

## Fitness, fashion, food and fun!

**F-factor brings it all to the girls in the cottages.**

Moving from one foster placement to another can mean that children in State custody lack even a minimalist “wardrobe,” or one that reflects who they are inside. Sometimes, the move to another home is abrupt, with little time to gather personal items. Clothing brought to a child or teen, new or used, may not fit their body or identity. That’s why volunteers from The F-factor came to Ryther for a girls-only workshop on fashion and wellness. Ellen Young, ED of F-factor explained their goal of empowering children who have had a rough start, primarily those in foster care through fashion and self-care workshops.

The F-factor helps children in our cottages overcome feelings of self-doubt and shame, much of it resulting from “failing” in an average of nine homes prior to coming to Ryther.

The opportunity to explore likes and dislikes, such as colors, types of clothing and creating a style all their own is of huge benefit to the kids. The F-factor volunteer day included yoga and healthy smoothie tastings, plus two Sea Gals from the Seahawks were on hand to talk about various ways to exercise and get stronger. The Russell Wilson touchdown dance was a hit as the girls learned the cheer!

The F-factor brought new clothing, hygiene items, make-up, and accessories based on each of the girls’ preferences as expressed during prior interviews. The girls were active participants and got to think about how they want to look and what they want to project to the world. One girl exclaimed as she walked in wearing her new outfit, “This is really a whole new level for me!” You could sense her joy



*Ellen Young interviews a little girl about likes and dislikes*

and it was more than about having new clothing. It was about having a new sense of self that was positive. Thank you F-factor.

## Take the Ryther GIVEBIG Challenge on May 9...

**And rebuild the Lee E. Grogg Challenge Course**

GIVE BIG *for* ALL



Seattle Foundation’s GIVEBIG is a one-day online giving campaign that raises funds for local nonprofits. We’re excited to dedicate this effort to bring back one of the most effective therapies for children receiving treatment in the cottages: Experiential Therapy in the Lee E. Grogg Challenge Course on campus! Children learn to build trust, cooperate, deal with frustration, problem solve, communicate effectively, identify feelings, know what it’s like to be a leader and enjoy being outdoors. The Course recently closed due to safety hazards and will need new poles purchased and installed, as well as equipment to make it fully functional again. We are ready to build now that protruding tree roots have been removed. Look for emails and Facebook posts from us. Our goal is \$30,000 – \$40,000.



*Colin Powers helping a child find balance*

You can schedule your gift in advance online at [givebigseattle.org/ryther](http://givebigseattle.org/ryther) beginning April 26th and it will be processed on May 9. Or wait till the big day on May 9 till midnight.

## Message from Karen Brady, Executive Director/CEO:



Today, partnerships and collaborations are essential when providing services to children, youth, young adults and their families who are impacted by significant emotional, behavioral, and psychiatric challenges. At Ryther, we are fortunate that our work is enhanced and extended by a community of

dedicated and committed volunteers who touch nearly every part of the agency. Volunteers who act as Best Buddies to children in our Cottages; Volunteers who bring therapy dogs for children who need a special friend to help them build confidence and empathy; Volunteers who teach mindfulness to youth who struggle to be present in their bodies because of the trauma they've faced; Volunteers who make our grounds and buildings look better and more inviting to those who need our services; Volunteers who help families who

have trouble meeting basic needs; Volunteers that help with a host of administrative tasks; Volunteer Board members who help us build the agency; and of course, the Ryther League who have stood by and helped stand up Ryther over the decades.

We depend on all of these individuals and groups to make Ryther more than it would be otherwise. Similarly, Ryther works to extend our therapeutic reach and enhance the services of other agencies by placing therapists in social service agencies and schools in order to reach children, youth, and young adults who, because of many barriers, need to have services immediately at hand. These partnerships have increased significantly over the last few years and include places like Woodinville Treatment Center, YouthCare, Nathan Hale and Roosevelt High Schools, as well as elementary schools and other social service agencies. Collaborating and partnering amplifies and enhances the work done by individuals and single agencies which, in the end, is what those that we serve need.

## Enriching children's lives with time.

### We appreciate our volunteers!

Children in the cottages benefit so much when they have a chance to interact with safe adults from the community. They practice social skills in real-life situations and are introduced to new ideas and activities. Easter egg hunts, crafts, games and photo "booth" fun were all provided over spring break by volunteer groups. A big thanks to:



*Trilogry for Kids*



*BlackRock*



*Junior League of Seattle*

## Healing in the cottages.

### One little girl's journey:

“Samantha” was eight when she came to Ryther’s Cottage Program with an extensive trauma history from birth to six years old. She witnessed gang and family violence and also was a victim of physical abuse. Initially placed in a Ryther therapeutic foster home after being removed from her home, she disrupted from the foster home due to dysregulated emotions and assaultive behavior toward her caregivers. She also was unsuccessful in school due to her frequent outbursts.

While the average length of stay is less than a year, Samantha was at Ryther for a year and a half. When she first began treatment she would fluctuate between extreme compliance with rules and extreme dysregulated emotions and behaviors. There were frequent dissociative trauma re-enactments where she would become assaultive toward staff. Over time and with weekly therapy as well as immersion in the therapeutic milieu of the cottage, and a lot of support and structure, we saw her become more relaxed. She started



*Path from trauma to healing*

showing some “in between” emotions and behaviors, such as being irritable and defiant, or sad and crying. She used her coping skills and worked hard on her treatment, bravely addressing her past trauma. Samantha’s PTSD symptoms decreased and she no longer dissociated. We called that “staying in her brain, heart and body.” It was a proud day when she went off to go to a neighborhood school instead of Ryther’s on-campus school. She has since left for another Ryther therapeutic foster home and is thriving.

### Getting Help

- Now enrolling for Aspiring Youth summer camps for children and teens ages 8-18 with Autism Spectrum Disorders, ADHD and developmental delays. For information, contact 206.517.0241 or [info@aspiringyouth.net](mailto:info@aspiringyouth.net)

### Giving Help

- Save the date Thursday September 27, for our annual luncheon to be held at the Seattle Sheraton Hotel. Contact [events@ryther.org](mailto:events@ryther.org) or call 206.517.0286 to learn about table captain and sponsorship opportunities.

- The Ryther League is in need of a treasurer to volunteer approximately 5 hours per week. If interested please call 206.517.0215.
- Ryther volunteers needed: Stylists expert at cutting African American children’s hair, administrative office (filing) help and garden help needed in summer to keep the kids’ gardens healthy and thriving. Contact [volunteer@ryther.org](mailto:volunteer@ryther.org) or call 206.517.0286.





Ryther's Dr. Freeman with his wife Maria Freeman



Thanks to generous sponsors



Barbara Herr with Trustees David Herr & Sabrina Friend



Fenwick & West ready to welcome guests



Guests learn about Ryther

## Ryther League's Fenwick & West Workplace Unit:

### Casino Night a big winner for children in Ryther's Cottage Program!

This first-time event at the Sand Point Country Club was a great friend-raiser, bringing awareness of the work Ryther does to a whole new group of people, mostly young UW alum. There was a silent auction, real casino tables (but not real money!), great food and dancing. All net proceeds from the event will support Ryther's Cottage Program.

If you want to enrich your life by making new, oftentimes lifetime friends while supporting a worthy cause, contact us about joining an existing League unit or consider starting a new unit with friends, family, neighbors or colleagues. The League is a separate 501 C 3 that has supported Ryther's mission since 1937. Units provide touches of homes, direct service and funds. The League also operates the all-volunteer ReStyle for Ryther thrift store in Ballard. Contact the League Liaison at [robinb@ryther.org](mailto:robinb@ryther.org) or call 206.517.0215 if interested.



#### RYTHER HAS THREE LOCATIONS

Main Office: 2400 NE 95th St, Seattle, WA 98115 • Ryther East: 14715 Bel-Red Rd, Bldg G, Ste 100, Bellevue, WA 98007 • Ryther North: 315 Lincoln Ave, Ste C-1, Mukilteo, WA 98275