



Work in Progress Update April 2004

Dear Friends:

Susan Leon, our new Moms Place Director, just returned from leading the 3rd Moms Place Retreat. Moms Place is our way for Christian women to support young mothers from the inner city. The relationships are designed to equip young mothers with Godly tools for living.

What does a Moms Place Retreat look like? Imagine 14 young moms (ages 14-24), 28 kids, 5 leaders and 1 bus driver dividing up into 11 rooms, splashing in the pool and Jacuzzi, lots of little chubby arms in colorful floaties everywhere. Can you picture the laughter & conversation around the dinner table, dancing country-line dances (laughing at the leaders), God's truth being told and His grace being expressed around a campfire, then singing old Kids Club songs, praying, and sharing communion.

"The retreat," said Susan, "allowed us time...to search out God's truth about grace; to experience prayer, tears, and the healing of wounds. We released to God our struggles and our hurts by writing them out, tearing them up and letting them fly away in a colorful array of helium filled balloons."

Teen moms in Arizona:

- ◆ Arizona ranked 3rd highest for teen births for 15-17 year olds (48th, close to last)
- ◆ The rate of births to women age 19 or younger in Arizona was 60.2 births per 1,000 women of that age group. The national rate was 49.6 per 1,000 women.

Moms Place Program Growth:

	2001	2002	2003	2004
Moms	8	12	14	22
Children	14	20	24	40

These deeper times were mixed with the noisy fun of 28 kids for lunch and a madcap Easter egg hunt where everyone got a prize from newborns to the oldest mom. Easter baskets were given to all the children filled with candy & fruit, books and fun surprises. Laundry baskets overflowing with practical household goods and other gifts filled with love were given to all the moms. At the end of it all, there were more tears, tons of hugs and kisses and finally packing up the bus and the vans to head back home.

One mother (age 22) at the retreat saw her reflection in a young, immature 16 year old mom. At first, she was indignant at the hardness of the younger woman's attitude and her greedy spirit. She told the leaders, "She can't treat you like that, you are our family!" But, then she remembered her fear at 16 and her grasping and demanding without gratitude. As she remembered, she saw what she had learned through Mom's Place: A grateful heart, a hunger to know God deeply, a desire to see her whole life change, and a new heart to help the younger moms. She told Susan, "I guess we'll have to love her out of it."

1 Thessalonians 2: 7-8

...we could have been a burden to you, but we were gentle among you, like a mother caring for her little children. We loved you so much that we were delighted to share with you not only the gospel of God but our lives as well, because you had become so dear to us.



Right after a Moms Place meeting, one of the young moms asked her mentor/leader to pray for her. She is struggling with drug addiction and has 2 small sons. "I don't know how to say it in English," she said. "Can you do for me what you did for that other girl?" The older woman suggested that she pray with her. "Yes, that's it. That's what I need. I get money from selling drugs and I don't want to sell drugs no more. Will you pray for me?" After they prayed, the leader asked if she had understood. "Yes, I understood every word you said," she answered. Then they talked about the fact that her life was out of control and that only God could bring healing. The young woman agreed with that and asked what they should do. The leader asked if she wanted to pray some more and give her life to Jesus. She said yes and they stood on the sidewalk praying as the young woman gave her life to Christ.

If you want to know more about how you can help with Moms Place, please call Susan Leon at our office.

Thank you for praying, volunteering, and remembering us in your giving. We want to especially thank everyone involved in the Neighborhood Ministries Golf Tournament at FireRock Country Club! We had a full field of golfers and raised enough money to send over 65 kids (4th - 6th grades) to a week of camp this summer. We're very thankful for the many ways people participate in our ministry.

With love,

Kit Danley

Kit Danley
President

Richard Speck

Richard Speck
Executive Director

