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VOLUME 1: ISSUE 1

NEWSLETTER

Winter/Spring 2011

SUPPORTING CHILDREN • STRENGTHENING FAMILIES • EMPOWERING COMMUNITIES • CHANGING LIVES

WHAT'S INSIDE

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Roy Marshall Receives an Award for Excellence from the Los Angeles County Department of Mental Health

On October 15, 2010 Roy Marshall, President/CEO, approached the podium and addressed a crowd of mental health care providers in recognition of the Los Angeles County Department of Mental Health (LACDMH) 50th Anniversary. He described



much of the work providing mental health services in the San Fernando Valley beginning through community activism initiated by his parents alongside a handful of other impassioned individuals in the 1960's. One of who

CONTINUED ON PG.2

25 Years Serving the Antelope Valley

In 1985, the Los Angeles County Department of Mental Health (LACDMH) requested the Center open a small satellite site to provide services in the Antelope Valley. At the time, there were no LACDMH contracted children's mental health agencies providing services in the region. Since then, our programs have grown dramatically and the Center now has offices in Palmdale, Lancaster, and at Desert Pathways, Quartz Hill High School.

Initially the Child and Family Guidance Center provided mental health services in public schools and at our first Antelope Valley location in Lancaster. In 1993 LACDMH provided the Center with additional funds for general outpatient treatment services and for foster care specific programs. Soon we outgrew our Lancaster location and moved to Palmdale in 1994 to accommodate the increase in demand for services. As the need for services continued to grow the Center re-opened an additional office in the City of Lancaster in 2002.

Today our Antelope Valley programs and services are unique in that we provide intensive mental health treatment services in the home and

CONTINUED ON PG.2



ROY MARSHALL...CONTINUED FROM PG.1

was Lila Berman, the last surviving activist who is now 90 years old. Roy Marshall also paid tribute to Areta Crowell, former Director of LACDMH, a pioneer and advocate for community mental health care treatment. After concluding his speech, Mr. Marshall was awarded and recognized for making a significant contribution to the community through excellence in providing mental health services in the San Fernando and Santa Clarita Valleys. Congratulations Roy Marshall!



25 YEARS SERVING...CONTINUED FROM PG.1

community wherever they are needed. "We have a 'do-whatever-it-takes' approach to providing high quality mental health services to children and their families in the Antelope Valley," says Rocio Cabrales, Regional Operations Manager. The Antelope Valley region spans approximately 3,000 square miles and is populated by an estimated 440,000 residents. The federal poverty level in the Antelope Valley is 18 percent. Compared to the national federal poverty level average of 12.5 percent and LA County's poverty level average of 16 percent the Antelope Valley's average poverty level is very high. "Poverty often creates barriers to accessing resources, particularly for our children and families," says Cabrales. "By providing services in the home and community, we reduce those barriers."

Our Desert Pathways program, in collaboration with the Antelope Valley Union High School District, combines academic instruction and mental health treatment in the classroom as an alternative to hospitalization or out-of-home care for children with severe emotional problems. Desert Pathways is the only facility of its kind in the Antelope Valley, offering academic instructions and psychological treatment in a school setting. "Our ultimate goal is to foster healthy and successful children, youth and families that are able to live up to their fullest potential in our communities," says Cabrales.

Message from our Board Chair

Some have commented that the Child and Family Guidance Center is the "best kept" secret in town. As Board Chair, one of my goals is to change that! In order to thrive well into the future, we have embarked on a process to increase our visibility to the public so that the important work the Center does is noticed and recognized. Our plan to increase our visibility is multi-fold. You may have already noticed some changes such as our new logo. We are re-branding the Center, creating a new website, creating new printed and digital materials, and changing the way we communicate with the world so that people can access services or invest in us to change lives in meaningful ways. We are participating in community events, speaking to new groups and businesses...all of which will introduce us to new people and opportunities. I eagerly look forward to the positive outcomes that will come from our new outreach and marketing efforts. I am equally as excited to have all our staff on board as part of our united team as we continue to provide children and families with quality mental health care and support, strengthen, empower and change lives.

Sincerely,

Sari Scheer
Board Chair



50th Anniversary Celebration

We are approaching our 50th Anniversary and want to make sure that you are invited to the party! Please join our mailing list to receive up-to-date information about our events, activities and volunteer opportunities. If you would like to join our 50th Anniversary Committee please contact Deborah Neal or Bonnie Weissman at 818-739-5319.



President's Message

I am excited to announce that the Child and Family Guidance Center is providing new programs and easier access to our services. As of July 2010 we have expanded our services and extended our reach in the San Fernando, Antelope and Santa Clarita Valleys by providing new Los Angeles County Department of Mental Health approved Evidence Based Programs (EBP's). These new programs will allow us to serve more families in need through prevention and early intervention treatment methodologies and will foster healthier children and families in our communities. To improve families' access to services we have two new centralized intake phone numbers, one for the San Fernando Valley and one for the Antelope Valley. These new phone numbers allow us to decrease the amount of time it takes potential families' in need to access services directly regardless of where they live. These new activities allow us to better continue to support children, strengthen families, empower communities, and change lives through providing the highest quality mental health care services possible.

Expanding Services and Extending our Reach

In California, the sales tax and vehicle license fee revenues that fund many mental health services has declined significantly. The Los Angeles County Department of Mental Health (LACDMH), due to a drop in tax revenues, has made unprecedented cuts in funding to contract providers like the Child and Family Guidance Center. As a result we lost 38 percent, or \$7.9 million dollars in outpatient funding, of our \$21 million dollar contract with the LACDMH. To prevent the loss of vital mental health services, the LACDMH made alternative funds available to agencies through the Mental Health Services Act (MHSA) Prevention and Early Intervention (PEI) budget. However, PEI funding imposes significant restrictions on how services are to be delivered, who can provide those services, who qualifies for services and for how long. Additionally, PEI funding requires the implementation of selected, Evidence Based Practices.

Evidence Based Practices are a mental health care protocol that research has demonstrated to be effective in treating very specific mental health problems. Each practice is limited to the types of mental health challenges a child may have, and the age of a child. We are implementing ten Evidence Based Practices to best meet the needs of children and families we serve. The practices allow us to serve more children because the models are time-limited ranging from a few months to a year. As a result we have expanded our services and extended our reach to better meet the needs of children and families in our community. Today we are able to intervene earlier and more effectively to prevent the development of more serious mental health disorders. These changes in our funding require a quick transition for our staff and agency. Additional training is required to provide Evidence Based Practices. More than 180 clinicians have been and are currently in training to provide these new practices. LACDMH provides and funds training in 5 of the 10 practices that we are implementing or expanding leaving training in 5 practices unfunded and increasing the cost of providing our services.

You can help. Evidence Based Practices offer outstanding treatment methods to children and families in need of mental health care. These services are vital to the health of children, families, and our communities. **Please support us through this transition by donating online at www.childguidance.org or by contacting Diane Montano at dmontano@childguidance.org or at 818.739.5319.**

Sincerely,



Roy Marshall
President, CEO



SAVE *the* DATE

**Child & Family Guidance Center
EVENT OF THE YEAR!
AUTRY
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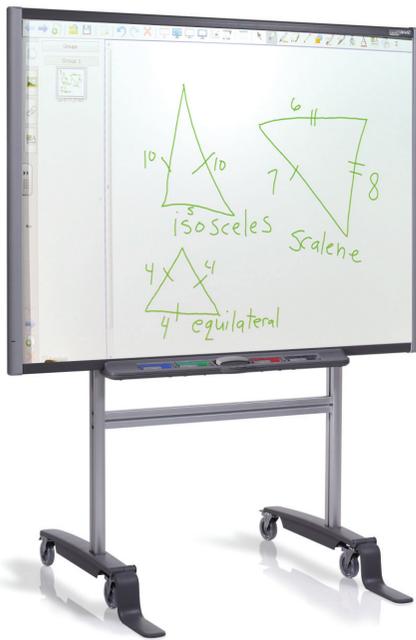
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A SMART Contribution

Imagine a classroom where students and teachers virtually interact with lesson plans on a digital white board. SMART Board interactive whiteboard technology is a learning tool that enhances academic performance. Children diagnosed with attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD), auditory processing disorder, and other learning challenges often find it too difficult to sit still and focus in a traditional learning environment.

Thanks to a generous donation from the Bazar family, the Center's Northpoint School now has a SMART Board in every classroom! Although SMART Board technology has shown to



improve academic performance in students with learning challenges, prior to the Bazar's donation, Northpoint was only able to purchase two SMART Boards. Out of seven classrooms, one board was placed in our 7th and 8th grade class and the other in the school's computer lab where other classes could use the board in rotation each week. The Bazar family was inspired to make their donation following the school's June

2010 annual graduation ceremony. Families were invited to witness a demonstration of SMART Board interactive technology in the classroom. It was there that the Bazar family saw the tremendous benefits of the SMART boards and how well students responded to them, including their own fifth grader.

Children with learning disorders at the Child and Family Guidance Center's Northpoint School are provided individualized special education services within a supportive environment. The ultimate goal of our Northpoint School is to enable children to successfully return to mainstream educational settings. Our classrooms aim to develop each student's unique strengths and abilities with the best teachers, resources, and tools available. SMART Board technology allows students to explore and learn at their own levels and pace both individually and in group settings. Since SMART Board integration in all Northpoint classrooms,

students have shown academic improvement. Children with severe learning disorders who have a difficult time retaining knowledge from text books are now able to demonstrate improved comprehension of information and more actively participate in class as a result. In addition to student's positive response to SMART Boards, teachers have found the technology enhances their ability to gauge student performance. The boards allow tests to be taken virtually and automatically records, grades, and indicates retention of lessons taught in multiple subjects. Receiving test results instantly helps teachers spend additional time covering topics not understood well by students in the middle of a lesson.

The boards have also shown surprising results such as improved group learning and teamwork. For example, students at grade level and students below grade level work together, help each other learn subjects, and encourage active participation despite differences in comprehension rates. "A part of Northpoint's curriculum and milieu of therapy is teaching social skills. The SMART Board technology has proved to provide a classroom environment that fosters cooperative learning, appropriate peer interactions, respect for one another, and solidarity. We are so grateful to the Bazar family for enabling us to purchase the SMART Boards and other technology equipment," said Kathy Le Breton, Northpoint School's Educational Director.

CalWorks Award Recipient: Cherie



Congratulations Cherie for being a CFGC nominated CalWorks award recipient for outstanding personal achievement on December 13, 2010.

Positive Parenting

“Stressful, and at times difficult, inconsistent” is how one mother describes her relationship with her 5 year-old daughter before completing the Positive Parenting Program. Our Positive Parenting Program, “Triple P,” is an Evidence Based Practice that provides parents of behaviorally defiant and aggressive children with positive coping skills to better manage their child’s negative behaviors. The program is designed to help parents

“Happy children
=
happy parents”

feel less overwhelmed when establishing limits for un-acceptable behaviors through positive re-enforcement. For example, a parent may feel anxious when taking their child grocery shopping for fear of being unable to control their child’s negative behavior in a calm and effective manner. “‘Triple P’ teaches parents how to involve their child in the process of grocery shopping and rewards them for exhibiting positive behaviors through anticipating possible challenges and planning the activity in advance so that it becomes a successful experience for both parent and child,” says Program Coordinator, Xenia Diaz, LMFT.

The Positive Parenting Program is a ten-week four-stage process. In the first stage, clinicians narrow the challenges parents have with their child through identifying the problem areas in the home that each parent wants to address. Second, therapists provide healthy alternatives that assist parents in remaining calm and in control, which fosters positive interaction with their children, thus resulting in mutual respect and more effective communication that improves their child’s behaviors. Third, parents practice positive learned behavioral management skills in everyday situations with support when needed. Once new skills are applied in their home environment, parents and therapists work together to re-evaluate and remove barriers to implementing learned parenting skills.

The final stage of the program is designed to assist parents with maintaining healthy interactions with their child. Once parents successfully demonstrate positive outcomes, they graduate from the program able to manage their child’s negative behaviors successfully. “It’s a program that should be taken seriously and you won’t be disappointed. Happy children = happy parents,” says a mother who has completed the program.

Mental Health Topic: Anxiety

From time to time, many children may show signs of anxiety throughout childhood. As a parent, how do you recognize when your child’s anxiety is a phase or a more serious disorder? What can parents do to help their children overcome either minor normal reactions or more serious disorders caused by anxiety?

Anxiety is a normal alert the body and mind receives in response to fear and can be an indication of danger. Anxiety disorders are the physical or psychological reaction caused by fear in anticipation of trauma, something bad occurring or the possibility of occurring. When anxiety effects occur in a child it is very important for both parent and child to exercise tranquility.

Anxiety is a natural part of life. When anxiety prevents children from participating in normal activities, parents should begin to look more closely into the cause. If anxiety appears to be more severe, a therapist can help diagnose whether or not symptoms are signs of an anxiety disorder. Psychologists can help distinguish between real traumatic situations and false signals and work with the child to discuss their feelings related to fear of bad things happening or the possibility of something bad happening. Some common anxiety related disorders are: post traumatic stress disorder, separation anxiety, social anxiety, and panic disorders.

Biology can sometimes cause false anxiety. In such cases, a therapist would assist a child in identifying false alarms and help



them learn coping skills to relax and remain calm when anxiety symptoms occur. There are four approaches to treating anxiety disorders. The first approach is to address situations that cause fear in a child. The second focuses on physical symptoms and emphasizes relaxation

techniques and exercises. Third is to manage thoughts that lead to fear and anxiety. The fourth treatment gradually exposes a child suffering from a disorder to what causes their fear and focuses on how to manage their reactions.

The more parents are aware of anxiety symptoms and are able to recognize differences in their children’s behavior, the easier it is to help resolve and manage anxiety situations. **For more information go to www.adaa.org.**



1-5 Sherman Oaks Street Fair, Oct 2010

Our Staff: Dr. Alpa Patel, MD, Director of Psychiatric Services

“Working in community mental health where underprivileged children and families are not always provided the best care is very important to me,” says Dr. Alpa Patel, Director of Psychiatric Services. “One of my goals is to close the disparity gap and I feel working at the Child and Family Guidance Center provides an excellent environment for me to accomplish that goal.” Joining our team in 2001, Dr. Patel was impressed by the enthusiasm staff expressed for programs and services provided at the Child and Family Guidance Center. Today, as Director of Psychiatric Services, Dr. Patel



leads a team of highly qualified psychiatrists to assess, diagnose, treat, and provide medication management for children who suffer from a variety of mental health challenges such as trauma, anxiety, and depressive or disruptive behavior disorders. She also teaches at UCLA Medical School as an Assistant Clinical Professor and enjoys hiking, tennis and traveling.

Nationally Recognized

The Center has built a strong reputation for providing the best professional training programs in the fields of psychology, social work and, marriage and family therapy in America. “The Center is nationally recognized as an organization that provides quality training for future professionals in the mental health field,” says Susan Hall-Marley, Director of Training. Historically, many of our interns/trainees have become staff members; some have

“The Center is nationally recognized as an organization that provides quality training for future professionals in the mental health field”

worked here for as long as 25 years. From the “class of 2009-2010,” 3 of 6 interns who completed their internships have become staff members. This year we have 13 dedicated interns/residents at the Center training for 9-month and 12-month terms from the following universities: Alliant International University (Los Angeles, San Diego, and San Francisco), California State University Northridge, Carlos Albizu University, Fuller Graduate School of Psychology, Seattle Pacific University, the University of Denver, and the University of La Verne.

Florence Gershenson – A Friend We’ll Miss

Former Board Chair
Florence Gershenson passed away on August 27, 2010.

Florence was a member of the Board for many years and she served as Board Chair from 1977 – 1980. Florence worked hard to ensure the Center’s legacy of supporting children and strengthening families

is continued into the future. All of us will miss Florence and her passion for improving the lives of vulnerable children.



On Point Softball Wins Division Championship

Northpoint School’s On Point softball team won the City of Burbank’s Co-Ed Fall 2010 (Division G) Softball championship, on January 9, 2011. The team completed a successful 8-2



season (5-0 second half) with a comprehensive 15-7 victory. Championship winning team (Northpoint/Center staff in blue) (L-R): shortstop Richard Austria, outfielders Ana Menendez and Hiran Amerasinghe, 1st base Iris Aviles, pitcher/manager Gilbert Munoz, outfielder MJ Escorpiso Serna, catcher Laura Alcantara, 3rd base Aileen Menendez, outfielder Paulina Romero, 2nd base Ricky Trevino and outfielder Larry Fontanilla.

Also on the team, but unable to play were outfielder De Marq Jaque, 3rd base Matt Speak, pitcher Jim Overall and catcher Michelle Golieb.

Installing Board Members

Once a year the Child and Family Guidance Center installs board members as officers responsible for governing our agency through the coming year. This year the installation took place August 19, 2010 at Braemar Country Club, thanks to



Board Chairman, Eric M. Book. In the tradition of the Center, President/CEO Roy Marshall presented outgoing Chairman Eric M. Book with our logo's bronze hands to commemorate his accomplishments during the previous year. After delivering



an impactful speech on the importance of the Center's work, Community Activist, Lorraine New, Administrator of Park Parthenia Apartments, served as Installing Officer. Ms. New installed new board members Joyce Barkin, Melissa Broadwell, and Ramon Escobedo. She also installed re-elected board members Rob Garcia, Steve Howard, Scott London, Myles Mattenson, Bill Winkelmann and our 2010-2011 Board Officers Linda Drescher as Secretary, Karineh Moradian as Treasurer, Bonnie Weissman as Vice Chair, and Sari Scheer as Chair. In the month following the installation, we were fortunate enough to add two more new members to our board, Christine McClane and Shekhar Chikhalikar. Congratulations to all of the stellar members of our board of directors!

Center Trailblazers

On Saturday, October 23, 2010, Center board members came together to engage in planning achievable fundraising goals for the coming year. The objective for the day was to explore opportunities for raising additional funds that support the Center's mission serving vulnerable and at-risk children as well as their families. Most of the day, our board member's evaluated CFGC's past, present, and future fundraising goals and established new objectives for a successful fundraising year. With all the productive work being done there was still time for some bonding activities such as learning more about one another and discovering unique personal characteristics about one's name. All in all, look forward to an exciting year of fun and informative fundraisers that will provide additional resources to ensure that the Center continues to offer the highest quality mental health services to our communities.

Welcome new Board Members: Melissa Broadwell, Shekhar Chikhalikar, Ramon Escobedo, Jr. and Christine McClane

Melissa Broadwell

Melissa Broadwell is pleased to have participated on the Donor Appreciation Committee, and subsequently been selected as a CFGC board member. As an adoptive mother, she has experienced first-hand the excellent services provided by the Center and is eager to increase community awareness of these services. For several years Melissa has led foster/adoptive parent support groups, and prior to that was actively involved with Big Brothers Big Sisters as a "Big." Both experiences gave her an understanding that many families are struggling and at a loss for



resources. She would like the community to know that there is a place for kids who are currently struggling in traditional schools.

In addition to her personal experience with CFGC, Melissa brings over 20 years of expertise in banking/finance and is currently the Senior VP of Administration & Operations at Matadors Community Credit Union in Chatsworth. Melissa is excited to contribute her professional skills by participating on various committees.

Melissa enjoys cooking and entertaining, and her husband Rob, a sales forecaster for a video game company, loves animals and volunteers his free time at pet rescue and adoption organizations.

Shekhar Chikhalikar, Esq.

Shekhar Chikhalikar, Esq. is an attorney and owner of SNC Law Office. His office practices Estate Planning, Elder Law and Immigration Law. He is licensed to practice law in California, USA, and India. Before moving to Los Angeles, Shekhar was a criminal defense attorney in his native country of India. Shekhar graduated with a business and law degree and an undergraduate degree in electronics.



In his free moments, Shekhar spends time with his wife, Danielle, and their son and daughter, Abhi and Neela and their cat, Minimeow. Shekhar enjoys playing table tennis, cricket and baseball.

Shekhar is an active member of the California Bar Association, the Los Angeles Bar Association, the Estate Plan Group, the National Academy of Elder Law Attorneys (NAELA), the American Immigration Lawyers Association, Kiwanis of Chatsworth, the Indian Association of Los Angeles, and the Indian Cultural Center. Shekhar is very excited to join the Board of Directors of the Child and Family Guidance Center and looks forward to active involvement with the center.

Ramon Escobedo, Jr.



Ramon Escobedo, Jr. has been a public school teacher at Napa St. Elementary for 13 years. At the start of each new school year he welcomes in a new class of Kindergarteners with a song and smile.

At Napa Street School, Ramon, has been a supporter of programs that empower students to eat healthy, and that inspires

them to be physically active. He has also been involved with the beautification of his school by organizing both the school and the neighboring community to help with planting flowers and painting murals. Ramon has developed two new learning gardens and has created an after school Garden Club at Napa.

Ramon was born, raised, and educated in the San Fernando Valley. He and his wife, Lilly, are kept busy at home with their two sons, Noah, who is 2 1/2 and Luca who is six months old. Ramon and his family enjoy going to the Zoo, baseball games, and picnicking in their backyard.

Ramon is looking forward to supporting the Child and Family Guidance Center thru his involvement on committees. He is also looking forward to bringing the Napa St. School community to a closer partnership with the Center.

Christine McClane, Esq.

Christine McClane is a Family Law Attorney and the owner and principal attorney of the Law & Mediation Offices of Christine A. McClane, located in Chatsworth, California.



Christine's law practice focuses on issues related to family law such as divorce, child custody and visitation, support issues and domestic violence restraining orders. The firm handles both mediated and litigated cases.

Prior to moving to California, Christine was born and raised in upstate New York.

Christine earned her law degree from Albany Law School. She also earned a Master's Degree in Business Administration from the College of St. Rose, and is a graduate of Hartwick College in Oneonta, New York, having earned a Bachelor's Degree in Music Performance and a Bachelor's Degree in Psychology.

Christine is excited to be one of the newest members of the Board of Directors of the Child and Family Guidance Center and looks forward to continued involvement with the center.

We are very pleased and honored to have Melissa Broadwell, Shekhar Chikhalikar, Ramon Escobedo Jr., and Christine McClane join our Board of Directors.



- 6 Encino Business Mixer, Nov 2010
- 7 Northridge Salute to Volunteers, Dec 2010
- 8 Granada Hills Business Mixer, Nov 2010
- 9 North Valley Regional Chambers of Commerce Business Mixer, Jan 2011

Donor Recognition List

We gratefully acknowledge and thank the following individuals, foundations, corporations and community organizations for their contributions from July 1, 2010 through to January 1, 2011.



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Mission

The Child and Family Guidance Center serves vulnerable and at-risk children, as well as their families. We provide a continuum of quality mental healthcare, supportive social services and links to needed resources. The Center embraces a family-strengthening philosophy aimed at helping clients to become empowered, overcome challenges and flourish within the community.

The Center is committed to remaining responsive to the ever-changing needs of our families, developing innovative programs and training professional staff members to work in a community setting.



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