



Child & Family Center

“Strengthening families through counseling, education & support.”

Summer 2009

Mental Health Counseling

Children and teens suffering from depression, anger, destructive behavior, hyperactive behavior, autism or other behavioral or emotional problems receive individual, family and group therapy.

School Based Mental Health Services

Students receive therapy on elementary, middle and high school campuses.

Intensive Home Based Mental Health & Support Services

Children, teens, adults, and their families receive intensive individualized mental health and supportive services in their own home.

Crisis Intervention

Children and teens up to age 18 who express suicidal or homicidal thoughts or have recently experienced a traumatic event are given immediate help during clinic hours.

Substance Abuse Treatment & Prevention

Adolescents abusing drugs or alcohol are given services at the clinic, at home and in the schools.

Infant Toddler Services

Parents of children ages 0-5 learn how to strengthen the parent-child bond and to address traumatic experiences.

Specialized Parenting Classes

Parents of children with specific disorders or problems benefit from specially tailored classes.

Preschool / Daycare

Children from low-income families attend preschool / daycare program.

Substance Abuse Prevention Education

Students in grades 7-12 who are caught with or are at risk of using drugs or alcohol attend a five-day education program on substance use.

Mental Health Consultation & Training

Mental health professionals consult with schools, children's camps and group homes.

Job Coaching & Support

Adults transitioning from welfare support into the workforce receive mental health services to overcome barriers to employment.

Domestic Violence Support

Children and adults victimized by domestic abuse receive help and support.

Community Referral Network

Clients are provided a network of community resources to help them achieve self-sufficiency, while the general public who call-in for help are referred to appropriate services.

Focusing on the FAACTS

Darrell Paulk, President/CEO

During my ten months at Child & Family Center, we've been focusing on the **FAACTS**, an acronym representing six areas I feel are important now, and in the future, for the well being of our organization, especially during the challenging economic times ahead of us.

Facing the **F**inancial realities of the future will be crucial as we navigate “uncharted waters” in a world that is challenged by economic uncertainty. We will be forced to accept changes in our funding streams as the public sector makes adjustments in response to revisions in the State budget.

Fundraising will become more crucial as budget cuts may force the elimination or significant reduction of some Child & Family Center programs.

Accountability will become more important than ever as we are expected to “do more for less.” We must become even better managers of our financial and human resources. We need to determine whether we have the right staff in the right positions, providing the training necessary for them to do their jobs effectively, and to ensure that all departments are operating at or near 100% efficiency.

Appreciation will be a common theme. We are living in “difficult” times to say the least. We must all strive to make the “culture” at the Center a positive one for our staff, volunteers, and donors. We need to focus on the positive and take every opportunity to say “thanks” to someone involved with the agency.

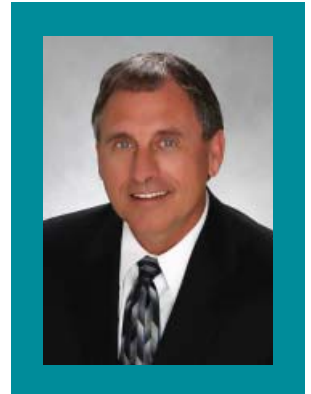
Communication is paramount to a “healthy” organization. We must strive to continually improve communication within our organization, which is especially challenging in a large, multisite complex organization like Child & Family Center.

Teamwork is vital in order to perform well in a highly competitive and resource challenged business environment. The Center and Foundation Boards of Directors, Executive Management Team, staff, volunteers and donors will all need to work more closely together.

Strategic Planning is a formal process designed to provide answers to critical questions currently facing the Center and Foundation leadership including:

- *Who are we as an agency? What do we do best and what identity/brand will position us to ensure financial sustainability in the future?*
- *How does the Center manage the likelihood of competing programs and services – provided by nonprofit as well as private sector organizations – coming to the Santa Clarita Valley?*
- *What strategies will ensure we have the organizational capacity – agency-wide and on individual teams – to operate effectively now and in the future?*
- *How do we develop the organizational infrastructure to effectively manage the complex contracts for the wide variety of programs and services we offer our community?*
- *With many of our key funders and major donors caught in the downturn in the economy, where do we get the financial resources needed to fund the Center's operations?*
- *How do we ensure that we continue to recruit and retain high performing professional staff, and provide them opportunities to do the jobs for which they are best prepared and suited?*
- *How do we engage members of the Center's and Foundation's Board of Directors to ensure their full and meaningful participation?*
- *How do we ensure the resulting strategic plan will offer flexibility to reflect emerging issues and opportunities in the environment and will be executed with fidelity?*

FAACTS will serve as a performance evaluation tool to ensure that we are adequately prepared to not only survive the future challenges, but to prosper. I want to thank our donors in advance because your continuing generosity will ensure our success. Together, we will meet the challenges of the future!



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Empowering Women

Twenty lucky ladies in the CalWORKs program received a complete makeover at the Finishing Touches Fashion Show, sponsored by Shannon Hair Salon. Ashlee Norman, stylist at the salon, coordinated the event with Center staff. First, the women received a hair-cut, style, and color. Then, makeup artists brought out their inner beauty. Finally they modeled stunning outfits courtesy of SteinMart. Friends and family in the audience witnessed the transformations. "This event helped these women feel empowered, giving them the tools they need to believe in themselves," said Sally Ibarra, Case Manager for the CalWORKs program.



Remembering a Loved One

The family of Taylor LeKamp attended a ceremony in February to honor his memory on the one-year anniversary of his death. Taylor was the grandson of Center supporters Jim & Karen Degnan, and their daughter Katie. When Taylor died suddenly in a motorcycle accident last year, the family asked that donations be made to the Center in his memory. A brick with his name was embedded alongside a beautiful white rose in the Center courtyard in his honor.

If you would like to honor a loved one, in memorial, or to recognize an achievement, birth, etc, please contact the Foundation office. In addition, engraved bricks may be purchased to be placed in the courtyard for \$150.

You're Still the One!

Dr. Alan Sandler, the Center Medical Director, received a certificate of appreciation from the staff on May 6, 2009. He has been THE ONLY MEDICAL DIRECTOR for the past 20 years.

During that time the Center has seen more than 6,000 clients, 447 staff members, 100 interns, 39 managers and directors, four vice presidents, two Presidents/CEOs, and two Foundation Presidents. Quite a testament!

Get to Know Us

The Center has been hosting quarterly "Getting to Know You" luncheons, where community members can come and learn about the many programs and services we provide. Guests enjoy a light lunch, live entertainment - courtesy of some of our preschool children (pictured at right), videos, testimonials and a brief tour of the facility. If you are interested in participating, please contact the Foundation office. The next event is scheduled for September.



INSPIRING HOPE

"I'm not afraid to deal with my past anymore."

Hope Craig

Hope had blocked out many of her childhood memories. She sensed something traumatic must have happened to her, but she couldn't remember anything, until her therapist at Child & Family Center helped her unlock her past.

Hope was basically homeless as a child, living with her parents and four siblings in their car or with friends. "Sometimes we were so hungry that our throats would literally hurt. We would eat plain flour just to fill our stomachs," she recalls.

Her mom was addicted to prescription pills and the current drug of choice – crack, marijuana, speed....it didn't matter. Alcohol made her a monster. She had a predisposition to be belligerent. Addiction ran rampant in her family. Hope's father was also an addict, abusing drugs and alcohol. The kids just tagged along.

To this day, she cannot stand the sound of certain music – especially Al Green, as it reminds her of the night she watched in horror as her uncle stabbed her aunt repeatedly in the chest with a knife. Nor can she tolerate the taste or sight of sherbet ice cream, as it brings back the memory of her uncle visiting her aunt in the hospital, offering a container of sherbet ice cream as an apology.

One night there was a fire in the apartment where they were living. For some unexplained reason, her mother came in and squirted baby oil on Hope, her sister and the walls as the flames surrounded them. That night they lost all their possessions, and Hope recalls lying on a blanket on the street waiting for someone to help.

"Trauma was so much a part of our family, it was like dysfunction for us was the norm," said Hope. She was molested and raped by family members repeatedly throughout her childhood. "We were always being touched by someone in the family. Everyone knew it, but nobody talked about it." One day her mom called Department of Children & Family Services pretending to be the babysitter. She told them that the parents had left, so they took the kids to live in a foster care home.

Hope's chaotic childhood influenced the choices she would make as an adult. Her spiral started at age 20 with the birth of a daughter. Problems at the sixth month juncture of her pregnancy contributed to her daughter's death during childbirth. "I held her in my arms when she took her last breath. There was no one there to help me or give me support. From then on, I was self destructive," said Hope.

She didn't respect herself or others. Unlike her parents, substance abuse was not an issue for Hope. She wanted to escape, but she didn't like drugs or alcohol. She made a choice to live on the edge in a different way.

She made a series of choices that were very destructive for herself and her family - choices that led her to lose the trust of long time employers and the jobs that went with that trust. The financial setbacks led to more emotional distress and despair.



It was during this time that she met a new boyfriend. They moved in together. He wanted to move closer to his job in Lancaster, so they settled in Santa Clarita. She had kept a great deal of her life hidden from him, but the emotional toll led her to finally open up to him...the one person she felt safe with...the one person she trusted.

During this time, she sought help and was referred to the Child & Family Center. "I was struggling. I didn't like the person I was becoming. I was destructive. I had led a double life. Why did I continue to do this to others? I knew something was wrong. I was depressed. I knew life wasn't supposed to be this way."

She had tried therapy before, but it had never worked. "That first day I met with Dr. Koch at the Center for three hours. He listened to me, just listened. I kept asking him shouldn't he be telling me something, but he just listened. He made me feel safe."

Then in September 2006, Hope's life began a downward spiral. She was not able to take care of herself or her children. She thought about suicide. She called Dr. Koch and he said to come in immediately. He hospitalized her. During this time, her children's father had reappeared and agreed to care of the children during her absence.

"I had created such wreckage for my family. When I came out, I had nothing." Since she had never married their father, and custody had never been established, he refused to give the kids to her. He resented her, blamed her for his misfortunes and knew the only way to seek vengeance was through her children. Their father was estranged for most of their lives. She turned to the courts to establish custody to have the children returned back to her care. After months of battling, the children's father finally called and said he was tired of the kids and she could have them. In April 2009, she was awarded full legal and physical custody.

Throughout the custody battle, she continued to receive treatment at the Center. "I don't think I would have made it to this point without the Center. They followed through with me every step of the way. I've learned so many coping skills. I know how to deal with the letdowns and the disappointments life brings," she says.

"Dr. Koch helped to get all of these horrible memories out of me. I had suppressed them so long, but he made me feel safe enough to share them," she says. She came to realize that her traumatic childhood had influenced all of her adult life. "The Center is such a nurturing environment. Everyone on the staff treats you kindly and with respect."

Today Hope, her children and fiancé continue to live in Santa Clarita. She has a full time job and her daughter recently received the President's Award from her elementary school. Her son has autism and is doing very well in school. She is getting married on August 15th to the boyfriend she reconciled with and who stuck by her these past few years. She and her family are active in their church and have found tremendous support and love from friends they consider family.

"I am who I am today because of Child & Family Center. If my story can help others to seek help, I want them to hear my story. Most importantly I want them to know about the healing process and there is hope. I thank God for His mercy and grace because in spite of it all He kept me and that is why I am able to tell my story. I love life now."

First Annual Century Ride Benefits Child & Family Center



The Santa Clarita Velo Club held their first annual Century Ride on Saturday, February 28. Several hundred riders participated, raising \$8,876.92, which the group generously donated to the Center. Pictured left is Bob DiPrimio, Foundation Board Member, and Mary Stob, who worked with the group to organize the event. The club was recognized for their efforts at a Santa Clarita City Council meeting (right).



California Pizza Kitchen Supports the Center

California Pizza Kitchen celebrated their grand opening in Bridgeport Marketplace by donating all the proceeds from pizza sales on June 1 to the Center - a total of \$8,389.04!

"Being involved in the community is a large part of the California Pizza Kitchen philosophy. We make sure we are part of the fabric of the community," said Larry Flax, co-founder and co-CEO of California Pizza Kitchen. To maintain that commitment, each new California Pizza Kitchen opening is held in conjunction with a local charity.

"We were thrilled to partner with the Child & Family Center on our opening at Bridgeport Marketplace. The work they do for the children and families in this community is amazing and we are glad to have been able to help raise funds to support their efforts," said Doug Djordjevic, Regional Director of Operations for CPK.



Jason Salmon, General Manager & Donald Bibbero, Manager, serve pizzas to guests.



Dancing with Our Stars

State Assemblyman Cameron Smyth represented the Center at the Dancing with Our Stars community event on April 18. Cameron was one of 12 volunteer dancers representing various charities, who were paired with professionals in the dancing extravaganza. Guests cast their \$25 votes for their favorite partners. Cameron and his partner, Edna Coe danced the swing and raised \$2,875 for the Center.

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Donate Your Unwanted Vehicle

Do you have an unwanted vehicle that needs a new home? The Center can accept them as charitable gifts, either directly or through Cars 4 Causes. Rob & Laura Hall (right) recently donated their Infiniti to the Center, which will be used for client transportation.





CHILD & FAMILY CENTER'S
TASTE OF THE TOWN

Two thousand people attended the Center's 21st annual Taste of the Town, Sunday, May 3 at Mann Biomedical Park. The event net \$90,000, which will help to support the Center's programs.



Lois Bauccio, C&FC Foundation President, thanks event co-chairs, Debbie & John Heys and Ginger & Mark LeVang.



Frank Di Tomaso, Elizabeth Hopp, Kim Altobello & Jim Hicken of event sponsor Bank of Santa Clarita, accept award from Darrell Paulk, CEO of the Center.



Some of the 40 restaurants participating in the event included (clockwise from left) Italia Panetteria & Deli, Bella Cucina, Wolf Creek Restaurant & Brewing Company, Jill's Cake Creations, RSVP Catering, Salt Creek Grille and Trader Joe's. (photos by Gary Choppé)



See What's Cool for Kids! At Kid Expo October 18, 2009



Mark your calendar for the 7th annual Kid Expo, Sunday, October 18 at Golden Valley High School. The FREE to attend event features over 100 exhibitors showcasing their products or services for children and families. More than 7,000 attended last year. For information on sponsorships or exhibit space, visit the website at www.kidexposcvc.com or contact the Foundation office at 661-255-6847 ext. 3059.



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