

# Family Living

## Fred Meyer Donates To Help Educate Homeless Children

Do you ever wonder what happens to children of homeless families in Portland when other students return to school? For the lucky ones, the answer is the Community Transitional School, which is \$14,050 richer after a donation by Fred Meyer Stores to help educate homeless children.

The money comes from a program held at Fred Meyer stores in May when money raised from merchandising P&G products was earmarked for a Portland charity and the school was subsequently chosen.

The mission of the Community Transitional School is to provide an alternative school for at-risk children from homeless families who are unable to overcome the barriers preventing them from regularly attending school.

"Unlike other kids, these students often come to school without warm coats, shoes, or a full stomach," Cheryl Bickle, executive director of the school, said. "But for

six hours every day they are warm and safe. Their bellies are full. And they have the opportunity to feel like typical children with out the heavy burdens of homelessness."

The school provides door-to-door transportation from shelters, family cars, and other transient locations to the classrooms housed at the former Rice Elementary School building at 6433 N.E. Tillamook. "Every morning we have to sort through dozens of messages to find out where to pick up the children whose families have had to move during the night. It is heartening to see so many parents who are struggling so hard to find food and shelter also making the extra effort to help their children attend school.

The one constant in the lives of so many of these children is their visit each day to the Transitional School."

The school provides pre-school through 8th grade classes for more than 300 students a year. It also provides breakfast and lunch, medi-

cal and dental screenings, clothing, shoes, and school supplies.

"Our emphasis is on the basics. These children cannot develop self-esteem until they succeed in their school work," Bickle said. "While they are with us, we believe, our greatest opportunity is to inspire them with a desire to learn and instill a confidence in their abilities to realize their own dreams. For some, we open a door into a world they hardly knew existed."

The School started in 1990 at the YWCA in downtown Portland. In the fall of 1996, they moved to their present location and in 1998 formed an independent nonprofit organization.

Fred Meyer has been headquartered in Portland since 1922 and features 135 one-stop-shopping stores in six western states. It is part of The Kroger Co. (NYSE: KR), which is the nation's largest food retailer.

## We're Part of a Bigger Team



Tualatin High School Dance Team show their support by participating in the "Race For the Cure" Sunday at Portland's Waterfront Park. The event has grown each year. Approximately 40,000 participated this year. L to R Daniela Balboa, Rachael Shindel, Sirena Mikesell, Aubrey Buek, Chelsea Hightower, Amalia Lucas, Lorissa Hoffman, Kristina Neuffer.

Photo by M. Washington

Thousands Of Participants 'Cool Off' At Portland Komen Race For The Cure Event

The finish line at, this year's Portland Race for the Cure® event featured a unique added attraction: a 10 X 10 Misting Massage Tent to help participants cool down and relax as they finished the Race. The Misting tent is a special "thank you" to supporters in the fight against breast cancer from Teledyne Water Pik, the event's local presenting sponsor. The Mist Tent featured Teledyne Water Pik's newest innovation, the Misting Massage® shower head, which gave Race participants a sneak preview into a whole new showering experience.

The Race for the Cure event took place at Waterfront Park, Saturday, Sept. 19, 1999.

## New Federal And State Laws Designed To Move More Children Into Safe Homes In Less Time

By RAMONA FOLEY  
ADMINISTRATOR OF THE STATE OFFICE FOR SERVICES TO CHILDREN AND FAMILIES

When I began child welfare work in the late 1960s in South Carolina, I quickly learned three "rules" about practice:

- Foster parents and foster children are not to bond with each other when the children are living in the foster home. If there are signs of bonding, we must place the child in another home. *Foster parents may not adopt the children placed in their home.*

- Upon entering foster care, children may not see their birth parents until the children have "settled in." That is, they are not to be made distraught by a visit from their birth parents.

- We have come a long way since the 1960s practice of child welfare.

Each of these practices is 180 degrees from where we are now. Foster parents are encouraged to bond and often adopt children in their care. And with few exceptions, visitation with birth families needs to happen as soon as possible after children are placed in care.

Now, federal law says when the child has been in foster care for 15 of the most recent 22 months, we will begin working with the courts and with other agencies to ensure permanency for the child through some other plan. While there may be exceptions, the law's intent is to discourage the practice of allowing children to remain in foster care indefinitely.

ASFA has the potential to improve child welfare practice because it stresses the safety, permanency

and well-being of the child and holds child protective systems accountable for actions and outcomes.

When child protective service workers intervene, we may alter families forever. We must strive to have a system that ensures that families are better off as a result of the state's intervention - safer, stronger and better able to care for their children.

And while we are focusing on the child's safety, we must respect the values of the family and of the community.

If we do have to remove a child from the home to ensure his or her

safety, we must be accountable for this action. ASFA will help us to set clear guidelines and time frames for returning a child home or for establishing another permanent plan.

As head of the state's child protective system, I want our division to be a true partner to other family service agencies and to be well respected in every community.

Finally, I believe we will have succeeded when we have a child protective system in which we ourselves would have confidence if the system were called upon to serve our own families.



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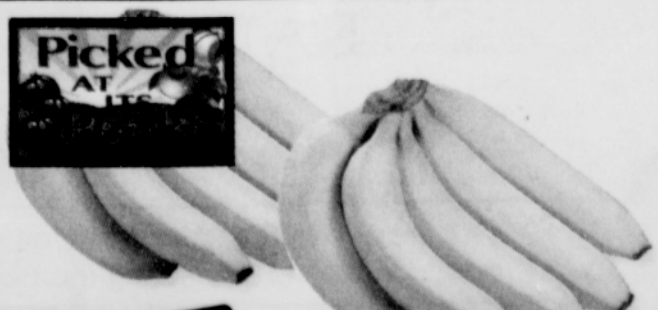
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