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*The mission of NCO Youth & Family Services is to serve as an agent for positive change for youth and families in the community through provision of the highest quality programs and services.*


**630.961.2992**  
**[www.ncoyouth.org](http://www.ncoyouth.org)**

## A Dream Becomes a Reality

For seven years, troubled young men in DuPage County have had a place to turn to for help. Now NCO Youth & Family Services can offer those same services for young women. In October, a \$1 million federal grant was announced that will allow NCO to provide transitional housing and life-skill education programs for at-risk women between the ages of 18 and 21 for the next 5 years. Deb Carr, Director of Residential Housing Programs for NCO, said programs are available for other segments

of the homeless population, including young woman with children, but this particular category is dramatically underserved. U.S. Rep. Judy Biggert agreed with Carr that young woman in the area have long



needed this type of service. The ceremonial check was delivered to NCO in October by Biggert. Carr first applied for this grant three years ago, but was denied. Now her dream has become a reality. Ten women will be selected for the program and will live in five two-bedroom apartments, which Carr has secured in Downers Grove. The grant provides \$200,000 annually for a five-year period. It actually cost to run the program is \$220,000 a year. The extra cost will come from donations and fundraisers. Participants will work through what Carr calls an “extensive life skills curriculum” with the goal of learning how to function independently. The women will be required to maintain a steady job, encouraged to attend school, and taught practical skills such as financial planning. “This is a very structured environment with a clinical staff on site each day to assist them” Carr said. Even if a young person still struggles with maintaining independence after he or she exits the program, Carr said that she still counts it as a victory. “No matter the outcome of their departure, they leave us with more than they came with,” she said. 

## *Cornerstone Received a Backyard Makeover - UPDATE*

In our last newsletter NCO introduced you to Brad Zimmermann who is a junior at Waubonsie High School and is working towards his Eagle Scout award. Brad chose to design a project to make over the backyard at Cornerstone. The project included new sod, plants and a bench for the area near the basketball court. We are very happy to report that Brad completed his backyard makeover and the area now is a more inviting place that is enjoyed by both the boys and staff at Cornerstone. Brad wanted to thank everyone who helped with his fundraising activities for this project and shopped at Jewel Food Stores in September, as well as having their cars. Housing Manager Andy True stated, "The project that Brad completed was a huge asset to making the living environment at Cornerstone much more homelike for our residents". On December 6th, at the NCO Volunteer Thank You event, Executive Director Ron Hume presented Brad with a plaque thanking him for his hard work, energy, and contribution to NCO. 🙌



*NCO Executive Director Ron Hume presents Brad Zimmermann with an appreciation plaque*



*Brad's proud parents joined him for this special presentation*

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## *In Appreciation and Thanks!*

*We gratefully acknowledge the following businesses, organizations, corporations, foundations, and individuals who have made significant contributions to NCO's programs in recent months:*


James Fritz  
Tom & Brenda Harter  
William & Ellen Lohff  
Susan Morrow  
James Snelgrove  
Manu & Nila Vora  
Stan Wojtasiak  
  
Advanced Data Technologies  
Advanced HealthCare Assoc.  
Allstate Giving Campaign

Brennan & Brosnan  
Casey's Foods  
Eco Spa  
First Congregational Church  
Grace A. Bersted Foundation  
Naperville Noon Lion's Foundation  
National City  
Pancholi & Associates Inc.  
Target  
Topfer Family Foundation  
US Bancorp Foundation




## ***5th Annual Chocolate Festival*** ***How sweet it will be***

On Saturday, January 19, 2008, from 10:00 am – 4:00 pm, NCO will host the 5th Annual Chocolate Festival at the Neuqua Valley High School Freshman Center. This daylong festival of chocolate is something that cannot be missed. There is something for everyone to enjoy. Start the day out by strolling through our vendors room where you will enjoy free samples of various treats. Vendors include: Le Chocolat Bar of

Naperville, Rocky Mountain Chocolate Factory, Chicago Chocolate Company, Napoleon Bakery and Coco's Chocolate Factory to name a few. We will also have family entertainment throughout the day for everyone to enjoy. Our entertainment includes the McNulty Irish Dancers, Kids Kabaret, and back by popular demand, Daniel Martin Magic. Our day would not be complete without our chocolate demonstrations, and we are pleased to have Kevin Molidor from Culinary Art Catering, who has appeared on the Food Network, Alisha Cooks from Robert Morris College, and Marcus Moody who is the Executive Chef from Tommy Nevins Pub in Naperville. This is only a tasting of what you can expect at our 5th Annual event. Also do not miss our 3rd Annual Chocolate Competition. The theme for 2008 is "My Favorite Things". We will have a very special judge with us for this portion of our event – Alain Roby is the Executive Chef for the Hyatt, and holds the World Record for the tallest chocolate sculpture which is 22 feet high and was reached in 2006. Chef Roby has also made several appearances on the Food Network displaying his culinary talents. So, if you need a reason to have some fun and stay out of the cold January weather, plan on joining NCO for a tasty and fun event. For further information on event schedules visit [www.ncoyouth.org](http://www.ncoyouth.org), for the most up-to-date information. 


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### ***NCO Launches New Program to Uplift Families Struggling with ADD***

Taking a practical, strength-based approach, NCO aims to assist teens diagnosed with Attention Deficit Disorder (ADD) and/or Learning Disabilities with a new program titled **THINK FIRST**. Initially, the program will offer an intensive 14 week group program for high-school aged youth. This group program will address developing social skills dealing with anger, making smart decisions and thinking before acting. Unique to this type of format, the group will be co-led by both a licensed therapist and a certified special education teacher with a specialty in attention and learning disabilities. The group will also offer parents an opportunity to learn new strategies to help their child. NCO also offers family and individual counseling as an adjunct to the group. Following the initial run of the teen group, additional programming will be offered to the community as the program expands. This group starts in February 2008. Please contact Angela Michalak at 630-961-2992 for more information and to reserve a spot! 

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### ***Life Workshops Inspire Teen Girls!***

Funded by the Naperville United Way, this 8 week program is designed to help teen girls learn how to effectively and creatively manage their stress level. In addition to teaching the basics of dealing with stress, the program allows teens to try yoga, meditation, guided imagery, and art expression as less traditional ways of becoming more balanced and self-aware. Other topics include nutrition/healthy eating, self-empowerment, improved communication with parents, and projecting a positive self-image. The group is led by a licensed NCO staff member, but includes presenters from the community. Yoga, pilates, meditation, and NIA presenters from L'artiste II, Helen Lee from Concept Kitchen, and Loretta Wilger-Asmus from Looks Salon all share their expertise. The winter session starts on February 6th and runs through March 26th. Spring and Summer session dates to be announced at a later date. For more details or to register, contact Kari Wittmann Lata at 630-961-2992 ext. 225 or [kwlat@ncoyouth.org](mailto:kwlat@ncoyouth.org). 



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## Save the Date:

### 5th Annual Chocolate Festival

Saturday, January 19, 2008

10:00am—4:00pm

Neuqua Valley High School - Freshman Center

### 8th Annual Spring Ahead 10K & 5K Run

Sunday, April 20, 2008

Calamos Investments

Route 59 and Ferry Road, Naperville

### 18th Dinner Auction — “That Old Time Rock ‘n Roll”

Wednesday, July 23, 2008

Abbingdon Banquets, Glen Ellyn



## NCO Says Thank-You to Our Sponsors



In October, NCO held a luncheon to say thank-you to some very special people, our sponsors. With the help of Carrabba's Italian Grill, we were treated to a wonderful lunch as we thanked the businesses who have supported NCO this past year. NCO Executive

Director Ron Hume said, “One of the keys to our success rests in people like our sponsors who are always there to help NCO with their financial support. We are grateful for their continuous assistance to help support our programs and services. Thank you sponsors and thank you Carrabba's for a great event.

## NCO Receives a Special Donation



The Board of Directors and Staff of NCO would like to extend a special thank you to Bob and Janet Van Iten from Village Pontiac in Naperville, for their generous assistance in helping us secure a slightly used 12 passenger van. The van will be used by all four of our housing programs to trans-

port our clients to various activities that occur daily. Trips include things such as, doctors appointments, job interviews, and group outings. We are truly grateful for the generosity of the Van Itens and Village Pontiac!