

## Pacific Beach family dedicates business to helping Promises2Kids

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Carrie and her husband, Scott, with their oldest, Evelyn (right), and Catherine on the beach at Crystal Pier.

While she identifies first and foremost as a mother, others see Carrie Miller as a one-of-a-kind philanthropist. Seven years ago, in honor of her oldest daughter Evelyn's first birthday, Miller and her husband Scott made a donation to Promises2Kids, a nonprofit organization dedicated to serving the needs of abused children in foster care.

But this wasn't Miller's first introduction to the nonprofit. A few months after Evelyn's birth, Miller was looking for ways to get out of the house. While on the Volunteer San Diego website, she found an opportunity for reading to toddlers. Miller still gets emotional remembering her first time walking into the A. B. and Jessie Polinsky Children's Center.

"I remember being in this big room with a bunch of people and the center showed us this introduction video of Norma Hirsh talking about how there used to be a 24-hour hotline for abused animals, but there wasn't a 24-hour hotline for abused children," said Miller.

"As the video went along, I was completely gutted, especially as a new mother racing with hormones. There's absolutely no words to describe the horrific things these kids go through."

Norma Hirsh founded The Child Abuse Prevention Foundation in 1981 to raise community awareness of child abuse in San Diego. In 1994, the children from the run-down, and grossly overpopulated, Hillcrest Receiving Home were relocated to the newly established Polinsky Center, which today can house up to 200 foster kids. Fifteen years later, The Child Abuse Prevention Foundation became Promises2Kids.

"We've definitely grown and evolved," said Tonya Torosian, CEO of Promises2Kids. "We focus less on the prevention of child abuse through the Palinsky Center and really look at what we can do to support these kids once they're in care. There's something special about having local San Diegans funding local kids."

Whether they're at the center, with a foster family or in a group home, Promises2Kids looks for gaps in the foster care system and how they can best fill those voids. After watching the video and spending the remainder of her day at the center, Miller decided she needed to be a part of it all.

"I remember sitting towards the back just ugly crying and I looked around and felt surrounded by a bunch of people ugly crying with me," said Miller. "I remember thinking, 'I need to be a part of this.'"

Now, Miller and her husband are both active volunteers and sponsors for Promises2Kids. Scott is a mentor in P2K's Guardian Scholars program, which provides former foster youth with a partial financial scholarship, along with mentoring support, to assist them in excelling in higher education. But Miller herself is unique in her giving.

"When I started my real estate business, I figured the best thing I could do was to start giving money," said Miller. "For every real estate transaction that I close, I give back a 10 percent donation to Promises2Kids. It's now part of my business plan."

Torosian added: "I was really shocked. You just don't see that. People might donate personally, but to embed it into your business ... that's something amazing."

Miller's donations are made on behalf of her clients and are unrestricted, allowing Promises2Kids to direct the funds to whichever division they think needs it most.

"We do a big lottery check outside the client's house and we post it up on social media," said Miller. "It's pretty cool. I now have this platform to sit with every client and potential client I know

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and share the story of Promises2Kids."

Miller's two daughters also made a donation of \$6 last month to Promises2Kids. Miller said it was a "proud mom moment."

"I tell my girls, 'Think about the thing that breaks your heart, what makes you feel sad. That's where you should give,'" said Miller.

WANT TO HELP?

- Promises2Kids is a leading nonprofit organization that responds to the needs of foster children and provides support to children removed from their home due to abuse and neglect.

- To donate, visit [promises2kids.org](http://promises2kids.org).

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