We are pleased to announce that construction is almost complete! The new CHAT Center will be completed and operational by November 2015.

THE CHAT PREVENTION MODEL: An Innovative Approach to Comprehensive Care

The vision of the Child-Centered Health & Advanced Therapies (CHAT) program is to provide comprehensive, bilingual developmental and behavioral health services that address the needs of underserved children and their families.

The CHAT Center will be located on the first floor of the Angel Harvey Community Health Center in Logan Square. It will feature a dedicated entrance, reception area, offices and group spaces, all designed to welcome our patients into a bright, accessible and therapeutic space.

The new, multi-functional sensory room has been designed to accommodate a range of individual and group behavioral therapies. The climbing structures, for example, will be used in occupational therapy for developing balance and strength and in vision therapy for building bilateral integration and left/right sequencing. In addition, the remodeled dental area will include two new doors, a fully enclosed dental bay for children with special needs, and a private consultation office where dentists can meet with patients.

The innovative CHAT prevention model will coordinate child development services across departments and enable timely interventions for our young patients who are at risk for developmental delays. With the addition of speech, vision, and occupational therapies and the redesign of our ground floor to accommodate state-of-the-art therapy spaces, IWS can provide a comprehensive continuum of services in a familiar, culturally competent environment.

Partnership with Ann & Robert H. Lurie Children’s Hospital

We are very grateful for our wonderful working partnership with the Ann & Robert H. Lurie Children’s Hospital. Their team has been invaluable to the CHAT process, from providing key staff members to advice on materials, supplies and equipment.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

What is Occupational Therapy?
Occupational Therapy (OT) helps develop the functional skills necessary to complete every day activities such as eating, dressing and living independently. OT can help kids improve their cognitive, physical, and motor skills and enhance their self-esteem and sense of accomplishment.

What is Speech Therapy?
Speech Therapy builds language skills both for speaking and understanding, identifies types of communication problems and models correct sounds and syllables in

SAVE the DATE

We want to celebrate the new CHAT Center with you once it opens! Please keep an eye on your inbox for the Open House invitation. If you haven’t signed up for our e-newsletter, please email browng@infantwelfare.org to join our mailing list.
What is Vision Therapy?
Vision Therapy improves skills such as eye movement control, eye coordination, and focus – all of which are important to enhance a child’s performance in school. Many studies show that vision therapy can correct vision problems that interfere with efficient reading and learning.

What is Mental Health Counseling?
Mental Health Counseling provides a safe space for individuals and families to address emotional and behavioral concerns that impact their functioning at home, school and with peers.

What is Child Psychiatry?
Child Psychiatry diagnoses and treats disorders of thinking, feeling and/or behavior through medication affecting children, adolescents, and how it may affect their families.

What is the Socialization Skills Group?
Socialization Skills Group for Children with Special Needs provides children and their families with an opportunity to learn and practice social and interpersonal skills in a fun group environment that both children and families enjoy.

What is the Parent Drop-in Support Group?
Parent Drop-in Support Group supports parents with the day-to-day activities of raising children and provides information that can help parents understand child developmental milestones, such as language development, school readiness, getting along with other kids, as well as discipline and improving parent self-care.

SUPPORTING THE CHAT CENTER
CHAT would not exist without the support of our wonderful donors. We are grateful for each and every one of you.

Interested in contributing to the CHAT campaign? Call 773.782.5040 for naming opportunities or donate online at www.infantwelfare.org.

FAMILY FEST
IWS hosted its second annual Family Fest on Saturday, September 19th in the clinic parking lot. It was a beautiful day with a fabulous turnout of over 450 guests!

Fourteen family-friendly tables featured eye catching information, coloring contests, raffles and lots of giveaways. The Chicago Fire Department brought Engine 91 to the fest for the kids to check out!

The Fest had plenty of entertainment! IWS’ Jimmy the DJ provided the music while families enjoyed ongoing free Zumba classes provided by the McCormick Tribune YMCA. Payton the Amazing Pug performed his full repertory of 11 tricks with costume changes! Payton, who has a master’s degree in dog tricks, stole the show. Thankfully, we were able to book him through his “agent”, Dr. Sheila Hall, VP of Dental Services.

IWS information tables provided handouts on our Well-woman Care, Children’s Health, Nutrition, Vision and Dental services. IWS staff and Auxiliary volunteers greeted guests, shared information and gave clinic tours. The IWS Auxiliary graciously donated gift baskets for the raffle. Each basket was age and gender specific and thoughtfully prepared with gift items and goodies. Many of our vendors donated items such as tooth brushes, floss and several rechargeable tooth brushes, which were used as raffle prizes.

There were many community groups in attendance including the McCormick Tribune YMCA, Logan Square Neighborhood Association (LSNA), Healthcare Alternative System (HAS), the Spanish Coalition for Housing and many others.

The BE HEALTHY ZONE attracted families interested in healthy lifestyles. EverThrive Illinois prepared food from their Cooking Matters Program which models healthy food preparation.

Last but not least, our new Alderman Milly Santiago of the 31st Ward and 8th District Cook County Commissioner Luis Arroyo, Jr. distributed information and mingled with constituents.

The Family Fest turnout exceeded expectations and we had a great time showcasing Infant Welfare’s programs alongside other local organizations and businesses.

A big thank you to all of our community partners, IWS Auxiliary volunteers, vendors, staff, family and friends who helped make this annual event a success!
Dear Friends:

I am excited to use this column as a venue of communication with you as I begin my two year term as Board President. I am truly looking forward to the next two years working and growing with all of you. Allow me to begin by extending a warm thank you to Lynda Given who served as President before me and to the entire Board for your confidence in me.

To all the new board members who have joined recently: Welcome aboard! I hope you find the work that we do to be a rewarding and challenging. To those who have been a part of Infant Welfare for many years: I look forward to continuing our work. The time and talent that you devote to this wonderful organization is important and impactful.

There are many exciting initiatives in store for the IWS Board and staff. Most notably, we look forward to furthering our community outreach efforts in order to showcase our programs and services to the communities we serve. Our goal is to be more visible in the community and the Chicagoland area so that the Infant Welfare Society is recognized as a leader and preferred option for families seeking medical, dental, optometry and behavioral health services.

In addition our newest, most innovative initiative is the Child-centered Health & Advanced Therapies (CHAT) program, which truly is a remarkable undertaking. I toured the spaces a few weeks ago in the midst of the construction and it really is inspiring. We are so proud that we will have such an innovative program in an accessible environment to provide much needed services to our patients with special needs and their families. You can read more about the CHAT campaign on the front page.

Thank you to each and everyone one of you for your interest in and dedication to the Infant Welfare Society of Chicago.

Liz Hennessy
President, Board of Directors

OUR MISSION is to provide a breadth of quality primary health care services in a single medical facility to medically underserved women and children, enabling them to lead productive and healthy lives.
THE MANY FACES OF IWS

KRISTINE CIESLAK, MD, is the new Chief Medical Officer. She joins IWS from the Division of Pediatric Emergency Medicine at the Ann & Robert H. Lurie Children’s Hospital and Cadence Health. Dr. Cieslak describes her personal and professional mantra as making “meaningful connections” with colleagues and patients. In her practice, she is committed to both patient service and research, and she will make the evaluation of IWS outcomes and quality of care indicators one of her priorities. Her current projects at IWS include ensuring all providers receive ICD-10 training and facilitating a successful transition to The Alliance in order to improve the collection and evaluation of IWS data. She also looks forward to building partnerships with other health care organizations that serve our patient constituency. Dr. Cieslak plans to work collaboratively with the leadership team at IWS to ensure a successful launch of the CHAT program.

Serving the Hispanic community is one of the qualities that attracted Dr. Cieslak to Infant Welfare. She notes the importance of delivering culturally competent care to patients in their own language, and considers it a critical tool for cultivating healthy families who are invested in their own well-being.

Fun fact about Kristine: she played softball for Northwestern University and remains active in many sports and activities with her two children.

JERRY ISIKOFF, PhD, is the new Chief Operations Officer. A native of Atlanta, Georgia, he has lived and worked in the Chicago area for 30 years. Jerry has taken the lead on critical IWS projects including the construction of the new CHAT Center; developing a potential partnership with The Alliance, an organization of community health care centers that shares resources and electronic data; our switch to HealthLab lab services; and the development of a quality work environment for employees and patients.

Jerry brings a wealth of experiences and ideas to IWS that he has accumulated from his background in clinical psychology. As an Early Intervention Developmental Therapist, he worked with families of 3-6 year olds to identify early behavioral issues and cognitive delays. Jerry also worked with Alternative to In-Patient Care, an organization dedicated to serving mentally ill adults.

Fun fact about Jerry: he is a skilled potter and taught a summer pottery class to more than 600 campers at his boyhood summer camp.
The fall season has brought a season of change to the Infant Welfare Society. It is to this end that I am pleased to welcome our new Chief Medical Officer Kristine Cieslak, MD and our new Chief Operating Officer Jerry Isikoff, PhD. Both Kristine and Jerry bring IWS a long history of working with children, families and underserved populations. (Read more about Kristine and Jerry in their bio and introduction on page four).

Additionally, allow me to extend a warm welcome to all of our new providers and staff. I hope you find your work at IWS to be fulfilling, rewarding and exciting. I look forward to the work we will do together and the unique ways in which we will serve our community.

Congratulations to Elizabeth Hennessy, our new board president and Cynthia Scholl, the new Auxiliary president. Cynthia and Elizabeth each have a long history of dedicated work with IWS and have hit the ground running with goals and strategies for the organization. Read more about Liz’s vision, goals and experience in her letter on page two.

In my last letter, I discussed the state budget and how it may impact IWS. The budget crisis is still a horrific problem in the non-profit services environment. Luckily, IWS has benefited from the recent federal law suit and subsequent judge’s order mandating the State to pay Medicaid claims. The judge’s decision has helped to keep IWS’ doors open and allows us to continue providing quality patient care without any interruptions in service. Thank you IWS partners and friends who continue to support us.

Finally, you may notice lots of new signs circling IWS. New building signs now don the main windows and doors of the clinic on both Central Park Ave and Fullerton Ave, providing better visibility and exposure for community members. If you haven’t seen the new signs, stop by and visit IWS. Be sure to let us know you’re coming so you can take a tour!

Notes FROM the FIELD

By Robin McGinnis, MSW
Chief Executive Officer

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THE Associate Board

By Natasha Wasinski, Associate Board Member

From school supplies and songs to bean bags and brackets, summer tends be an action-packed time for the IWS Associate Board. On Aug. 8, we hosted two of our signature events: a back-to-school fair for students, and a bean bag tournament fundraiser for supporters and friends.

The fair is free for families who receive services from IWS. It’s our way of getting young students ready and excited for school while having a bit of fun. Much to our delight, 20 families and six volunteers attended the event. In between painting faces and playing games with children, we gave away 50 backpacks with new notebooks, pencils, glue sticks and more. We’d like to recognize Fortune Brands Home & Security for its generous gift, and the Hancock Real Estate team and tenants from 55 W. Monroe for collecting and donating school supplies. This support made the fair possible.

Since the last Bag Toss Tournament the Associate Board hosted was such a success, we had to bring it back. This time around, roughly 50 supporters gathered at Will’s Northwoods Inn in Chicago’s Lakeview neighborhood to socialize under the sun during an insanely fun bags contest. Teams of two squared off for coveted trophies and bragging rights. Together, we raised close to $900!

The Associate Board aims to donate $20,000 to IWS this year to support health care services for women and children in need. Our Team IWS marathon runners are helping us fundraise to meet this goal, while training for their 26.2-mile footrace on Oct.11.

You’re invited to help us cross the finish line to another successful year! For updates on our work, please visit iwsassociateboard.org.
“It has always been important to me to give back. My husband (Dr. Jeff Socher) and I have been involved in the dental industry and with various oral health organizations for many years. We are so pleased to support Infant Welfare and its great work.

In fact, this August, I asked my friends and family to give to Infant Welfare as my birthday gift.”

— Chris Socher, longtime donor to the Infant Welfare Society of Chicago

WAYS TO GIVE

Put your money to work right away by donating at infantwelfare.org or mailing your check using the enclosed envelope.

Become a Monthly or Quarterly “Dreammaker”

Your gift in any amount given each month/quarter, charged to your credit card, provides a convenient, efficient and stable source of support!

Donate Stocks or Bonds

By donating appreciated property to IWS, you may receive a tax deduction for the current fair market value of the asset and avoid capital-gains tax.

Celebrate or Remember Others

Recognize or remember someone special with a gift in their name that honors their legacy and commitment to women, children and families.

Leave a Legacy – Join the Armour Heritage League

Estate planning is a powerful way to express your values and vision for the future.

• Remember IWS in your will. For sample bequest language, please call 773.782.5040.
• Donate life insurance or name IWS as a beneficiary of a retirement plan.

Introduce Friends, Colleagues and Others to IWS

Your assistance in bringing new people to IWS is greatly appreciated. Or, sign up for our e-mail list and forward the messages you receive along to your friends.

Visit infantwelfare.org to make your gift, or please contact Michelle Di Benedetto, VP, Institutional Advancement at 773.782.5040.

THANK YOU!

IWS is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit public charity. Contributions are tax-deductible to the fullest extent of the law.

DON’T MISS OUT!

The “Make A Difference” newsletter is published twice a year, but we have so much more to share in between issues. Our short, monthly email newsletters get you updated information, stories and invitations in a timely and cost-effective way.

If you’re not receiving them yet, sign up on the home page at infantwelfare.org, via our Facebook page, or by emailing or calling Gina Brown, browng@infantwelfare.org or 773.782.800 ext. 6052.

INFANT WELFARE SOCIETY of CHICAGO

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