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Childhaven's summer fundraising event, "More the Merrier" has been popular with the community for more than 20 years, but this year the nonprofit organization is changing the event to reach out not only to bikers, but to runners and walkers as well.

"More the Merrier Walk & Roll" begins at 8:30 a.m. on Saturday, June 8, at Berg Park in Farmington. It is sponsored by the Childhaven Foundation. In past years, the event was at Lions Wilderness Park and specifically focused on mountain biking, but now bikers, walkers, and runners are invited to join in on the morning trip along the river.

"Being able to have a little bit more flat of a surface will make it a lot easier for more families and folks with strollers, and even the cruiser type bikes can participate. I think by allowing walkers, it is more inclusive, and that is what the theme is all about – having a lot of people showing up and being able to support Childhaven and the work we do for abused and neglected children," said Erin Hourihan, Childhaven CEO.

The registration fee is \$30, which includes a T-shirt and breakfast burritos. Children 12 years and younger can participate free. To register, visit [active.com](http://active.com) or [childhavennm.org](http://childhavennm.org). Individuals may also register at 8 a.m. on the day of the event at the Berg Park Pavilion.

"We really need the community to turn out and support this. This is the first time as the 'Walk and Roll' and we are trying to let the community know we made these changes," said Jamie Church, Childhaven Foundation Development Director.

This year, Childhaven Foundation has set a goal to raise \$50,000. Last year, the goal was \$35,000 and the Foundation was able to raise that amount, which benefits the programs offered at Childhaven.

"The reason why we are raising the goal is there are funding decreases anticipated so we need our fundraiser to be more successful than it has been. We want to make sure we can provide these services for the children and keep our programs intact," Church said, adding that the Foundation has already raised nearly half of this year's goal.



Several Childhaven programs that benefit from "More the Merrier" are the Children's Emergency Shelter, which provides children and youth food, clothing, medical attention, educational assistance, and transportation; Court Appointed Special Advocates, or CASA, where volunteers advocate for the best interest of children in the court system; Behavioral Health Services, which offers children mental health assessments, outpatient therapy, and support services to children; and Foster Care, which offers family based treatment for children with severe emotional

disturbances.

Church said people may volunteer for the "More the Merrier" event. "We can always use volunteers at the walk, and maybe that will make them interested in what we do," she explained, adding that any volunteering at Childhaven also is appreciated.

If interested in volunteering at "More the Merrier" or at Childhaven call 505.325.5358.

Childhaven has been "Lifting Children from Crisis to Hope" and has served local abused, neglected and traumatized children and youth since 1969. Childhaven is located at 807 W. Apache St.

"Donations to Childhaven help round out our annual budget to assure we are able to continue all of our programs and services for the kids, so we really appreciate the community support," Hourihan said.

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