

Donations

With so many children in our programs, we can always use your help!

Please click [here](#) to donate or send a check payable to Play for Life International to:

2635 W. Cortez, Suite 1
Chicago, IL 60622

Volunteer Coaches

We'd love to have more volunteer coaches come out to help with clinics, games, and outings.

If you'd like to volunteer with us, please email us at volunteer@playforlife.org.

Thank you for your continued support!

Hi everyone,

It's been a busy summer with a lot of great opportunities for our children. The baseball season wrapped up at the end of July and our 10 and under team finished an impressive season. Playing in a league with 11 and 12 year-olds, they made the playoffs and reached the semi-finals. It was great to see their growth as a team, as individual players and as young men, over the course of the season. Our 13-14 year-old team played in two very competitive leagues and showed that they could compete with any team in the greater Chicago area. Several of our older kids were even recruited by local high schools to play baseball for them and we look forward to cheering them on next year at that level. We need to say thank you once again to Xcel Supply for sponsoring our 10U team, which allowed us to get uniforms, cleats, and equipment for our team.



The kids had a great time when we visited Soldier Field in August to watch the Chicago Bears practice. We literally had a front row seat for all the action, and the kids even got to talk to Charles Tillman and Tommie Harris! Before practice started explored outside the stadium, where the kids played games, participated in contests, and won fun prizes. It was extremely hot that day, but the boys were having so much fun they didn't even notice.

Finally, the Gary RailCats, a minor league baseball team, hosted our children for a picnic and a game. Wayne Hummer Investment sponsored the bus that brought our children and volunteers to and from the game. The day was fantastic - the children were all given gloves when they arrived at the park, enjoyed a nice picnic, and then watched the game. Read more about the outing in the Program Spotlight.

Everything we do is made possible because of generous donations for people like you!

THANK YOU FOR ALL OF YOUR SUPPORT!

Program Spotlight - Gary RailCats Outing

by Stacy Beattie, board member



After so much work behind the scene as a director on the board for Play for Life, I was anxious for an opportunity to spend some time with the kids. Wayne Hummer Investments graciously offered to sponsor our kids to attend the Gary South Shore RailCats game complete with transportation and dinner! It just took one afternoon chaperoning kids to the game to validate my efforts in working for such an extraordinary organization that benefits an amazing group of children.

For those of you who haven't been to West Englewood where PFLI conducts the majority of our programs, it's definitely a culture shock from downtown Chicago. Just nine miles south of downtown Chicago, West Englewood has been named as one of the most dangerous and impoverished neighborhoods not only in Chicago but also in the U.S. The poverty that these kids face is evident everywhere you look. Gang violence and crimes are commonplace in this neighborhood - something the kids in our program unfortunately are witness to at such a young age.

The park district was hectic with activity when we arrived with kids of all ages running around the park playing catch, football, and running in the sprinklers.

I sat with Reshawn on the way to the game. Reshawn is a fourth grader and plays football on our 10 and under team. We talked about our families, how he wants to be a detective when he grows up, and how this trip to Gary, Indiana, was going to be the first time he has been outside of Chicago. I thought about how different my childhood was from Reshawn's as he stared out the window wide-eyed clutching his hand-me-down baseball glove that was literally falling apart at the seams and was glad that PFLI was giving Reshawn this new experience. For Reshawn, Play for Life programs mean more than just a safe place to play baseball and football. They also give him stability, hope, and confidence that there is more to life than the struggles that he faces on his block.

We arrived at the game and headed in through the VIP gate (this was a huge hit for the kids)! A nice picnic was provided for us and then the kids headed straight for the fence next to the field to get a close look at the players. We were able to sit in the first and second rows just behind third base to cheer on as the RailCats beat the Winnipeg Goldeyes 14-4. Several of the kids were tossed foul balls, and a few even received autographs from the players. The smiles on their faces would make you think they were attending game seven of the World Series!

This day was a very rare opportunity for the kids to get out of their neighborhood and experience a minor league game. Spending the afternoon with the kids reinforced for me why Play for Life needs to be involved in the lives of these children. Our successes extend much further than just the baseball field - our coaches and volunteers make real connections with these kids on and off the field. I would challenge anyone who has a passion for making a difference in the lives of children to come see our programs and meet our kids and you will understand how Play for Life is truly changing the game.

Special Events

Chicago Marathon

It takes approximately 41,280 steps to run a mile, and Team PFLI is just about a month away from running the Chicago Marathon. Our team of runners have worked hard to help us further our mission to engage and empower at risk children through the power of sports! **Join them in their journey for 26.2 miles by sponsoring their run by clicking [here](#).**

CORENet 5K

Want to run a little more? Join us for the Chicago Real Estate Fun Run on Thursday, October 29. The emerging leaders of BOMA, CoreNet, IFMA, and YOBA have chosen Play for Life International to be the beneficiary of this inaugural run. Registration is \$50, and runners will meet at Duffy's at 420 W. Diversey. Please contact us at info@playforlife.org for more information!



Thank yous

A special thank you to Momentum, an incredible marketing agency, who selected Play for Life International as their charity. The philanthropy team, lead by Josh Schachner, held a fundraiser at Slugger's in Wrigleyville, which brought in funds critical to keeping our organization going.

We would also like to thank Courtney Thompson, Evy Lui, Rick Pierzynski, Carolyn Eck, and Matthew McCabe, the incredible creative team who designed the Play for Life brochure for us pro bono.

Volunteer Opportunities

More chances to come out and play!

Baseball coaches/umpires - We are always in need of more coaches (preferably with some baseball or softball experience) and are looking for volunteer umpires for the spring/summer of 2009.

One-day and after-school programs - We always need more coaches to help us facilitate our one-day and after-school programs and other unique activities (no experience necessary, just the desire to help).

Fundraising Committee - We are building a fundraising committee to oversee special events as well as our annual fundraiser.

To volunteer for any of the activities listed above, please contact us at volunteer@playforlife.org.

Shop & Support!

If you shop on line, there are two ways to support Play for Life International while you buy stuff you were already going to buy.




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visit our website at: www.playforlife.org

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