

The Respite Center:

An Effective Approach to Reducing Parent Stress



By, Lauren Silber and Erin Kasik

Childcare Specialists at the Respite Center

Parenting is one of the hardest jobs...

What are the most challenging parts of parenting? What are the primary stressors?

As a parent, have you ever needed a break? Who do you rely on?



Imagine you are experiencing housing insecurity...



Imagine you are fleeing domestic violence...



Imagine you have a chronic health condition...



How it all began...





Skyline

Parents are people, too

New local center takes care of Johnny when parents can't

By Karin Jenkinson
Press Connection Writer

The parents of a second grader, on their way to pick him up after school, are involved in an auto accident and both are hospitalized.

A single parent of two preschoolers finds a need for a few hours to herself, away from the stress of parenting, but has exhausted her list of potential babysitters.

Where can they turn for child care?

Today, there is no center in Madison able to respond immediately in either situation. But that will change on Jan. 18, when a Respite/Emergency Crisis Center (REC) opens at 904 Williamson St.

A two-story frame house on the city's near East Side has been transformed into the crisis center, and was on display at an open house Friday. An excited staff greeted well-wishers with cookies, hot cider and a lot of champagne, and all agreed that both house and staff were "ready for Johnny's kind."

The local center will provide 24-hour temporary child care, and will charge parents, based on their ability to pay, a maximum of \$1 per hour.

Madison's REC is one of three pilot projects in Wisconsin made possible by a three-year federal grant. The others are in Milwaukee and Racine County. The City of Madison contributed \$48,000 in community development block grant money to buy and renovate the house.

Child care programs will be supported by information, referral and counseling services aimed, according to REC outreach coordinator Linda Howe at "helping to maintain a healthy family environment and preserve the integrity of the family unit."

The center will try to serve two distinct needs: One is respite or emergency care — a parent takes

previously called out of town, hospitalized or incarcerated.

The other is "respite" or "respite care" — parental recognition of what family counselor and temporary center coordinator Lauren Young calls "a natural need for a break from child care... when the parent sees the need for distance from his or her child for the emotional well

being of the family."

REC stands distinct from the "crisis nurseries," after-the-fact centers for victims of child abuse which are springing up across the country.

While the REC services can act as deterrents to child abuse, Young says, "We're not emphasizing the state of abuse. While analyzing child abuse has opened up broader questions of what it means to be a parent, we need to emphasize needs of parents to get away, which are not tied at all to a concept of child abuse, but which are tied to enhancing the family experience."

Learned to care for up to 12 children, REC will give priority to filling emergency needs. The staff feels strongly, however, about the need to remain flexible and respond to a number of different situations.

Family Counselor Fran Trogman talks of "self-referrals by parents, talking with hospitals and police agencies, working with the Children's Protective Center, providing respite services, sponsoring parent support groups, and working with the day care community."

REC is administered by the Child Care Services Consortium. The consortium was formed by the boards of the Red Caboose, Magic Penny, and Christian Day Care child care centers.

Exchanges of child care workers, family counselors and parent specialists between REC and these three day care centers are planned.

But REC does not exist only to serve the parents and children of these three centers. Young says the REC is "devoted to real grassroots, community level responses."

As Allen Schwartz, financial director for Red Caboose and child Social worker for REC, explains, "What we're doing has been done for generations by relatives, by more stable neighborhoods. Through these child care resources have diminished, the need still exists. We need to provide these services."



—Photo by Johannes Chabrowski

Fran Trogman and daughter Kate open presents

 **Growing Your Own**

By Jerry Minnich

Who we are today



Respite Center is a 43-year-old program within RISE Wisconsin Inc

Merged in 2017 so that we can be a part of a network of wraparound services



Respite's original logo!

Welcome to our space...



Meet our CEO!

Our Philosophy

We believe that parenting is one of the most difficult jobs. We also believe that well-timed breaks and a supportive ear can help parents return to parenting feeling more confident in their abilities.



How we support families...

Provide a safe place for children to stay and play while parents and caregivers get a break.

- 24/7 around the clock service
- Childcare for kids 0-14 years old
- Crisis counseling
- Resource referrals



Needs we meet...

Household Violence

Education

Medical and Mental Health Emergency

Housing Insecurity and Homelessness

Relief/Break

Medical & Wellness

Court Related

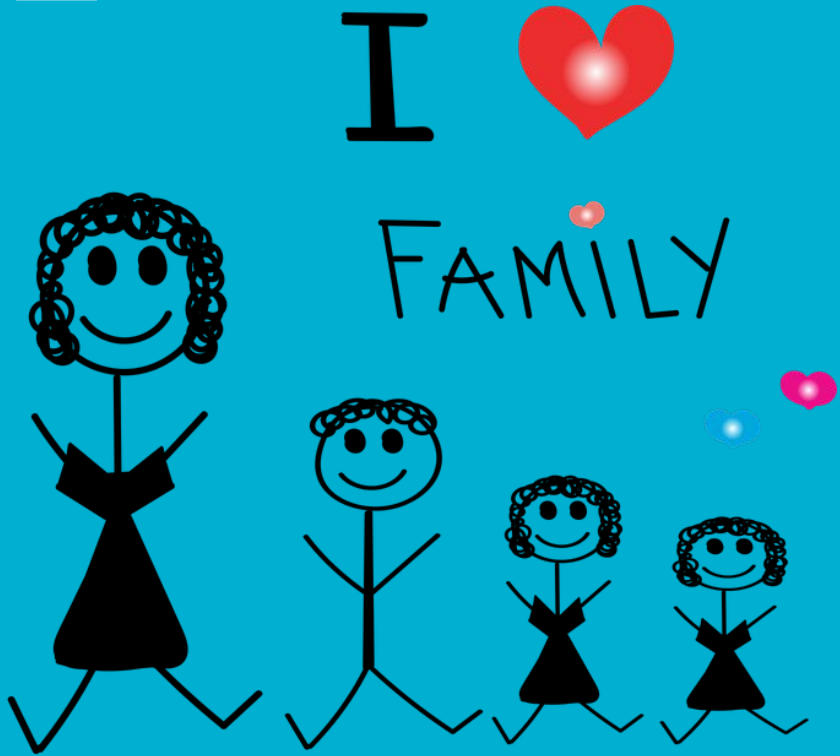
Job Security

Dane County Emergency



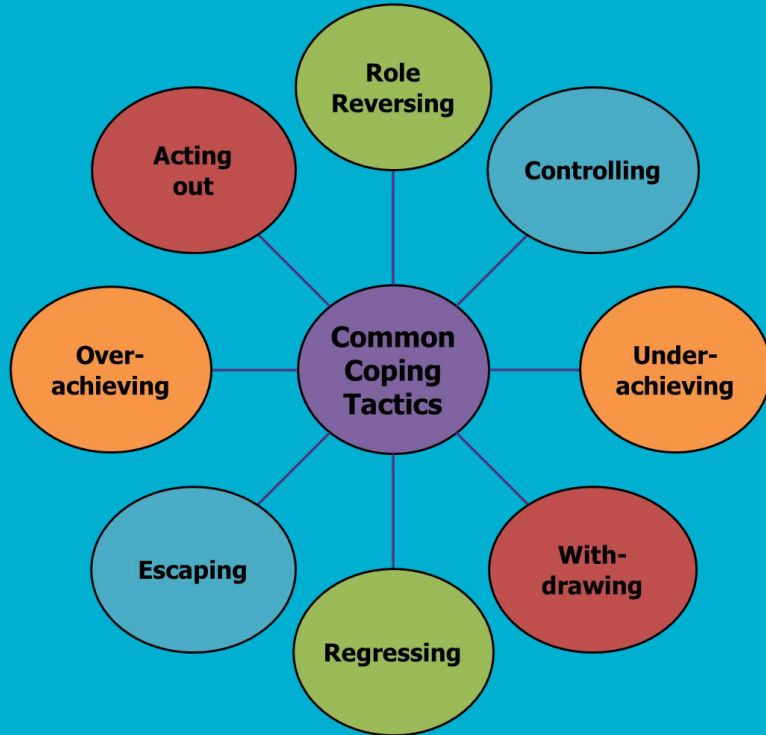
Total of 2,864 visits in 2019

Let's hear from our families...



“I think the last thing any mother wants to do is fail her children and left with no other option but to place her children in foster care. Your program prevented me from losing my children. Thank you.” ~ Parent

How we support children...



Our Impact in the community

- **Annual Service Volume (in 2019):**
 - Number of times we've scheduled individual children: **2,864**
 - **26,102** hours of child care provided
 - **798** different children from **378** different families



- Serve 12-15 children in a 24-hour period

Our work during the pandemic...

Our Distribution of Covid-Relief Funds:

- Care packages: 32 families
- Holiday gifts: 40 kids, \$50 per gift
- Food Assistance: Gave one family \$150
- Housing Stability: \$1300 across 4 families
- Childcare costs: \$150
- Basic Needs Pantry

ALSO

Received a large donation of books on diversity/pandemic topics from Madison Public Library and UW's Women in Business



Nationally Recognized!

“Innovative and Exemplary Respite Services” award
by the ARCH National Respite Network

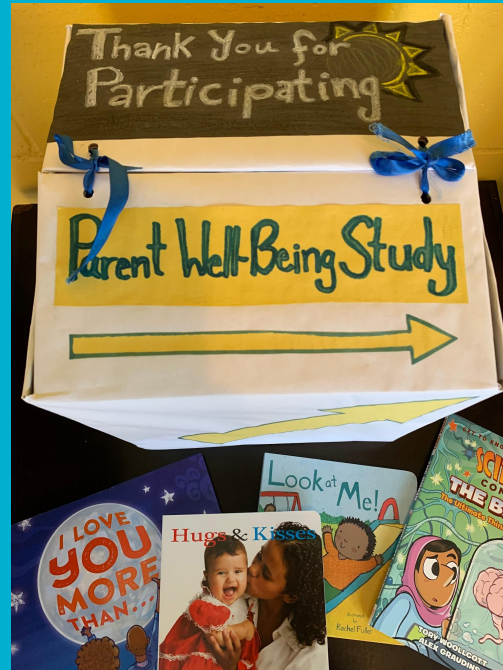


Does a respite break reduce parent stress?

We've always had plenty of anecdotes and **qualitative** evidence of our program's effectiveness

The Parent Well-Being Study will be our **first quantitative** study to evaluate our service model

Results found significant change in self-reported stress



RISE Helping Community & Family Thrive

Respite Center
Arrival Parent Survey

We're inviting you to participate in a research study. Participation is completely voluntary and anonymous. By agreeing to participate, you are consenting to our use of the survey data to provide evidence for the impact of the Respite Center on families we serve. Your feedback will not impact scheduling.

(1) Please rate your stress level right now from 1 to 10, with 10 being the highest level of stress.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	----

(2) On call

1

RISE Helping Community & Family Thrive

Respite Center
Departure Parent Survey

We're inviting you to participate in a research study. Participation is completely voluntary and anonymous. By agreeing to participate, you are consenting to our use of the survey data to provide evidence for the impact of the Respite Center on families we serve. Your feedback will not impact scheduling.

(1) Please rate your stress level right now from 1 to 10, with 10 being the highest level of stress.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	----

(2) On a scale of 1 to 10, how confident do you feel about your ability to respond to your child(ren) in a calm manner, with 10 being the highest level of confidence?

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	----

(3) Without services from this program (Respite Center), I am able to find safe, reliable care for my child(ren) when I need it.

Never	Very seldom	Occasionally	Half of the time	Often	Most of the time	All of the time
-------	-------------	--------------	------------------	-------	------------------	-----------------

Please rate your level of agreement with the following statements.

(4) Respite Center is a good break for my child.

Strong disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree
-----------------	----------	---------	-------	----------------

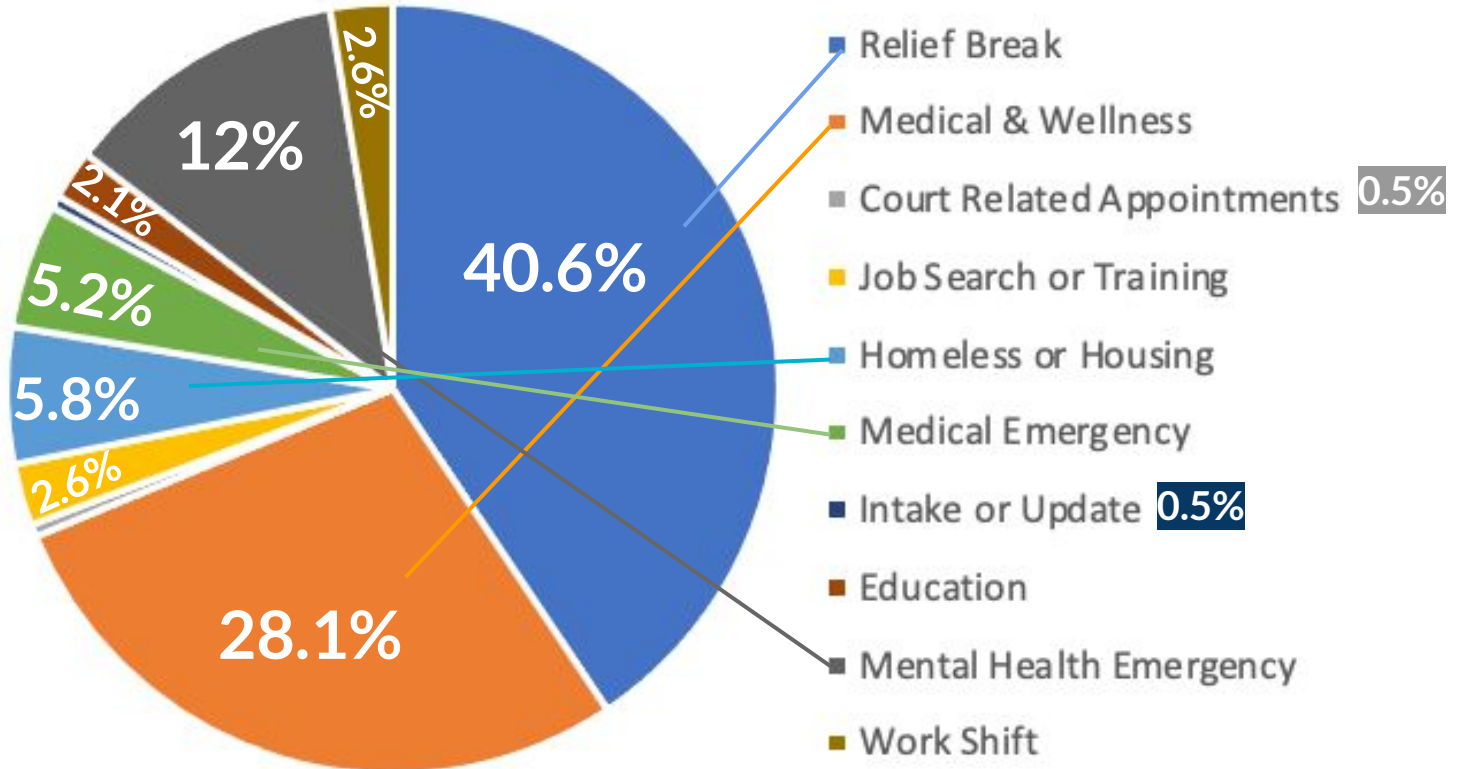
(5) Respite Center helps me reach my goals (e.g., education, job, health related, etc.).

Strong disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree
-----------------	----------	---------	-------	----------------

(6) COVID-19 is currently my primary stressor.

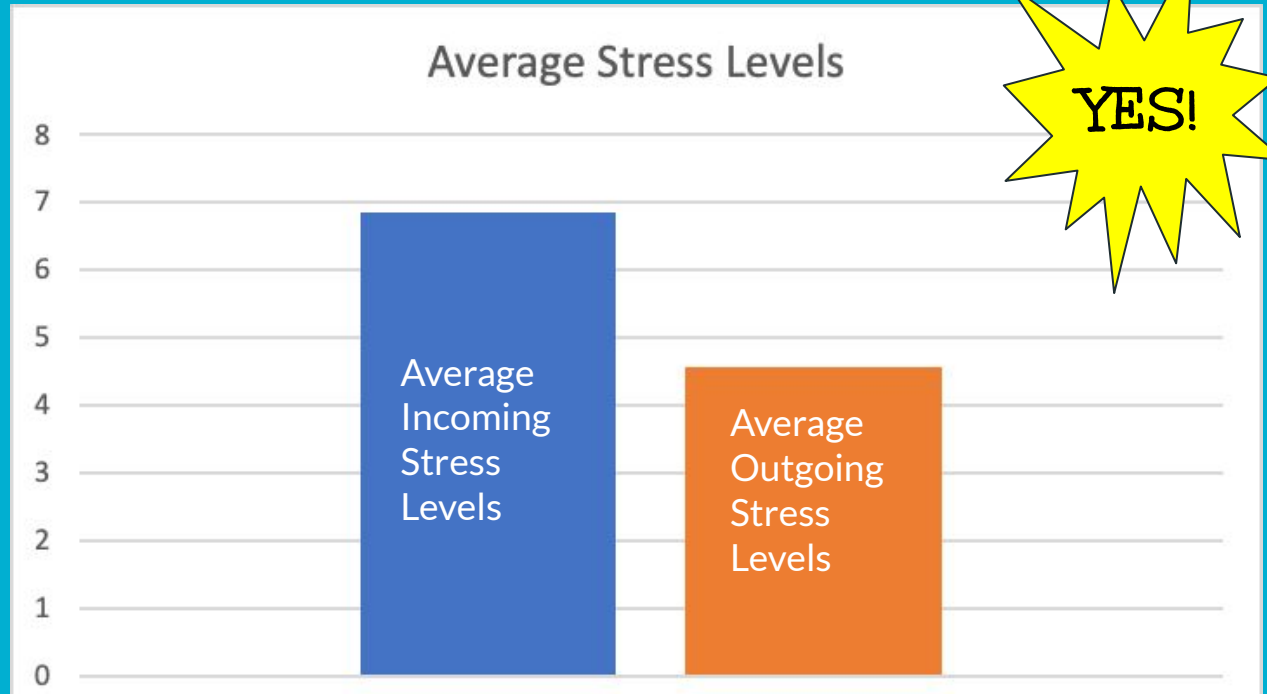
Strong disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree
-----------------	----------	---------	-------	----------------

Reasons Parents Use the Respite Center



Results: Does a respite break reduce parent stress?

The mean stress levels of the participants is **significantly less** after using the Respite Center ($p < 0.001$).



95% Confidence Interval of the difference between incoming and outgoing stress levels: [1.937, 2.606]

Results: *Without* services from this program (Respite Center), *I am able* to find safe, reliable care for my child(ren) when I need it.

Never

Very
seldom

Occasionally

Half of
the time

Often

Most of
the time

All of the
time

Results: Respite Center is a good break for my child.

Strong
disagree

Disagree

Neutral

Agree

Strongly agree

**Results: Respite Center helps me reach my goals
(e.g. education, job, health related, etc.)**

Strong disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree
-----------------	----------	---------	-------	----------------

Results: COVID-19 is currently my primary stressor.

Strong
disagree

Disagree

Neutral

Agree

Strongly agree

—

Any questions for us?

lauren.silber@risewisconsin.org
erin.kasik@risewisconsin.org



Thank you for your time...

Although anyone can be a parent, no one should be expected to do it alone.

"I love this place so bad!
This is the coolest place I
wish I could come here
every day!"



"I know why this is
called the 'Rest-bit'
center. Because moms
can go drop their kids
off and rest a bit!"