



The Community

FAMILY

Architecture rendering courtesy of the CFC



Proposed Community Family Center

"Like art, revolutions come from combining what exists into what has never existed before."

- Gloria Steinem

Plans for a revolutionary approach to much-needed family services in our community involve combining five existing

childcare and family service agencies into a single cost-effective facility: The Community Family Center (CFC).

These agencies which currently serve 3,500 participants annually, include the Highland Park Community Nursery School & Day Care Center; Family Network; Highland Park-Highwood Home Child Care Association; Tri-

Con Child Care Center; and Family Service: Prevention, Education & Counseling.

Although the agencies have provided decades of outstanding services, the needs of the community have caused them to outgrow their current space and facilities. Several are located in basements of local buildings where they strive to overcome antiquated, overcrowded conditions.

As planned, the new modernized facility would include merging the two daycare programs, while the other agencies would remain as independent service providers. The Community Family Center would house counseling rooms, classrooms, a library, play areas, and administrative offices. According to Community Family Center President Herb Wander, "Having all five service providers under one roof offers cost-efficiencies and dramatically improved productivity across the board. Families will benefit from better coordination of referrals among providers within the

CENTER

Photo courtesy of the CFC



Day Care programs will be part of the CFC

Community Family Center building and, ultimately, money will be saved."

The City of Highland Park has offered Community Family Center the option to lease the aging Karger Center once the group raises funds to completely

renovate the building. Karger's location at 1850 Green Bay Road is ideal for the proposed family center. The site is next to the Lake County Health Department, it is accessible to public transportation, and it borders Sunset Park—an ideal neighbor for pre-school and daycare centers.

Many residents have been inspired to contribute significant time and funds to support the vision of the Community Family Center.

Because our community is prosperous, there could be a feeling that somehow the project will reach its goal, leaving involvement to go elsewhere where the need is perceived to be greater. One could live here and never realize that there are

hundreds of disadvantaged families. The distance between the "haves" and the "have-nots" is even greater in our own community.

"We've raised substantial help from public and private sources. But, there are miles ahead of us," Wander said. "Ironically, while the economy over the past several years has made our job more difficult, it's made the service need greater. We all know that there's a lot we should do to improve our world, and often there's not much we can do. This is a problem that is literally in our own backyard and we can do something about it."

In keeping with the spirit of the holidays, there is no better time to share the mission of the Community Family Center. For more information, contact Amy Zisook at 312-961-1352 or visit:

www.Communityfamilycenter.org.

By Audrey Suffrin on behalf of the Community Family Center.