



CHILDREN'S AID
AND FAMILY SERVICES



Creating
Brighter Futures
Since 1899

IMPACT

Issue 1 2015

Learning about Family

"How did my clothes get in my drawer?," asks 12-year-old Matthew* with amazement. He has spent most of his life enduring instability, abuse and neglect, and recently began living with therapeutic foster parents Karen and Ramon and their children. Matthew had never been taken care of before, and having clean clothes, food on the table and help with his homework was an entirely new experience. "He was so sad when he came to our home," says Karen. "But after a couple of weeks of feeling safe and being taken care of, he's smiling and talking more."

Karen and Ramon have two birth children, and as their boys got older, they decided to become foster parents to give back. They adopted the first child they fostered, a 4-year-old girl who is now 16. "The second I saw her I knew she was my daughter," says Karen. Their sons played a big role in helping the foster children adapt to their home by being role models and offering guidance. One little boy was 6 years old when he came to their home, and he had terrible nightmares. He shared a room with Eric, Karen and Ramon's oldest son, who was kind to him and told him he would always protect him. Karen and Ramon eventually adopted him, and he chose Eric as his middle name in honor of the close relationship he has with his brother.

Their other adopted son is Joshua*, who his proud mother describes as sensitive, sweet, smart and athletic. Karen smiles at the changes she has seen in the children who have come to her home. "I see kids who are so timid at first become confident and outgoing.



Karen

Sometimes you don't realize the effect of having breakfast on the table at the same time every day or giving a child reassurance or a hug."

Karen encourages others to look into fostering children. "If you're able to give a child structure, stability, consistency and love, you can become a foster parent. We get a lot of support from the staff at Children's Aid and Family Services and other foster parents. We will continue to give back as long as we can."

To learn more about helping a wounded child to heal, please call one of our family recruiters at 201.261.2800 or visit www.cafsnj.org.

*Name changed to protect client's privacy.

The Board of Trustees and Staff of Children's Aid and Family Services Invites You to
A Special Reception for

DR. ROBERT "BOB" JONES

On the occasion of his retirement and to celebrate his 29 years of service as President and CEO

Date: **Saturday, February 7, 2015**

Time: **4:00 – 8:00 p.m.**

Place: **The Unitarian Society of Ridgewood** 113 Cottage Place, Ridgewood, NJ 07450

Space is limited. Please RSVP no later than January 30 to Latecia Smith 201.740.7104/lsmith@cafsnj.org

Thank you to our corporate sponsors:

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Fabulous Fun at the Ragtime Rendezvous Murder Mystery

While in town for The Barclays, The PGA TOUR Wives Association members and their PGA TOUR professional golfer partners searched for clues at the 'Ragtime Rendezvous Murder Mystery' 1920's gangster-style whodunit. The murder mystery event was led by Harlan Coben and featured fellow writers Mary Higgins Clark and Michael Connelly. Proceeds benefitted Children's Aid and Family Services' Medical Services and Advocacy Center and the PGA Tour Wives Association.



(l. – r.): Harlan Coben, John Conheeneey, Mary Higgins Clark, Anne Armstrong-Coben, M.D., Sari Agatston, Arthur Agatston, M.D., and Michael Connelly.



Jimmy and Erin Walker and Courtney and Kevin Strelman.

Above: Members of the PGA Tour Wives Association and their PGA TOUR professional golfer partners.

Eye-Catching New Ad Campaign Launched

Could you foster a child?

Children's Aid and Family Services launched a new ad campaign to attract prospective therapeutic foster parents and raise awareness of our work. Generously funded by an anonymous donor, the ads ran on highway billboards, buses and newspapers during the holiday season. The campaign will continue to run throughout 2015, so be on the lookout!

Help spread the word – we are in urgent need of more foster parents. To learn more, call one of our family recruiters at 201.261.2800 or visit www.YesICanFoster.org.

Ad 1: I can't stop the sky from falling. But **I can** show you how to enjoy the rain. For information about foster parenting or adoption, visit www.YesICanFoster.org or call 201.261.2800.

Ad 2: Maybe we can't do Broadway tonight. But **we can** make family movie night a blast. For information about foster parenting or adoption, visit www.YesICanFoster.org or call 201.261.2800.

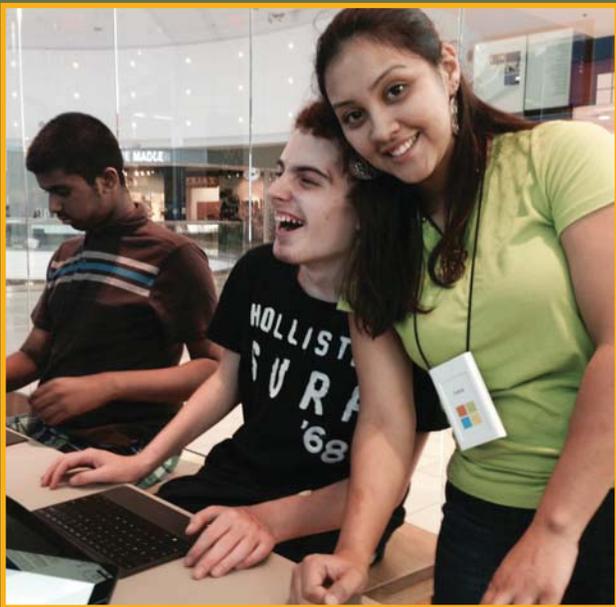
Ad 3: Maybe I can't move mountains. But **I can** show you how to blaze your own trail. For information about foster parenting or adoption, visit www.YesICanFoster.org or call 201.261.2800.

Ad 4: Could you foster a child? (Text partially obscured)

CHILDREN'S AID AND FAMILY SERVICES | Serving vulnerable children and families since 1899.

Interactive Fun at Microsoft

The Microsoft Store in the Garden State Plaza regularly hosts our children with developmental disabilities, including severe autism. The children play Xbox and on tablets that feature apps designed for people with special needs. "They love going to Microsoft and experiencing all of the latest technology," says Donna Kennedy, Senior Vice President of Disability Support Services. "The technology enhances their communication skills and the games encourage sharing and turn-taking. We are very grateful to Microsoft for giving them this opportunity."



Michael at the Microsoft store.



Brandon learning with a touchscreen.

The Best Thing I've Ever Done



In 2011, Liliana began volunteering at a dance studio as a way to give back. She saw a 10-year-old girl dancing and was impressed by her skills. When she asked about her, she found out that Melissa* was living in one of Children's Aid and Family Services' group homes for children in therapeutic foster care. "I fell in love with her the first day I met her," she recalls. "When I found out she was in foster care, I decided to sponsor her dance lessons. Later, I found out I could become her mentor, and I took training with Children's Aid and Family Services. For the past three years, I've seen her just about every Saturday."

Liliana, a weather reporter with Univision and voiceover artist, calls mentoring a journey. "It takes time to build trust and become a friend to a child who's been through a lot of struggles," she says. "Melissa knows I consider her part of my family and I will be there for her."

The two of them go for pizza, movies, brunch, play board games and go to Barnes and Noble and the library as Melissa is a voracious reader. For Melissa's birthday, Liliana gave her a professional photo session. "She told me after that she had never felt so pretty. It made my day!" says Liliana.

She has seen changes in Melissa since their friendship began. "She's become more patient, tolerant, open and affectionate. And she has changed my life. She makes me laugh and has brought such joy to me."

Liliana urges anyone interested in becoming a mentor to find out more. "These kids need attention and unconditional love from a friend. Mentoring is the best thing I've ever done."

To learn more about changing a child's life by becoming a mentor, please call 201.261.800 or visit www.cafsnj.org.

*Name changed to protect client's privacy.

Mural Project at Safe Journey



The boys living at Safe Journey, one of our therapeutic group homes for children in foster care, spent the summer flexing their creative muscles. Under the guidance of West Orange High School art teacher Nicole Krulik, and two well-known graffiti artists, Joe Iurato and Carmelo "Snow" Sigona, they painted a colorful mural emblazoned with the words "Safe Journey." The boys were excited to work with the artists and are proud of their mural. Many thanks to Nicole, Joe and Carmelo for donating their time to our children, and for the support of the West Orange Board of Education.

Kids Helping Kids

Generous fourth graders from the Edith A. Bogert Elementary School in Upper Saddle River led a fundraiser/teddy bear drive to benefit Children's Aid and Family Services. They delivered more than 100 teddy bears for the children in our care and raised \$1,000! "We are very grateful to these caring children," says Liz Mason, Executive Vice President and Chief Development Officer. "Many of our children in therapeutic foster care come to us with just the clothes on their back. They are scared to be in a new place, and having a soft bear with which they can cuddle gives them comfort and helps reduce their anxiety."



Top row (l – r): Griffin and Brandon. Bottom row (l – r): Sofia and Olivia.

A Memorable Holiday Season

Thanks to our generous supporters, our children in therapeutic foster care got almost everything they asked for on their holiday lists, from meeting Santa Claus to seeing "Frozen on Ice."



The girls living in Path II went to see "Frozen II," courtesy of Wyndham Worldwide.



Bergen Regional Medical Center staff donated gifts for 75 children. (l – r): Soobean Jo, Henah Parikh, Erica West and Susan Burkhardt of Bergen Regional Medical Center.



One of our youngest supporters, Timmy, asked for donations instead of gifts for his 8th birthday, and he donated them to our children.

The Tree of Addiction

You see their pictures in the newspaper and on TV. They are your neighbors ... your friends ... your family members. The drug epidemic has hit towns all over Bergen County hard. And it impacts all of us.

According to Eileen Fitzmaurice, Coalition Supervisor, Bergen County and Garfield Prevention Coalitions, The Center for Alcohol and Drug Resources, the number of young suburban drug and alcohol users is growing because of availability. "Alcohol and prescription drugs are in just about everyone's home," explains Eileen. "People are getting addicted after sports injuries, and through procedures, like having their wisdom teeth removed."

And the reality, according to the Center for Disease Control and Prevention, is that one person dies every 19 minutes in the United States due to prescription drug abuse. Prescription drugs can be a pathway to heroin addiction. One prescription OxyContin pill costs \$30 if you buy it from a drug dealer. A bag of heroin can cost as little as \$5.

Getting a handle on how high-risk behaviors begin and evolve was the motivation behind the 2014 Bergen County Prevention Coalition Alcohol, Tobacco & Other Drugs (ATOD) conference, "The Tree of Addiction." The reasons behind addiction, such as loneliness, depression and anxiety, take root below the surface. As those feelings grow and get stronger, a person can be drawn to drugs or alcohol to numb their emotional or physical pain. The conference, a community collaboration working toward a substance-free Bergen County, hosted expert speakers and workshops to address the need for



(l. – r.) Samantha Harries, Director, The Center for Alcohol and Drug Resources; Ellen Elias, Senior Vice President, Prevention and Community Services; Bob Jones, Ph.D., President & CEO; Mayor Joseph Delaney; Councilwoman Gwenn Hauck and Mayor Paul Aronsohn.

multiple programs to battle different addiction issues.

"The conference's goal was to get the message out on a cross-section of issues," says Eileen. "For instance, how can the internet and cyber bullying lead to alcohol or drug abuse? Does marijuana use lead to prescription drug abuse and to destructive heroin use?"

Education plays a crucial role in understanding high risk behaviors and treatment options. And it's education and support – to individuals, families, schools and the Bergen County community – which The Center for Drug and Alcohol Resources provides. "If your 'parental antennae' goes up, listen to it. Don't be embarrassed. Don't be ashamed. Put aside the fear, and arm yourself with education," says Eileen. "We'll connect you to resources that can help."

To contact The Center for Alcohol and Drug Resources, please call 201.261.2800 or visit www.tcadr.org

Grants UPDATE

Children's Aid and Family Services wishes to thank the many generous organizations and foundations that recently provided vital support to its programs for vulnerable children and families.

- BD
- BJ's Charitable Foundation
- Carlson Family Foundation
- The George Link, Jr. Foundation
- The Gertrude E. Skelly Charitable Foundation
- Giants Foundation
- Investors Foundation
- Kaplen Foundation
- Macy's
- The Healthcare Foundation of New Jersey, founded by the Jewish Community
- OritaniBank Charitable Foundation
- Ronald McDonald House Charities New York Tri-State Area
- St. Elizabeth's Church, Ridgewood
- TD Charitable Foundation
- Yaw Paw Foundation

Invest in the Future

Make a gift through your will or living trust and touch the future of generations of children. If you would like to include Children's Aid and Family Services in your will or living trust, please use our full legal name, Children's Aid and Family Services, Inc. Your attorney may find the following language helpful:

I hereby give, devise and bequeath _____ (a dollar amount, or all or a percentage of the rest, residue, and remainder of my estate) to Children's Aid and Family Services, now or formerly in the borough of Paramus, 200 Robin Road, in the state of New Jersey, for its general purpose.

The I.R.S. recognizes Children's Aid and Family Services, Inc. as a tax-exempt, 501 (c) (3) not-for-profit organization. Our federal tax ID number is 22-1487147.

If you would like to discuss planned giving opportunities at Children's Aid and Family Services, please call Liz Mason at 201.740.7100.



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Change Service Requested

Visit us online at www.cafsnj.org
Call us at 201.261.2800

Save the Date for our Spring Gala: **OUT OF THIS WORLD**

Date: **Thursday, April 23, 2015**
Place: **The Terrace at Biagio's**
299 Paramus Road, Paramus, NJ
Time: **7:00 – 11:00**
Honoree: **BD**

This galactically fun evening will feature live and silent auctions, a raffle, live entertainment and more! Most important, it helps us support some of the most vulnerable in the community. We need your help to make it a success! For information about sponsorships or auction item donations, call the Development Office at 201.261.2800 or visit www.cafsnj.org.



Our **Mission** is to preserve, protect, and when needed, provide families. Motivated by compassion and in partnership with the community, we make positive lasting differences in the lives of those we serve. We provide high quality, innovative services to children and their families that advance social, educational and emotional development and well-being.