

The Story of the Kellin Foundation

“There is nothing more powerful than idea whose time has come.”

Three years ago, my dear friend Lindy Beauregard made this statement to me in relation to the program we co-created and had been growing since 2008 called The Child Response Initiative (CRI). Lindy was diagnosed with Stage 4 cancer in September 2011. Given about six months to live, this woman-warrior defied the prognosis and fought for two years until her passing in December 2013. Her fight was a fight of strategy. A fight of grace. A fight with a purpose.

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Meet 4-year-old Sara. Served through CRI, Sara was living in a family struggling with domestic violence. Sara’s dad cut off all support to the home as a power and control technique after being served with a restraining order.

Lights. Water. Heat. All off. Mom was not working (another common power and control technique). The family was in crisis.

Lindy and I worked with local resources to get all of these basic needs restored. But, there was another basic need that we identified. A basic need that is not typically considered but essential to childhood - it is the basic need of children to feel safe and normal in an otherwise chaotic environment. To experience the simple and innocent joys of childhood. It was clear that Sara needed that desperately.

You see, separate from basic utilities, Sara’s dad also cut off her dance class membership, which was the one activity for Sara that brought pure joy and normalcy to her week. While community resources are in place to assist with basic needs such as utilities, there are limited resources to help with the basic needs of facilitating the emotional health and wellness of children through activities such as dance for Sara. Yet, these are essential for children.

In response, *Lindy's Kids* was founded to provide assistance to kids and families to help ensure safety and wellness, with the goal of allowing kids to enjoy being kids. Lindy’s Kids was a fund that was allocated specifically to support kids and families in meeting those unique needs.

Lindy’s Kids needed a home. Lindy and I talked to several local non-profits that could potentially serve as a home for the Lindy’s Kids program, but because of the crisis response nature of the kind of work that we do we could not find a good fit that could respond as quickly as we would prefer.

Lindy’s desire as she fought her battle with cancer was to create our own foundation so that *Lindy’s Kids* would always have a place to call home that would not have red tape barriers that would keep us from helping kids. I assumed we would just call it “*Lindy’s Kids*.” But, Lindy had another plan. Whoever knew Lindy is well aware that she was always very strategic.

Six months before she died, she asked me to meet her over a cup of coffee at one of our favorite hangouts. There, in the booth with an outwardly fragile woman who was inwardly the strongest woman I have ever met, Lindy proposed that instead of a nonprofit called *Lindy’s Kids*, we needed to think bigger. She proposed a nonprofit that would be called something different but that would still be the home of *Lindy’s Kids*. Over medium roast coffee and a bagel, she asked me to launch this non-profit as a testimony to our joint legacy of giving back to the next generation. A legacy of working together to make a difference in the world. Feeling overwhelming admiration for this amazing woman, I agreed. With one condition – she needed to pick the name and we needed to decide together its founding mission and vision. She agreed. We sipped our coffee and casted visions of how we could make a difference together, even beyond however many days she had left on this earth.

Two weeks later, I got a phone call from Lindy. She had decided on the name. I can still remember the excitement in her voice that pushed through the weakness she felt. She shared it with me - **The Kellin Foundation**.

At first, it didn’t register, but after about 20 seconds, I understood. **Kelly. Lindy. Forever connected.** Connected in a joint legacy of making a difference together. It was perfect.

That was 2013. Three months after that conversation, Lindy died peacefully with her husband (and equally amazing human being) by her side. Several years have passed since that time that have allowed for grieving, healing, and situational changes that have made it clear that the time has come. Time to grow. Time to live out our legacy.

The soil has been prepared. The seeds have been planted. The right people are in place. It is time to work. It is time to cultivate change. Change not only for kids and families, but for individuals. For communities.

This is the story of the Kellin Foundation. Join us as we work toward making a difference together.

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