



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

August 28, 2020

South Minneapolis nonprofit launches campaign to enhance understanding of Phillips community, invites partnership to build equity in health and education

Campaign led by therapeutic early childhood nonprofit Southside Family Nurturing Center following the nearby murder of George Floyd

Minneapolis, Minn. – On the same day its cohort of five-year-olds graduate into kindergarten ready to take on the upcoming school year, south Minneapolis nonprofit [Southside Family Nurturing Center](#) (Southside) is launching its new awareness campaign. *We Rise: Breaking Cycles, Building Equity* aims to enhance people’s understanding of the south Minneapolis community and identify other Twin Cities neighborhoods with similar needs that might benefit from Southside’s holistic model of nurturing children and their families.

In May, the Phillips and surrounding neighborhoods found themselves at the center of a global spotlight following the murder of George Floyd, further amplifying trauma already collectively experienced by many community members. While still hurting and facing many challenges, the strength and resilience of the Phillips community inspired Southside leaders to explore expanding its footprint to reach other high-risk children, families and neighborhoods across the Twin Cities. Families qualify for Southside’s therapeutic early childhood education and family home visiting services based on their income and history of trauma.

Based in the heart of the Phillips neighborhood for more than 45 years, Southside serves racially diverse, low-income families through early childhood education programming and intensive home visiting and support. Services are culturally relevant and trauma-informed, based on the unique needs of each child and family.

Southside’s multi-cultural program includes center-based education for toddlers and preschoolers. Along with low teacher-child ratios and emphases on safety, relationship building, and social-emotional development, onsite therapies address developmental concerns and provided nutritious meals support healthy brain function. Ultimately, a child’s success is dependent on stability at home; Southside supports the whole family with intensive home visiting, family events, parenting skills development and crisis intervention.

“We know the impact of prevention and early intervention from prenatal to five years is important; and if we’re willing to invest as a community, we can change, or literally tip, the health and education scales throughout a person’s life and our next generation,” said Julie Ellefson, executive director of Southside Family Nurturing Center. “Ensuring that every child – inclusive of race, culture and socioeconomic status – is nurtured in mind, body, soul, and community is vital to the health of our community and our collective future.”

“Given the current state of our world, we need to invest like we have never invested before. Southside’s holistic, dual generation, trauma-informed model is needed now more than ever. This campaign will help enhance understanding of our community-based approach to building health and education equity for Native American and Communities of Color in Minneapolis.”

We Rise. People aligned with our focus on promoting health and education equity through a holistic family centered model are invited to explore a conversation about future partnership with Southside. Community members, public and private leaders, developers, and funders are encouraged to reach out to julieellefson@ssfnc.org

Julie Ellefson – BA, MPH Community Health Education

Executive Director, Southside Family Nurturing Center

Ms. Ellefson has over 25 years of not-for-profit leadership experience in organizations serving children and families at-risk for abuse and neglect. Prior to joining Southside Family Nurturing Center in 2015, she served as co-director of Legal Program Services at Family Violence Network in Lake Elmo; program director at the CornerHouse Interagency Child Abuse Evaluation and Training Center in Minneapolis; and as executive director at the Committee Against Domestic Abuse, Inc. in Mankato. Specific areas of professional expertise include Program Development & Evaluation, Forensic Interviewing, Violence Prevention and Intervention, Systems Change, Cross-Cultural Communication, and Child Safety and Well Being.

About Southside Family Nurturing Center

Since 1974, the Southside Family Nurturing Center has offered services to children and families in the heart of the Phillips neighborhood. One of the first private, nonprofit agencies to implement holistic family interventions in Minnesota, Southside offers therapeutic early childhood education and intensive, home visiting services. When parents receive the support and care they need and deserve, they create bright futures for themselves and their children. For more information, visit ssfnc.org.

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