



Thank you! we have distributed over 1.5 million dollars in grants ★

Todd Ouida Children's Foundation

591 Clarendon Court, River Edge, NJ 07661

www.mybuddytodd.org

★ Spring 2017

Our Mission

The Todd Ouida Children's Foundation was established by Todd's family to create a meaningful legacy for Todd, whose life was tragically ended in the September 11th terrorist attack on the World Trade Center. Born out of Todd's own successful struggle with childhood anxiety, the mission of the foundation is to:

- Financially support psychological services for children of families in need and promote mental health initiatives for all children
- Raise awareness and reduce the stigma of anxiety and depression disorders in children, recognizing the need for early intervention
- Provide contact information for those seeking help

Mental Health America reports that youth mental health is worsening. The depression rate among young people is rising but, even with severe depression, 80 percent of children and adolescents either get insufficient treatment or none at all. MHA President Paul Gionfriddo says: "We must improve access to care and treatments, and we need to put a premium on early identification and early intervention for everyone with mental health concerns."

We thank you for being loyal partners and for keeping Todd's spirit alive through each and every child whose life we touch.

*Herb and Andrea Ouida
Amy, Alex, Ashley, Andrew and Aidan Morik
Jordan, Heather, Christopher and
Nicholas Ouida*

Todd Ouida Children's Foundation Fifth Annual Conference

Another chock-full conference, overflowing with information and inspiration! The topic of the 2016 conference was *Attuning to the Mind, Body and Spirit of Infants, Children and their Families*.

The program began with yoga and mindfulness instructor, Johanna Samad, leading everyone in an exercise we called "Strengthening the Body While Quietening the Mind." Corinne Catalano, Assistant Director for Consultation Services, Center for Early Childhood and Mental Health at Montclair State University, spoke about "Attuning to, and Giving Voice to the Inner Lives of Children." Dr. Stuart Shanker and Dr. Susan Hopkins of the MEHRIT Centre in Canada had everyone engrossed with their discussion of "The Self-Reg Movement in Canada: Recognizing Stress and protecting the Spirit in Infants, Toddlers and Children." Dr. Richard Dopp continued the tradition of an Ouida clinical scholar joining us from the University of Michigan, speaking about "Depression, Sleep and Physical Activity in Youth."

The Third Annual Todd Ouida Children's Hero Award was presented to Richard Mingoia, president and CEO of YCS. He charted a bold new direction for the organization and, in 2000, at a time when very few leaders in the public or private sector recognized the critical importance of infant and early childhood mental health, Richard invested in the creation of the YCS Institute for Infant and Preschool Mental Health. The Institute created the momentum for the development of programs and policies in New Jersey that now place infants, young children and their attachment figures at the center of government interest and investment.



*Johanna Samad (left),
Corinne Catalano,
Richard Dopp*



*Herb and Andrea Ouida
with Richard Mingoia*

Digital Connection

Have you been receiving our email blasts? They are brief and occasional but keep you up to date on what we're doing since not everything can make it into this newsletter. If you're not receiving them, you also missed out on chances to win four Yankees Legends tickets and two tickets to Broadway's Hamilton!

Be sure to include your up-to-date email address(es) on the enclosed response card, even if you are not making a donation at this time. We promise not to bombard you!

Featured Charities

We continue to support:

Zippy's Friends is a worldwide school-based curriculum for kindergarten and first grade children, promoting social and emotional health. The Todd Ouida Children's Foundation was instrumental in bringing the program to the United States and each year more students in more schools are benefitting from it. Last year, more than 200 additional school personnel were trained to present the 24-week program, many in Newark and South Orange.



The *YCS Baby Steps* program currently serves approximately 50 at-risk mothers in infant, toddler, teen mom and pregnancy groups, including one group in Spanish. The program fosters healthy parent/child relationships and supportive relationships among the mothers.

Healthy Families provides in-home health and parenting information, as well as linkages to community services, for families overburdened by stressors that frequently contribute to abuse and neglect. Currently, 94 families are enrolled in the program.

Because children and teens with clinical depression cannot simply "snap out of it," *West Bergen Mental Healthcare's Center for Children and Youth* provides a comprehensive, research-based treatment program designed to meet the needs of children and adolescents experiencing depression and mood disorders. This may include Cognitive Behavioral Therapy, Interpersonal Psychotherapy and Family Systems Therapy.



We've added support for:

New City Kids: loving kids for change offers engaging after-school programs that provide



employment for teens, developing them as leaders and helping them get into college. There are now three after-school centers in Jersey City, with additional centers in Paterson NJ and Grand Rapids MI. Youth in the after-school centers receive musical instruction, homework support and may attend ESL classes. New City Kids' summer camp includes park days, swimming, museum visits, and other field trips that take the campers out of the heat of the city. Teen Life Interns are highly trained and take primary leadership roles in running the after-school centers. One hundred percent of them over the past six years graduated from high school and enrolled in college.



Center for Hope and Safety is dedicated to rebuilding lives beyond domestic violence, providing emergency shelter and transitional housing for women and their children. Children entering the emergency shelter are in a state of crisis.

They grieve for the things they left behind and struggle with ongoing feelings of anxiety, fear and depression. Frequently, their cognitive and emotional development have been adversely affected. The Children's Services Program works to stabilize the child's environment and to counteract the effects of abuse. It includes individual counseling, small group discussions, art therapy, tutoring, recreational activities and community trips. The goal is to help children heal the scars of domestic violence, become healthy members of their communities, and break the intergenerational cycle of violence.

No Stigma in Mental Illness



We're in good company! William, Kate and Harry are tackling the stigma surrounding mental illness with their *Heads Together* initiative in the UK. They aim to change the national conversation on mental well-being to a positive one, encouraging society to recognize that psychological problems are suffered by all and the sooner everyone reaches out to help, the better.

Back home, the River Edge Stigma Free task force has been reaching out with the same message. Team leader Arlene Fausini, River Edge Public Health Nurse, makes sure we have a presence at River Edge Day, the River Edge Run,

Little League Opening Day, and other community events, raising awareness and disseminating information. We held programs on autism and Alzheimer's and hosted a powerful presentation from the National Alliance on Mental Illness: *In Our Own Voice*. Two speakers shared their compelling personal stories about living with mental illness and achieving recovery.

New York Mayor Bill DeBlasio's wife, Chirlane McCray, has been using her role as New York's first lady to focus on mental health, sharing her struggles to find the right care for their daughter Chiara, who has struggled with anxiety, depression, and addiction.

As Bill Clinton once said: *Mental illness is nothing to be ashamed of, but stigma and bias shame us all.*



Elizabeth Oudens, Rebecca Naprstek, Arlene Faustini

University of Michigan

Todd loved his years at the University of Michigan and would no doubt be extremely pleased at the impact his legacy is making there.

Interest funds from our original endowment to the university are being used to support the new *Todd Ouida Network for Detection and Treatment of Early Childhood Trauma*, with the following goals: provide a statewide framework for trauma screening and assessment of young children within primary care settings; train mental health clinicians across the state of Michigan in early-childhood focused evidence-based treatment for trauma; create a template for national dissemination. Katherine Rosenblum and Maria Muzik, former Todd Ouida clinical scholars, are members of the project team.

Dr. Sheila Marcus, who is leading the project team, wrote to us: *Each year I reflect with gratitude upon the number of investigators whose causes have been expanded and the number of high risk youth who have been touched by your support.*

Todd's foundation has been pleased to support *M-SPAN (Military Support Programs and Networks)* for service



Top: Dr. Eric Storch (left) and Dr. Jacek Debiec.
Bottom: Dr. Wael Shamseddeen, Herbert and Andrea Ouida, Dr. Jim Hudziak, and Dr. Gregory Dalack, Chair, Department of Psychiatry, University of Michigan

members, veterans, and their families. M-SPAN is dedicated to military and veteran mental health with innovative approaches to outreach, engagement, and reducing stigma. Michelle Kees, 2004 recipient of the Todd Ouida Clinical Scholar Award, is a principal faculty member with M-SPAN.

In April of 2016, a new unit opened at the C.S. Mott Children's Hospital, providing state-of-the-art inpatient treatment for children and adolescents suffering from psychiatric illness. Todd's foundation donated a bubble wall for one of the "calming rooms" used for both group sessions and private family sessions.

2015 Lecture and Clinical Scholar Award: Eric Storch, Ph. D., University of South Florida, delivered the lecture on *D-cycloserine Augmentation of Cognitive Behavioral Therapy in Pediatric Obsessive-Compulsive Disorder* on

Charities Supported

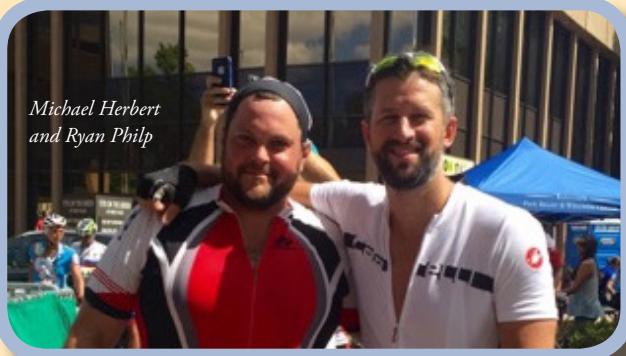
- Association for Child Psychoanalysis
- Care Plus New Jersey: Healthy Families Bergen County
- Center for Food Action
- Center for Hope and Safety
- Children's Aid and Family Services
- Children's Aid Society
- Community FoodBank of New Jersey: Kids Division
- Eva's Village: Hope Residence for Mothers and Children
- Family Promise of Bergen County
- Field Trip New Jersey
- Fresh Air Fund
- Juvenile Justice Fund
- Montclair State University: Zippy's Friends
- New City Kids
- New York Psychoanalytic Institute
- River Dell High School Scholarship
- U.S. Fund for UNICEF
- University of Michigan Depression Center
- Valley Home Care: Journeys Art Therapy Program
- Volunteer Center of Bergen County: Summer Campership Fund
- West Bergen Mental Healthcare
- Youth Consultation Service (YCS)

October 21, 2015. The clinical scholar award was bestowed on Dr. Jacek Debiec, whose research is aimed at understanding neurobiological mechanisms of childhood anxiety disorders and intergenerational transmission of emotional trauma and anxiety.

2016 Lecture and Clinical Scholar Award: On October 19, 2016, Dr. Jim Hudziak from the University of Vermont spoke on *Why Child Psychiatry Should Be the Center of Health Care Reform: The Science Behind the Argument*. Clinical Scholar Wael Shamseddeen, MD, MPH, is interested in treatment and prevention of relapse of depression among adolescents, examining whether a history of abuse may affect response to treatment.



Creative Contributions



Michael Herbert
and Ryan Philp

When **Michael Herbert** participated in the New Jersey Gran Fondo cycling event in Morristown, NJ on Sunday, September 11, he decided to ride for something more important than his own personal goals. He decided to raise money for Todd's foundation. *Todd's family and mine have been friends for many, many years. I have great memories of competing against Todd both on the field and on the mat as our two high schools were in the same league. We would always meet each other after these battles and, no matter the outcome, Todd always had a big smile on his face that I can still picture in my mind to this day; and that's how I choose to remember him.*



John MacCarter was a fraternity brother of Todd's at U-Mich and now works for the New York Jets. He graciously donated tickets to a Jets game, which we passed on to Children's Aid and Family Services for one of their event auctions.

Rich Freedman, principal of **River Dell Middle School**, wrote: *I have been moved by the work that you do and challenged my staff to contribute to the Ouida foundation as part of our Friday 'dress down' program, as both a tribute to a former student and a celebration of the work that the foundation does.*



Jodi, left, and friends

Jodi Bienenfeld and friends held a successful bake sale at the Smith school in Tenafly to benefit Todd's foundation.

Keri Cohen continues to send generous donations in honor of Dr. Nat Donson, *for his continued tireless efforts and contributions to the betterment of children's mental health.*



Tara and Marc Deckler sent this note along with a donation made on September 11: *This year we would like to honor Todd by adding to his special children's garden [at the Holley Child Care Center]. Please choose and have planted a perennial in his garden....A remembrance from a family that his memory has helped so much.*

Barbara Carey sent a generous gift in honor of Deborah Zeigler, *a very special friend and wonderful school counselor on the occasion of a significant birthday.* Deborah has been a loyal supporter of our work through the years.



Our special thanks to **Roy Wandelmeier** and Scholastic Books for continuing to donate cartons of new children's books to the annual Bergen County Multicultural Family Fun Festival.

Elen and Dale Reynolds supported the classroom project *Inspiring Readers One Button at a Time* in memory of Todd.

BGC Partners included us once again in their 2016 Charity Day. We are very grateful to them and to **Chris Snee**, former NY Giants two-time Super Bowl winner, for serving as our celebrity ambassador.

Jordan Ouida, Chris Snee, Herbert Ouida



Thank You!

Many of the agencies we support have weathered decreases in government funding and anticipate possible further reductions. We are so grateful for your continued belief in our work and for your unwavering support during the past 15 years. Maya Angelou said: *Be a rainbow in someone else's cloud.* You are the prism of light that brings hope to the children who need it the most. We appreciate your gift at this time and contributions year-round through www.mybuddytodd.org or checks mailed to:

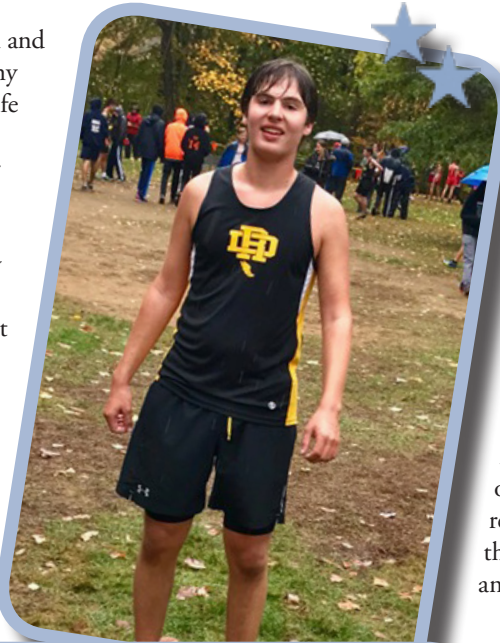
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Anthony's Journey by Anthony Orlando

Constantly dealing with the aching pain and overwhelming fear from anxiety has been my greatest struggle. I have had a challenging life for the past few years, as I've struggled with chronic anxiety over a variety of things. For example, I'd usually worry about normal things like school and my social life. While this may sound like a problem almost every teenager has experienced, my worries were on a whole other level. I have worried about things that are totally ridiculous, such as getting sick or hurt when I'm outside, or whether or not I did something immoral. These thoughts would swarm inside my head like flies throughout the day with barely any relaxation. Life for me was tough, but I have still managed to live happily. To cope with my stress, I joined my school cross-country team, and it changed my life.

For months, I would wake up early in the morning and run three to five miles a day with my team. My heart was pounding, my body was aching, and I was always out of breath; I felt the same way running as I do worrying. After just four days, I felt ready to give up. However, my teammates encouraged me to push myself and continue running. Their support helped me get through those first few months of practice. My coach told me to always try my best when running despite how much I want to give up. He told me that if I kept running until the very end, I would feel good knowing that I ran the full distance. As a result, I always tried to run as much and as fast as I could, and I was amazed at what I had accomplished.

These achievements from running have enabled me to overcome my anxiety. I've stayed determined and hopeful that I'll have a wonderful life. I've learned that I don't need anyone to feel sorry for me because pity won't help me get anywhere in life, including cross-country. Only a strong will can help me have a better future, and so far, I'm already on the right track. I now feel more relaxed than before because I'm channeling my energy for running instead



Anthony with his mom, Julia Orlando



of worrying. I can feel all of my worries float away like clouds in the sky while I'm running. I'm spending time with my friends on the team, I've developed a strong body, and I've become part of something greater than myself. I feel more confident in myself than I have in my entire life. Also, while I still managed to be a great student in school despite my anxiety, running has helped me become an even better one because of how I'm more relaxed. For these reasons, I joined the track team during the winter and spring as well, and I continue to run to this day and will for many years to come. I've even given back to my community by participating in a race for Habitat for Humanity. I feel overjoyed not only because I'm less anxious, but also because I'm finally living in the moment as I race around the world with my friends.

In conclusion, my chronic anxiety has been a thorn in my side for many years. Fortunately, after training and become a runner for my school, I'm now able to control my worries, remain calm, and enjoy my life to the fullest. Alongside running, I regularly attend therapy sessions in order to maintain control over my thoughts, and this helps me a great deal as well. Also, my family and friends have been very supportive through my entire struggle, and I cannot thank them enough for what they've done for me. While I still tend to stress out, I am still doing my very best to control it. I can only get better at dealing with my anxiety if I continue to persevere, and this gives me hope that my life will become even better as well. After all, if I can finish a race like a strong runner can, then I can surely overcome my anxiety. ●