



# The Health Center

*Promoting the success of children by providing for their physical, emotional and social well-being.*

Volume 2

Back to School 2013



## Top Foundation Is Wowed by The Health Center's Innovative Approach:

**Your ongoing support made their grant possible!**

### Did You Know?

Our Lincoln students are doing much better than they were just five years ago thanks to *you!*

#### Truancy DOWN\*\*

- 34%

#### State Test Scores UP\*

- 20 - 35%

#### Graduations UP\*

- 18%

\* [www.reportcard.ospi.k12.wa.us](http://www.reportcard.ospi.k12.wa.us)  
\*\*Walla Walla Public Schools

In May, The Health Center became one of only a handful of organizations in Eastern Washington to ever win a Washington Women's Foundation (WWF) grant. Having your partnership meant that we were strong enough to win this award. Having your ongoing support as we grow means we will continue to be here, helping vulnerable children thrive. Thank you!

#### Head-to-Head with Big Players

Nearly 340 organizations from across the state applied for funding from WWF this year; The Health Center was one of only five organizations to be selected, and was the sole grantee in the health sector.

Washington Women's Foundation seeks out innovative programs that address critical needs in a community. In their award letter, WWF grant makers highlighted The Health Center's success at reaching high risk students at school, providing needed services that reduce truancy and absenteeism, and boosting graduation rates and academic achievement.

#### Forging a Path for Others

As the only independently operated school-based health center in our state, The Health Center is leading the way for other rural communities by demonstrating an effective model of partnership with schools, community medical resources, and other stakeholders, like you. You can be proud of the attention this grant brings to our community because you made it happen.



# How You Rescued a Boy from the Brink of Despair:

## A doctor's perspective

2009-2014

**We're Turning FIVE!**

**Thank you for believing in our work and for caring about our children!**

**Five things we're so grateful for:**

- 1 Caring Volunteers
- 2 Blue Ridge & Lincoln
- 3 Loving Families
- 4 Walla Walla
- 5 **You!**

I could see the hurt brimming in his eyes. "How's it going?" I gently asked fifteen-year-old Sean.\* "Okay," he whispered. But Sean was far from okay.

### Physical Symptoms, Emotional Roots

Sean showed me his shoulders. They were crisscrossed with red, painful-looking cuts. He had made these cuts himself using a razorblade. Cutting is a red flag for suicide. Sean's girlfriend (and best friend) had recently broken-up with him. His family situation was toxic; his mother was in rehab and her live-in boyfriend was alternately absent, withdrawn and emotionally abusive. "Why can't I just be like other kids, with *normal* families," he said. He felt alone, trapped and hopeless.

I was Sean's doctor at The Health Center at Lincoln. Because of the holistic way we practice medicine at The Health Center, I was able to give Sean the time and attention he desperately needed at that moment. My caring for him wasn't constrained by a fifteen minute appointment slot and the knowledge that we had ten more children to see after him. Thanks to your support of The Health Center, we were able to make room for an in-depth visit with Sean so that we could fully explore what was happening in his life. And thank goodness we did.

### Life-Saving Interventions

Sean was considering killing himself. Fortunately, The Health Center staff was there and we were able to intervene immediately. First we contacted the Walla Walla County Crisis Response Team. Then we arranged for Sean to talk with one of our counselors; together they created a safety plan for Sean in case his despair should become overwhelming. I treated Sean's cuts and prescribed antidepressant medications; The Health Center paid the copay for the medicines through a special fund for that purpose. Finally, we made sure that we continued to follow-up with Sean frequently, and that he didn't feel alone anymore.

Thanks to ongoing counseling, medication and support, Sean is back in school and coping well. He's learned strategies to help him manage his family situation. He's built a support network to help sustain him when things get really bad. His cuts are healing, and so is his broken heart. And it's all thanks to you.

\*Sean's story is a blend of facts taken from the lives of students we see frequently. Please understand our need to be nonspecific when sharing about our work. Thank you.

# Teaching Mindfulness to Empower Children:

Your gift could help The Health Center give students tools for learning self-control. **NEW “Reflection Kits”!**

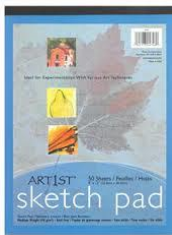
“Knee-jerk!” That’s how a teacher described Jason’s\* intense, angry outbursts. Something would set him off. He’d lash-out with swear words and maybe slam his fist on the desk. BOOM! Jason was finished learning for *that* day.

## Acting, Not Reacting

Mindfulness is the ability to pay careful attention to an experience as it unfolds. Being mindful allows us to calmly observe our emotions, our thoughts, and our physical states even in the midst of very stressful events. It lets us disengage from stressors so that we can absorb the details and implications of events and analyze them objectively. Once we are in a calm state, being mindful allows us to carefully choose our best responses. Mindfulness stops knee-jerk reactions.

## Freedom to Choose Well

At The Health Center, we teach children mindfulness by asking them to reflect on difficult experiences, and then to imagine how they might respond better in similar situations in the future. To help them begin, we give them Reflection Kits containing drawing supplies and journals. Drawing a picture of an event, or writing about it, can help children understand the event more fully.



**NEW!**  
**Reflection Kits**  
**(\$10 value)**

Reflection lets children, like Jason, cast themselves as the heroes of their own stories. It empowers them to *choose* how they wish to respond the next time they’re faced with a challenge. Goodbye, knee-jerk. Hello, self-control!

\*Jason’s story is a blend of facts taken from the lives of students we see frequently. Please understand our need to be nonspecific when sharing about our work. Thank you.



**Beth:**  
“Change the world!”

What do you want to change?

Beth Kreger wants to give kids a chance. She wants to help *every* child feel loved. She wants to build a better world by investing in the next generation.

Beth is one of our donors; we think of her as a hero to kids! If you don’t know Beth, you surely know her type – busy volunteer, passionate advocate, friend to all, change agent.

Beth supports The Health Center because she knows her gifts *matter*.

Do you want to matter to a child and change the world? You *can*!

# You Make a Difference!

Your support of The Health Center makes it easier for parents to keep their children healthy.

Bianca is a second-grader at Blue Ridge Elementary. She's a sweet, social girl with a humble maturity that sets her apart.

It used to be a real challenge for Bianca's mom, Yaneth, to take Bianca to the doctor. Yaneth works full-time and it's hard for her to leave work for appointments.

Because The Health Center is located right inside Bianca's school, Bianca can visit whenever she needs care. She likes being able to see a medical provider in a familiar place. Her mom likes the convenience of same-day appointments, right in Bianca's school.

Shouldn't it be easy for families to give their kids healthcare?

## Thank you!!



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## TheHealthCenter

509-529-5661  
509-529-5432 To Donate

[info@TheHealthCenterWW.org](mailto:info@TheHealthCenterWW.org)

534 S. 3<sup>rd</sup> Ave., Suite 16  
Walla Walla, WA 99362

[www.TheHealthCenterWW.org](http://www.TheHealthCenterWW.org)



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