

CourtCare Concept

Coalition Partners

- Polk County District Attorney's Office
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- Polk County Victim Assistance Program
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- Marion County District Attorney's Office
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- Marion County Victim Assistance Program
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- Court Appointed Special Advocates (CASA) programs, both counties
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- DHS Child Welfare
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- Local Judges
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- Local Attorneys
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- Family Building Blocks
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- Family YMCA of Marion & Polk Counties
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- Marion and Polk Early Learning Hub
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- Chemeketa Community College
-
- Polk County Family & Community Outreach Department
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Imagine having to go to court for divorce proceedings, a sex abuse trial, a domestic violence case... now imagine not having child care and you have to take your young children with you. This is a current reality for families in both Marion and Polk Counties. Children should not have to be in the room while legal proceedings are taking place. Those involved in the courts have seen babies and toddlers left unattended in hallways while their parents are in courtrooms; young children sent to restrooms unsupervised; children seeing their parents upset and emotional about adult conflicts; children watching as a parent is arrested and taken into custody; children hearing adults talk about family violence, restraining orders, custody disputes, or criminal behavior of family members... thus, the need for CourtCare.

What is CourtCare?

CourtCare is child care where children ages six weeks to twelve years will be cared for in a safe, supportive, and quality environment. They will be spared from witnessing adult conflict, hearing harsh words and seeing potentially disturbing scenes, which could traumatize or even re-traumatize them. If both parent and child are supported during the child's early stages of life, it makes enormous impacts on future health and child development. What children see and experience in early childhood affects both their brain development and their future health.



"I had to drive all the way to Sherwood to take my kids to my sister's house and that took a lot of gas to make two round trips. I would absolutely have used child care if it was available." - Angel, Polk County mom



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Mid-Valley CourtCare

Quality Counts!

Our CourtCare program will be high quality and operated by early learning professionals. High quality child care includes: using evidence-based curriculum and materials, following state licensing policies and procedures, and utilizing highly trained staff with a special emphasis in trauma informed care practices. According to a recent report by *Fight Crime: Invest in Kids Oregon* titled "High-Quality Early Care and Education", low quality care can increase the risk of negative outcomes and contribute to social, emotional, and behavioral problems.

Making an Impact

Our project will have three major impact areas: 1) Children are in a safe and nurturing environment while parents and caregivers attending court proceedings-thus reducing childhood trauma associated with exposure to the adult content matter discussed and displayed in courtrooms 2) Staff at both CourtCare sites will be able to refer families and caregivers to much needed local area resources and 3) Overall court business will function with fewer interruptions and distractions from children in the courtroom. Our research has shown that when properly funded, court child care and the collaborations upon which it is based, is highly effective and beneficial to the courts and clients receiving service.

Regular Referrals

This program will serve as an information hub for families as well as a link between much-needed social services and the high-risk families who need them. Each site will have brochures and pamphlets provided by social service and other outreach agencies. Staff will be cross-trained to provide referrals as needed.

Measuring Results

We will have several measurable objectives within this project including: **Utilization:**

How often was CourtCare used? Who used it? Were certain days busier than others? **Referrals:** How many referrals, what kind, and to whom? Are there unmet needs?

Courtroom efficiency:

Do court proceedings run more smoothly? Are parents less stressed and more focused to participate in court?



Are you ready to donate or get more involved?

Visit us at: www.midvalleycourtcare.org

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