

# A step ahead



**PLAYING TO LEARN:** Children play together in Carey Services' Early Head Start classroom.

## TFTGC / Carey Services partnership will provide more early learning opportunities

*Provided by Carey Services*

Carey Services and our Early Head Start program have been proud partners with Thriving Families, Thriving Grant County — call it a movement — since day one. There is clear alignment between the two organizations, and the goals to be achieved in one of the key areas where Carey Services has seen great value in partnership with TFTGC: the Early Childhood Education Coalition Working Group. Striving to secure a bright and positive future for Grant County starts with our community's early learners and their families, like those which are served at the Early Head Start.

There is no doubt the need to enhance learning opportunities for ages birth to 3 years is essential. The partnership being provided by TFTGC to Carey Services will address long waiting lists for Early Head Start classroom services for children in need. The funds from this partnership will go to support the renovation of existing space



**READER FOR LIFE:** Children in Carey Services' Early Head Start program get early literacy opportunities to lay the foundation for lifelong learning.

on the main campus at Carey Services in Marion to build two license-ready early childhood childcare classrooms for expansion of existing services provided with Early Head Start and/or to support new childcare initiatives in partnership with internal employee childcare needs, and potentially

with other employer partners in the community who may wish to offer childcare to their employees.

There continues to be long waiting lists for Grant County families for affordable and high-quality early childhood education. With our specific focus on infants and toddlers with this project and partnership, we will be able to help Grant County families that are struggling to find the kind of childcare services their children deserve.

Carey Services believes strongly that TFTGC is making a positive difference in lives in Grant County. Knowing TFTGC is a movement in steering Grant County (and every individual that lives and works here) toward a thriving community is inspiring. Knowing TFTGC is invested in the very young only serves to demonstrate that TFTGC is in it for the long run to leave a legacy for Grant County for years to come. This partnership will be part of that legacy, and Carey Services is thankful for this partnership.

**COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS:** A year ago, Thriving Families, Thriving Grant County was awarded a \$300,000 matching grant through the Lilly Foundation, with the Community Foundation of Grant County as the conduit. TFTGC chose to leverage that grant to form several community partnerships. Over the next several weeks, we will spotlight those partnerships that are helping to build a coalition to reduce root causes of childhood poverty and adverse family conditions in Grant County.

### PARTNER SPOTLIGHT:

**Jim Allbaugh, CEO, Carey Services**

**What is your position at your organization, and what do you do?**



I am one of many on a team working to assure that our mission statement is executed for individuals and families we serve so they thrive in their communities: "Turning abilities into opportunities."

**What inspires you as a leader in Grant County and your organization?**

I am inspired by the creative talent and passion people in this county have to move our county forward in positive ways, sometimes taking on challenges head-on for the good of the local community. I am inspired that Grant County residents work hard to take care of their own in many supportive and meaningful ways. I am inspired about the immense curiosity Carey Services has to make sure that Grant County is a world where all people are empowered and equally valued in the community. With that, I am inspired we have more than 275 employees working hard to make sure Grant County is thriving for pre-natal moms, infants and toddlers and their families, and individuals of all ages and abilities in and around Grant County.

**What is the most rewarding aspect of your work?**

I love being able to see individuals and families we serve engaging in the broader community here in Grant County. The outcome of seeing individuals we serve being more active in their community is evidence our mission is being fulfilled.

**What is the biggest challenge that you are currently facing?**

There is a large need for passionate people who want to be Direct Support Professionals (DSP) to make a continued positive difference in the lives of the more than 300 individuals we serve with disabilities. The DSP job is not easy, but it is entirely rewarding as we are able to see individuals we serve achieving things they have never achieved before. We are hopeful our community can come together to help us solve our DSP workforce recruitment challenges.

**What are some practices that you apply to develop as a leader?**

I am constantly engaged with industry professionals, both locally, and statewide, to hone our team's skills at Carey Services to assure we are operating with Best and Next Practices. The immense curiosity mentioned earlier is an essential character to always be asking for feedback and advice to improve the services and outcomes for those we serve and those we employ. Leadership development is key as well, and whenever there is an opportunity to read and engage your teammates in team-reading, there is proven benefit and reward.

**What is a quote that has helped you live a life of purpose?**

"Leaders become great, not because of their power, but because of their ability to empower others." - John Maxwell.

**How do you envision collaborating with TFTGC will build successful solutions?**

We at Carey Services consider what we are engaged in as a movement, as we began in 1954 with individuals that were passionate about a cause, and that passion has not ceased in the more than 65 years for those we serve. In the same way, Carey Services sees TFTGC as a movement for the greater community, and though our mission/vision/values do not mention "thriving" specifically, the concepts in our organization's foundation certainly do indicate that thriving is one of the positive outcomes of our work. Our services and those we serve cross many groups of people in our community, so it makes great sense that we are engaged (and have been engaged from the beginning) with TFTGC as they continue their movement.



**Thriving Families,  
Thriving  
Grant County**  
*Building systemic  
solutions together*



## WHERE DO YOU FIT IN?

**We want YOU to be involved!  
Here's how to get started:**

- Attend any meeting. Just show up!
- If you need meeting times / dates / places or have any other questions, contact Cathy Weatherspoon, Executive Director of Thriving Families, Thriving Grant County, at [cathy@thrivinggrantcounty.com](mailto:cathy@thrivinggrantcounty.com) or call her at 765-662-0065.
- Keep up with us on social media:
  - Facebook.com/ThrivingFamiliesThrivingGC
  - Instagram: @ThrivingGrantCounty



**Cathy Weatherspoon**

**NOTE: Virtual meetings are taking place for working groups, due to the COVID-19 distancing guidelines. We are working to find the best way to continue our collective work!**