



CHILDREN'S AID
AND FAMILY SERVICES

Turning Points

SERVING VULNERABLE CHILDREN AND FAMILIES SINCE 1899

FALL 2010

Inspired to Help the Community Gets Involved



Thomasville Home Furnishings of New Jersey president Ed Massood.

For some people, going on a tour of Children's Aid and Family Services spurs them into action. For others, hearing about the difference the agency's work makes in the lives of vulnerable children and families from their friends and neighbors moves them to help. Then there are those who learn of the agency's services from a Board or staff member and become involved. Still others see an ad in the newspaper, pick up the phone to call the agency and ask simply, "What can I do to help?"

A myriad of ways to help create a home

Giving back to the community is a priority for Edward Massood, president of Thomasville Home Furnishings of New Jersey. When a friend invited him on a tour of the agency, he visited Turrell Child Care & Early Learning Center and some of the therapeutic group homes for foster children. He was deeply touched by the difference the agency makes in the lives of children who have no family able to care for them, and immediately asked how he could help. A staff member gave him a "wish list" of items for the group homes, and soon after a truckload full of brand new furniture – including kitchen tables and chairs, entertainment armoires, china cabinets and tables, bedroom sets and mattresses – was delivered to several of the agency's houses, courtesy of Thomasville Home Furnishings of New Jersey. Mr. Massood oversaw the delivery in person and even helped assemble the furniture. The children, many of whom have histories of

See **Inspired** page 4



Members of Woodlea/Path I Advisory Council.

There are many ways you can get involved in supporting the agency's work. Call Karen Winick at 201.261.2800 x222 or visit www.cafsnj.org.



Students from Eastern Christian School collected diapers and other supplies to benefit Baby Basics.

Message from the President



Touch the Future

For a child in foster care, obtaining a good education can seem like an elusive goal. In addition to having backgrounds of abuse and neglect, most of the children we serve have endured multiple home and school placements by the time they come into our care. As a result, they can be up to two years below grade level. They struggle with their studies and need specialized support. To help overcome these obstacles, the agency established a program that focuses on strengthening reading and learning skills through one-on-one tutoring. I'm delighted to tell you that in less than one year of getting this much-needed help, two of the adolescents in our care have received recognition and accolades

from their schools for their achievements, and reading has become a popular new hobby at our group homes!

Our commitment to obtaining a strong education for our children continues into their high school careers and beyond. I'm proud of the fact that for the past three years, 100 percent of our teens have graduated high school, with a good number of them continuing on to vocational school and college. Unfortunately, there are scant support services for teens that "age out" of foster care at 18 or 21; most of them have little or no family upon whom they can rely. Without adult guidance and support, it is all too easy for their lives to unravel.

The agency's Thomas R.S. Burgin Parents Fund was created to help our children successfully make this transition into adulthood by providing financial assistance for those going on to college or vocational school, and also serves as a form of emergency support. In addition to providing a stipend for education expenses each year, the Fund also purchases each teen a laptop computer to aid in their studies. Further, the Fund provides emergency financial assistance to teenagers who were formerly in foster care with the agency and may need help with a rental deposit or car repair.

The fund's recipients are in close touch with agency staff and they often report back their profound gratitude for the help they receive. We wanted to share some of their words with you and let you know how important your support is to their success.

Thank you for all you do to ensure a bright future for the children in our care.

Robert B. Jones, Ph.D.
President & CEO

"As a 17-year-old high school graduating senior: I have so many goals for myself. Right now, I absolutely plan on attending college. My dream is to become an executive chef, traveling around the world while doing something I love, cooking." ~ T.L.

"I'd like to relay my gratitude for considering me for another academic scholarship. The previous scholarship has helped me pay my tuition and purchase books for my classes." ~ B.D.

"I'm graduating this year and will need assistance furthering my education. As a young African American adult, I have seen many people throw away their lives because financially they could not afford to attend school. I do not want to miss this opportunity." ~ D.R.

HOW YOU CAN HELP

A gift of \$420 will provide a care package (includes an alarm clock, desk lamp, comforter and linens, ironing board, school bag, hangers, storage containers, luggage set); \$1,000 will provide a laptop, software and accessories for a teen going to college; and \$3,000 will provide a stipend for living expenses for college. To make a donation to the Thomas R.S. Burgin Parents Fund, send a check (payable to Children's Aid and Family Services, with "Burgin Fund" on the subject line) to the development department in the envelope included in Turning Points.

You may also visit www.cafsnj.org and make your donation online. Thank you!

A Wealth of Experience Caring for Babies

Choosing the right childcare center for your infant is a must for busy parents while they are at work, yet it's certainly not an easy process. Moms and dads are understandably concerned that their precious little ones get nurturing, individualized care. For more than 35 years, thousands of families in Bergen County have entrusted their babies' care to the staff at Turrell Child Care & Early Learning Center. Here are some of the most common questions new parents ask and the reasons why they choose the Turrell Center.



Q. Will my child get the individual care he would at home?

A. Most assuredly, yes. Each teacher in the Infant Room cares for the same four children every day and gets to know each baby well, including his specific cries and what they mean, favorite foods and toys, unique personality traits and if he's not acting himself (e.g., a tooth coming in). The teachers follow the same routine you've established for your child and communicate with you, both in person and through a daily chart, so you'll know exactly what your child has done all day. Each of the teachers in the Infant Room has been with the Turrell Center for 10 years on average and has tremendous experience caring for babies.

Q. What do the babies do all day?

A. Lots of fun things. They go for walks in the strollers, to the dedicated baby gym for a "workout," they play on the floor with toys, they blow bubbles, create simple art projects like making footprints. Of course, they have their meals and snacks, too. And when they "graduate" to a toddler room at 1 year old, they get a yearbook.

Q. I work nearby the Turrell Center. Can I feed my baby during my lunch break?

A. Absolutely. We welcome moms, dads and grandparents to visit their children during the day in the Infant Room. We view ourselves as part of your extended family.

Q. What do you do to keep the Infant Room clean?

A. High chairs are scrubbed down right after meal time, toys are sanitized after the babies use them, floors are swept throughout the day, cribs are wiped down after naptime. We pride ourselves on having an exceptionally clean facility.

Q. I work part-time. Do you offer a flexible schedule?

A. Yes, we offer full and part-time schedules and are open Monday – Friday from 7:00 a.m. – 6:30 p.m.

Q. How old are the children you care for?

A. You can bring your baby here once he's 8 weeks old and he can continue throughout the preschool years, and even go to Kindergarten at the Turrell Center.

To schedule a tour of the Turrell Center, please call 201.261.5970. For a virtual tour, visit <http://turrell.cafsnj.org>.

MENTOR WINS AWARD



Congratulations to mentor John Morris, who recently received The Grace Boskey Volunteer of the Year Award from the Association for Children of New Jersey. (l. - r.): ACNJ Executive Director Cecilia Zalkind, Rose Zeltser, senior vice president, professional services and John Morris.

Inspired to Help *continued*

multiple foster placements before coming to the agency and have never experienced the excitement of decorating a home, were absolutely delighted with Mr. Massood's gift.

A computer room at Woodlea

Promoting volunteerism and helping improve the community are integral to the mission of the Junior League of Bergen County, and its ties to Children's Aid and Family Services are both deep and longstanding. In 1973, the organization spearheaded the effort to purchase and renovate the Woodlea group home for adolescent girls in Ridgewood. Last year, to commemorate its 75th anniversary, members of the JLBC made a \$10,000 grant to the agency's Woodlea/Path I Advisory Council. The grant was used for a major renovation of the sun-room at Woodlea, transforming it from a seasonal space to a computer room used year round by residents. The room has quickly become a favorite among the girls, who use it to do their schoolwork, as well as for relaxation.

Beautifying group homes

As any homeowner knows, houses need almost constant upkeep and maintenance. This is especially so for a group home, where as many as eight children live at any given time. This summer, the agency was extremely fortunate to have employees from Goldman Sachs paint the interior of Path I group home and volunteers from Berkeley College paint two of the bedrooms at Woodlea. Some of the volunteers from Berkeley College also cleaned and sanitized the infant playroom at the Turrell Center.

Having fun and helping out

Several local organizations have held events to benefit the agency. Ridgewood-based Savvy Chic boutique and Playart teamed up with Platinum Consulting to offer a creative concept geared toward mothers of small children:



Some of the happy shoppers at Savvy Chic in Ridgewood.



Volunteers from Goldman Sachs did a terrific job painting rooms in one of the agency's group homes.

PlayArt held complimentary classes for the kids while their mothers shopped at Savvy Chic. A portion of the proceeds were donated to the agency. The Franklin Lakes Newcomers and Neighbors Club held a wine tasting at Endless Vine – featuring a tricky tray and silent auction – and donated the evening's proceeds to Children's Aid and Family Services.

Collecting for babies

Atlantic Stewardship Bank held a month-long Baby Basics supply drive at all of its 13 branches, collecting much-needed diapers, nutritional formula and other infant essentials. The fifth graders from Eastern Christian School organized



Members of the Franklin Lakes Newcomers and Neighbors Club and agency staff at the winetasting. (l. – r.): Laura Rensel, owner of Endless Vine; Christina Tillsley; Nina Sharma, member, Board of Trustees, Children's Aid and Family Services; Eve Marsan, marketing/special events manager for the agency; and Kathie Schwartz.



Some of the supplies collected during Atlantic Stewardship Bank's month-long Baby Basics drive.

a large Baby Basics drive as their project for Make a Difference Day. The Baby Basics program, which provides free nutritional formula and diapers, is helping more young families than ever who are struggling to feed their babies and meet their other expenses. Volunteer supply drives are the lifeblood of the program.

"We're deeply thankful to be in such a caring community and grateful to all of the friends of the agency, new and old, who make the work we do possible in so many different ways," says Bob Jones, Ph.D., president & CEO. "I invite anyone interested in helping vulnerable children to come on a tour of the agency and find out more about what we do and how you can get involved."

To come on a tour of the agency or learn more of the many opportunities to help the children in our care, call the Development Office at 201.261.2800. There are so many ways you can help, including adopting or fostering a child, mentoring a teenager [who needs a friend], volunteering at Turrell Child Care & Early Learning Center as a classroom assistant or by making a donation at www.cafsnj.org.



Agency senior vice president, planning & strategic development, Liz Mason and Peter Rebsch, owner of CNR Products LLC, in front of the capital campaign giving express at the agency's administrative offices in Paramus. The mural was designed and painted by Isaac Gerges.



Volunteers from Berkeley College helped clean the "Waddler" room at the Turrell Center (l. - r.): Roseann Torsiello and Rosalyn Akalonu. Seated: Shelly Rosen.

Our Wish List

We are always in need of specific items for our children, particularly now that autumn has arrived. Below is a wish list of donations we are seeking.

- Laptop computers, with software and accessories, for the teens going to college.
- Halloween costumes (we can only accept new clothing)
- Gift cards to Party City so we can decorate our group homes
- Gift cards in the amount of \$5.00 to Target, Game Stop, Barnes & Noble and iTunes. The children earn the cards as rewards.
- Diapers, sizes 4, 5 and 6.

To make a donation, please call the Development Office at 201.261.2800 or visit www.cafsnj.org. Thank you!

Helping Teens Make Safe and Smart Decisions

It's a truism that as children get bigger, so do their problems. It's relatively simple to comfort a heartbroken 4-year-old whose balloon has popped, yet infinitely more challenging to talk in a non-confrontational way to a 14-year-old who is seeking acceptance from his friends by experimenting with alcohol or drugs. One of the best ways to prepare your children to navigate the sometimes uncomfortable social situations that occur as they approach their teen years is to start communicating with them at a young age. "There are many opportunities to talk to your children about being safe and making smart decisions," says Ellen Elias, director of The Center for Alcohol and Drug Resources and vice president for prevention & addiction services. "For example, your 8-year-old may hear of a celebrity who overdosed, got arrested, or even died because of their abuse of drugs or alcohol. This is a perfect opportunity to talk about how bad decisions can have devastating consequences."

And as your child gets older, the communication must continue so he or she is equipped with the confidence and skills to make smart and safe decisions, especially when socializing with friends. Today's world of texting and social websites requires specific skills for children to safely maneuver through this crucial time in their lives. Even teenagers who don't drink alcohol may be faced

with upsetting or dangerous situations, such as having to make a choice not to be in a car with a driver who's been drinking or deciding if a friend needs emergency help.

Often, it's not easy for parents to broach the topic of substance abuse and safety with their elementary school-aged children and teens in a non-judgmental way. To help, The Center has developed a tip sheet "Communicating is Key to Keeping Your Teen Safe" and an "In Case of Emergency" (ICE) card. This is a wallet card, created with the input of a focus group of teenagers, that contains contact information and important safety tips. Funding for the ICE cards was provided by grants from the Yaw Paw Foundation and Stop & Shop. They were distributed in Glen Rock, Midland Park and Ridge-wood school districts earlier this year and this fall, the effort will expand to Franklin Lakes, Oakland and Wyckoff school districts.

Parent tip: Insist your kids make agreements with friends about never leaving anyone behind or alone.

"What parents think is extremely important to kids," says Ms. Elias. "When the messages are clear and consistent, it helps kids make healthier decisions as they get older and become more independent. What's more, keeping the lines of communication open reassures your kids that they can ask you for help whenever they need it, no matter the situation."

Research indicates that kids who communicate regularly with their parents about their daily activities are 67 percent less likely to be involved in substance abuse than children who have little or no communication (2000 PDFNJ Middle School Study on Substance Use). The Center for Alcohol and Drug Resources has an abundance of resources, including community and school programs, literature and practical advice, to help parents talk to their children about making safe and smart decisions.



To get an ICE wallet card or Parent Tip Sheet, call The Center for Alcohol and Drug Resources at 201.488.8680 or visit www.tcadr.org.



Children's Aid and Family Services was named one of the 2010 Nonprofit Innovation Awards finalists by NJBIZ. Bob Jones, Ph.D., president & CEO and Harvey Braun, Boardmember, attended the awards event.

Grants Update

Children's Aid and Family Services wishes to thank the many generous organizations and foundations that support its programs and services. Recent grants include a \$5,000 donation from the Community Chest Serving Englewood, Tenafly and Englewood Cliffs and a \$10,000 grant from the United Water Foundation, both in support of the agency's Baby Basics program, which provides free nutritional formula, diapers and other baby essentials to low-income families in Bergen County. For our adopted children, the F.M. Kirby Foundation donated \$25,000 for adoption counseling and support programs. Our Medically Needy Infants and Toddlers Foster Care Program benefited from generous grants from the Edward W. and Stella C. Van Houten Memorial Fund (\$10,000) and the Gertrude E. Skelly Charitable Foundation (\$25,000).

"These organizations play a vital role in the agency's ability to help vulnerable children and families," says Bob Jones, Ph.D., president & CEO. "We're enormously grateful for their support."

Tribute Gifts

Thank you to the following donors for making gifts* in honor or in memory of others, and for choosing to support the agency's mission in this way.

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*Gifts given between
January 1, 2010 and
June 30, 2010.

The Depot

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Be sure to visit The Depot for a unique present for that special someone. The Depot has something for just about everyone. Staffed entirely by volunteers, The Depot is the largest all-volunteer women's exchange in the country and donates its proceeds to Children's Aid and Family Services.

22 Prospect St - Midland Park - 201.444.6120

Holiday hours (from Oct): Mon - Thurs, 9:30 am - 7:30 pm,
Fri, 9:30 am - 6:00 pm and Sat 9:30 am - 4:30 pm
For more information, visit www.cafsnj.org

CALLING ALL WINE ENTHUSIASTS



Our 10th annual Wine & Food Tasting Event is on **Friday, November 12, 2010**, from 7:30 p.m. – 11:00 p.m. at the Woman's Club of Ridgewood, 215 W. Ridgewood Avenue, Ridgewood, NJ. The evening's honoree is The Northern New Jersey Business Volunteer Council. The BVC is a group of companies whose members work year-round to help children and families with issues like hunger, literacy, education and well-being.

The Wine & Food Tasting Event will benefit Baby Basics and other programs supporting vulnerable children, and will feature a wide assortment of elegant wines and epicurean delights. Tickets to the event cost \$75.00.

The evening also includes a silent auction featuring fabulous prizes, such as vacation packages, flavorful wines and stylish Kate Spade bags.

Presented by TD Bank, food is being provided by Applebee's Neighborhood Grill and Bar, Chevy's Fresh Mex, Panera Bread, The Shannon Rose and wines by Carlo Russo's Wine and Spirit World of Ho-Ho-Kus. Please call the Development Office at 201.261.2800 or visit www.cafsnj.org to purchase tickets to this exciting event.

MISSION

The Mission of Children's Aid and Family Services is to preserve, protect, and when needed, provide families. Motivated by compassion for vulnerable children, young adults, frail elderly and their families, we provide high-quality and innovative services that meet their social, educational and emotional needs. Since 1899, the agency has been recognized as a leader in adoption and specialty therapeutic services for children who have been severely traumatized and abused.



Children's Aid and Family Services
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