



ChildSavers

Helping Greater Richmond's Children Since 1924

The Wonderful World of PLAY: Helping Children Heal and Learn!



Frightened by nightmares from the burglary in his home, Kevin came to ChildSavers with his mother. Here, he and his therapist play with all kinds of toys, cars, trucks, dolls and animals, and sometimes dress up clothes. Using these play tools, Kevin and his therapist work through the trauma Kevin experienced from witnessing the burglary.

"Play is like language for children," explains Maria Razos, a Mental Health Clinician at ChildSavers. "It helps them express feelings when they don't have words. When Kevin pretends to be a police officer, or a robber, it helps him regain a sense of control and safety in his environment. When he builds a miniature town with buildings and cars and people, this helps him see his world on a more manageable scale. Play gives Kevin a way to talk through what he feels about the robbery, and helps him move from fear back to feeling safe."

Play is an important part of the growth and development of children, too. "We tend to think of play as just something children do," explains Brenda Cubero, a Program Specialist at ChildSavers. "In reality, it's so much more."

Play sparks imagination, builds vocabulary, provides social experiences like sharing and empathy, and offers opportunities where children can explore and test their environment.

Reading, writing, and math are built upon the foundations of play as children explore colors, shapes, and textures.



"Play is really a core foundation for all learning," says Brenda, "and anything can be used for play. Bubbles, chalk, balls, and crayons are some of the basics. Pinecones, stones, flowers, bark, and water are parts of nature children love to explore. We encourage our child care providers to incorporate in their daily routine lots of time for free play, and offer a wide variety of interesting items."



Some things to try with your children:

- ★ Blowing bubbles helps regulate breathing to calm children, and bubbles produce fascinating colors and shapes.
- ★ Drawing with crayons gives insight into a child's world, and provides an outlet for creative expression.
- ★ Stretching and bending arms and legs gives children a way to release stress and anxiety, and provides perfect warm-up for a game of tag.



This story has been changed to protect the privacy of our clients.

Making A Difference!

Artists Support ChildSavers

Thirty-four artists joined together in support of ChildSavers on October 28 through the third *Artists Support ChildSavers Show* at the glave kocen gallery! Here, a few artists share their passion for children . . .

“Knowing how traumatic the smallest thing can be to a child, it unsettles me to think of a child who experiences real trauma. I deeply appreciate what ChildSavers does for Richmond’s children.”

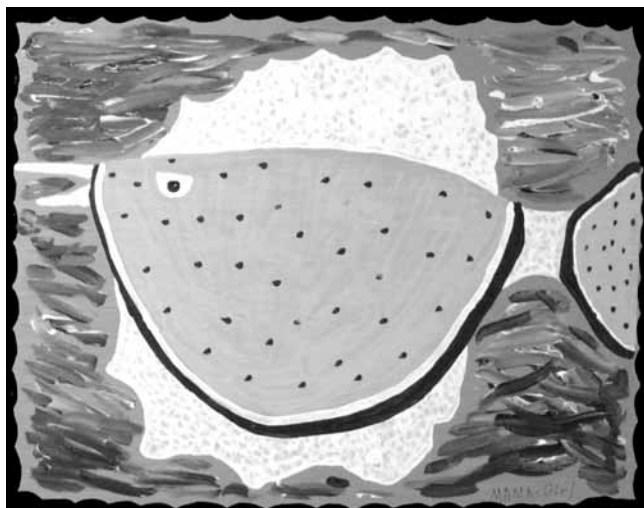
— **Andras Bality, artist, long-time ChildSavers supporter, and father of two children**

“ChildSavers and myself, we have a common bond: the love of children. We want them all to have stable lives.”

— **Mama-Girl (Mary Onley), artist and mother of four children**

“Art has the power to help children express their feelings. It also has the power to change the whole atmosphere to one that is happy and joyful. ChildSavers understands this and I am glad to contribute to the work they do.”

— **Diego Sanchez, art educator and Art Department Chair, St. Catherine’s School**



Mama Girl’s *Sunshine Fish* is on display at ChildSavers



Trio Rides Across the US for ChildSavers!



This summer, Adam Reel, Mark Walkley, and Rawles Wilcox, three MBA students at the Mason School of Business at the College of William & Mary, completed a 4,200 mile, 58 day trek from Astoria, Oregon to Williamsburg, Virginia—all to raise awareness and support for children and families! A common thread running through their story: “We want to make a difference.” Read about their amazing adventures and how they made a difference: www.wmbikers.com.

◀ **Mark, Rawles and Adam at ChildSavers**



5K for Children and Families!

Cool, crisp weather greeted runners, walkers and families for The Pediatric Connection’s 5K run/walk to benefit the children of ChildSavers. The Pediatric Connection, an independently owned pediatric home health care company, sponsored this 5K in celebration of National Make A Difference Day on October 22. Make A Difference Day is a national day of giving back spearheaded by USA Today. It encourages everyone nationwide to spend a day of “doing good.” About 40 Pediatric Connection staff members volunteered or participated in the run, all to “take care of kids who need our help.”



▲ **Race day volunteers**



▲ **Raheem and Leslie join the fun**

Volunteer Team Gives New Life to Playground!

Rain couldn't damper the spirits of 30 Capital One volunteers who gathered at the Genesis Learning Center this month to give new life to their playground. "This is really a huge blessing for Genesis," said Lisa Thompson, Program Specialist at ChildSavers. "The center has been unable to use their playground because it didn't have an adequate fall zone under the equipment. At just the right time we were able to connect them with some volunteers at Capital One, and they came with mulch, timber and lots of hands to get the playground up and running again."

ChildSavers is working with the Genesis Learning Center as part of the Virginia Star Quality Initiative Program. Says Kandra Brown, Center Director, "We joined this program to give our children a higher quality of care. The amount of knowledge and training gained has been priceless. We would like to thank the VSQI program and Capital One for helping bring our playground back to life!"

Genesis Learning Center is one of 32 STAR rated child care providers participating in the VSQI program through ChildSavers. Providers that volunteer to participate in the VSQI are rated on many factors, including:

- ★ Staff qualifications: Do staff members have a degree in early childhood? Do they go to workshops to continue their training?
- ★ Interactions with children: Do caregivers talk with your child? Do they have a positive attitude and encourage children to learn and be creative?
- ★ Class size and arrangement: How many children are in the classroom? How many teachers or assistant teachers are in the classroom? How is the classroom furnished? What kinds of activities are offered?
- ★ School readiness: How do caregivers prepare children to be ready for school?

To learn more, visit www.smartbeginnings.org/QRIS.



Your gifts support children and families every day!

★ Yes, I want to make a difference in my community by giving children the confidence and skills they need.

Name: _____

Address: _____

City, State, Zip: _____

My gift is in honor of: _____

Please acknowledge at: Name _____

Address _____

City, State, Zip _____

Enclosed is my check for \$ _____ payable to ChildSavers

Please charge \$ _____ to my credit card: Mastercard Visa

Card Number: ____ / ____ / ____ / ____ Exp. ____ / ____

Name as it appears on card: _____

Signature: _____

A financial statement is available upon request from the State Office of Consumer Affairs in the Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services

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**Learn more at
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See Success Stories Inside!

How Your Support Helps Children Like Andrew

At three, Andrew and his older brother witnessed the arrest of their mother. His grandparents became legal guardians, and because they both worked, Andrew was enrolled in child care. Aggressive toward the other children, his caregiver quickly determined that Andrew needed help controlling his anger and frustration, and referred him and his family to ChildSavers.

Through the use of play therapy, Andrew was able to express feelings associated with the abandonment experienced by his mother's arrest. When Andrew became anxious, he and his therapist blew bubbles to help him regulate his breathing and calm down. The therapist also worked with Andrew and his grandparents to strengthen their bond and increase his trust that grandma and grandpa were not going to leave him, too. Together they developed strategies, used both at home and in child care, which helped him feel safe and secure.

Today, Andrew is a curious learner and he loves sports. He's also developing trusting relationships with the adults in his life and has made many friends in Kindergarten.

**Thank you for giving
children like Andrew
a chance at a bright future!**

