



# STARFISH

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## FAMILY SERVICES

**Contact:** Kelle Sisung,  
Marketing and Communications Manager  
Email: [ksisung@sfish.org](mailto:ksisung@sfish.org)  
Office: (734) 713-9221  
Cell: (313) 303-1770

### FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

#### **STARFISH FAMILY SERVICES RECEIVES \$50,000 GRANT FROM GARDEN CITY HOSPITAL HERITAGE FOUNDATION TO FUND CHILDHOOD SERVICES**

**INKSTER, MICH. (July 10, 2018)** --- Starfish Family Services (Starfish) is pleased to announce it has received a \$50,000 grant from the GCH Heritage Foundation. The grant will specifically support Starfish's early childhood programs with a multidisciplinary approach designed to address unmet developmental delays in children throughout Wayne County. In 2016, the GCH Heritage Foundation awarded Starfish a \$65,000 grant to assist in the startup of this essential community service.

Early intervention for children with mild to moderate developmental delays is vital. If ignored, even the mildest delay may progress into more extensive and serious problems. Unfortunately, many children from families with limited resources "fall through the cracks" because their issues are not severe enough for insurance companies or school systems to cover assessment and treatment costs.

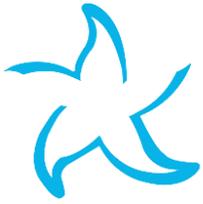
"It is our desire to support these families, and for every child to have a success story," said Ann Kalass, Starfish Chief Executive Officer. "The first five years of a child's life are critical due to rapid brain growth. If early delays are left untreated, a child is at risk for falling even further behind."

Starfish early intervention team members represent multiple disciplines, including mental health therapists, speech-language pathologists, occupational therapists, and teachers. The team works in tandem to conduct a comprehensive developmental and behavioral assessment and to develop a customized plan of action for each child. Starfish team members also work in close collaboration with parents and caregivers to provide ongoing consultations and interactive parent and child group opportunities. The goal is to ensure that the entire family has the tools to help a child to thrive.

"The initial results have demonstrated the tremendous opportunities this program provides to address some critical needs of children in our community and the Foundation was very pleased to provide this grant to help continue its worthy mission," said Gary Ley, Executive Director of the GCH Heritage Foundation. "Starfish has an outstanding track record of providing comprehensive, quality family health services that give young children a chance for a healthier start in life," continued Ley. "We are excited to support this creative program."

**About Starfish Family Services:** Founded in 1963, Starfish Family Services (Starfish) is a private, nonprofit human service agency, recognized as a champion for at-risk families in metropolitan Detroit. Serving over 2,000 children and their families daily, our mission is to strengthen families to create brighter futures for children. We provide high-quality programs and support services that focus on early childhood development, mental health wellness, and empowering parents. Through our family-centric, integrated approach, we supply access to the right resources at the right time so that our community clients transition from crisis to self-sufficiency and long-term success. For more information, contact Marketing & Communication Manager Kelle Sisung at [ksisung@sfish.org](mailto:ksisung@sfish.org). See also: [www.starfishonline.org](http://www.starfishonline.org).

**About GCH Heritage Foundation:** The GCH Heritage Foundation is a private, nonprofit foundation, committed to building healthier communities through philanthropic efforts. Our focus is on inspiring new and creative methods of



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providing healthcare and social services, with an emphasis on programs for children under 18 years of age. The Foundation was originally a subsidiary of Garden City Hospital, but became independent and repurposed itself after the hospital was sold to a for-profit entity. Proceeds from the sale created the initial capital funding for the Foundation and members of the community continue their long-standing financial support. For more information, contact Executive Director Gary Ley, [admin@gchheritage.org](mailto:admin@gchheritage.org)

**Image submitted:** Starfish Chief Executive Officer Ann Kalass (left) and GCH Heritage Foundation Executive Director Gary Ley (right)

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