

For Immediate Release

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**Oaks Integrated Care
770 Woodlane Road
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**Oaks Integrated Care Encourages Community to Support Holiday Drive
Now - December 17**

Mt. Holly, N.J. – The Oaks Integrated Care Holiday Giving Drive is officially underway and will run until Thursday, December 17. The organization is collecting new, unwrapped holiday gifts for 4,000 children, teens and adults in desperate need of support in over 150 Oaks Integrated Care programs. As the number of families in need continues to grow, the community's generosity is critical now more than ever.

Oaks Integrated Care invites the community to make this holiday season special by making a monetary contribution, providing holiday gifts or sponsoring a family. Bob Pekar, Oaks Integrated Care CEO, explains, "Unfortunately, for an older adult coping with mental illness, a child struggling with the trauma of abuse or a family experiencing extreme financial hardship, the holiday season can bring about feelings of hopelessness. By donating to our holiday drive you can make a world of difference to individuals and families in need."

Every little bit makes an impact, and the Carson family reminds us why:

The Carson family was happy. Hank, his pregnant wife Melissa and their two children, 11 year old Matt and 9 year old Lilli, lived in a nice home in a suburban neighborhood. The kids received good grades and participated in swimming and theatre after school.

One year ago things completely changed when Hank was suddenly laid off from the job he held for two decades. The family was forced to sell their belongings to make ends meet. Facing homelessness, they moved into a friend's house temporarily.

Scared and overwhelmed, Melissa began to struggle with depression. The Carsons knew they needed help. They were referred to our Family Preservation Service (FPS) which offers intensive, crisis intervention services designed to keep families intact. The program helped the family secure temporary housing, arranged prenatal care and set goals for finances and employment.

Thankfully, this summer Hank found a secure job and Melissa gave birth to a healthy baby boy named Julian. The family plans to remain with the FPS program and save money for a permanent home. The Carsons now have hope for the future as they begin to rebuild their lives.

Drop off holiday gifts or donations to Oaks Integrated Care, 770 Woodlane Road, Mt. Holly or at Oaks Integrated Care, 499 Cooper Landing Road, Cherry Hill. Visit www.oaksintcare.org to donate online or sponsor a family. Contact the Development Office at (609) 267-5928 for more information.

Oaks Integrated Care offers over 150 programs for vulnerable adults, children and families in nine counties throughout New Jersey. Programs include group homes, in-home services, case management, day treatment, foster care and adoption support, outpatient and partial care services, crisis stabilization services, food pantries and special needs supportive housing. For more information, please visit www.oaksintcare.org or call the Development Office at 609-267-5928.

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