



Growing Times July 2020

Promoting the maximum development of the whole child and adult through innovative, individualized and comprehensive brain-centered programs and services.

More Than A Daycare by Vicky Stein

They have been through more in their brief lives than most of us experience in a lifetime. Travonte, age 4, Tramonte, age 3, and Tranayjah, age 2, are the children of single father Terrance.

He is devoted to his nine children, seven of whom live with him. "My goal is install goodness in them and make sure they become something of themselves. I try to do my best to give them a good foundation." An Eagle Scout and basketball coach and mentor, Terrance knows what a good foundation requires. Forced to stop working full time after an accident, he uses the knowledge gained as a graduate of the Minnesota School of Business to work in real estate, property management, and the gig economy, while being a full-time parent.



From left: Tramonte, Tranayjah, Travonte; Back: Terrance

Terrance had known Savalas (children's mother) for more than 20 years when they finally came together. He knew she had a history of heart disease and had a pacemaker, and that she was already mother to eight children herself. But she wanted more, and so Travonte and Tramonte were born. Both Terrance and her doctors warned her against getting pregnant again, but she wanted a girl. Six weeks after giving birth to Tranayjah, she passed away.

Terrance and Savalas had shared responsibility for the kids. After she died, the children were embroiled in a custody battle between Terrance and Savalas' older children, who took them away from him until a judge gave them back to Terrance. The impact on the children was devastating. "First, you lose your mother and you don't know how, and then, at the same time, Dad, who is always there, suddenly he's not there anymore." Travonte, called Taytay by his father, felt her absence the most. "Her presence is very missed by him, he's the one I'm dealing with the most," says Terrance.

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"He has a lot of temper tantrums, shut downs, blank outs, he has these moments where he'll cry and say, 'I want my mom.'"

Once the children were back in his custody, Terrance needed to find daytime child care for them, so he could continue to support his family. "I researched a few child-care places and everybody kept saying 'we can take the younger one but not the older ones' or 'I've got room for the boys but not the girl!' I needed someone who could take them all." Given what they'd already been through, he felt it was important to keep them together; no more separations. "I was giving up and one morning I got a phone call from [Turnquist] saying 'we have a spot for all three kids now.' I did a little research and visited, the staff walked me through, and I was like 'You guys don't know how much of a blessing!' Ever since that day I thank God for you guys."

Speaking of his little ones, Terrance says: "They are all my angels. Travonte, he's a character of his own. He's a bright young boy, shy and bashful, he loves basketball. Tramonte is more in your face. He's my eater, you gotta keep the refrigerator full for him. He sees himself being a football player. Tranayjah, she's a character among characters, she's expressive, when it comes down to face gestures, impressions, picking things up, she's one in a million."

But the older children had challenges. Both Travonte and Tramonte had trouble with language. "You couldn't understand what they were saying, Tramonte would go about mumbling. I think they were more scared to speak out, so when they talked, you had to make everybody be quiet just to get a simple sound out of them. Travante's equilibrium was off, he was just clumsy, with bad hand-eye coordination. The guys had temper issues, they didn't like sharing, they would get really aggressive, they would shut down."

Since coming to Turnquist, things have improved for Terrance's children. Both Travante and Tramonte have benefitted from Turnquist's brain-based approach to child development, and both have also received occupational and speech therapy. Now, says Terrance, "they're outspoken, you can hear every word clearly."



Tranayjah and Travonte playing in the gym.

"Even my mom notices, she says to them 'ooh, you're talking so good!' It's a dramatic, dramatic change. Their physical movements are more coordinated. Travante, he still jitters side to side a little bit, but I think that's him being silly at times."

"The kids are smart as it is, but now they are very aware, alert, their ability to do everything is better." They are also more able to regulate their emotions. "You guys are more hands-on when it comes down to keeping it together internally. Tramonte once bit the whole class, even the teacher. Now he comes in and gives everyone the biggest hugs, even Ashley. Their behavioral issues have very much improved."

Terrance credits the staff at Turnquist with these gains. "They learned how to eat with a spoon. I didn't teach them that, they were here most of the time, because I was working. Being able to have them come to the same place every day, with the same teachers and the same other kids is giving them stability they wouldn't have had prior to that because of all the chaos. I tell everybody about you guys because I hadn't found a daycare that took the time – and I don't even call you guys a daycare, I call you a learning school, the services you provide these kids are way beyond being a daycare in my eyes."

Call Turnquist today at (612) 789-1236 or email turnquist@actg.org to inquire about enrolling your child in our program!



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2020-21 S.M.A.R.T. and S.M.A.R.T. Pre-K Workshops

We finally made it to summer! But it's not too soon to start planning for next school year, whatever it may look like. We understand the last few months have been difficult for both teachers and students, but the staff of A Chance To Grow remains committed to supporting you and your students throughout the remainder of this health crisis.

Our full calendar of S.M.A.R.T. and S.M.A.R.T. Pre-K Workshops is now available! Join our community of educators that view children from a developmental perspective and discover how you can stimulate their brains and prepare them to become life-long learners! Sign-up two weeks in advance of any workshop and receive a \$25 discount! Registration is now open online at ACTG.org/workshops.

S.M.A.R.T. Workshop

- October 27-29, 2020 - Minneapolis, MN
- February 23-25, 2021 - Minneapolis, MN

S.M.A.R.T. Pre-K Workshop

- November 3-5, 2020 - Minneapolis, MN
- March 2-4, 2021 - Minneapolis, MN



Update on ACTG's 30th Annual Race for the Children at Canterbury Park

We're sad to announce that we have had to cancel our annual Race for the Children at Canterbury Park, which was scheduled for August 16, 2020. In order to keep patrons safe during the COVID-19 pandemic, Canterbury Park has greatly reduced its racing schedule and limited the number of people who can attend. This has led to a cancellation of Sunday events, including ours. We'll miss you this year, but we will see you soon. The race will run next year, renamed the **Bob DeBoer Race for the Children**, in honor of our late founder, who loved this event and Canterbury Park.



Instagram



@achance2grow

On February 14, 2020, our founder and mentor, Bob DeBoer, passed away at the age of 73. Unfortunately, we had to postpone his memorial service due to health and safety concerns, but today, we are pleased to be able to share a video tribute honoring Bob and his legacy at A Chance To Grow. We invite you to visit [ACTG.org/tribute-to-bob-deboer.html](https://actg.org/tribute-to-bob-deboer.html) to watch the video, assembled by his family, friends and colleagues, and join with us as we celebrate his life and accomplishments. .



Bob and his daughter, Jesse - the reason why A Chance To Grow exists today.

"We will miss him - his vision, his passion for helping children, the way he fostered hope in our families and in us. Bob made this organization what it is and helped every person he could along the way. We are grateful for our time with him and we celebrate everything he gave to this world." ~ Erica Dickerson, ACTG Executive Director

Vision Clinic Update

We are excited to announce that A Chance To Grow's Vision Clinic is under new direction! Dr. Shelby May-Parmley, an optometrist focused on pediatric care and developmental optometry, will start in August 2020. She replaces the recently retired and much beloved Dr. Janyce Moroz, who served at a Chance To Grow for more than 30 years. Dr. May will continue Dr. Moroz's tradition of dedicated service to children and adults, and build on it with new vision therapy services. Due to the transition, we are not offering vision services at the moment, but the clinic will offer eye exams, prescriptions, and glasses as well as new developmental vision services. Watch for announcements!



Dr. Shelby May-Parmley, OD



Thank You to Our Partners and Supporters

We are so grateful to all the organizations that have generously supported our programs and services throughout the COVID-19 pandemic. We especially want to acknowledge the Richard M. Schulze Family Foundation, the Otto Bremer Trust, the Fred and Katherine Andersen Foundation, the Sauer Family Foundation, the J.A. Wedum Foundation, All Hands MN, Ames Construction and the Minnesota Department of Human Services. Your contributions make a direct and positive impact in the lives of children and adults, and help us continue to serve those seeking to reach their highest potential. Thank you!

Will you support A Chance To Grow's programs and services?

Visit [ACTG.org](https://actg.org), click on the "Donate" tab on the homepage and fill out the form. Your contribution makes a difference in the lives of children and adults with learning disabilities, developmental delays and brain injuries. All donations are tax-deductible. Thank you for your generosity!

Want to view our newsletter online? Visit [ACTG.org](https://actg.org) and sign-up to receive news and updates from A Chance To Grow.

Equal Employment Opportunity

A Chance To Grow provides equal employment opportunities to all employees and applicants. Employment is based upon personal capabilities and qualifications without discrimination because of race, color, ancestry, religion, sex, sexual orientation, pregnancy, age, national origin, disability, gender identity, genetic information, service in the military or any other protected characteristic as established by law. This policy of Equal Employment Opportunity applies to all policies and procedures relating to recruitment & hiring, promotion, compensation, benefits, termination, layoff, recall, transfer, training and all other terms and conditions of employment.



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