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G A D S H I L L
C E N T E R

CHILD DEVELOPMENT CENTER
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MISSION & VISION

*Gads Hill, a family resource center established in 1898, partners with our community to develop the assets of children, youth, adults, and families. In collaboration with the members of our community and other organizations, Gads Hill Center develops programs that support and empower the economically and educationally disadvantaged residents of Chicago's Pilsen, Little Village, Back of the Yards, and North Lawndale neighborhoods. Our vision is that **every family and every individual has the opportunity, the skills, and the education to make a better life.***

HISTORY

Since 1898, Gads Hill Center has been **a force for positive growth for generations of immigrant families in Pilsen.** With a strong historical foundation as one of the country's original Settlement Houses, we continue to provide traditional programs, such as early childhood development and care, adult basic education, and tutoring/mentoring programs, while also delivering innovative programs that engage families, most recently in areas such as science, nutrition, and technology. Seeking to break the cycle of educational failure in our community, Gads Hill dedicates itself to developing the strengths of low-income children, adults, and families.

In February 2002 Gads Hill Center **opened a new Child Development Center** at the Sinai Community Institute in North Lawndale. This Center provides comprehensive Head Start and child care services for 3 to 5 year olds; Club Learn, an after-school educational program for children in 1st to 8th grade; and Family Support Services. The new site has doubled our service capacity. On a weekly basis we serve nearly 1,000 people.

Over the years the Center has received much recognition for our work in the community.

- 2009: Gads Hill Center was chosen by the nationally-renowned Wallace Foundation as one of 14 organizations to participate in a four-year national pilot project to strengthen the financial management capacities of out-of-school-time providers.
- 2007: The United Way of Metropolitan Chicago recognizes Club Learn with a three-year commitment to significant funding.
- 2006: Club Learn is recognized by CYS/CDBG as Region 3 Youth Net's 1st place out-of-school time program.
- 2005: We received the Alford-Axelson Award for Nonprofit Managerial Excellence from North Park University's Axelson Center.
- 2004: CEO Barbara Castellán received North Lawndale Employment Network's 2004 ***Creating a Community That Works Award*** because of her "extraordinary contributions to advancing the economic stability of the residents of the community, commitment to excellence, and providing high quality service with the greatest respect to humanity."
- 2004: CEO Barbara Castellán received Mujeres Latinas en Acción's ***Maria 'Maruca' Martinez Community Service Award*** for her work in the community and at Gads Hill Center.
- 2002: We won the National Association for Chicana and Chicano Studies Community Award.
- 2001: We received the prestigious **BP Leader Award** for work in collaboration with the Chicago Department of Environment to provide environmental education and a "green" setting for the Gads Hill community.

PROGRAMS

At every level, our aim has been to increase **family involvement** in learning. Our vision is to provide a rich educational environment in which capable and forward-thinking community leadership will develop. We put our mission into action through an array of services that are of high quality, flexible, responsive, and culturally sensitive.

Children's Services

- **Head Start** provides high quality, on-site early-childhood education and healthcare services to 120 3 to 5 year olds and their families. Head Start activities take place at our Child Development Center in North Lawndale, with seven state-of-the-art classrooms.
- **Home Based Head Start** serves 25 children ages 3 to 5 and their families by promoting healthy development, preparing them for success in school, and supporting their parents. Teachers from Gads Hill travel to participants' homes, sharing weekly lessons and activities with the entire family to give the child a sound foundation of early learning before entering school.
- **Early Head Start Enhanced Day Care Homes** provides daycare for 34 children, from birth to 3, through six home care providers, who are supervised and supported by a Gads Hill professional in specially qualified and licensed day care homes. The children participate in a stimulating environment of nurturing activities that address their cognitive, social, emotional and physical growth needs.
- **Parents as First Teachers** is a home-based program serving 26 children three years old and under and their families, promoting parent-child verbal interaction through activities such as reading, play, and conversation.
- **Pre-School For All** services, including social, cognitive, early reading and math skills, enhance our child development offerings. State certified early childhood educators provide activities that ensure children will be prepared for kindergarten.

Youth Services

- **Club Learn** is our out-of-school time educational support and enrichment program serving close to 200 economically and educationally disadvantaged 1st to 8th graders during the critical before and after school hours. Program activities are intended to increase our participants' academic, recreational, athletic and life skills, foster positive personal and social attitudes, and build a strong sense of self-worth leading to the ability to make good life choices.
- **New Horizons** is a mentoring program aimed to provide positive role models to 40 middle school students in the Pilsen community. With the support of a mentor, every student is exposed to a variety of new and exciting experiences that challenge and engage the student in academic and social activities. By establishing one-on-one relationships, mentors will be able to support the student on their journey to high school, ready to perform at his/her best.
- **Teen Connection** is a comprehensive college preparatory program for 66 middle school and high school students. Teen Connection "fellows" participate in an academically rigorous, socially enriching and highly individualized program. Program staff works with parents on financial aid planning and throughout the college application process, supporting our teens to become first in their family to attend and graduate from college.

Community and Family Services

- **Seniors' Club** provides a place for recreational, educational, and cultural activities for seniors. In addition to weekly socializing and regular bingo games, seniors enjoy field trips, parties, and visits from community or business volunteer groups.
- **Community Space** is available in our facilities, providing a safe, neutral area for community meetings, volunteer-led sports teams, aerobics classes, and for local schools to find extra gym space.
- **The Odyssey Program**, sponsored by the University of Chicago and the University of Mexico, offers adults college-level courses in literature and philosophy, taught in Spanish.