



G & G
Living Centers, Inc.

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
14 November 2011

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G & G LIVING CENTERS RECEIVES \$4200 GRANT TO FUND A LOCAL TEACCH PROGRAM

Guttenberg, IA – G & G Living Centers has been awarded a \$4200 grant from the Upper Mississippi Gaming Corporation to help fund **TEACCH** (Treatment and Education of Autistic and Communication-related handicapped CHildren) training. **TEACCH** is an evidence-based service, training, and research program for individuals of all ages and skill levels with autism spectrum disorders that was originally developed by the University of North Carolina in the early 1970s.

Most of the individuals served by G & G Living Center will benefit from the structured **TEACCH** curriculum, as 45% are diagnosed within the Autism spectrum. G & G Living Centers currently serves 75 individuals living in Clayton County, and with this funding, plans to offer this training to its staff and other service providers, and eventually extend training to the following counties: Clayton, Dubuque and Delaware.

People that fall into the Autism Spectrum Disorder tend to be very isolated and are not able to enjoy their respective communities. Sensory issues can affect mood, anxiety, depression, social skills, and learning and result in behavior breakdowns. G & G Living Center's clients will have the opportunity to be part of the structured teaching class that will enable them to learn self-help skills. People with severe autism need special equipment to desensitize from over stimulation of the world around them. Multiple sounds, bright lights, soft touch and strong perfume are not such a big deal to us, but can be physically painful to a person with autism.

According to Lorrie Meier, G & G Living Center Administrator, "All of the noises in a retail store (cash registers, loudspeakers, multiple people talking, shopping carts, etc.), for instance, come at people with autism without the learned ability to filter. Fluorescent lights can almost blind their sensitive eyes. A simple touch feels like sandpaper on their skin. Smells can sometimes affect breathing ability. People with autism become so overloaded that they will have a 'meltdown' in the store while trying to get away from the sensory stimulations. Others in the store do not understand and become frightened. This program helps those with autism learn how to filter those items on site and then 'desensitize' at home by choosing one of the many calming techniques TEACCH offers.

— more —

Community Matters

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“The three-day training—which due to the distance, cost of hotel and travel expenses—has not been cost effective for most agencies and families in northeast Iowa to attend. With the help of these grant funds, we will be able to provide training to our staff, other agencies, and families in this area. “We are thrilled to expand our programming in Northeast Iowa.”

The Upper Mississippi Gaming Corporation receives its funding from admission taxes paid for the Lady Luck Casino - Marquette. This revenue provides the funding UMGC needs to make grants available to qualified organizations. Each year, grant applications are accepted from non-profit organizations, government entities, and educational facilities. As of June 2011, UMGC had awarded a total of \$4,344,888.52 to improve the quality of life of the residents of Clayton County.

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