

# “I Know My Children Are in Good Hands”

**Agency:** Volunteers of America, Dakotas

**Program:** Childcare and Family Literacy

**Service:** Quality childcare that encourages the growth and development of children. Services are available on a sliding fee scale and center opens at 5:30am for parents working early hours.

**Need:** 74% of children in SD under the age of six live with a single parent or both parents who are in the workforce. Families with young children are the most likely to struggle economically and are least likely to afford childcare.

**Impact:** High quality affordable childcare makes it possible for parents to work and support their families, while ensuring that children enter school ready to learn.

A woman holds her ten-month-old daughter on her hip and grasps the hand of her three year-old son as she opens the door to the Volunteers of America Childcare and Family Literacy Program Center. The little girl is quietly babbling to her mother, while her brother pulls insistently on his mother’s old jacket.

“The Children’s Inn told me about you,” said the mother. “I need a place for my children to stay for a few hours.”

The children were taken into a separate room to play while their mother quietly explained that she was in kidney failure and had no place to take her children while she received dialysis.

“How much does the care cost,” she asked. “I’m all alone. I don’t have any family nearby and the dialysis makes it difficult to take care of my kids and work.”

Karen, the mother, was elated to find out that because of support from Sioux Empire United Way she could use VOA’s crisis care to provide the quality care her children needed while she was receiving dialysis.

Thanks to funding from Sioux Empire United Way, parents are able to continue working and supporting their family because of the high quality affordable childcare offered by the VOA Childcare and Family Literacy Program.

Crisis care or child care – parents like Karen know their children are receiving quality care, “I know my children are in good hands while I’m getting the treatment I need to stay healthy and be a good mom.”

\*Two years later, after receiving a kidney transplant, Karen has recovered and is providing a quality life for her children.