



WHAT'S THE Word?

AN UPDATE FROM YOUR FRIENDS AT MY SPECIAL WORD

JULY 2021

Making a Special Impact

FOR ADULTS LEADING OUR CHILDREN



At a recent Boys and Girls Clubs of Central Ohio, our founder Dwight Smith spent time connecting with 45 staff members from clubs in Columbus, Newark and Marion, sharing the importance of even adults having a special word. **Germaine McAlpine, Chief Operating Officer** for the organization felt it was critical to bring the staff together in person for the first time in almost two years due to COVID-19. “With our programs, it’s important to start with the staff for planning and personal development. The work is more impactful when we can take them through the My Special Word program, they have an opportunity to think about their special word ... their why and how they want to live it ... and that allows them to better facilitate the program with our kids.”

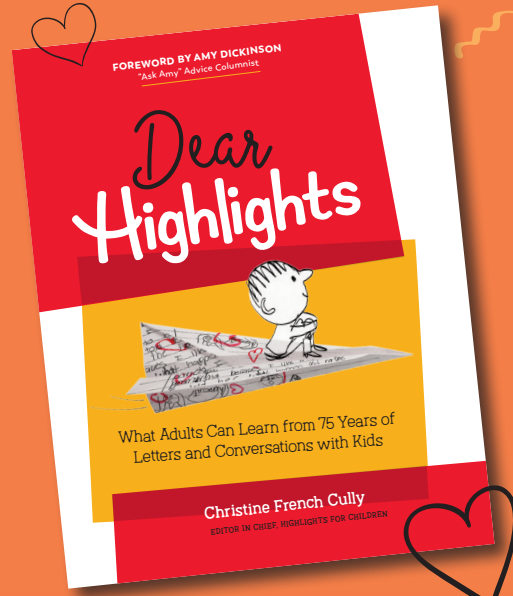
He said the fun and collaborative experience allows them to not only connect with the kids more deeply, but with one another as teammates and colleagues, especially after the challenges they’ve faced both personally and professionally through the pandemic. Germaine said he and the staff are looking forward to integrating My Special Word into their character leadership programming. “When kids are encouraged to think about who they are and what they stand for, and can express that in a word, they know their motivation. It gives them direction and focus.”

GERMAINE’S SPECIAL WORD IS *faith*

Dear Highlights Celebrates 75 Years of Conversations with Kids

Our close friends and partners at *Highlights for Children* have been helping kids become their best selves — curious, creative, caring and confident — for 75 years!

To celebrate, they published *Dear Highlights: What Adults Can Learn from 75 Years of Letters and Conversations with Kids*. Each year, tens of thousands of children write to *Highlights* magazine, sharing their hopes and dreams, worries and concerns, as if they were writing to a trusted friend. From the beginning, the editors have answered each child individually. Longtime editor in chief Christine French Cully has curated a collection of this remarkable correspondence (letters, emails, drawings, poems) in *Dear Highlights*.

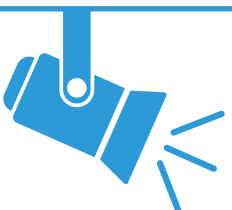


Cully’s insightful narrative is a call for adults to lean in and listen to children, to make sure our kids matter and what they think matters, and to assure them that they have the power to become people who change the world. “This is a time capsule, but also a current view of our kids, and the big takeaway is the world has changed, but the way kids grow and change isn’t different. They still have that same need for love and guidance from adults, for someone to listen with empathy, validate, encourage and connect,” said Cully.

The book is available in August, but can be preordered now at any book retailer. To learn more about their 75th anniversary, check out this [Today Show](#) story.

Congratulations to our Special Friends at Highlights, and thank you for helping children become their best selves by publishing content and creating experiences that engage, delight, and foster joyful learning.

SPECIAL FRIEND SPOTLIGHT



Many supporters go above and beyond in their efforts to advance our work. This month, meet **Mike Sayre**. His commitment to service and leadership inspires us, and we’re grateful for his support.



Mike
HIS SPECIAL WORD:
LEARNING

“I believe that MSW helping children gain their own sense of identity and value through positive experiences early in their life is truly a gift that will keep on giving throughout their lives.”

MSW DONATES 1,000 BOOKS TO NATIONWIDE CHILDREN’S REACH OUT AND READ PROGRAM



We were proud to support Nationwide Children’s Hospital Reach Out and Read — one of the largest programs of its kind in the country — with a donation of 1,000 My Special Word books. Reach Out and Read shares our belief that a child’s early years lay the foundation for all that is to come shaping their future health, happiness, growth, development and learning achievement at school, in the family and community.

Reach Out and Read partners with primary care physicians to utilize age appropriate books during well child checks from six months to five years. Providers encourage families to read together on a daily basis, and we’re proud they will be reading My Special Word books to encourage conversations that build self esteem, character, and family relationships. A QR code in the books also connects families to MSW age appropriate online learning tools and activities.

JOIN US IN CHANGING A CHILD’S WORLD TODAY
[CLICK HERE TO DONATE](#)