

Foster Adoptive Support Team

Maintaining foster and adoptive placements through resource management and personal assistance.

by Gloria Alvarez-Kayser, FAST Supervisor



FAST works as a team and together provide case management and crisis intervention services for ninety days to support foster and adoptive families and the children in their care, to ensure and stable homes, and to avoid disruption of placements. The FAST team helps to stabilize the child and family through an array of services such as assessing needs, developing and implementing behavior management strategies and referring to outside providers. The program originated in January of 2001 and has successfully managed to remain a strong working force within the community.

The program has three behaviorists: Stacey Kennedy who has worked with the program from the very beginning and offers therapeutic behavior management skills; Rick Kennedy, who has worked with FAST for three years and offers strong non-violent crisis intervention skills; and Jay Halpern, who also has worked with FAST for three years and offers excellent advocacy for the clients and their families.

All three behaviorists bring their individual techniques and together make a strong support team.

The beginning of the new fiscal year has brought some challenges for the FAST team due to budget deficits; however the team has done an outstanding job at managing their funds creatively as well as utilizing community resources to enhance their continued support to the children and families that they serve. Along with a new fiscal year FAST also replaced a supervisor, Gary Redman, who had run the program since its start. Gloria Alvarez-Kayser was named the new supervisor on June 13th; Gloria has been a part of the Children's Community's Program since 2001 and was an original member of the FAST team. In addition to FAST she was a TFC Clinician working closely with therapeutic foster children and families and later became the YouthNet program coordinator. FAST is located in office 13 and 14, please feel free to stop by and ask any questions you may have.

Educational Programs

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Summer programs for students were run in Stratford, Hamden, Bridgeport, and Portland. Gary Lenoce and Charlie Rosenthal were primarily responsible for the programs in Hamden, Bridgeport, and Portland while Barbara Feldman was responsible for the program in Stratford.



In addition to supervising summer programs Charlie Rosenthal moved our STARS program to a new location in Bridgeport and Gary Lenoce took over the leadership for the Portland

Clinical Day School. Darleen Gessert, Robin Kinney, Joe Torre, Cay Maynard, MaryAnn Pellegrino,

Laura Vechiola, Carol Sarmiento were among the staff who worked in the summer programs to provide the students with an exciting educational experience. We began our 2005-06 school year on August 25th with a Professional Development day. Dr. Mitch Beck from CCSU provided training on Cognitive-Behavioral Interventions with an emphasis on conducting Life Space Interviews. Feedback from teachers, education Counselors and Social workers indicated that this training provided them with skills that are immediately useful in working with students.

We are looking forward to having Dr. Beck back for a second session in November. I would like to welcome our two new Social Workers Gayle Turcio-Carter and Melissa Caron. I am confident that both of these ladies will be assets to their respective programs.

"Every Child Counts"

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Welcome to Our First Agency Newsletter

From the desk of Brad Lynn, CEO



Greetings. This is our first newsletter for the new Children's Community Programs of CT, Inc. As many of you know the Children's Center has been divided into two separate corporations; The Children's Community Programs of Connecticut and Florida and The Children's Center of Hamden. Although, our roots go back to the early 1800's we are a new corporation. This corporate reorganization doesn't change or effect any of the services and programs we offer to our children and families, but restructures us to be a separate operating entity from the former Children's Center.

It has been a busy time for us, both in finishing the corporate reorganization as well as developing new and expanding existing programs. In our Connecticut programs we have continued to expand our foster care program, now serving over 150 children in over 130 foster homes. My deep and heartfelt thanks to the real heroes of our agency, our foster parents who give of themselves 24 hours a day, 7 days a week to the children in their care. Our other community services, Outreach and Tracking, Youth Mentoring, FAST, Permanency Planning Service and Art Therapy have all experienced increasing demands for services.

Our community schools opened in September with an expanded Clinical Day School Program attached to our Pathways Program in East Haven, as well as the Portland site. Our former Housatonic

Children's Center Program, which was located in Ansonia, has changed their name to the Great Hill Regional Academy and moved to Naugatuck. Our Stratford School has also moved into a new site at the former Center School in Stratford. With the larger location, Stratford has been able to expand services.

Our Florida program celebrated their first year anniversary in July. Once again they prepared for another hurricane that hit the South Florida region. Fortunately all our staff, foster families and children stayed safe and made it through the storm. The Florida program just acquired in September, a new regular foster care program, which adds to our existing enhanced foster care services.

With fall upon us and the holiday season quickly approaching, we are all gearing up to make the holiday's special for all the children and families we serve. I especially want to thank our Board of Directors and Staff who contribute and give so much to the agency especially during the holidays. As a private agency we are dependent on the help of individuals, groups and community organizations during the holiday season. If anyone is interested in making a contribution to the holiday program or would like more information as to the opportunities for giving, please contact Joyce Norman at 203-786 6403.

Many thanks to all of you and my best wishes for a happy and healthy holiday season.

Brad Lynn
Chief Executive Officer



Fall TFC Training Schedule

November:

Children Expose to Violence by Dr. Carolyn Fischer, National Center for Children Exposed to Violence.

December:

Annual Christmas Party (the holiday party is attended by over 500 families and children).

A full Class of Prospective Foster Parents attending the "PRIDE" Parent for Resource, Information, Development and Education" training began September 13, 2005.

These Therapeutic Foster Care families have been servicing children for up to 25 years. Congratulations!

- Linda & Sonny Vitale
- Linda Hamilton
- Robin Francis
- Dawn & Brian Engelhard
- Gloria Engelhard
- Ellen & Michael Fusco
- Maxine Gilliard
- Vivian Hilton
- Anthony Lafo
- Jacqueline Mack
- Janice McKenzie

Therapeutic Foster Care

The goal of the Therapeutic Foster Care Program is to recruit, screen, train, approve, and supervise families who can provide a home and therapeutic environment for children with special needs.

TFC News

Clinical social worker **Yvonne Walker** was recently promoted to TFC Supervisor. Former clinical social workers **Henrietta Small**, **Ebony Manning**, and **Sandra Tyrrell** have taken on new positions as well. Henrietta Small is now the new Compliance Specialist, Ebony Manning is the new Permanency Placement Planning Coordinator, and Sandra Tyrrell is the coordinator of the Art Therapy Department. Congratulations go out to all.

Outreach Tracking and Reunification

Recognition Dinner, August 26, 2006



Supervisor John Gill makes a presentation

The 11th annual Recognition Dinner was held on August 26, 2006 at the Colonial Tymes Restaurant in Hamden.

Parents and OTR clients were presented with awards for their achievements in the program.



Emerson Stevenson presents Achievement in Parental Support



Damian Henderson makes a presentation



John Gill presents Achievement in Group Participation



Emerson Stevenson presents Most Cooperative Client

Happy Holidays from the Children's Community Programs of Florida!

From the desk of Russell Bova, Exexutive Director, Florida



Florida Office

First off, let me introduce you to our staff in order of seniority: Betty Branham is our Foster Parent Recruiter; Claudia Hoffman is one of our Foster Parent Support Specialists; Mary Warren is our Administrative Assistant; Ken Evans is our Clinical Supervisor; and last but not least is Ana Ucha, another Foster Parent Support Specialist. We are a lively, comical and enormously dedicated bunch of professionals.

Approaching the holiday season down here in Florida is particularly cheerful because it marks the end of the hurricane season! You can't help but be mystified by the fact that we have weathered two years of the most active hurricane seasons on record. Hats off to our entire staff who did a magnificent job supporting our foster parents (heroes) and foster children through the awfully difficult and tumultuous times.

Programmatically we have increased our size both in numbers (30) and levels of intensity, in that we now accommodate regular foster placements. In order to provide additional supports to our foster parents, we have instituted a monthly support

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Florida, (cont)

group, bi-monthly training workshops, and an "enhanced" MAPP Training Course that requires 35 hours instead of the routine 30 for those parents interested in the enhanced level of care. Not only do these additional supports provide supplemental training opportunities, but they also provide forums in which parents get to know one another better and, therefore, can support each other in more and more ways. Thus far we have provided 9 Model Approach to Partnerships in Parenting (MAPP) classes for our potential parents, with our tenth scheduled for mid-January.

A highlight of our ongoing recruitment efforts was created just a couple of weeks ago (early November) when we staged and filmed a 30 second television commercial of the program. Currently it is being edited by Adelphia Cable Television and should be a finished product by the beginning of next year. We are very excited about the advertising potential of this recent endeavor. We may have created a movie star or two!

Thank you all for supporting us through our testy and challenging first year of operation. Happy Holidays!!!

Youth Mentoring

by Dawn Renaud, Youth Mentoring Coordinator



Our numbers continue to grow. At the time of this writing, we are up to 70 mentors and have 60 children involved in the program. This has been truly an amazing year. With our growing numbers of mentors, we have had a growth spurt to the staff of the mentor department. It is my pleasure to let all of you know that Penny Ratcliffe and Rita Queiroga will be working with us part time. Feel free to give them a call at any time at extension 128 to introduce yourself. And please, continue to call Dawn at 203-786-6403, extension 117 with all emergencies-at least for right now.

Educational Programs

The Children's Community Programs Schools provide quality educational experiences, which encourage a successful return to the mainstream educational environment by re-educating students within a safe and supportive environment in close proximity to their homes.

by Catherine Murphy Brooks, Director of Educational Services

The fall represents a culmination of a busy summer for the Principals and school programs of the Children's Community Programs of CT. This year we moved from our former site in Ansonia to Great Hill Road in Naugatuck. Also we have renamed the program "The



Great Hill Regional Academy

Great Hill Regional Academy" The principal, Linda Kapitan supervised the move and put in long hours to get the school settled and ready to start up on September 1, 2005.

We also moved in Stratford. After lengthy negotiations with the Stratford Board of Education we arrived at an agreement permitting the Stratford New School, Phoenix School and SMILE to move into the former Center School. This move provides more room for the expansion of these existing programs.

We also took over the "School to Career" program in Stratford, providing young adults with the opportunity to develop skills needed to be successful in the world of work. Barbara Feldman worked on the weekend of August 20-21 to oversee the move and (amazingly) had the school settled and ready to open on August 30th.

Our PATHWAYS program is in the process of installing a new data base that will facilitate gathering and reporting of data for the students in that school.



Shoreline Clinical Day

Robbin Golden was busy all summer in training and getting data loaded into a new system called 'SASSI'. Robbin had assumed leadership of the Shoreline Clinical Day School in the spring and spent time getting that program ready for the fall.

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