Offering Every Kid Success

Christopher House has been helping children and families succeed for more than 100 years. Today, Christopher House’s family of schools prepares at-risk children and their families for success in school, the workplace, and life.

Our continuum of high-quality schools serves children from birth through high school, and includes programs that help parents create stable, self-sufficient families. Working in partnership with parents, we provide a rich academic environment that also builds qualities that make the difference later in life: self-confidence, social skills, and perseverance.
A Letter from Our CEO

There is good news to be shared. Recently published studies found that from 1998 to 2010, the school readiness gap between children from low-income and high-income families narrowed by 10% in math and 16% in reading. A New York Times article noted that while the gaps that remain are massive, this “improvement represents a sharp reversal of the trend over the preceding decades.” It is important that we celebrate this very significant indication of progress.

The research has identified focused parent education on engaging in a child’s learning at home to be the leading cause behind the improvement. This is at the root of Christopher House, and I am so proud of our Parent School, as it underlies all of our work. The life trajectories of children are changing as our parents learn how to be the best parents they can be. When we couple this with high-quality early childhood and elementary education, we hit a trifecta for our children.

As encouraging as the narrowing of the school readiness gap is, there is still significant work to be done. From the New York Times, “poor children still enter kindergarten nearly a year behind their richer peers. Even if school readiness gaps continue to narrow at the rate they did between 1998 and 2010, it would take another 60 to 110 years for them to be completely eliminated.” We are making progress, but we can do better, faster.

Your support and involvement is extremely important to the daily work at Christopher House, closing the gaps for low-income kids, and ensuring we build on success and gain momentum. Thank you for being part of this work and seeing the tremendous asset our children are. They are worth every investment we make.

Gratefully,

Lori Baas
Chief Executive Officer

September 2016

OUR VALUES
- Commitment to Excellence
- Achievement and Perseverance
- Respect and Compassion
- Equality of Opportunity

OUR BELIEFS
Children and families thrive when:
- They have access to a high-quality education
- Education begins at birth, with parents as the first teacher, and continues through life
- Parents have high standards and set high expectations for their children and themselves
- Professionally trained teachers use strength-based instruction and know their students as individuals
- Parents support their children financially and emotionally
- Evaluations and program adjustments are data driven
- Education includes developing perseverance and social intelligence
- Parents and teachers work together to continuously improve programs

IT MAKES DOLLARS AND SENSE.

The rate of return for investments in quality early childhood development for disadvantaged children is 7-10% per annum through better outcomes in education, health, sociability, economic productivity and reduced crime.

Growing Minds Through Personalized Learning

Christopher House Elementary School (CHES) started its fourth school year this August, welcoming 56 kindergarten students (over 70% from Christopher House’s early childhood classrooms), and the addition of the fourth grade! We incorporate the best technology and methodology to give our students cognitive and creative problem solving skills and a life-long love of learning. This year, we are participating in the LEAP pilot program and incorporating the “growth mindset.”

Starting with second and third graders, CHES partnered with LEAP Innovations to individualize instruction with technological and environmental enhancements. Promethean boards, and Chromebooks for all students give access to a digital reading library personalized for each scholar by the teacher. Similar to Netflix, but for reading!

Additionally, to develop the soft skills that are imperative to success - the grit and perseverance to continue when things don’t go the way one expected, CHES staff have applied the “growth mindset.”

“Growth mindset” is the belief that through a love of learning and resilience, success can be achieved. It teaches students to encounter challenges and adversity as opportunities to learn and grow, rather than as failure.

This mindset can be applied to all aspects of life, and can help students and their parents realize their goals and the value of their continued efforts.

With these additions, the 2016-2017 school year looks to be another successful year for staff, students, and their families!
Family of Schools

INFANT & PRESCHOOL
Christopher House’s internationally renowned, full-day early childhood schools serve children from six weeks to five years old. Our schools advance literacy, motor skills, positive social behavior, cognitive development, math skills, and long-term success.

ELEMENTARY SCHOOL
Christopher House Elementary School is an innovative school model offering a continuum of education for children as young as six weeks of age through eighth grade. The school’s rigorous college prep curriculum develops critical thinkers who will succeed in high school, college, and beyond.

AFTER SCHOOL
Christopher House After School promotes academic achievement, self-confidence, and positive decision-making skills for children and youth. We offer tutoring, enrichment activities, field trips, college and career prep, and more.

PARENT SCHOOL
Christopher House Parent School fosters the skills parents need to raise happy, healthy children. Our Teen and Adult Parent and Prenatal School prepares parents for birth, and educates parents to be a child’s “first teacher.” The school creates a strong support system for new parents with social workers, food pantries, and emergency financial assistance.

Our Method

Provide a continuum of education for children from birth to high school graduation.

Educate the whole child; going beyond academics to teach social/emotional skills as well as perseverance and grit.

Partner with parents to provide wraparound support and set goals for self-sufficiency.

Real Results

86% Parents reached measurable goals toward their children’s educational and cognitive development.

Alford-Axelson Award
Christopher House awarded in 2016 for Nonprofit Managerial Excellence.

1 of 23 One of 23 nonprofits to receive gift from Michael Jordan.

1,592 Hungry children and their families were provided emergency food.

175 Students visited college campuses.

Highest Level of Care
All early childhood centers NAEYC accredited for the highest level of education and care.
Thank You to Our Donors

July 1, 2015 - June 30, 2016

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Stephen Herseth, Mary Jo Herseth, Board Member Cindy Zelby, and Andrew Zelby at Christopher House’s 26th Annual Benefit.

It is our pleasure to recognize the generosity of all the institutions and individuals that make our work possible.
Thank You to Our Donors

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Director of Quality Assurance Traci Stanley, Christopher House Alumnus Emmanuel Odiase, Irene Odiase, Sakirat Kuti

Grace Buono with Liz and JoAnne Cicchelli at the Ritz-Carlton for our 26th Annual Benefit, April 2016.
This summer, CME Group Foundation invested $300,000 in Christopher House over three years to engage low-income parents in promoting early math skills, kindergarten readiness, and learning through play and language.

Christopher House has recently implemented a Kindergarten Readiness Matrix© that was developed through a collaboration of our early childhood and elementary school educators. The tool outlines what developmental milestones are important to ensure students are ready for kindergarten. While our educational philosophy acknowledges that students learn at different paces, we hope that as they complete preschool, students have achieved the following early math milestones which will help them excel in kindergarten and beyond:

- Verbally count to 20
- Identify numerals 1 through 10
- Write numbers 1 through 5
- Connect numerals 1 through 5 (child can look at a grouping of three objects and match them to the numeral 3)
- Identify basic shapes (circle, square, triangle, rectangle)
- Compare and order 2-3 objects based on size, length, weight, area, or volume
- Extends simple repeating (AB) patterns

Past support from CME Group Foundation has helped our teachers become experts at promoting these skills in the classroom through play. With the foundation’s renewed support, we will now extend this expertise to parents, fulfilling our shared vision of helping children achieve the early math skills vital to their academic success.

“CME Group Foundation is pleased to continue its support of Christopher House through our Early Math Education Initiative. Christopher House’s plans to engage families in early math activities with their young children will help break new ground in this area.”

– Kassie Davis, Executive Director, CME Group Foundation
Counselors at Christopher House have really helped me get through so much and find my center. Now, I know my worth and I can get through things,” says Erica.

Erica is a single mother of two children, ages five and seven. She has found support and an opportunity to overcome the trauma of her childhood at Christopher House. “I grew up thinking I was at the fault of everything. I went through depression in high school; I had suicide attempts,” she recalls. Erica’s father made her insecure and anxious throughout her adolescence and young adult life.

She understood the amount of work it was going to take to recover, “Anything that happens in your childhood takes a long time to heal from; it took counseling to be able to let go of that, and know that I was enough. [Now,] I feel pretty confident in myself and know I am worthy.”

“Being able to have someone listen to what you are going through and validate your feelings, recognize and appreciate you as a person, that’s really big and Christopher House did that for me. I had a self-esteem boost,” recalls Erica.

Christopher House has been an immense support not only in her personal life, but as a mother, “as a single parent you feel alone, and it’s very hard, but Christopher House meets you where you are. It’s super great.”

Erica was able to go to school and work towards a career while her son and daughter were in high quality early childhood and after school classrooms. Plus, with the additional resources Christopher House offers - social workers, family advocates, food pantries, and emergency assistance - their family was able to focus on their growth.

Through Erica’s work with Christopher House she has overcome her insecurities, and been able to focus on her goals. Recently, she became a certified Medical Technician and hopes to become a flight medic. She wants her children to learn and grow from each other and know their worth.

For Erica, “Christopher House means support; they help you find your foundation, wherever you are in life.”
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July 1, 2015 - June 30, 2016

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Diapers to Diplomas

You can help our littlest learners reach their full potential by joining Diapers to Diplomas to provide essentials for our 120 infants and toddlers.

We are in need of:
• Diapers - sizes 3, 4, 5, 6
• Pull-Ups
• Baby Wipes
• Enfamil Formula

How can you help?
• Donate these items today!
  Bring to our James & Jean Stewart Campus or our Logan Square Center
• Throw a baby shower or
  Host a diaper drive!
• Sponsor a child.
  For less than a dollar a day, you can ensure a child has clean diapers while in school.

Visit christopherhouse.org/d2d and sign up today!
A simple philanthropic decision can create a staggering domino effect that ensures low-income children have access to quality early childhood education and the opportunity to reach their goals. Here are some of the ways that you can give:

- Donate Online
- Donate by Mail
- Become a Monthly Donor
- Donate Diapers
- Include Christopher House in your Will
- Make Christopher House your IRA Beneficiary
- Send Gifts of Stock

For more information about ways to give, please contact our Associate Director of Individual Giving, Kathy Greenberg at kgreenberg@christopherhouse.org or...
Get Involved

HOLIDAY FOOD DRIVE & FAMILY-TO-FAMILY

November 1 - December 19, 2016
Holidays are a time of family, food, and generosity. At Christopher House, we want to help our families enjoy a special day of hope. Your dedicated support can make a difference in their lives. Please join us to provide children and their families with food, gifts, and other necessities to have a joyful holiday season. Visit christopherhouse.org for more information and to sign up for Family-to-Family this fall.

READ-A-THON

March 1 - 17, 2017
Christopher House celebrated the love of READING with our scholars last March and it was a huge success. During the Read-A-Thon, we had the opportunity to open scholars’ imagination, spark their creativity, and build their vocabulary and literacy skills. Volunteers shared their favorite childhood books, and collected donations to help create more robust classroom libraries. Through books and reading, we are encouraging children to succeed in school, the workplace, and life.

27TH ANNUAL BENEFIT

April 27, 2017 - Four Seasons Chicago
Save the date to join us this spring for our largest fundraiser of the year! Last year, we were pleased to honor the Hale Family and welcome Christopher House alumnus Emmanuel Odiase back as a featured speaker. Emmanuel, who will graduate from Purdue University this December, said, “I prefer to think of myself and the people in this organization as just family...Thank you for investing in the lives of people and children you didn’t know at all, but came to you with a need.” The event raised $690,000 to provide a continuum of education for low-income children and their families.

2016 Annual Benefit Auction Chair and Board Member Nicole Toalson, and Host Committee Chair and Board Member Anthony Chimino.
Help Christopher House’s youngest students reach their full potential, one change at a time.

DONATE DIAPERS TODAY!
Bring donations M-F 8am-5:30pm to our Logan Square site at 3255 W. Altgeld St. 60647
or our James & Jean Stewart Campus at 5235 W. Belden Ave. 60639

SPONSOR A CHILD BY BECOMING A DIAPERS TO DIPLOMAS MEMBER!
Sign up at christopherhouse.org/d2d.

HOST A BABY SHOWER!
Contact us at 773.922.7544 or visit christopherhouse.org/d2d for more information.

christopherhouse.org/d2d