



The Orso family (l. - r.): Richard, Daniel, Philip, Bernadette and Rebekah.

*A Family
Made
Complete*

Philip Orso is a typical 2-year-old, full of energy and curiosity. The bright-eyed child laughs at the antics of his 9-year-old brother, Daniel, and loves to snuggle with his 13-year-old sister, Rebekah. He thrives in the lively and warm atmosphere of Bernadette and Richard Orso's home, where friends and family frequently visit and fun activities abound.

Philip could be leading a completely different life today, were it not for the caring family who made the decision to adopt a medically fragile child. He was born into incredibly harsh circumstances: he was exposed to drugs in utero, and was 3 months premature. The tiny newborn weighed only 3 lbs., and suffered from a host of medical problems: reflux, seizures, asthma, retinopathy and paralysis on his right side. He was removed from his birth parents' care, and left the hospital at 2-months-old to live with a foster family.

During this time, in another part of the state, the Orsos were thinking about adding to their family, either through fostering or adoption. While visiting a Wendy's restaurant, Mrs. Orso saw an ad for the Wendy's Wonderful Kids program, which funds an adoption recruiter for Children's Aid and Family Services. After discussing the possibility of adoption with her family, she contacted the agency, and she

See *Orso Family* on page 6

Spanning the Centuries: Agency Marks Special Anniversary



This year marks Children's Aid and Family Services 110th anniversary!

Read more about the agency's history and milestones on page 5.



This year marks the agency's 110th anniversary. It's remarkable to think about all the children and families that have been helped in such a meaningful way during that time. It's also a testament to the power of your commitment. Everything you do – whether it's to give of your time as a volunteer, lead a gift drive or make a donation – contributes to the agency's long history of making a difference in the lives of vulnerable children and families in our community.

I thank you for everything you do, and want you to know that your efforts are needed, now more than ever. If you already volunteer for the agency, think about expanding your commitment. For instance, you may want to support the agency by registering to attend our spring gala on Friday, March 27. It's going to be a fun night and, most important, it will raise funds for the children in the agency's care.

If you haven't been involved with the agency's work, now is the time to join us. These are challenging times, but with your help, we will continue to provide critical services to vulnerable children and families, who rely on us now more than ever.

Robert B. Jones, Ph.D.
President & CEO

Agency Wins MarCom Award

Children's Aid and Family Services was honored with a Gold MarCom Award for a public service announcement it produced with its celebrity spokesperson, Darryl McDaniels, of the legendary rap group Run-DMC.



The award recognizes the public service announcement for radio recorded by Mr. McDaniels, which urges listeners to "make a difference in the life of a child: be a mentor, volunteer, donate your time." The PSA has been playing on TV and radio stations throughout the tri-state area.

The MarCom Awards recognize outstanding creative achievement by marketing and communication professionals. This year, there were more than 5,000 entries from the United States and the rest of the world.

Since discovering in 2000 that he was adopted, Mr. McDaniels has been a strong advocate for the cause, and also received a Congressional "Angels in Adoption" award for his work. He partnered with Children's Aid and Family Services to give a voice to the thousands of children currently in the foster care and adoption system in New Jersey.

Touchdown for Families

Although the New York Giants didn't make it to the Super Bowl this year, they are still champions to the children in the agency's care. For the second year, Horizon Blue Cross Blue Shield of New Jersey generously donated \$500 to the agency for every touchdown the Giants scored. Big Blue scored 45 touchdowns in the 2008 season, bringing the total donation from Horizon BCBSNJ to \$22,500. A check was presented to the agency in February with the final tally for the season.

"We greatly appreciate the generosity of Horizon in choosing the agency as a partner for the second year," says Madinah Grier, director of development and communications. For more information on agency partnerships, contact Ms. Grier at 201.261.2800 or visit www.cafsnj.org.



Jonathan R. Pearson, program director, corporate responsibility & community relations, Horizon Blue Cross Blue Shield of New Jersey; Bob Jones, Ph.D., president & CEO, Children's Aid and Family Services and Mike Stevens, senior vice president and chief marketing officer, NY Giants.

An Innovative Model of Foster Care

Children's Aid and Family Services recently opened two Professional Parent foster homes in Clifton and West Orange, NJ. Modeled after a traditional family, the Professional Parent foster home offers the older children in the agency's care a secure and warm environment, with two parents to come home to every day. Four children, ages 14 through 18, live in each home, with a professional foster parent, who is an employee of the agency, as well as a co-parent, a full-time youth counselor and an alternate parent who fills in when the parents go on vacation or are sick. The professional parents undergo thorough agency trainings, as well as background checks.

"Many of the children have gone through several placements and as a result, have a difficult time with trust," says June Sosland, administrator, Out-of-Home Care. "The



Professional Foster home offers a real family environment, and the sense of security it builds allows the children to simply be kids, often for the first time in their lives."

To that end, the children attend school and participate in the local community by holding part-time jobs or enrolling in recreational activities. They eat dinner with their foster family, and enjoy family time together, perhaps watching a movie or talking about the day's events. This small environment encourages the building of lasting relationships and creation of trust, which are essential to helping the children heal.

These homes were purchased by Children's Aid and Family Services through the remarkable generosity of an anonymous donor. Two additional homes are scheduled to open in 2009.

The Turrell Child Care & Early Learning Center Introduces Half-Day Preschool Enrichment Program



For more information,
call 201-261-5970

or visit us at <http://turrell.cafsnj.org>

WE ALSO OFFER:

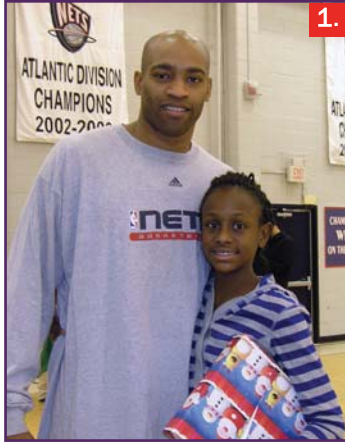
- Enrollment from ages 8 weeks to kindergarten.
- Convenient hours:
Monday - Friday 7:00 a.m. - 6:30 p.m.
- Onsite kitchen where nutritious meals and snacks are prepared.
- Dedicated playrooms for infants/toddlers and preschoolers.
- Conveniently located in Paramus, by Routes 17 & 4, the Garden State Parkway and NYC bus stops.



Holiday Wrap-up



8.



1.

The children in the agency's care enjoyed a fantastic holiday season, thanks to the generosity of many individuals, organizations and businesses. Here are some of the highlights.



7.

1. Vince Carter of the Nets with one of the children in the agency's care at a holiday party hosted by the Nets.
2. Children's Aid and Family Services' holiday display at Paramus Park Shopping Center.
3. Generous shoppers donated to the Baby Basics collection box at Westfield Garden State Plaza.
4. A magician entertains children in the agency's care.
5. Gabriela and Santa at the treatment homes holiday party.
6. A Nets' dancer shows some moves to one of the children in the agency's care.
7. The Claus' celebrate at the treatment homes holiday party.
8. Yi Jianlian of the Nets at the team's holiday party for children.



2.



The NJ Adoption Resource Clearing House (NJ ARCH) was again the state-wide coordinator for the 10th Annual "A Home for the Holidays" TV special on CBS. This hour-long program was sponsored by The Dave Thomas Foundation for Adoption and Children's Action Network.



6.



3.



4.



5.

Children's Aid and Family Services offers a profound thank you to the many generous individuals and organizations that hosted parties, donated their time, gave gifts to the children, and/or donated to our 2008 Holiday Appeal.

110 Years of Helping Vulnerable Children and Families



Children's Aid and Family Services marks a special milestone this year: its 110th anniversary! Founded in 1899 as a child protection and adoption agency, the agency has placed more than 10,000 infants with loving adoptive parents. Its services have also evolved and grown to keep up with a changing world. Below is a timeline of our history.

1899

Children's Aid and Protective Society of the Oranges established. First official meeting of the board of directors held February 9, 1899, at 65 Essex Avenue, Orange, NJ.

1945

Name changed to Children's Aid and Adoption Society (CAAS).

1952

CAAS and the New Jersey Children's Home Society decide to divide coverage within the state, with CAAS focusing exclusively on northern New Jersey.

1956

Family Counseling Services of Ridgewood and Vicinity, Inc. founded.

1965

The Depot, an all-volunteer gift store, was established to raise funds to benefit Family Counseling Services.

1973

Woodlea group home for adolescent girls established in Ridgewood with the support of the Junior Women's League of Bergen County. The child care center opens.

1974

CAAS merges with the Sister Mary Eugene Foundation, Inc. Sister Mary Eugene's Bogota facility becomes CAAS main office. Eastlea group home for girls established at old main office in East Orange.

1976

Renaissance House group home for adolescent boys opens.

1984

Post-Adoption Counseling Services begin.

1986

Independent Living Program created.

1987

PATH I, a therapeutic foster care residence for boys and girls ages 5 - 12 opens.

1990

CAAS headquarters moves from Bogota to larger facilities in Hackensack.

1992

PATH II, the second therapeutic foster care residence, opens for girls ages 5 - 12. PATH I becomes a residence for boys only.

1993

Children's Haven group home in Paterson merges with CAAS.

1995

Children's Aid and Family Services established, merging CAAS and Family Counseling Services of Ridgewood and Vicinity, Inc.

1996

Boarder Babies program begins. Endowment Fund receives \$500,000 anonymous challenge gift.

1998

New Turrell Child Care & Early Learning Center and Children's

Services Center opens at 200 Robin Road in Paramus.

1999

Centennial anniversary of Children's Aid and Family Services.

2005

The Read Now! program launched. The Baby Basics program is adopted from the American Red Cross by Children's Aid and Family Services.

2006

After a successful capital campaign, the agency's flagship building at 200 Robin Road was renovated to provide offices for administrative staff.

2007

Formalized outreach program launched to keep in touch with young adults who have "aged out" of the agency's care. The Baby Basics program distribution sites expanded to include Englewood.

2008

Hip-hop legend Darryl "DMC" McDaniels, an adoptee, partners with the agency to advocate on behalf of the children in foster care awaiting adoption. The Baby Basics program distribution sites expanded to include Carlstadt. Professional Foster Parent Homes open in Clifton and West Orange.



Bright-eyed, happy Phillip.

and her husband began training with the intention of fostering a child. Sooner than expected, an agency staff member told the Orsos there was a toddler who seemed to be a good fit with the family, and he was ready

to be adopted, but he had medical problems.

“We both read the medical reports separately, and thought about this little boy,” says Mr. Orso. “And both Bernadette and I said, ‘how selfish would it be to say we won’t take him because he’s not perfect? If he were our birth child, what would we do?’”

The family drove to Philip’s foster parents’ home to meet the little boy. Although they were warned he was attached to his foster family and shy with strangers, he ran right to Mr. Orso and gave him a hug upon meeting him. “Right then we knew he was the one,” says Mr. Orso. After a few more meetings with Philip, he went home with his new family, where neighbors and family streamed in to meet him. He soon went to a large family reunion in Maine. “He went with everyone, and had a great time,” says Mr. Orso. “He made such an easy transition into our family. The big change it had on us was figuring out who was going to get up with him in the morning,” he laughingly says.

A nurse from Children’s Aid and Family Services trained the family on how to handle Philip’s medical conditions. Specialized therapists visit the Orso’s home throughout the week to give Philip developmental, occupational, speech and physical therapy, and the Orsos work with him on improving his skills. Mrs. Orso, a former physical education teacher, helps him with his exercises, and his siblings help out, too. Daniel reads to him and makes him laugh, and Rebekah plays games and cuddles with him. As a result of this nurturing,

the toddler has thrived. He chews better, and thus eats more, and has grown, no longer needing nutritional supplements. He’s more active and less lethargic, and walks with more surefootedness. After suffering 12 seizures from ages 13 – 18 months, he’s had none since joining the family.

Philip’s adoption was finalized in December 2008, and friends threw the family a party to celebrate. “We tell our friends about the joy Philip has given us and how complete he has made our family,” says Mrs. Orso. “Not everyone can adopt, but they can do other things to help. For instance, we have friends who are physical therapists and have worked with Philip on their own time, other friends gave us a baby shower, and many friends have driven my older children to their activities when I’m busy with Philip.”



Brotherly love: Philip with Daniel.

“One of the reasons we wanted to adopt was to show our kids how to give and care for someone else,” says Mr. Orso. “We also want to give Philip the opportunity to contribute something to society. Who knows, he may be a surgeon one day.”

Children’s Aid and Family Services is seeking foster and adoptive parents for children ages newborn – 4 who are medically fragile and in need of a loving home. Prospective parents will be helped every step of the way. Support services include a monthly stipend and medical coverage for the child, case management by a social worker, comprehensive training programs and monthly family group meetings. For more information, call Eileen Jones at 201.226.0300.

MARK YOUR CALENDARS



Visit www.cafsnj.org and click on the Calendar of Events for upcoming agency events, including:

Annual Spring Fundraising Gala
March 27, 2009

Monthly Agency Tours
March, April and May 2009

Volunteer Appreciation Evening
May 21, 2009

Regular Adoption and Foster
Care Orientations/Information
Sessions

Agency Overview for New
Volunteers
Twice Monthly

"Friends of Children's Aid and Family Services" Launch Event

"Friends of Children's Aid and Family Services - Volunteers Making a Difference," the new organization for agency volunteers, held its launch event at Powerhouse Studios in Paramus, NJ. The guests had a fun time mingling and learning about the many opportunities available to volunteers in the agency's programs.

The agency needs your time and talent as a volunteer! To learn more, contact Cyndy Mitchell at 201.261.2800.



Photo (c) Timothy Glenn Photographers, Inc.

The "Friends of Children's Aid and Family Services" Leadership Committee with agency staff. (l. - r.): Jackie Poritz, Michelle Sherry, Jackie Qualey, Bob Jones, Ph.D., Brigid O'Brien, Madinah Grier, Cyndy Mitchell and Marie Adler-Kravec.

Grants News

Children's Aid and Family Services thanks The NYMEX Foundation and Oritani Savings Bank Foundation for their generous support. The NYMEX Foundation provided a \$10,000 grant for Baby Basics. This vital program supplies free nutritional formula and diapers to low-income parents in Bergen County with children ages two and younger.



Oritani Savings Bank Foundation sponsored the agency's Children's Motivational Awards Dinner. (l. - r.): Kevin Lynch, president & CEO; David Garcia, vice president, commercial lending; Darryl "DMC" McDaniels of Run-DMC, who was the guest speaker; and Michael DeBernardi, executive vice president & chief operating officer.



The Oritani Savings Bank

Foundation was the lead sponsor of the Children's Motivational Awards dinner, donating \$9,500 to the event. The dinner is a large, family-style celebration attended by foster children in the agency's care. Awards are given to the children to acknowledge their accomplishments and progress.

"Organizations such as the NYMEX Foundation and Oritani Savings Bank Foundation play a critical role in the agency's ability to help vulnerable children and families," says Bob Jones, Ph.D., president & CEO, Children's Aid and Family Services. "We're extremely grateful for their support."

“There’s No Place Like Home” Fundraising Gala

Mark your calendars! The agency’s signature fundraising gala is on Friday, March 27, 2009, at the Hackensack Golf Club in Oradell, NJ. The event will benefit vulnerable children and families.

This year’s theme is “There’s No Place Like Home,” and will include appearances by Dorothy, the Tin Man, Scarecrow and Cowardly Lion, from the all-time classic film “The Wizard of Oz”; a wide assortment of culinary treats; open bar; DJ; raffle; and silent and live auctions with one-of-a-kind items to bid on, including stays at vacation homes in exotic locations, the chance to be named as a character in international bestselling author



Harlan Coben’s upcoming novel, and unique opportunities with your favorite sports teams.

This year’s sponsors include Helen’s Hope Foundation, Applebee’s, Irwin Franchise Capital Corporation, Boiling Springs Savings Bank, Brenda and Frank Gallagher, Mutual of America, Toys“R”Us, Inc., Town News and Wyeth.

Please join us for an evening of fun and fundraising! Tickets for the gala start at \$150 and online registration is available at www.cafsnj.org.

If you would like to lend your support through a sponsorship, journal ad, ticket purchase, contributing an item to the auctions, or volunteering, please call Madinah Grier at 201.261.2800.

The mission of Children’s Aid and Family Services is to preserve, protect and, when needed, provide families. Motivated by compassion for vulnerable children, young adults, frail elderly and their families, we provide high-quality and innovative services that meet their social, educational and emotional needs. Since 1899, the agency has been recognized as a leader in adoption and specialty therapeutic services for children who have been severely traumatized and abused. For more information, please visit www.cafsnj.org.



**CHILDREN’S AID
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