



Mommy Rocks

May 2004

Mommy Rocks is a project of the
Colorado Nonprofit Development Center

ANNUAL NEWSLETTER

Mommy Rocks
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Lakewood CO 80226
www.mommyrocks.org

Dear Friends,

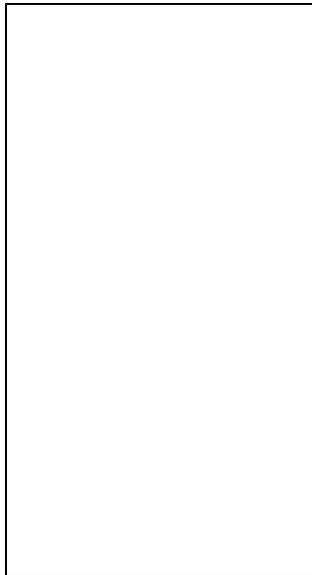
Standing in front of a group of people I can tell them about delivering rocking chairs to our moms and how it might play a role in the future of raising their child, but what I actually see is what is happening on that day. Some days are good and some could be better.

I can talk about the moms from other countries who were abandoned by their husbands or boyfriends, leaving them pregnant and with their other children, or perhaps even their first child. Or, maybe how a dad and mom greet us at the front door with offers of a soda and we see the excitement on their faces. They may take us, right away, to see their beautiful new baby that was born

prematurely, placing their child in our arms, wanting us to share in the joy of their beautiful baby.

It is hard to tell just one story. Mommy Rocks really is a network of those in need and how they find their way to us. The great nurses and dieticians who spend hours guiding the moms through the pre-natal and post-delivery stages of care, they are the ones that call to let us know we have made a difference.

Some of our moms are young-very young- and living with parents or grandparents that are helping them with their new role of parenting. Others struggle to balance work and parenthood, barely able to make ends meet. They are all grateful!



Some days it doesn't seem like putting a rocking chair into the home of a mom is a big deal. We step through the door, not knowing what to expect, and the moms not knowing what to expect. Sometimes, it turns out it is a BIG DEAL!

The look on a mom's face, the sometimes-timid words of thanks are all we need. Although the moms know we are bringing them a rocking chair they usually don't know that we are bringing a tote bag of gifts, too. Recently I visited a mom who was surprised as she started taking out the items from the tote bag, first a book, a flashlight, a blanket, and then a layette set. She kept looking up at me as if she couldn't believe she was getting all these things. The simple things that we might take for granted were to her more special in that they were chosen for her and her baby.

Someone recently pointed out to me that we have given out almost one rocking chair a week for 2 years.

And by the end of May 2004 we will have delivered at least 124 rocking chairs in our community!

By delivering a rocking chair we deliver more than just a place to sit - we are making a difference. That is the legacy of Mommy Rocks.

***Deb (Oletski) Sanders
President and Founder***



How Can You Help?

Once in a while we look for other items that a family may need like a dresser for the baby or when we are looking for baskets for our Silent Auction and it would be great to be able to make a few calls and get what we needed. In reality it takes contacting a lot of people to get a few things done or find what we need.

We are looking for anyone who wants to be on our volunteer e-mail list! This will get you occasional updates and it will give us an opportunity to put out a call for help when needed. You will always be given the option to have your name removed from our list. If you want your e-mail address added to our list

please e-mail us at information@mommyrocks.org and let us know. I will post volunteer opportunities as well. In the SUBJECT line please type in **Mommy Rocks** when you e-mail us, that way we know it isn't junk mail!

As always your financial support is needed. I can not stress how much a \$25.00 donation alone can make such a difference. That is 1/2 the price of a rocking chair, 10 flashlights and batteries or 5 children's books! We really do spend your donations wisely and any amount will make difference. Donations should be sent to our PO Box and checks can be made out to CNDC FBO Mommy Rocks.

Please consider supporting us through a financial donation!



Leaving the Nest

These past two years MR has been a project of The Colorado Nonprofit Development Center. They have taken care of financial banking; official thank-you letters and most importantly have provided the 501 (c) 3 status that makes us a nonprofit.

Under the umbrella of CNDC we have had an Advisory Board that has helped with events and some decision-making. We are currently in the process of 'leaving the nest' to become our own 501 (c) 3. Along with this process we are looking for business people in the community who might be interested in being on our Board of Directors. This will be a group that will meet at least 4 times a year to help make decisions and help direct the future of Mommy Rocks.

Anyone interested may submit a letter of interest to Mommy Rocks PO BOX 261033 Lakewood CO 80226 or may call Deb at 303 601-8421 for more information.

Volunteer Highlights

One really active group of volunteers are the **RSVP Woodchucks** from the Jefferson County Senior Resource Center. This is a great group of retired men who meet in their Wheat Ridge shop to build wooden toys and furniture for children and adults.

They are a vital part of the community and a blessing to Mommy Rocks. The Woodchucks have repaired many of our donated rockers that needed additional work before we give them to our moms!

Gerri Schiel has sewn over 50 layette sets that include a blanket, nightgown, bib, and burp pad. She often includes another outfit or socks to round out the gift. She makes girl and boy sets which the moms' just love. Gerri makes it a great gift by wrapping her packages and tying them with blue and pink ribbons. She also helps deliver rocking chairs and is available whenever we need a helping hand! Gerri is 'retired' but I'm not sure from what as she is on the go and giving of herself 24-7!

Since many of our moms are Spanish-speaking it is wonderful to have **Linda Henry** with me when I deliver a chair. Linda has been translating for us for over 6 months. She sets up appointments with the moms and accompanies me on deliveries. Linda has made an effort to follow up with some of the moms, which those moms have really appreciated. We are always on the lookout for materials in Spanish since each Spanish-speaking mom receives a book in Spanish to read to their child! Linda is a Realtor but will adjust her busy schedule to make sure rocking chairs are delivered. Linda is another one of our Mommy Rocks angels!



Moms and Babies

Many people wonder where we find the moms and babies that receive our chairs. We work with different agencies that will follow the mother through her pregnancy and often through the first year of motherhood! These agencies are the experts in their field and have many resources available to help new parents. Two county agencies that have been active with Mommy Rocks are Jefferson County and Tri-County Health Departments.

In Jefferson County we receive referrals from the community health nurses with the Partners for Healthy Families program. They visit with first-time mothers who meet their financial guidelines during the prenatal and early childhood months. We are happy to be able to

supplement some of the service they give to moms with other resources in the community.

Tri County Health Department serves Adams, Arapahoe and Douglas Counties. Mommy Rocks receives referrals from the staff in the WIC

Program, (a special supplemental nutrition program for Women, Infants, and Children). This program helps safeguard the health of low-income women, infants, & children up to age 5 who are at nutritional risk by providing nutritious foods to supplement diets, information on healthy eating, and referrals to health care.

Mommy Rocks delivers rocking chairs only through referrals from agencies and organizations in the Denver metro area and surrounding counties.



Where Do We Get The Rocking Chairs?

Mommy Rocks looks for donors from all parts of the community. Kudos go out to all our supporters from the Parker Area to Westminster! We have traveled near and far to pick up your gift of chairs. Although we do look for gently used wood chairs we have been given some gliders and other types of rockers that have worked very nicely for our moms and babies.

Special thanks to Buzz in the Burbs and the North Denver Tribune for carrying our request for donations! Buzz in the Burbs readers are the greatest as we have been given more chairs by their readers than any other publication!

And in April a wonderful article was in the North Denver Tribune about Mommy Rocks!

We have had several local Girl Scout Troops clean and paint rockers that they have donated! They have also donated diapers, blankets, flashlights and books! They have been wonderful in choosing Mommy Rocks as their community service project. One troop actually had a baby shower for a mom who would have never had one had it not been for this troop and their parents!

When we do not have enough donated rocking chairs we purchase unpainted chairs and prepare them. Occasionally we are lucky enough to buy new rockers when we can find them at a reasonable price!

Our chairs are as different as our moms and babies and just as special!



Celebrating our 2nd Year

Last year we celebrated our 1st Birthday at The Crazy Merchant in Littleton with presents and refreshments. This year we are celebrating in a little different way. Mommy Rocks has been chosen by Peace Jam as one of their service projects for their May 8th event at Red Rocks Community College. Peace

Jam gathers local youth and explores ways that they can promote peace in their schools and community. Each year a Nobel Laureate addresses the youth. This year Sir Joseph Rotblatt will speak to the anticipated 400 in attendance.

Mommy Rocks and its supporters will provide 14 rocking chairs to be sanded and painted by youth, and chairs will be given to 14 young mothers at McLain Community High School in Lakewood. The students will also help with preparing this newsletter for mailing and preparing other gifts for the mothers and babies. What a great way for us to celebrate our 2nd Birthday...And there will be cake!

Mommy Rocks Needs A Distribution Center!

Mommy Rocks is looking for space to store our rocking chairs and supplies. A place that is large enough to have

room for our artists to come and decorate the chairs. A place that moms can come and choose their own chair and pick out their own blanket and book to read to their child.

We are currently in 1000 square feet of space (in Deb and Craig's Basement!) and would like to have at least that amount of room to work in.



The ideal space would be along the Alameda or 6th Ave corridor or within about 5 miles of Sheridan and Alameda, our current location.

We are looking for a church, organization, or company to donate space for a minimum of one year. We are open to any suggestions at this time.