

Smart Love® Newsletter



Working towards a more just society

“The greatest improvement in the quality of human life will come not from brilliant discoveries about the nature of matter or technological innovations, but from parents whose love and insight give their children lasting inner happiness and thereby leave a legacy of competent, caring individuals.”

– Smart Love (1999) by Martha Heineman Pieper, Ph.D. and William J. Pieper, M.D.

If we want our children to grow up as citizens of a healthy, caring and just society, we need to be building that world now. This has been our guiding ideal since opening our doors in 2001. In light of recent events ignited by the killing of George Floyd in Minneapolis and the deeper realization of the profound issues around racism and inequity our nation continues to face, we are reenergized to do our part.

Effectively addressing the systemic issues that have been laid bare is a long and arduous process in which everyone has a role. Environmental factors such as social and economic inequity interfere and make it extremely difficult for parents to effectively provide for their children and give them the emotional availability they need to thrive. Creating social and economic supports and

reforms that help parents meet their children’s needs is crucial.

Smart Love’s programs are grounded in a philosophy and set of ideals that people have an innate desire to be happy and enjoy well-being. And this fundamental human desire is present from birth onward. Helping parents and caregivers and their children fulfill that desire in healthy and positive ways underlies all our work. A core tenet of Smart Love is that children copy the care they receive and come to treat themselves and others in the same way. At Smart Love we take this seriously and strive to offer this kind of nurture to clients, children, parents, and to staff members.

These same ideals inform our goal of making our services and programs more inclusive and

engaging for Black, Latinx, and other persons-of-color. We have been refining and investing in our Minority Family Program (MFP) over several years to ensure we do just that. Led by trained clinicians who are themselves minority professionals, the program aims to help minority families learn about and overcome challenges around their children’s healthy development and success in school that involve issues of race and culture. Additionally, the MFP offers opportunities to minority clinicians at the start of their careers to receive meaningful professional training and community engagement experience. The MFP has helped more than 60 families to date (see article inside for latest news on the program) and trained more than 10 minority clinicians.

In the year ahead, we are planning to expand the MFP’s impact beyond group support and individual parent and child sessions to include a Spanish-language version and the addition of therapeutic tutoring for children participating in the program. And with generous grant support we will make the MFP program available to families in more communities. We look forward to launching other initiatives in the future as we continue to review our programmatic and organizational goals.

PROGRAM UPDATE

Minority Family Program

The Minority Family Program (MFP) is continuing to engage parents and children even without its usual biweekly in-person sessions. During the pandemic, switching to meeting via Zoom at the same times on Saturdays has proven very popular. Even families who have moved farther away than the MFP's general service area, which is concentrated on the West Side, Oak Park, and nearby communities, remain connected to the program and contribute to its ongoing success.

One change during the pandemic has been transitioning the timing for the parent and youth groups meetings from simultaneous to sequential in order to allow full participation by families with only one Zoom-capable device. In between meetings, the parents stay connected via a private WhatsApp group that has provided immediate answers to pressing questions and mutual support in stressful situations.

Anyone interested in participating in the MFP can learn more on our website www.smartlovefamily.org under News & Events or by contacting program director Dr. Felicia Owens at felicia.owens@smartlovefamily.org / 773-665-8052, Ext. 227.



Telehealth Services

Smart Love Family Services continues to be providing its counseling services via telehealth, using HIPAA compliant platforms to connect clinicians with their clients. Not only has this allowed us to sustain our full client load during the pandemic but to even increase it. Our intake department is open and accepting new patients via telehealth until such time as we can safely return to in-person sessions. Our clinical team is providing our full range of programs and services and continues to engage with other partners and organizations to find new ways to serve our communities even more widely.

Therapeutic Tutoring

Our therapeutic tutors are continuing to see an increase in students being served. We attribute this progress both to increased awareness of the program and its success as well as parents' desire to ensure that their children are remaining on track with their schoolwork and addressing related issues while they have been distance-learning from home during the pandemic. At the same time, parents also want to help their children sustain their learning over the summer break. The therapeutic lens of our tutoring program allows Smart Love to recognize possible issues and complications that can be addressed by adjusting the tutoring or referring the family for more in-depth services. The flexibility and adaptability of the program are winning rave reviews from parents.

DONOR SPOTLIGHT

Little Feet, Big Fun! 2020

Due to the pandemic, everyone has had to deal with its ramifications, from financial burdens to emotional stress—we all have been impacted. That’s why the work that Smart Love provides to children and families, in this time of need, has been so important.

In mid-March, as we saw the COVID-19 infections climb in Illinois and in Chicago, just two days before our scheduled Gala on March 13, 2020, we made the necessary decision to cancel our in-person Gala and convert it to an online fundraiser. As we began planning for Smart Love’s first ever virtual event, we realized that many aspects of the evening would need to change—not only the cocktail hour and seated dinner, but also our live auction. We were, however, able to maintain some of our silent auction and much of the speaking program which included Gala Co-Chairs, Emily

and Bob Carroll, Preschool Director, Kelly Perez, and Director of Clinical Services, Dr. Carla Beatrice—who provided insight into the vital work Smart Love is doing to support the children and families we serve. When our paddle raise began, the support from our donors was incredible, with over 100 people donating we raised more than \$60,000! We are truly inspired by such generosity. Smart Love will now be able to meet the growing demand and needs of our community. Thank you!

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Smart Love deeply appreciates the generosity of the Annual Fund and Program donors and funders who contributed to our work in FY20, making it possible for us to care for more children and families than ever before. And due to the COVID pandemic, that support has never been more important.

(Gifts received July 1 2019 to June 30 2020)

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SMART LOVE[®] FAMILY SERVICES

Natalie & Ben Heineman Smart Love Center

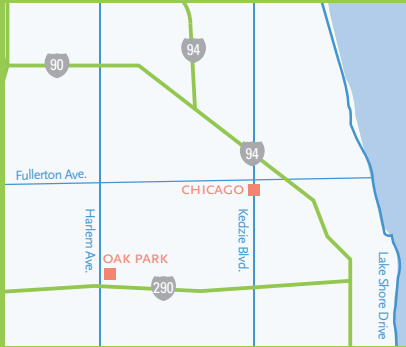
Smart Love Preschool—Moving Forward and Opening Doors

After five months of virtual programming, The Natalie G. Heineman Smart Love Preschool will be opening its doors in the fall to welcome children back into our classrooms! We are excited to see everyone in-person again and begin another fantastic Smart Love year! With enhanced safety and health protocols like temperature checks, masks, and frequent cleanings—we are ready for the fun of learning to begin!

Our early childhood education programming is designed to help children and parents with the important transition of starting school. Our approach gently introduces school to young children in a fun and non-pressured way. Teachers engage children in all classes with developmentally appropriate games, teaching materials, and activities designed to foster curious, eager, and enthusiastic learners. This approach to early childhood education sets a positive outlook on school and learning for years to come and is the best foundation for future school success.

Our Preschool program, for children ages three to six years-old, offers four or five day options, begins at 8:30 a.m. and ends at 11:30 a.m., with lunch and extended-day options available as well. Playschool is offered for children two and three years-old, begins at 9:00 a.m. and ends at 11:45 a.m., with a lunch extension also available.

We are now offering Virtual Open Houses via Zoom! Get a sense of our program and a peek inside our classrooms as Kelly Perez, our Preschool Director, discusses our approach and answers parents' questions. Registration is required to receive the invitation, please visit our Events & News section at www.smartlovespreschool.org. For a one-on-one conversation with Kelly, contact her at kelly.perez@smartlovesfamily.org or 773.665.8052, ext. 120.



OUR LOCATIONS

Chicago • Oak Park



TO LEARN MORE VISIT

www.smartlovesfamily.org

www.smartlovespreschool.org

Smart Love Programs

COUNSELING SERVICES

- Therapy for Children, Adolescents, and Adults
- Play Therapy for Young Children
- Support Groups for Children and Adults
- Neuro-Psychological and Psychological Testing
- Couples and Family Counseling
- Minority Family Program

EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION

The Natalie G. Heineman
Smart Love Preschool

- Preschool and Kindergarten for Children 2-6 years
- Parent and Child Toddler Explorations for Children 12-36 months
- Toddler and Parent Play Times
- Summer Camp

LEARNING SERVICES

- Psycho-Educational and Learning Evaluations
- Therapeutic Tutoring
- Customized Parent Consultation

PARENTING

- Parenting Guidance and Counseling
- Parenting Seminars and Webinars
- Publications and Resources for Parents



The Smart Love Approach was developed by Martha Heineman Pieper, Ph.D., and William J. Pieper, M.D., and is described in their book *Smart Love*. The Natalie G. Heineman Smart Love Preschool offers classes for three to six year olds, and parent and child programs for children six weeks to 36 months. Smart Love Family Services provides counseling for children and families based on the Piepers' therapeutic approach, Inner Humanism[®]. Parenting programs include private parent coaching, educational seminars (co-sponsored by the Intrapsychic Humanism Society), parent training and support programs, and publications. © 2020 Smart Love Family Services is an Illinois-based 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization.

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