The holidays should be a happy time for children, but for many kids that is not the case. **Child abuse is an issue we must face**, not only across the United States, but right here in our community.

Confined to living alone in a trailer outside of his parents’ home, 12-year-old Roy* had to endure living without heat and running water. Small for his age, he was forced by his parents to perform back-breaking labor that would exhaust a grown man. He accepted his “chores” without complaint.

What he couldn’t endure were the beatings and torture month after month at the hands of his parents. They kicked and punched him and even threatened him with a hammer. He had multiple scars all over his skinny body. His stepfather was especially brutal; he was good at coming up with new ways to torment him. It was more than anyone—let alone a child—could take. Roy knew he had to get away from this nightmare, or he would end up dead. **He knew he needed to tell someone.**

The number of children needing child abuse intervention services is increasing each year. Last year, nearly 700 children were referred for assessment and medical consultation services at ABC House, where no child is ever turned away due to inability to pay, and families pay no out of pocket costs for any of these important services.

Lucy*, a mom of four children, desperately hoped that the allegation of sexual abuse wasn’t true. How could the man she picked to marry do something like this? It was one thing for him to hit her, she thought—she was an adult— but she could not fathom him doing unspeakable things to her six-year-old. Her mind swirled with questions—how long has this been going on? Was this happening to any of the other children? How could she have been so blind? **She needed to talk to someone and didn’t know where to turn.**

Last year, ABC House helped Roy, Lucy and her children, and hundreds more children and families find the help they needed to heal from the trauma of abuse and neglect.

*Names have been changed to protect the identities of actual ABC House clients.

Continued on Page 2
As the only child abuse intervention center for Linn and Benton counties, ABC House relies on community support to continue providing intervention and support services. Won’t you join others in helping children when they are at their most vulnerable? Your gift this holiday season will ensure these vital services will continue to be provided for children and families faced with abuse:

- **Expert medical evaluations** performed by a physician specially trained in identifying and treating abuse
- **Objective and child-friendly interviews** conducted by interviewers highly trained in childhood development and communication to ensure children’s responses are their own
- **Family Support Services** including referrals to other services, like trauma counseling to help each family member process their experience and heal

Thanks in part to the evidence collected at his medical exam at ABC House, Roy is now safe. He is living with extended family, who are invested in helping him thrive. Roy is a resilient youth who can move past the horror of his previous existence – but he will need help to do it. At ABC House, he’s receiving effective, trauma-focused therapy to continue his journey of recovery.

Lucy and her children are now in family counseling at ABC House to give them the tools to support each other as they heal. Lucy ended her relationship with her fiancé and has been connected with domestic violence services to help her address her own abuse.

**Your gift makes hope and healing possible. Thank you so much for your most generous donation.**

If you have donated before, we hope you will renew or increase your gift. You can also donate at our website. Find the DONATE NOW button on the top of the page: www.abchouse.org.

Your giving will bring the joy of living back for children like Roy and families like Lucy’s, not only during the holiday season but throughout the year. Your investment will mean a brighter future for them and our community. Thank you for your caring support!

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**Director’s Corner**

By Jenny Gilmore-Robinson, ABC House Executive Director

"Are you ready for the holidays?" seems to be the question on everybody’s lips this week. My answer? Yes and no. I love the holiday season but in the hustle and bustle of buying gifts and attending year-end festivities, it’s easy sometimes to lose sight of what’s important in favor of Just. Getting. It. All. Done. Am I right?

Case in point: I took my toddler to visit Santa, who was conveniently being played by someone she knew and adored. I figured her joy in seeing her special friend would translate to a great photo moment for her faraway grandparents.

Except it didn’t work out that way. As I was handing her over to sit on Santa’s lap, she burst into tears. And I had a choice: force her to do something that she was telling me with every fiber of her little body that she didn’t want to do—or not.

I’ll admit it, it was tempting. Just get the photo opportunity and check it off my list. And then I remembered what was really important: that my daughter feels safe and secure, and knows that her body belongs to her. It’s not always easy to stay focused on that—believe me, I get it—but it has to be a priority.

And that’s what we do at ABC House every day. No matter what else is going on—the heat pump breaks, a computer gets malware, a disagreement at home—our doctors, interviewers, advocates and counselors always stay focused on the most important thing: the comfort and wellbeing of the child in front of them. Nothing can be more important than that.

As we look ahead into all of the excitement coming in 2019, I am grateful for what’s most important, the children we serve and the people who make it possible: you.

From all of us at ABC House, happy holidays!
Community Happenings
Please join us in thanking the following businesses for their support of ABC House!

**Sybaris Bistro**
Thank you to Matt and Janel Bennett of Sybaris for their continued support. Thanksgiving Day 2018 was their 15th annual luncheon benefit – all proceeds and tips from the event go to ABC House. A special thank you to all of the volunteers who gave of their time on their Thanksgiving holiday and to all of the sponsors who gave generously, allowing 100% of the food sales to be donated to ABC House. Overall, Sybaris donated **$4,800** to ABC House from this event!

**HEWLETT® PACKARD**
A raffle for prizes during their 2018 Holiday Bazaar is just one of the many ways that Hewlett Packard has supported ABC House as their 2018 Charitable Giving recipient. Stay tuned for more about HP’s year-long support in our spring newsletter.

**Candy Cane Express**
All Aboard! A big thanks to Santiam Excursion Trains and the Candy Cane Express. They chose to support ABC House as their sponsored charity for the weekend of December 1st & 2nd. We had a great time with our volunteers and the Claus family riding the train. It was fun to see kids and families enjoying the ride. We raised over **$900** in tips during this event!

**Ascent Fitness & Conditioning**
Thank you to Ascent Fitness & Conditioning and the amazing fundraiser they "worked out". They raised **$500** during their Charity Fit Camp events to donate to ABC House. Way to go!!

**SUBARU**
Thinking of upgrading your vehicle this holiday season? Make sure to check out Subaru of Corvallis!

ABC House was selected as this year’s Hometown Charity by Subaru of Corvallis for their “Share the Love” event! During **November 15th - January 2nd**, for every new vehicle purchased or leased, Subaru will donate $250 to the purchaser’s choice of participating charities. So far **Subaru of Corvallis is cruisin’ right along** and has raised over **$7,000** for ABC House!

Thank you to Subaru of Corvallis for choosing ABC House as your Hometown Charity!!
Thank You for Your Support!

This list represents generous donations from October 1, 2018—December 7, 2018 including our Monthly Donors. If we have inadvertently missed you or misspelled your name, please contact the Development Office at (541) 248-3978 or devassistant@abchouse.org so we can acknowledge your generosity in our next newsletter.

Abramson, Randa Cleaves and Jonathan
Albany Antique Mall
Albany Optimist Club
Allstate
American Legion Auxiliary
American Sewing Guild - Albany
Sunshine Group
Ames, Rich and Julie
Anonymous
Ariceaga, Hector
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Bargsten, Dale and Elizabeth
Barrow, Andrea
Benton County
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Costco
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Cousins, Carissa
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Eckroth, Lee
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Giles, Jason and Jennifer
Giuffre, Ralph and Charlene
Glassman, Carol
Godek, Brent and Priscilla
Goodyear, Kari
Gotze, Kevin and Colleen
Grocery Depot
Gustav, Walter and Mary
Hahn, Karlie
Harris, Heidi
Harris, Jackie
Hauge, Donald and Barbara
Hewlett Packard
Holdeman Paving
Houck, John and Janice
Hubbard Family Trust
Hubele, Curt and Deanna
Huss, Ronald
Ibarra-Escabar, Eowyn
Immel, Wendy
Independent Order Of Odd Fellows
Beulah Rebekah Lodge No 35
Isom, Melody
Jager, Norm and Sandy
Janske, Cindy
Keady, Sarah
Keller Williams
Kenyon, Peter and Patti
Kenyon, Rick and Jamil
Kerns, Laurel
Keys, Amie and Andrew
King Office Equipment and Design
Kish, Cherise
Kline, Jeff
Koos, Stacy and Mike
Kopczynski, Ray
Kosmala, Greg and Dana
Larson, Tricia T
Law, Cathy
Lifestyle Vision Source Of Lebanon LLC
Loney, Ron and Diane
Lynch, Jani
Mabeck, Jeffrey
Marin, Enio
Mays, Jennifer
May-Stoull, Heidi
McDonald, Chelsey
McKinnon, Jason
McManus, Mara
Meeker, Arthur & Chrystal Hart-Meeker
Miller, Annette
Moore, Ronald and Angela
Morningstar Grange 311
Mosbrucker, Chris and Tasha
Moyes, Rebecca and Joshua
Network For Good
OFD Foods
Olson, Rebecca
Oregon Association Of Family & Consumer Sciences
Oregon Network Of Child Abuse Intervention
Pace, Lester and Judy
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Pearce, Buck and Amy
Precourt, Jeff
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Thorpe, Bryce and Kelly
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Vogt, Gordon and Karen
Volz, Charles and Janis
Walker, Peter
Walters, Charlene
Wasmund, Ryan and Audrey
Weyerhaeuser Giving Fund
Williams, Bobby
Wimmer, Robert and Joan
Wong, Michael and Frances
Yang, Xiao and Mai Shoua
Young, Zac and Abbey
Yutzie, Jason and Staci
Zeemin, Pam

Quilter’s Corner
Thank you to the following friends for donating handmade quilts that will be gifted to ABC House clients:
Albany Senior Quilters
Baker, Judy
Fairview Mennonite Church
Sewing Circle
First Presbyterian Piecemakers
Johnson, Carl and Gloria
Mary’s River Quilt Guild
Michelsen, Phyllis
Mitchell, Marjorie
Mowery, Judy
Smith, Helen

*Smartphones are not recommended for any child who is under the age of 13. The ABC House Prevention Coordinator recommends waiting until age 15 or 16, provided the child has demonstrated maturity for their age range, an ability to set limits with technology and seems trustworthy.*

For more information or safety tips for other devices, such as Android devices, please reach out to Melissa Whiteman, ABC House Prevention Coordinator, at educator@abchouse.org!

6 Merry Christmas iPhone Safety Tips

Planning on giving your child an iPhone for Christmas? What a huge and exciting gift! Let us help set you and your child up for success with some safety tips!

1 Set up the Screen Time settings (parental controls) in the phone’s settings.
These user friendly and well-functioning settings allow parents to set screen time limits, restrict adult content, monitor app downloads and in-app purchases and disable your child’s ability to change their passcode or clear their history.

2 Create safe environments for their device use.
The phone should be used during the day and in common areas of the home only. Children should never have cell phones at night, in a bedroom or at sleepovers. Chris McKenna, the founder of Protect Young Eyes, an internet safety resource for parents, says: “Where a child uses a device, determines how they will use it.”

3 Set clear expectations.
Your child should know how they can and cannot treat others online, and what types of behaviors from others online are problematic. Make a plan for what to do if something weird or scary happens (Put it down, Tell someone).

4 Test everything out before allowing it.
Test out and research apps or games that your child wants for one week before approving the download. Remember, you can disable the ability to download apps without your permission in the phone’s Screen Time settings. If something you are testing makes you uncomfortable or is not appropriate for your child’s age, it is not okay for your child. Find better, more age appropriate alternatives whenever possible. The website, Common Sense Media, is a great resource for this.

5 Communicate with your child consistently and proactively about their device.
Having open and ongoing conversations about device safety is the best thing you can do to keep your child safe from potential risk! Check in often, use a positive tone and remind them of your expectations. Build trust to set them up for greater freedoms with their device as they get older!

6 Lead by example.
Model a healthy relationship with technology by following similar rules. Opt for no phones at the dinner table, and set media free times to enjoy being with your child without distractions.
Building Hope Together Campaign Update

Construction of ABC House’s new building is moving closer to completion! Installation of light fixtures, carpet, paint and cabinetry has begun and the front door and reception desk are in, ready to greet guests and clients. The exterior is also nearly complete. We are so excited to see the progress and transformation! Our sincerest thanks to the generous support of many individuals, businesses and foundations who donated to the Building Hope Together Campaign to help make the new home of ABC House possible.

The Albany Optimists’ Service Club Challenge

Are you a member of a service club? The Albany Optimist Club has issued a challenge to all local service clubs to make a donation to ABC House’s Building Hope Together Campaign for a new building. The Optimists recently donated $10,000 to the campaign, with the hope of inspiring other clubs to make a donation or even match theirs. “We deeply appreciate the generous support of the Optimists,” said Jenny Gilmore-Robinson, ABC House Executive Director. “Their wonderful gift and challenge to other clubs is bringing us that much closer to being able to serve more children and families in the way they deserve.”

ABC House Closed During Move

ABC House will be closed Monday, January 28th through Friday, February 8th as we move into our new building. Emergency services will be available, and phone calls will be returned as quickly as possible during the move. Thank you for your patience as we transition services to the new building. We will re-open, ready to serve you, on Monday, February 11, 2019.
**Mother to Son:**
“Lose the ‘stache!”

It may not be the most typical reason to donate, but it worked for Sheelagh Bailey! She wasn’t fond of her son Douglas’s prominent mustache. So, she made a deal with him that she would give a generous monthly donation to ABC House as long as he shaved his ‘stache when he came to visit her. They’ve both fulfilled their contract (see after photo below) but recent reports indicate that another mustache is in process!

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**Reflections on Gratitude from an ABC House staff member:**

My eight year old son Max and I sat down the other day to write a letter to Santa. Max, as tenacious as any child I have ever met, started writing without any direction provided by me or any other adult. He began with “Dear Santa,” then listed his many wants for the season, including a trumpet and Husky puppy (both long shots for items under the tree). Max rewrote his letter several times, being critical of his spelling and prioritizing his list of wants. I noticed in every copy of his letter, he included a statement of gratitude…not a thank you for gifts as much as for the feelings/emotions of the holiday season. The last copy that ultimately made the trip to Alaska (thank you USPS), included the postscript, “P.S. Thank you Santa for Christmas and bringing joy. It took me 6 pieces of paper to write this.”

Note for the season and all year long: Remember to be grateful and to keep your sense of humor!

Erin Ferris, Clinical Manager

P.S. Thank you for your continued support of ABC House and Happy Holidays! It only took me a couple of tries to write this.

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**COMMUNITY PREVENTION EVENTS**

**Upcoming Trainings**

**Darkness to Light: Stewards of Children**
January 15, 2019 @ ABC House 5:30—8:00 pm

**Keeping Children Safe in the Digital Age**
January 17, 2019 @ ABC House 9:30—11:30 am

**Keeping Children Safe in the Digital Age**
February 20, 2019 @ *ABC House new facility
Tour: 5:00—6:00 pm; Training: 6:00—8:00 pm

**Darkness to Light: Stewards of Children**
February 21, 2019 @ *ABC House new facility
Tour: 8:30—9:30 am; Training: 9:30 am—12:00 pm

**Darkness to Light: Stewards of Children**
March 18, 2019 @ *ABC House new facility
Tour: 4:30—5:30 pm; Training: 5:30—8:00 pm

**Keeping Children Safe in the Digital Age**
March 22, 2019 @ *ABC House new facility
Tour: 8:30—9:30 am; Training: 9:30—11:30 am

To register for these or other upcoming sessions, visit [www.abchouse.org](http://www.abchouse.org) under the Events tab.

* Please note: Starting in February trainings will be held at our new facility at 228 5th Ave SW, Albany OR 97321, with optional building tours offered before each training session.

Darkness to Light: Stewards of Children is a nationally-recognized, evidence-based training that teaches adults how to prevent, recognize and react responsibly to child sexual abuse. **This training is currently offered at no cost.**

To learn more about our community education offerings, or to schedule a presentation at your school, business, church or community group, please contact Melissa Whiteman at educator@abchouse.org or (541) 926-2203.
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Ribbon Cutting and Open House

February 28, 2019; 3:30—6:00 pm
Location: New ABC House
228 SW 5th Avenue, Albany

Please join us at 3:30 pm at our new facility for a ribbon cutting ceremony, followed by an open house with self-guided tours. We’ll welcome guests until 6:00 pm. We hope to see you there; we are looking forward to sharing our new home with all of you!

Presented By:

You’re invited to the ABC House Celebrate Hope Fundraising and Awareness Dinner! Join community members for our annual banquet dinner and learn how you can make a difference in the lives of abused children in our community. Go to www.abchouse.org for more information.

YEAR END GIVING

A friendly reminder to our friends over age 70 1/2

If you haven’t yet taken the required minimum distribution from your Individual Retirement Account (IRA), you can avoid paying income tax by donating it directly to ABC House!

Required minimum distributions (RMD) must be taken each year beginning with the year you turn age 70 1/2. See your tax advisor for additional details!