Parents Evaluate FOCUS

Over 99% say that childrens’ camps and childcare
- Give me a much needed break
- Give my child a chance to have fun and practice social skills
- Are safe, professional, friendly, and economical

100% say that teen activities and camps
- Help my child gain independence
- Encourage him to explore new activities
- Help her develop friendships with peers

98% say that family camps and activities
- Assist us in enjoying activities that we might not have tried alone
- Are a great experience and good quality

100% of parents felt more connected through FOCUS support groups and parent retreats.

Over 95% of parents learned new and helpful things in FOCUS educational seminars.

By giving to FOCUS, you bring Comfort. Hope. Fun.

to
4,000 families

or about 17,000 individuals in greater Atlanta.

FOCUS Mission: FOCUS understands and supports the unique needs of families with children who are medically fragile or have significant developmental disabilities. FOCUS offers comfort, hope, and information to parents; accessible recreational and social programs for children and teens; and fun, inclusive activities for the entire family. A non-profit founded by parents in 1983, FOCUS continues to embrace and strengthen metro Atlanta families.

Here’s where you are helping special needs children:
- Cobb/Douglas ........................................ 21%
- Fulton ................................................... 18%
- Gwinnett/Rockdale/Newton .................. 18%
- DeKalb .................................................... 16%
- Clayton/Coweta/Fayette/Henry ........... 11%
- Cherokee/Forsyth/Hall ......................... 8%
- Outlying Counties ................................. 8%

Celebrating 31 years...

... of helping kids with developmental disabilities and their families – smile!
Ten years ago, Jose and Angela, already parents to Belle and Aaliyah, were excited to discover they were having twin girls. Angela experienced complications throughout the pregnancy, and, at 35 weeks, went into labor on Christmas Eve. Chloe was born first but did not survive. Sarah arrived and, while she appeared perfectly healthy, she was diagnosed with microcephaly, periventricular leukomalacia, and cranial stenosis. Jose and Angela mourned Chloe while tending to Belle and Aaliyah and establishing a routine with a new baby. Sarah cried non-stop and did not eat or sleep well. Angela tried to return to work but gave up after a few months, realizing that her family needed her at home.

Angela and Jose were exhausted! Sarah was easily startled and would cry for hours. Sisters Belle and Aaliyah learned to help by reading and singing to Sarah to soothe her. Angela learned about FOCUS Extra Special Saturday respite when Sarah was just 1 1/2. They reluctantly left the girls for a few hours. Executive Director Lucy Cusick remembers standing and rocking Sarah the entire four hours to keep her from crying. Angela and Jose were so relieved to have a few hours rest, knowing Sarah (and Belle and Aaliyah) were safe and cared for by FOCUS. Because of her family’s love and perseverance, Sarah began to smile, especially at her sisters. By age 5, she had several surgeries behind her, new diagnoses of cerebral palsy and a seizure disorder, and a killer smile. She wrapped her daddy around her little finger and stole hearts everywhere she went.

This year Sarah will be 10. She continues to enjoy Extra Special Saturday respite and no longer needs to be rocked! She loves FOCUS summer day camps and has rolled the runway in FOCUS on Fashion with her sisters. Angela looks forward to FOCUS support groups, workshops, and activities just for moms. FOCUS volunteers shower Sarah with treats whenever she is hospitalized. The entire family looks forward to family activities and camps, especially the sweet parties for families with children who are medically fragile like Sarah.

Every morning, when Angela goes into Sarah’s room to wake her up, she says that Sarah smiles before she even opens her eyes. She smiles through medical procedures, and she laughs at jokes that aren’t funny. She wants to do what her sisters do, insisting that “I go!”

When you give to FOCUS, you help Sarah smile.