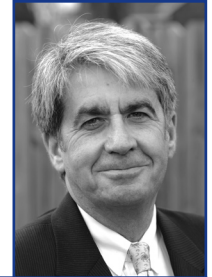


# It's For Kids



By Thomas L. Cuni

**P**roKids was founded in 1981 through the combined efforts of the Junior League of Cincinnati, the Cincinnati Bar Association, and the Hamilton County Juvenile Court. If you take a moment to read about ProKids at [www.prokidscasa.org](http://www.prokidscasa.org) you will find stories about the children in our community whose lives have been changed by this organization. The dedication and effectiveness of the staff and the volunteers of ProKids convinces me that it produces a positive result for the children of our community who need and deserve our help.

## A very small change in a complex system will produce very significant consequences.

In 2008, ProKids served 434 children through its 1,029 volunteers, its 157 Court Appointed Special Advocates who are known as "CASAs," and, its full-time staff. The amount of time needed for these children (31,776 volunteer hours last year) bespeaks the urgency of the circumstances for the children.

The reality of the world in which we live is that there are scant resources to serve the many children in need. Rather than be discouraged by that fact, I suggest that the work of organizations such as ProKids can be viewed from a perspective of how many can be helped. In the early 1960s, a mathematical theory called "Chaos Theory" became popular. Skipping the math part of the theory,

Chaos Theory is fundamentally a concept which posits that over time a very small change in a complex system will produce very significant consequences. That particular aspect of the theory is called the "Butterfly Effect." Briefly, the movement of a butterfly's wings somewhere in the world theoretically can set in motion a chain of events which ultimately leads to an event of enormous consequence. An organization such as ProKids may start a series of events which transforms the life of one young person. The positive change in one child's life may, in the future, result in positive changes in the lives

of the children of that child, and in the children of the children down through the generations. The participation of the CBA may help people whom we do not know, whom we will never know, but whose lives have been transformed by a small good deed.


The CBA has supported ProKids through the Run for Kids event each year (see page 23). I anticipate that the amount of money to be raised next year at that event will be a record, when word gets out that I was able to teach CBA Executive Director John Norwine how to properly grill the hot dogs which are served after the race. I hope that you will set aside a few hours of your time next year to attend the Run for Kids. It is a

great event, and if you are not interested in running or walking the course, the party is always a lot of fun for participants and their families.

In addition to the CBA's support, the Cincinnati Bar Foundation, through its grants, has been a supporter of ProKids.

ProKids sponsors a breakfast fundraiser each year. If you attend you will be inspired by the stories of the CASAs and the lawyers and other volunteers who give their time for the young people whom ProKids assists. You can find out more about it on its Web site.

ProKids recently moved to a new location at 2605 Burnet Avenue in Mt. Auburn. The new location was provided by the Mayerson Family Foundations in cooperation with Gene Mesh, the former owner of the property. The new facility is a *mitzvah* which will better the lives of many of the citizens of our community.

We should all be proud of our Bar Association and of our Foundation for supporting ProKids. If you are inclined to volunteer your time for a truly worthy purpose, I suggest that ProKids may be a way to use your legal training and skills to help those who need and deserve our support. As Hamilton County Juvenile Court Judge Thomas Lipps recently said about ProKids: "It's for kids, Tom. Who doesn't want to help kids?" 

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*Cuni is 2009-10 president of the Cincinnati Bar Association.*