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VOLUME 2: ISSUE 2

NEWSLETTER

Summer 2012

SUPPORTING CHILDREN • STRENGTHENING FAMILIES • EMPOWERING COMMUNITIES • CHANGING LIVES

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The Child and Family Guidance Center A Champion for Children for 50 Years



For half a century, the Child and Family Guidance Center has been a champion for children in our community. As the Center commemorates its 50th anniversary, its clients, supporters, volunteers and employees are celebrating the

agency's evolution. What was a small provider of services five decades ago is now one of the leading mental healthcare providers in the industry. Thousands of children living with trauma, abuse and mental illness found treatment at the Center, and what they gained was passed on to their children and, in some cases, even their grandchildren. In this way, the benefits of the Center's services multiply exponentially as the years pass.

In the next 50 years, the Center will continue to be our community's champion for children -- developing, adapting and meeting the changing needs within our society. As the Center's second half century begins, we thank you for your past commitment to children and families and enthusiastically invite you to witness and experience all that lies ahead. As champions for children, we are proud to announce the following achievements:

- Northpoint School was chosen by BLOOM, a women's giving group, as the recipient of their first donation.
- Healthy Eating Active Living, funded by Kaiser Permanente, is the Center's new collaborative program that teaches healthy living habits to children who are living in times of record childhood obesity and chronic illness.
- In 2014, Monroe High School will offer mental health services administered and provided by the Child and Family Guidance Center at their new on-campus community health clinic.
- The In-Home School Readiness program will continue to prepare at-risk, pre-school aged children for success in kindergarten and beyond, thanks to support from the Ralph M. Parsons Foundation. Healthy eating and fitness education will be added to the program's services to address children's most timely needs.
- Kids Charities of the Antelope Valley has generously supported our programs and services in the Antelope Valley for the ninth consecutive year.

At the Center, we are proud of where we have come and confident about our future. You, our supporters, are our champions for helping make our success possible.

Message from our Outgoing Board Chair



My time serving as Board Chair during the last two years was marked by significant change. An increased need for services in our communities, state budget allocation changes and the growth of social media made 2010 to 2012 a time for the Center to evaluate and implement new and innovative ways of providing services. Today, it gives me great pleasure to see how far our agency has come.

Maintaining close, meaningful relationships with donors and supporters is always among the Center's top priorities. At present, the Center is better positioned than ever to nurture those relationships, as well as attract new friends whose dedication to our mission can help us remain at the forefront of mental health services. Our work to grow an active, engaged and diverse Board of Directors has resulted in attracting new members; each bringing unique skills and experiences to our agency's leadership. They guide us ahead in our quest for excellence.

Our newly revised and streamlined board bylaws are conducive to keeping the Center's goals and objectives results oriented, at the forefront of innovation and responsive to the quickly evolving needs of the communities we serve. We have embarked upon a strategic planning process to position ourselves for success in the future as our nation's healthcare delivery landscape changes dramatically. And, enhancing the Center's development and community relations functions have produced our updated brand image, website and methods of outreach, including social media. These accomplishments have strengthened our bond with our communities and increased awareness of our mental healthcare resources and services.

My experience as Board Chair has been characterized by joy, hard work, inspiration, cooperation and fulfilment. In past decades, my mother served as Board Chair, and my father served as Board President at the Child and Family Guidance Center. Continuing my family's legacy of leadership for such an innovative and far-reaching organization has been an honor. The Center is and always will be a source of growth and healing within our community. I leave my position as Chair with immense confidence in what the future holds for the organization and the children and families we serve.

Warm Regards,

Sari Scheer
Outgoing Board Chair

Message from Our Incoming Board Chair



The need for mental health services is changing and growing. The recession, budget cuts, changes to our educational system and increased stress on families have left many struggling like never before. The Child and Family Guidance Center exists to support our communities. And, support from the community enables the Center to continue providing mental health

services that give children and families the opportunity to flourish. This circle of support is a key reason our agency is a consistent leader in mental healthcare services. More importantly, it gives our communities access to high-quality mental healthcare programs and services when they need it most.

As the incoming Board Chair, I will spend the next two years guiding the agency to meet the changing needs of the communities we serve. To achieve this, I envision strengthening the ties between the Center and community members and developing strategic partnerships with other healthcare providers. As more people turn to us for help during troubling times, the Center must respond by providing access to mental healthcare at the same level that people have come to trust over the past 50 years. Working in partnership with groups and individuals from within our communities makes it possible for the Center to support the increasing number of people who turn to us for help.

Community support and volunteerism comes in many forms. Our volunteer Board of Directors provides professional guidance and financial support. Volunteers and financial supporters make an immeasurable difference for the Center's programs, fundraising efforts, building projects and more. I plan to increase the number and types of volunteer opportunities available. I want to inspire local citizens with experience or interest to help improve the lives of the children and families we serve.

I thank you for your continued support of the Center, and I invite you to participate in improving the lives of children and families in whatever way will be most gratifying to you. There are easy ways to make a difference at the Center. Both long-term and short-term volunteers are needed. Community members can get involved with the Center in a manner that is conducive to their individual schedules. You can see the difference you make first-hand, and what you are a part of today, will make our communities better for children and families tomorrow.

Sincerely,

Eric M. Book

Incoming Board Chair

President's Message



The Child and Family Guidance
Center is currently in the midst of our
strategic planning process that will
position our agency for growth, strength
and flexibility in fulfilling the needs of
children and families living with mental
health challenges. Healthcare reform,
state budget alterations and a larger
population in need of mental health
services are strong environmental

factors that have guided our strategic direction. Increasing awareness of mental health care is vital to the overall health and wellbeing of our communities.

Our strategic planning process has inspired us to reassess our mission, values and goals to create a comprehensive and shared vision for the Center's future. As we move forward, we are examining ways to enhance our business practices to build the strongest possible financial pathway to realize our new vision. We are currently working to enhance our measures of success in alignment with our new goals and objectives to produce superior evidence-based outcomes for families who struggle with their children's mental health challenges.

Today, more people than ever require access to high-quality, affordable mental health services. At the Center, we are researching ways to expand and reach a broader population of families in need of affordable mental healthcare services. We are also extending our reach to new areas, including enhancing our professional training offerings to help increase the number of mental health practitioners. Moreover, we are focused on raising awareness about our cause and partnership opportunities. As we continue to expand over the next few years there will be many opportunities for you to get involved in your community and help advance our mission.

It is an exciting time to be a part of the Child and Family Guidance Center. We are involved in meaningful endeavors that are both financially sound and make a significant contribution to human well-being. We are so grateful to have you along on our journey. Your involvement with the Child and Family Guidance Center makes our work possible. Our success is your success. I look forward to sharing our strategic plan with you in the coming weeks.

Best.

Roy Marshall President, CEO

SAVE the DATE

An American Heart Association Grant "Teaching Gardens Program"

Northpoint School's
Plant Day Kick-off Event
October 18, 2012

It is an exciting time to be a part of the Child and Family Guidance Center.

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 Development Committee please contact Deborah Neal or Janice Kyser at 818-739-5319.



Supporting Children

Northpoint School Students BLOOM and Grow Thanks to Local Women's Group

Lots of friends meet for lunch. When we are with our best buddies, we talk about our lives and families, share accomplishments, laugh and get away from the stress of everyday life. Recently, 10 close friends from the West San Fernando Valley took their social gatherings a step further. They named their women's lunch group Building Local Outreach Organization Matters (BLOOM) and dedicated it to raising funds to make a difference for children in their community. After careful research, they chose the Center's Northpoint School as their first recipient.

"After touring Northpoint School, we knew that we wanted to support its amazing work," said BLOOM's Jennifer Yoon. "Many organizations do a great job of helping kids. But, Northpoint's exceptional level of teacher dedication, the great strides the kids make due to strong teacher-student relationships and the hope that the school provides for families of kids with special needs – it all just made Northpoint a standout when it came to choosing the best place to donate our BLOOM money."

At BLOOM, we are all mothers.

We know that these types of projects can make all the difference when it comes to keeping kids engaged in learning at school.

The ladies of BLOOM generously contributed \$1,500 that they raised through garage sales, pooling money in lieu of exchanging birthday gifts and finding other ways of fundraising. The contribution enabled students at Northpoint (a school that makes it possible for students with severe mental and emotional challenges to earn an LAUSD high-school diploma) to have an amazing prom and provided one student a \$500 scholarship toward a college education.

"At Northpoint, we strive to make it possible for students with special needs to experience the same kinds of milestone activities that kids in mainstream schools enjoy," said Rick Hunnewell, director of Northpoint School. "The prom, funded by BLOOM, gave our kids a chance to experience a highlight of teenage life. And, receiving the scholarship money from BLOOM has had a great influence on our staff. We are now looking to expand scholarship opportunities for our graduating

students. And, it was one of the true high points of the graduation ceremony to have a representative from BLOOM attend and present the scholarship check to the lucky student. BLOOM has made a positive impact on our school and its students. We are grateful to them and look forward to sharing Northpoint's success with these generous women."

The women of BLOOM researched numerous non-profits before finally selecting the Center as the recipient of their collected funds. They chose Northpoint after determining that the school, and the Child and Family Guidance Center as a whole, is extremely well-run, makes a significant impact on children's lives and that Northpoint students can truly benefit from their contributions.

Jennifer anticipates a growing relationship between BLOOM and the Child and Family Guidance Center. "When we heard of Northpoint's plans to start a gardening program in the fall, we immediately began thinking of ways that BLOOM could support the project," she said. "At BLOOM, we are all mothers. We know that these types of projects can make all the difference when it comes to keeping kids engaged in learning at school."

For Northpoint students and the staff that educate them, an on-going relationship with BLOOM is one they hold dear. "Many thanks to BLOOM for choosing Northpoint School," added Hunnewell. "You are an example of what is possible with dedicated support from our community members. The students and staff are happy to include BLOOM as part of our Northpoint family."

BLOOM Scholarship Award



Building Local Outreach Organization Matters (BLOOM) members award a Northpoint School graduate with a scholarship for college.

Strengthening Families

Kids Learn the Importance of Good Nutrition and a Healthy Lifestyle

Low-income people in the United States are experiencing surging rates of obesity, diabetes, high blood pressure and other chronic health problems. Lack of access to healthy lifestyle choices and good nutrition is the main culprit in the downward spiral of our communities' health.

Kaiser Permanente has stepped up and provided a \$24,000 grant to help children and families achieve better health. The Child and Family Guidance Center, in collaboration with the Childcare Resource Center and California State University Northridge, is proud to bring a new Healthy Eating Active Living Program to families who need it most in Northridge and Canoga Park. Now we are able to teach 6 to 11 year olds how to select nutritious foods, cook healthy meals, eat properly and stay fit.



Instruction will be provided to children in "hands-on" group workshops where the kids will be the chefs in the kitchen. They will see and taste the results of their healthy choices. When they finish the Healthy Eating Active Living workshop, they will have acquired skills that will last a lifetime, such as how to select healthy foods and prepare delicious meals that are good for both them and their families. They will also learn how to read food labels and understand their bodies' hunger and full signals.

Latinos are at particularly high-risk when it comes to chronic health problems due to a lack of access to healthy food and exercise. Because about 90 percent of the population that will be served by Healthy Eating Active Living is Spanish-speaking, all learning materials, workshops and meetings will be presented in two languages.

The Center for Disease Control reports that nearly 12 percent of Latino adults have diabetes – the seventh leading cause of death in this country.

"I'm very enthusiastic about the Center's newfound opportunity to present these important lessons to school-age children," said Maral Papazian, the Center's Rehabilitation and Health Education Specialist who will be running the Healthy Eating Active Living workshops. "The advantage of being in a group setting is a unique dynamic that encourages peers to support and empower one another to make healthier choices that impact their overall well being. Peers will recognize that they are not alone- that there are other people who have similar problems, such as, being overweight. Many thanks to Kaiser Permanente for enabling the Center to provide this valuable service and meet the immediate health care needs of our community."

The Child and Family Guidance Center is proud to partner with:

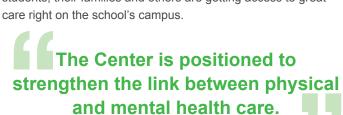
California State University Northridge



Empowering Communities

CFGC to Expand Mental Health Care Services On-Campus at Monroe High School

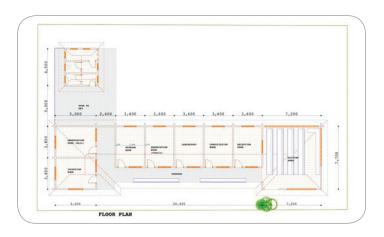
The Center has been providing mental health care services at Monroe High School in North Hills for more than 12 years. Today, the school is planning to build an innovative, integrated physical and mental healthcare clinic to serve students, their families and members of the surrounding community on the school's campus. The Center will be the official mental health care provider at Monroe's new health clinic. The ground breaking for the clinic's building is scheduled for early 2013, and the building is estimated to be completed by July 2014. The clinic will meet a vital community need for accessible healthcare. While access to quality care is becoming more difficult for so many, Monroe students, their families and others are getting access to great care right on the school's campus.



The City of Los Angeles, the Los Angeles Department of Mental Health and the Los Angeles Unified School District are working together to place integrated healthcare centers on school campuses where the need is greatest. Monroe has some of the highest physical and mental health and developmental needs of any school in the city. The goal is to create a "one stop shop" where people in need can find physical and mental health services, vision and dental services all at the same location. Valley Community Clinics and the Center will provide health care services at the Monroe clinic, Monday through Saturday, days and evenings.

"We want physical and mental health care to be seamless for people who need services," said Evy Lowe, the Center's director of Outreach and Outpatient Treatment Services. "No matter what happens with national health care reform, this approach reduces the stigma of mental illness in the community. It makes it more likely that people will reach out to receive care before mental health issues reach a crisis level."

By being a part of full-service healthcare options offered through school-based clinics, the Child and Family Guidance Center is able to extend its services to many more children and families. "It's wonderful to be a part of a project that so beautifully integrates mind, body and emotions," Evy continued. "I'm so excited about our presence at Monroe High School and the potential to further expand our services within our city's schools."







Changing Lives

With Support from the Ralph M. Parsons Foundation, Academic Success is Within Reach for At-risk 3 to 5 Year-olds



For the past 15 years, at-risk children ages 3 to 5 have received our supportive services, which enable them to begin their educations prepared to achieve academic excellence. This year, that valuable service was at risk of closing until the Ralph M. Parsons Foundation awarded the Center a \$65,000 grant to keep the service available to kids who are at risk of falling behind academically without it.

Our In-home Instruction program (funded by First 5LA) was coming to an end due to California state budget changes. After seeing so much success over the years, the staff at the Child and Family Guidance Center was determined to find a way to keep the program going. For the first time ever, today's children may have a shorter life expectancy than their parents, primarily due to poor nutrition. And, it has been proven that children who eat a healthy diet are sick less often and perform better in school.

We appreciate the Ralph M. Parsons Foundation's support for making it possible for young kids to excel in school.

The Parsons Foundation not only came through to continue the school-readiness aspect of the program, it enabled the Center to add a component to the program that they never had before -- a case manager. The program can now help families to improve their young children's health, reduce childhood obesity, offer parenting/nutrition classes and offer other advice about health factors that affect children's ability to learn.

Today, A qualified teacher meets with children one-on-one as they approach the age when they begin kindergarten. The teacher works with children and their families to ensure that each child has the learning, language and social skills necessary to succeed in school. Parents also have access to parenting classes and one-on-one counselling that prepares them to support their children's success in school.

"All of us at the Center are appreciative of the Parsons Foundation's support for making it possible to keep giving young kids the chance to excel in school," said Evy Lowe, the Center's director of Outreach and Outpatient Treatment Services. "The additional nutrition aspect of the In-home Instruction program is addressing the children's most current needs. That's what makes the Center a leader in mental health care -- remaining responsive to our community by providing services that are needed most right now."

Mental Health Statistics

Studies show that children who exhibit poor mental health are more likely to experience unfavorable educational consequences.

- Nationally, the dropout rate for students with severe emotional and behavioral needs is approximately twice that of other students (Lehr et al., 2004)
- In the course of a year, approximately 20% of children and adolescents in the US experience signs and symptoms of a mental health problem. (US Surgeon General)
- About 2/3 of school districts report that the need for mental health services has increased, and 1/3 report that funding for mental health services has decreased. (Forster et al. 2005)

Our Staff

Jelga Ramirez, Community Outreach Coordinator



"More and more people are in need of our services, and we are committed to being there for them," said Jelga Ramirez. At the Community Family Center in Northridge, young children are prepared to start school through our In-home School Readiness program, and families find access to affordable healthcare. Families are strengthened through parenting classes, and English-language

learners increase their skills and prepare themselves for future employment. The Community Family Center also collaborates with other community organizations to ensure that each family's individual needs are met.

I see people who are hit the hardest by the current economy. Some never imagined that they would need to turn to the Center for help. It gives me great pleasure to see them leave our office with much-needed assistance and renewed hope.

"I am grateful that my work allows me to serve others -- to support them as they better their own lives. For me, that's the greatest reward." That is how Jelga describes how she feels about the work she has done for the Child and Family Guidance Center for the past 21 years.

Jelga is proud to be a part of the Child and Family Guidance Center because she sees how the agency as a whole makes a difference. "After more of than two decades working for the Center, I've seen so many people grow, accomplish their goals and change their lives," she said. "Moms find jobs to support their families; children grow up, graduate high school and attend college; families in crisis learn how to heal and make things better for their children. It's wonderful, and I'm thrilled to have a role in making it happen!"

Jelga's dedication to the welfare of children does not stop when she leaves her job at the Center each evening. She and her husband, Antonio, co-founded a non-profit organization called "Eyes of a Child," which raises money to help kids in need both in the United States and South America. The rest of her time is dedicated to her 18 year old son, Kevin. Jelga has enjoyed attending Kevin's soccer, football and basketball games, and she is proud to see him off to college. In addition, Jelga and her family are proud to welcome their newest family member – a pet schnauzer from Chile named Mia!

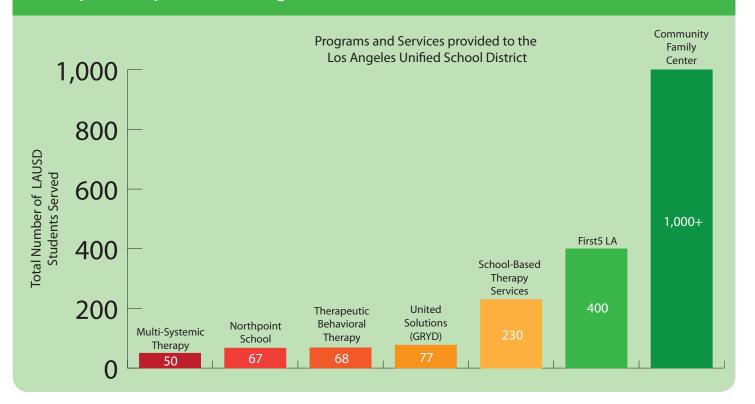
CFGC Statistics

Total number of families served at the Community Family Center (January - June 2012)



- In-Home School Readiness Program:
 35 children (Parents of these 35 children attended 10 parenting classes with an average of 61% in attendance.)
- Community Resources & Referrals:
 36 Families (These services included assistance in completing forms for Section 8 Housing Program, Cal-WORKs Program, Child Care Programs, etc.)
- Food Stamps Application Assistance:
 40 Families
- Medi-Cal and Healthy Families enrollment, retention and utilization services:
 42 families with a total of 86 children

Impact Report: Los Angeles Unified School District Collaboration



CFGC ANNOUNCEMENT

CONGRATULATIONS

Donna Venezio, Director of Community Resource Services and Sharon Feingold, Transitional Youth Program Manager!

For being selected speakers at:

The National Association of Case Management 18th Annual Conference
October 24, 2012 at the Millennium Biltmore Hotel in Los Angeles
On the topic of

"Removing Barriers: Strategies for Merging Mental Health and Educational Advocacy"

YOU MAKE ALL OF US AT CFGC PROUD!

Welcome A-Board! The Center's New Board Member Ken Teasdale



The Child and Family Guidance Center warmly welcomes Ken Teasdale to our Board of Directors. Ken joined the Center's Board because he wanted to utilize his skills as a financial expert to make a difference in his community.

After researching various organizations, Ken Teasdale chose to volunteer his time at the Child and **Family Guidance Center because of** the organization's outstanding work with children and families.

Ken is the managing audit partner at the accounting firm LaRue, Corrigan, McCormick & Teasdale, LLP in Woodland Hills. He is responsible for all the audit, review, compilation and agreed upon procedure engagements that the firm performs. These include large, medium and small not-for-profit organizations, publicly and privately held corporations, pass through entities and employee benefit plans. He has consulted with numerous not-forprofit organizations regarding their internal control and financial accounting procedures, as well as their operations related to their mission statement. Ken has 18 years of experience in both private and public accounting and he is a licensed Certified Public Accountant in the state of California, as well as a member of the American Institute of Certified Public Accountants and the California Society of Certified Public Accountants.

Ken is a graduate of California State University Northridge with a Bachelor of Science in Accounting Theory and Practice. He currently resides in West Hills.

Thank you for becoming part of the leadership at the Child and Family Guidance Center, Ken. We look forward to having you work with us in supporting children and families' mental health care in our community.

Girl Scout Troop Brightens the Lives of Children in Need

When 10-year-old Alexandra Kramer learned that her Girl Scout Troop would be completing a community service project to earn a bronze medal award, she knew exactly what she wanted to do. Alexandra's mother is Sheryl Lesner-Kramer, LMFT, the Center's clinical administrative regional manager. Alexandra has grown up visiting the Center, volunteering her time, hearing stories of the work the agency does and seeing first-hand that kids with special needs are not so different than any other kids. So, Alexandra suggested that the girls in her troop do something special for kids at the Child and Family Guidance Center. Her friends and troop leaders immediately got on board with the idea.

The troop took a tour of the Center, so that all the scouts could begin to have first-hand experience with the agency just like Alexandra. The girls were deeply moved by what they saw, especially after learning that some kids cannot live with their parents. They also learned about the foster care system and what could be done to help other children who deal with mental health challenges.

Before the tour, the girls got to work gathering art supplies to donate to the Center's waiting room. They brought in color pencils, markers, paper, glitter, paints and brushes. Now, thanks to the Girl Scouts, children who are waiting to receive treatment at the Center are entertained by participating in fun, creative art projects.

"I'm very proud of my daughter and her troop for giving to other kids in the community," Sheryl said. "Children at the Center are really enjoying the art supplies, and the scouts have learned that they can make a difference in the lives of others. I'm so happy they chose the Center to receive their gift."

Alexandra agrees. "My mom always taught me about the kids she meets at work," she said. "I thought that donating there would be special. And, it was awesome!"



Donor Recognition List

We gratefully acknowledge and thank the following individuals, foundations, corporations and community organizations for their contributions from January 1, 2012 through to June 30, 2012.





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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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