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Perspectives Family Center Introduces Bonding Bill to Expand its Model Program for Homeless Women and Children

Project will launch new therapeutic early childhood education center, expanded children's mental health services and earth science program for at-risk youth.

ST. LOUIS PARK, Minn March 30th, 2015 – Perspectives, a groundbreaking program that helps women and children who have experienced long term trauma through addiction, homelessness, mental illness and poverty, break destructive cycles through comprehensive, holistic support services.

Perspectives expansion addresses the growing need for early intervention programming for children under the age of 4. It will also increase its current capacity with a 9,000 square foot addition. An expanded mental health program will provide a multicultural, trauma-informed model that includes a team of mental health clinicians, educators and health care professionals.

A \$10 million expansion and renovation project took a giant step forward with the introduction of a \$3.5 million bonding bill by chief authors State Representative, Cheryl Youakim and Senator Ron Latz.

“On behalf of the Board of Directors, staff, donors and the 1,000 women and children we serve each year, I offer heartfelt thanks to Representative Youakim and Senator Latz for introduction of this bill,” says Jeannie Seely-Smith, President/ CEO of Perspectives. “This is an important step forward in our 40 year history of breaking cycles of addiction, mental illness and poverty for families in our community. The research is overwhelming about the impact of early intervention for children who have experienced extensive trauma,” states Senator Latz. “And we all know the need for outcome based programs such as this currently outweighs capacity.”

Seeds of Change: Transforming Families and Futures will support renovation and expansion of current services at Perspectives Family Center including a multicultural, transdisciplinary Early Learners program for at-risk children ages 16 months to 4 years, an enhanced therapeutic program that is culturally sensitive and trauma informed, a children's earth science program, complete with rooftop garden, enhanced employment programs and outpatient treatment. Adjacent land acquisition will provide ample parking.

Seeds of Change: Transforming Families and Futures capital campaign is raising \$6.5 million in private sector support from foundations, corporations and individuals, which, combined with \$3.5 million in State bond funding, will provide the \$10 million needed to build a state-of-the-art facility.

New data shows an urgent community need for additional resources for at-risk children: State education officials estimate that the \$44 million invested in early learning scholarship in 2013 and 2014 covered

only about 10% of all qualifying children in Minnesota. One in five children has a diagnosable mental health issue—yet only 20% of them are able to access services. For more information, visit: <http://www.perspectives-family.org>.

About Perspectives, Inc

Founded in 1976, Perspectives' early mission was promoting healthy lifestyles through community awareness about the societal and individual consequences of addiction. Today, we have grown into a multi-service agency with several award-winning programs – one of which is Minnesota's largest therapeutic supportive housing campus for recovering women and children.

Perspectives' programs assist recovering women in establishing healthy ways of living for both herself and her children through a holistic, trauma-informed model. This includes helping women maintain sobriety, stabilize their mental health, and increase awareness around nutrition. Others services include a full children's academic/social enrichment program, employment, and parenting reunification and skills-building.

Perspectives Board of Directors and staff are rich in cultural diversity, knowledge, and passion. They understand the complexities and challenges of our population and they possess the resources and expertise to help change a family's direction. From administrators, financial professionals, licensed teachers, family advocates, and counselors, our programs are managed and implemented by some of the most skilled leaders in the Twin Cities.

Our mission statement, Breaking Cycles for At-Risk Families and Children for Total Family Recovery continues to be at the foundation of all our programs and will guide us for decades to come. For more information about Perspectives contact Linda Domholt, 952-405-2529, mobile 612.710.6385 or by email ldomholt@perspectives-family.org, or visit <http://perspectives-family.org/>.

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