**Life at Collins Home 10/02/15 By: Alena Pelfrey**

*There is no quick fix…*

It’s hard to succinctly describe the positive effect Collins Children’s Home has on the lives of kids who have been abandoned, abused and neglected. Whether we have a child for 6 months

or 10 years, we know that each moment with that child is precious. We must use every opportunity to teach hurting children they can have successful futures regardless of their past circumstances or family situations. What we do today for our children makes a difference for generations to come.

A friend once said to me, “But Collins Home only has 16 to 17 children at a time…there are other organizations that can help more people…” Rather than being offended, I welcomed the opportunity to educate my friend. Working with abused and neglected children can never be about numbers or the time involved in healing broken hearts.

People are always looking for a quick fix to the serious problem of abused children. We know there is no quick fix. How can we spend a lifetime raising our own children and expect children who have been abused and neglected to spend a few months or even years in care and somehow function normally?

There are hundreds of children throughout our state that need the stability of safe and loving home with caring parents to nurture and guide them.  Many of these children have never known what it is like to have healthy meals every day, or a warm bed to sleep in, or clean clothes that fit, or have never had someone to help them with their homework, cheer for them at an event, or encourage them to keep trying when learning to tie their shoes, read a book or fill out a job application.  These children have been abused, neglected, and abandoned by those they loved and trusted the most.

Herbert Ward said, “Child abuse casts a shadow the length of a lifetime.” We know this to be true, but we also know that ***every child*** deserves a chance at a happy childhood. Nobody longs for a safe and loving family more than a child in foster care. Our prayer is to provide this and more for our children.