

Smart Love® Newsletter



Understanding Our Impact

In the year that ended June 30, Smart Love's counseling program served a record number of clients, working on 1,035 cases—far outpacing any year in our history. But the figures really don't capture the impact that Smart Love has on those we serve.

The essence of Smart Love's counseling is the astute, high quality care and support provided by our team of highly trained clinicians, which has now grown to 28. Focused on every client we serve, our clinical team also continuously learns from new research, develops new programs, and more – all of which help deepen and strengthen our counseling program.

Often referred to Smart Love by their pediatricians or other trusted professionals, parents come to us seeking help for their children struggling with a wide range of needs. Our therapists work with children as young as two through adolescence and young adults on issues ranging from anxiety and depression to ADHD, coping with family transitions and loss, and much more. Among the examples of more recently emerging concerns is the widespread addiction to electronic devices and the destructive combination of isolation and peer pressures that social media can exert on young people.

A few examples illustrate just how Smart Love is there to support and care for young people in need.

A 12-year-old was brought to Smart Love by her mother, alarmed by the abrupt personality and behavioral changes her daughter began to present after her parents divorced. The mother knew it had to be a reaction to the divorce, but had no idea of how to effectively help her child. A Smart Love therapist began working with the young girl, providing a safe, responsive, and confidential place for the girl to express and reflect her intense feelings of betrayal, loss, guilt, and fear brought on through the divorce. Encouraged to better understand her emotions, now eight months later, her home life and happiness are improving markedly.

With his grades tanking, his disruptive classroom attitude, and his increasingly erratic behavior, a fourth-grader came to Smart Love labeled as 'just' having ADD. Working with his therapist and also utilizing our expertise in psychological testing, it was quickly apparent that more was affecting him than just that broad label. He and his therapist are working together as he grapples with the sense of failure, lack of hope, and even suicidal thoughts that have been undermining him for over two years. His parents are

encouraged, but more importantly, he is feeling positive about his future.

A high-school junior undergoing profound changes with her gender identity needed someone who could hear and help her process her emotions, as she grapples with the changes in herself as well as the anxieties and fears of her supportive but completely stunned parents. The family knows they are there for one another—and are working together to move forward.

We are able to help clients cope with challenges like these thanks to the strengths of the Smart Love approach and our high standards for service delivery and client care. Creating a space for clients of all ages to feel safe, process their feelings, and be aware of and engaged in their own self-care, we help them build the foundations for happier, healthier lives, now and over the long-term.

COMMUNITY UPDATE

Celebrating the Harvest

Smart Love was delighted to welcome 45 of our friends and families for a wonderful Garden Harvest Celebration on Saturday, September 21st.

Surrounded by dozens of photos of our preschoolers engaged in the care and cultivation of our gardens, guests enjoyed delicious hors d'oeuvres created by FIG Catering, incorporating produce planted and raised by the children. Vegetables like arugula and tomatoes, herbs like basil and mint, and even edible flowers like calendula and borage, all from our garden, were used by FIG's chefs to create the evening's treats.

The Celebration also featured staff-led tours of the Edibles Garden and the Butterfly/Pollinator Garden, explaining all that goes into them and how our Preschoolers interact with them. From growing vegetables to raising and releasing butterflies, our Garden and Nature curriculum engages children in understanding and getting involved in important issues such as nutrition, lifecycles of plants and animals, and environmental stewardship.

Our guests were amazingly generous in expressing their support of the Garden and Nature Curriculum through contributions to our Wish Wall of garden-related items, raising over \$3,000 for tools, supplies, and more. Another highlight of the evening was the fantastic raffle prize won by longtime Smart Love supporter, Jean Lennox: a fantastic dinner for six with champagne and caviar tasting at the acclaimed Heritage Restaurant & Caviar Bar.

Many thanks to Jen Fisher, chair of the Garden Harvest, and all those who helped make it such a great success!



Building Bridges in Oak Park

Over the past couple of years, Smart Love has been developing new relationships with community organizations throughout our service area— just as we grow and sustain existing partnerships. One of the most significant communities for these relationships is Oak Park.

These take place in the context of both formal and informal collaborations. Among the formal partnership structures, the most far-reaching Behavioral Health Consortium along with other mental and behavioral health providers, led by the Community Mental Health Board of Oak Park Township. Through the Consortium, Smart Love contributes to its activities, builds awareness of our programs and learns of new programs and research affecting Oak Park residents (which often include residents of nearby communities as well). Smart Love clinical staff attend and provide presentations and continuing education sessions for area professionals sponsored by the Consortium. The CMHB is the sponsor of a new but increasingly important

closed-loop client referral service called The Hub to connect providers and make swift referrals, as well as enable Oak Park residents to get in contact with programs of interest to them.

Among the numerous less-formal but no less important collaborative initiatives in which Smart Love is involved is our work with Oak Park school in Districts 97 and 200. In recent months, Smart Love staff have attended resource fairs and outreach events for middle school parents, worked with families referred to us by our long-time partner Strive for Success, and met with school staff about potential services for LGBTQIA students.

Engaging with the community is a vital part of Smart Love's role in providing the best, most informed and impact-driven programs for all we serve. We are grateful for the leadership of the CMHB and our collaborators in Oak Park for helping make all that we do possible.

LEADERSHIP UPDATE

At its Annual Meeting in June, Smart Love's Board of Directors elected **Jean Murphy** as Vice Chair.

Jean's new role is overseeing Smart Love's external relations which covers marketing (print, media, digital), community outreach, events and resource development, and program planning. Jean joined our board of directors in September 2018 and has provided valuable insight into this important area. Jean and her husband, Chuck have two children both of whom have attended programs at the Natalie G. Heineman Smart Love Preschool.

We are also excited to announce that we have elected two new members to our Board of Directors:

Cecelia Pikul, a long-time supporter and preschool alum parent, who has a background in broadcast media and experience in event planning. She and her husband Tom Gallagher first came to know Smart Love when they attended our parent and toddler programs at the birth of their first child.

Gloria Cox has dual careers in business strategy and client service for Nielsen as well as Associate Pastor at Oak Park's Pilgrim Congregational UCC. She and her husband Bruce Cox are Oak Park residents where they raised their three children who are all now young adults.

We have also appointed **Jeremy Guenther** as the chair of Smart Love's Associate Board. Jeremy is a preschool alum parent and has been involved in the Associate Board since its inception in 2015. He is a senior manager in the tax department at Exelon. Jeremy is excited to roll out new plans for the Associate Board and is looking forward to recruiting community-minded members who wish to raise both awareness and funds for Smart Love's vital programs helping children who have experienced trauma or loss.



Jean Murphy



Cecelia Pikul



Gloria Cox



Jeremy Guenther

Staff Spotlight

We are pleased to welcome several new staff members and trainees to our preschool program and counseling services!

Ms. Laura Bentley, LCPC, is a therapist in our counseling program. She graduated from The Chicago School of Professional Psychology with a M.A. in Counseling Psychology. She is experienced working with children, adolescents, and families involved with the juvenile justice system and has provided individual therapy, family therapy, parent guidance, and group therapy in other outpatient settings.

Mr. Daniel Kanofsky, LCSW, is a therapist in our counseling program. He received his MSW from Loyola University Chicago School of Social Work and is an experienced psychotherapist who has worked in outpatient mental health centers, primarily with adults and families. He is also a member of the Academy of Certified Social Workers and a Registered Dual Disorder Professional.

Ms. Amanda McGee is the new toddler teacher for our Playschool and Toddler Explorations programs. Amanda received her BS in Sociology from Linfield College in McMinnville, Oregon. She has worked for organizations like Make-A-Wish, the American Cancer Society, and the Child Life Services team for UCSF Benioff Children's Hospital San Francisco.

Mr. Joshua Ollswang, M.A., is the Walter D. Miller Social Work Intern at Smart Love, and is presently a graduate student at the University of Chicago, School of Social Service Administration. He has over ten

years' experience working with children and adults in various settings, including treating adults with substance addictions, childhood trauma, and depression and anxiety.

Ms. Alison Pildner is a Therapeutic Tutor in our Learning Services department. She received a Bachelor's degree in Comparative Human Development from the University of Chicago and has completed all of the academic requirements to become a Child Life Specialist. Alison has experience working with children in a variety of settings, including in the classroom, hospital, home, and community.

Dr. Gabrielle Rodriguez Franco is the William J. Pieper M.D. Post-Doctoral Fellow at Smart Love Family Services. She is a multilingual therapist offering therapy in Spanish, English, and Portuguese. She received her Psy.D at The Chicago School of Professional Psychology with a focus on child and adolescent psychology. For the past four years she has worked with the Latinx immigrant community providing family and psychodiagnostic testing in Spanish.

Ms. Madeline Sullenberger, M.A., is a counseling intern from the Chicago School of Professional Psychology concentrating in child and adolescent treatment. She brings 25 years of experience working with children and families in mental health, special education, and social services. Some of her specific experience includes residential treatment, therapeutic foster care, and working with teen parents.



Laura Bentley



Daniel Kanofsky



Amanda McGee



Joshua Ollswang



Alison Pildner



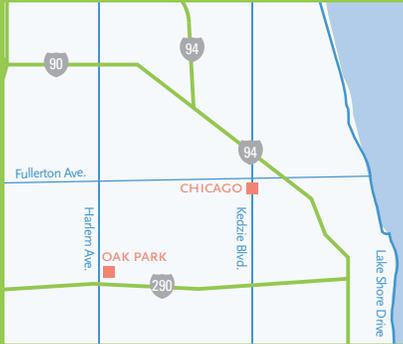
Gabrielle Rodriguez Franco



Madeline Sullenberger



courtesy of Steve Ewert



OUR LOCATIONS

Chicago • Oak Park



TO LEARN MORE VISIT

www.smartlovetfamily.org

www.smartlovetpreschool.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
- Publications and Resources for Parents

SMART LOVE[®] FAMILY SERVICES

Natalie & Ben Heineman Smart Love Center

SAVE THIS DATE
Friday, March 13, 2020
Mid-America Club

LITTLE FEET
Big Fun
ANNUAL BENEFIT GALA

Let the beauty of the Chicago skyline surround you atop the Aon building! The breathtaking panoramic views of the city will set the stage for Smart Love's signature fundraising event that allows us to serve Chicagoland children and families in need. Our Gala chairs, Emily and Bob Carroll, are planning a beautiful and exciting event to raise our glasses while raising funds for the children and families of Chicago!

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. © 2019 Smart Love Family Services is an Illinois-based 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization.

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