
SPRING
NEWSLETTER





PAYING IT FORWARD

KAROLYN SCHRAGE,
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

“I ALONE CANNOT CHANGE THE WORLD, BUT I CAN CAST A STONE ACROSS THE WATERS TO CREATE MANY RIPPLES.”

— MOTHER TERESA

Across our region, LifeChoices engages **more than 10,000 students** every year with age-appropriate, medically accurate, and engaging prevention education programs. Our medical mobile unit team is on the move to provide free and compassionate healthcare services **at multiple locations** throughout the community. Medical services are provided to almost **4,000 patients annually** through our clinic, and **over 1,800 ultrasounds** were performed by our medical team last year.

All of these accomplishments together are an incredible feat only possible because of your support. **But did you know that on top of the important work God does right here in our communities, LifeChoices also has the opportunity to pay it forward nationally, and even globally?**

Twice a year we invite non-profit leaders to come to LifeChoices as our team shares with them about how we utilize sexual health medical services to share the love of Jesus with our clients. At our recent March training we hosted organizations from South Dakota, Delaware, Texas, Kansas, Indiana, and beyond. One participant had this to say,

“Your team is incredible. The training, inspiration, and every detail you poured into welcoming us was beyond

expectation. We are filled up and excited for what we’ve learned and how God will use us moving forward.”

In addition to our in-house trainings, our team is also often invited by several national organizations to share with their affiliates at their annual conferences. This year our team is scheduled to share 5+ workshop sessions at the Heartbeat International, National Institute of Family Life Advocates, and CareNet conferences. Many of these sessions are recorded and provided virtually to organizations around the world! Last year a participant made this comment,

“We always look to see which workshops LifeChoices is leading and make sure to sign up. We are always encouraged & excited to see what new adventures you’re bringing our way next.”

Lastly, one of our greatest honors is to influence a national effort to combat domestic trafficking by encouraging others to replicate the processes we have found success with in their own communities. Recently we have received multiple calls from various state-wide human trafficking task force agencies who have heard about the success our team has had with implementing a multi-agency response to sexual exploitation

in our region. We have been able to share about our strategies, protocols, and outcomes when providing victim advocacy services alongside our law enforcement partners. One group recently drove from Iowa to learn from our team and sent back the following note:

“In a world where time is a commodity – your gift to us was priceless! We are still reeling with excitement from all we learned and all we must do. Please extend our thanks to your team!”

What a blessing to know that the everyday obedience of our team to serve with professional excellence for the last 34+ years has opened doors to also be a light and pay it forward to organizations across our country, and even in regions beyond.

Your support of LifeChoices is truly a stone that has caused innumerable ripples of change and compassion in our world. Thank you!

“Let’s not allow ourselves to get fatigued doing good. At the right time we will harvest a good crop if we don’t give up or quit. Right now, every time we get the chance, let us work for the benefit of all, starting with the people closest to us...” – Galatians 6:9-10

CLINIC UPDATE

MISCHA LONG, DIRECTOR OF NURSING

In any given week, our team serves approximately 100 individuals. These people all have different backgrounds, different financial and family situations, different reasons for coming to our clinic, and uniquely different needs. But, we aim to always serve each person as the individual they are. We listen to them, we build custom care plans, and we offer compassionate and professional healthcare in their most urgent time of need. The following are just three short stories out of the dozens of clients that we have served recently:



Lola: Denial had carried her through many weeks of her pregnancy, but Lola finally faced what she could no longer ignore – a positive pregnancy test. She and her mom came to our clinic hoping to receive information about her options for an abortion. Her ultrasound revealed that she would surprisingly give birth in less than 6 weeks. Our team gave Lola information on adoption and promised to be an ongoing

resource for her. Just a few weeks later, the team received this note: ***“Hello! I am doing well. I gave birth a few weeks ago – he has two loving adoptive parents and a big sister, too! Thank you for all your kindness and help. You made it much easier to make this choice.”***

Josh: Josh had been sexually abused repeatedly as a pre-teen and had never shared that with anyone. Over the years, he had tried to deal with the hurt from this abuse with relationships that only left him more depressed. Josh had come to the clinic for an STI concern, but our team quickly realized there were as many emotional and spiritual needs as there was a physical need. The nurse discussed counseling resources, but Josh said the cost of counseling was too expensive to consider. After sharing that he was drinking many bottles of vodka per week, the nurse encouraged him to consider instead putting that money towards counseling. Josh agreed to this challenge and gladly accepted prayer and a devotional book as he left. A week later, Josh returned for a follow-up visit. He excitedly told the nurse he had not had any sexual encounters since his last visit, had significantly cut back on his alcohol consumption, and was on the waitlist for a local counseling center. The nurse encouraged him to keep moving forward and reminded Josh that he was worth making healthier choices for himself.

Cindy: Fearful she was pregnant again, Cindy made an appointment at our clinic. She had three kids at home and had terminated two other pregnancies. When asked about her previous abortions, Cindy admitted she has had many struggles since then, and believes they started the downward spiral of her marriage and her heavy drinking. Our team told Cindy about our post-abortion support group and other online resources she could access. She was very tearful throughout the appointment and admitted to trying to fill the void in her life with alcohol, sex, and relationships. While Cindy was relieved that her pregnancy test was negative, she knew she had to make a change in her life. She made a commitment to follow-up with her AA group and discussed getting back into church. Cindy gave the nurse a big hug as her appointment ended and promised to follow-up on the resources for her healing and restoration.

Every appointment in our clinic is an opportunity for our team to share love, grace, and hope with our clients. What a privilege it is to do this work that we do – thank you for your partnership in this endeavor!

*Names changed to protect client confidentiality.

ON THE MOVE!

KAROLYN SCHRAGE, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

At his school, Blake* encountered a LifeChoices Compass presenter who provided his class with medically accurate and age-appropriate information about relationships, resiliency, and sexual health choices. At the end of their 5-day program, each student received information and resources about the free and confidential testing offered at our Choices Medical clinics. Blake felt safe and empowered to make an appointment in the following weeks on our medical mobile unit. He was able to receive professional and compassionate healthcare, essential treatment for his positive test results, and community referrals for ongoing therapeutic care. From the classroom to the clinic – LifeChoices offered him hope and healing.



In the book of Deuteronomy, Moses recounts God's words to the Israelites: "Get off the mountain and get moving!" He goes on to remind the people that their active obedience to get moving took them on a long journey of faith, but also provided them multiplied opportunities as they entered the promised land.

Seven years ago, LifeChoices also accepted a challenge from God to get moving! Our medical mobile unit was purchased, equipped, and staffed to reach individuals who lack access to quality healthcare and, like the story in the Bible, our faith has been exponentially increased and our opportunities are abounding!



Across our communities our medical mobile unit is on the move. Our team has provided ultrasounds to unplanned moms in jail, at hotels, at an adult dance club, truck stops, and on school campuses. We also provide several STI testing & treatment services every single week. In addition to these unique locations, we also offer our mobile unit services on a routine basis at the following locations:

- + Crowder College – Neosho
- + Crowder College – Webb City
- + Lafayette House
- + Jasper County Jail
- + Newton County Jail

We also deploy our team for human trafficking law enforcement operations multiple times each year in Kansas City, St. Louis, Springfield, Columbia/ Jefferson City, and several outlying regions!

As one author writes,

“God is constantly on the move. I cannot stay where I am and follow God at the same time; responding requires movement.”

Thank you for believing in the vision to move and investing with us to make this mobile ministry a reality!

*Names changed to protect client confidentiality.



A TRUE CALLING

ABBY HAYS, PREVENTION SERVICES ASSISTANT/CLINIC RECEPTIONIST

Saying that I am a “sexual health missionary” has caused a lot of bewildered looks from people during my last 2 years of serving at LifeChoices. Yet, I can honestly say that this type of ministry has been on my heart since I was a teenager.

I have had the privilege of serving in our medical clinic as receptionist, and in our school programming department as the Prevention Services Assistant. On paper, these two positions could not be more different. One focuses on greeting, paperwork, scheduling, and phone calls. The other focuses on curriculum development, teaching, researching, planning, and organization. Yet, when you look at the heart of each, they could not be more similar. Both positions focus on **loving the vulnerable, scared, and hurting,**

and walking with them through a scary and unfamiliar process. Both focus on a first impression that will hopefully lead to conversations that could deeply impact someone for the rest of their lives.

One of my favorite parts of being a receptionist is hearing clients comment that their nurse was the best nurse that we have on staff, and that “everyone should see her!” The amazing thing is that I have heard that same sentiment for each and every nurse that we have on staff. Our medical team is fueled by the loving power of the Holy Spirit. I have seen angry, nervous, or terrified clients walk into our clinic, and then those same clients walk out thankful, empowered, and prepared for their next steps.

The services we provide in our clinic expand so far beyond simple medical information and assistance; it’s displaying a light and compassion that brings people to a state of hope that they never thought possible.

Similarly, I have walked into schools and seen students come into class fully anticipating to detest the class or be repulsed by the content. Yet, those same students asked me not to leave on the last day because they just wanted to continue the conversations we had together. What we cover in classrooms is not simply medical and relationship education; it’s an opportunity to show students that real and healthy love, respect, and sexual choices exist. It’s being a safe place for them to disclose an unsafe or abusive situation. It’s being an adult in a student’s life who believes in them and thinks they are capable of change.

From the classroom to the clinic, I have had a front row seat to the impact that LifeChoices has on our community. I have witnessed the power of prayer, hope, and a kind word. I have seen how the phrase “you’re not alone” has impacted both students and clients. Most importantly, I have seen how the love of God has been tangibly shown to people that He created, died for, and years for.



GOLF WRAP UP

SAVE THE DATE!

Links for Life 2023 was incredible! Thank you for your support!

This year's event had a full field of 26 teams with over 100 men and women coming out to show support for LifeChoices! We are excited to report that over \$20,000 was raised for continued services in Carthage, Joplin, and the surrounding areas! We are thankful for everyone who joined us on the links for this event.

We also want to thank all of our event sponsors who helped make Links for Life such a success, and share a special thank you to the below underwriters.



**Title Sponsor:
Troy & Jenny Richards**



LifeChoices' 2023 Annual Banquet

Thursday, October 26th / Hope City Church

2022 was a year full of exciting growth at LifeChoices, and this year has already been filled with incredible client stories and big dreams about future ministry endeavors.

We are excited to announce **Bob Goff** will be joining us as our special guest speaker at this year's annual banquet! Bob is a New York Times-Best Selling Author, as well as an attorney who founded a nonprofit human rights organization operating in Uganda, India, Nepal, Iraq, and Somalia. Choosing to live audaciously, Bob connects to his audiences in a powerfully inspirational, yet down to earth manner. Bob is a highly sought after speaker and we cannot wait to introduce him to you all!

Save the date now to join us on Thursday, October 26th for a special evening highlighting the impact of LifeChoices.

Registration information for this year's event will be published later this summer. Please watch our social media accounts or www.lifechoices.org/banquet for updates in the coming months.

We are forever grateful for your faithful support of LifeChoices. We could not serve 14,000+ people each year without you!



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We cannot do what we do without your *support and partnership. Thank you!*

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or www.lifevoices.org/banquet for
updates in the coming months.



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