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## Empty Stocking Fund: Nonprofit helps family get disabled girl into Head Start

By Ellie Cole Special to The Gazette - • Published: December 10, 2014 •  0

This is one of a series of stories about the nonprofit agencies that receive money from The Gazette/El Pomar Foundation Empty Stocking Fund campaign that runs through the holidays.

Kyla Peoples and her husband never would have known about the Community Partnership for Child Development if it hadn't been for their pediatrician. The family has lived in Colorado Springs for only about a year.

The partnership provides an early childhood education for more than 2,000 children who may be challenged by life circumstances or poverty. It collaborates with the community to support children and their families through different programs.

According to Noreen Landis-Tyson, CEO of the partnership, the agency works to serve Colorado Springs' more vulnerable children and their families.

"Not only are we working with children, but we spend an equal amount of time talking to families," Landis-Tyson said.

This fall, Peoples' daughter, who has Turner syndrome, started at Soaring Eagles Head Start, and the program has supported her growth in many ways. Peoples learned about the syndrome, a genetic condition in females that stunts development, during an ultrasound when she was pregnant. Her doctors didn't think her daughter would make it to 24 weeks, but now she is 3 years old.

Peoples said it is hard to know what disabilities may arise for her.

"We're always on this wild roller coaster," Peoples said.

During orientation at school, Peoples' daughter was offered a dance class, and she was one of the 15 children selected to participate in this bimonthly dance class at CPCD led by teenage volunteers.

"She is our little miracle child," Peoples said. "We have to always be on our toes. We have to be advocates for her."

CPCD has supported the family since it walked through the doors, and Peoples is blown away that the services are free.

"I think that programs like this are really good for Madeline because of the socialization," Peoples said. "She is doing really well in the Head Start program. She has a really big personality."

Peoples said her daughter's teachers have said they haven't seen any significant delays.

"I was really blown away at how great of a program it is for someone the age Madeline is," Peoples said. "It's amazing that she has the head start."

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