, which are made when donors remember Youth In Need in their will, trust or other estate plans. Donor satisfaction and planned giving are closely connected because planned gifts are made only when donors feel connected to the organization and know their hard-earned dollars will have a lasting impact.

If you are interested in completing the survey, please contact the Development Office at 636-757-9347. We want to hear from you!

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Now you can get your Youth In Need logos apparel and gear online at Lands’ End Business Outfitters.

Let your personality show. Pick your style, size and color. Wear our logo proudly.

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About Youth Update

Upon request, individual names may be placed on our mailing list. Please inform us of any address change or correction, or of those individuals who have moved, died or are no longer interested in receiving the newsletter. Please send this information, with the zip code of the previous address, to:

Youth In Need’s Development Office • 1815 Boone’s Lick Road • St. Charles, MO 63301
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Please forward all communications with reference to editorial content to April Klutenkamper, Marketing Director, at 636-757-9330 or aprilk@youthinneed.org.
It was just like any other St. Louis golf tournament in August: Hot! But the temperature wasn’t the only thing making records.

Title Sponsor Walgreens led the charge in raising more than $115,000 from sponsorships, auctions, specialty contests, golfing fees and tax credit donations—a record total in the tournament’s 13-year history!

The heat didn’t keep golfers from supporting the cause on Aug. 2. The two courses at Whitmoor Country Club in St. Charles were nearly full with more than 240 golfers bearing the heat to support Youth In Need’s Golfing for Youth Benefit Tournament.

Golfers enjoyed lunch courtesy of Youth In Need’s Guardian Children’s Partner Culpeppers Grill & Bar. Following the four-player scramble, golfers cooled down with a social hour in the clubhouse and enjoyed an exciting collection of silent auction items. The daylong tournament concluded with dinner, a live auction and awards ceremony.

Tournament proceeds benefit Youth In Need’s programs and services that provide crisis prevention and intervention services each year to more than 11,000 children, teens and families in St. Louis City and St. Louis, St. Charles, Lincoln, Warren and Montgomery Counties in Missouri.

Don’t forget to save the date for Youth In Need’s 14th annual Golfing for Youth Benefit Tournament on Monday, Aug. 1, 2011, at Whitmoor Country Club.

For a complete list of tournament and contest winners, visit www.youthinneed.org.

Photos courtesy of Michael Schlueter

Top, left: Scott Haynes (left) and Jay Baumohl (center) present Walgreens’ Title Sponsor check to Youth In Need President and CEO Jim Braun.

Top, right: Championship Flight winners Jeff Viehmann, Todd Linnenbringer, Dale Boggs and Jeremy Reidelberger.

Above, left: Robert Crumpton (right) presents Monsanto’s Principal Children’s Partner check to Youth In Need President and CEO Jim Braun.

Above, right: Stacy and Mary Beth Daniels cool off in the clubhouse.

Right: Larry Van de Riet (left) presents the Drive for Potential award to this year’s event co-chair Bob Kalinch.
Head Start Staff Wins National Award

The National Head Start Association recently recognized Tammie Benton, Youth In Need’s Assistant Head Start Director, as Administrator of the Year. Benton’s national award comes after receiving the Administrator of the Year award at the state and regional levels as well. The award honors a Head Start administrator who has made significant contributions to his or her program. Benton received her award at the 37th annual National Head Start Conference in May in Dallas.

Youth In Need Video Wins International Award

In 2009, Diane Asyre, communications consultant and award-winning film producer, volunteered to produce “Dreams of Youth In Need,” an informational video about Youth In Need to be aired at the agency’s 2009 Celebration of Youth dinner and gala. Asyre recruited several of her film colleagues to donate their services as well. Recently, the team of Asyre, Richard Chapman, Tor Hyams and Scott Huegerich won an IABC Gold Quill Award of Excellence from the International Association of Business Communicators. This award is the top-tier award level for the international competition. The film scored a 6.07 (of a possible 7.0), which is an impressive feat since judges are veteran communications professionals from a variety of fields, including corporate, for profit, nonprofit, marketing, writers, editors and consultants. Visit Youth In Need’s YouTube channel to watch the winning video.

Head Start Opens Two New Centers

Youth In Need's Head Start program recently celebrated the opening of two new centers in Montgomery County and Troy, Mo. The addition of the new locations comes after Youth In Need received $2.4 million in federal stimulus dollars to expand child development and family support services in St. Louis City and St. Charles, Lincoln, Warren and Montgomery Counties.

The new Montgomery County Head Start and Early Head Start Center replaces the program’s older facility in New Florence and is located nearly next door to the County’s home-based building. The location in Troy adds Early Head Start programming to Lincoln County with a classroom building for little learners, ages birth to 3-years-old.

Both locations held a ribbon cutting ceremony and open house for the local Chambers of Commerce, community supporters and parents.

The program expansion is a result of federal funding Youth In Need received as part of the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) of 2009. The agency received approximately 20 percent of the available funding in Missouri and was the only organization to receive both Head Start and Early Head Start expansion dollars in the greater St. Louis region. Youth In Need added 46 Head Start slots that serve families with children, ages 3 to 5; and 165 Early Head Start slots for families with children, ages birth to 3. The expansion slots are allocated to: St. Charles County, 30 slots; Lincoln County, 16 slots; Warren County, 38 slots; Montgomery County, 23 slots; and St. Louis City, 104 slots.

United Way to Kick Off Annual Campaign

The United Way of Greater St. Louis has been helping people since 1922. The first campaign raised money to help operate 40 charities. More than 88 years later, the United Way continues to help people in a very large way.

Each year during September and October, the United Way holds its annual fundraising campaign, which supports nearly 200 member nonprofit agencies that provide services for basic and emergency needs, children and youth, community resources and disaster services, domestic violence and legal services, health and well-being, mental health and senior services. In 2009, the United Way raised more than $65 million through workplace campaigns and individual and corporate giving.

When people contribute to the United Way, they can be sure their donation is being put to good use. With a very low fundraising cost, more than 90 cents of every dollar raised goes back into the community. More than one million people in 16 Missouri and Illinois counties benefit from services that a United Way-member agency provides. Trained volunteers allocate funds based on a number of high-quality standards.

Youth In Need is a proud member of the United Way and encourages the community to support the United Way in its efforts to make the community safer, healthier and more self-sufficient.

Young Professionals Rally for Youth In Need

Youth In Need has a young professionals group working to further the agency’s mission. Whether connecting through networking events, volunteering in a Youth In Need program or holding a fundraising event for the agency, these young professionals are busy making an impact. If you’re interested in joining this group of young professionals, contact Lucy Schuering, Community Relations Manager, at 636-757-9334 or lschuering@youthinneed.org.
Youth outreach partnership developed

Youth In Need also will be expanding its transitional living services. The Transitioning Youth to Adulthood program helps teens, ages 17 to 19, successfully transition to independent living. New apartment sites and staff positions will be added to the program to ensure effective and efficient services to teens in need of guidance and support as they transition to adulthood.

Most notably, a new partnership has formed between Youth In Need and Behavioral Health Response (BHR) as a result of the Children’s Service Fund grant. Youth In Need and BHR are combining their expertise to provide crisis intervention services through BHR’s helpline and Youth In Need’s mobile Street Outreach team. Youth will gain access to services via phone calls and texts to BHR as well as through neighborhood Safe Place sites, a national program managed regionally by Youth In Need. Youth In Need also will continue to deliver street-based outreach and referrals to youth in crisis.

The goal of this team effort is to make services and programs more accessible to disconnected youth facing homelessness, and mobility and instability issues. With the Children’s Service Fund’s help, Youth In Need and BHR will be able to disseminate information to more than 30,000 youth in the area and take 4,000 helpline calls.

These three programs will provide invaluable services to St. Louis County children and teens battling serious obstacles. Since 1974, Youth In Need has been at the forefront of addressing some of the toughest issues that impact area youth. Thanks to the Children’s Service Fund and St. Louis County taxpayers who supported Putting Kids First, Youth In Need and other local agencies will continue to meet the increasing demands of the children, youth and their families served each year.

“The wonderful thing about this funding is that it not only expands Youth In Need’s services, but it also builds a coordinated service network by funding expansion of 44 different experienced youth service providers,” Braun said.

Imagine the potential...

Thanks to our 2010 Principal Children’s Partner

Monsanto imagine
Gifts to Help Them Learn and Grow . . .
Between our 23 Head Start and Early Head Start classrooms and nine Out-of-School Time programs, Youth In Need has more than 2,800 children elementary-school age or younger. That’s a lot of learning and growing (and a lot of wear-and-tear from all those little hands)! And they need the tools to do just that—from books and educational toys that help with the “three Rs” to gifts for play and pretend that develop imagination and the cognitive skills enormously important for young children’s development.

. . . And Tools to Help Them Achieve Their Goals
Older youth in Youth In Need’s residential homes, foster care and beyond need the big things and the little things in life that will help them get their life back on track. Even gifts as simple as a blanket of their very own or a personal music player can bring calm in a crisis. These are gifts that truly can give hope. Being away from home is difficult, especially at the holidays. A simple present, wrapped especially for them, can brighten a dark time and provide hope for the future.

How you can help:
- **Early Head Start & Head Start:** Give the gift of imagination to infants, toddlers and children. Dress-up clothing, play food, musical instruments and baby dolls.
- **Out-of-School Time:** Provide opportunities for fun and play in a classroom of elementary-age children. Board games, puzzles, art supplies, books and sports equipment.
- **Emergency Shelter:** Make a youth feel special with a present of his or her very own or equip the group home with items that truly make a house a home. MP3 players, winter clothes, movies, CDs, gift cards, bedding, kitchen items, games and home décor.
- **Transitional & Independent Living Program:** Help a young adult feel confident while learning life skills to live a productive and independent life. Winter and interview clothing, accessories, household goods, home décor and gift cards.
- **Foster Care:** Ensure every child has a gift that can bring comfort amidst uncertainty. Games, toys for infants to children, winter clothing, movies, CDs, MP3 players and gift cards.

If you want to give hope this holiday season, contact Lucy Schuering, Community Relations Manager, at 636-757-9334 or lschuering@youthinneed.org.

One of the most delightful activities of the holiday season is seeing the wonder in a child’s eyes. Now imagine multiplying that feeling a thousand-fold. This holiday season, give just one gift to Youth In Need—a book, a doll, a new baseball glove—and you’ll be a part of the season of giving for all of our programs.
Youth In Need relies on the community to deliver much-needed services. The Children’s Partnership Program is one way community members can reach out to Youth In Need and enjoy a few benefits.

Partnership levels range from $1,500 to $15,000 and include advertising opportunities and participation in both Youth In Need’s annual dinner and gala and annual golf tournament.

Don’t miss out on this prestigious opportunity! For more information or to enroll as a 2011 Children’s Partner, call Alicia Rosier, Annual Fund Director, at 636-757-9346.

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