



50 YEARS
CHAMPIONS FOR CHILDREN

CHILD AND FAMILY
GUIDANCE CENTER™

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VOLUME 2: ISSUE 1

NEWSLETTER

Winter/Spring 2012

SUPPORTING CHILDREN • STRENGTHENING FAMILIES • EMPOWERING COMMUNITIES • CHANGING LIVES

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**Celebrating Our 50th Anniversary:
A Visit with Our Director of Training**

This year marks the 50th Anniversary of the Child and Family Guidance Center. Since its inception in 1967, one of the main arteries of the Center remains our acclaimed internship program. One person who is synonymous with this respected program is Dr. Susan Hall-Marley. Having interned herself in 1983, while completing her Ph.D. from the University of Illinois – Chicago,



Dr. Susan Hall-Marley

she recalled our incredible diverse client population, our mission of helping under-privileged communities, our focus on children and families, and our commitment to training staff as hallmarks for

CONTINUED ON PG.3

Antelope Valley

“Music is Power” Hits All the Right Notes

A new form of group therapy is underway at the Child and Family Guidance Center - Palmdale. It has been dubbed “Music is Power” and it is the brainchild of Staff Therapist Ashley Webb. “I first thought of it in graduate school at Pepperdine,” said Webb. “I took music and narrative therapies and sort of mashed them together to create this program.” Sometimes connecting with a child during therapy requires a bit of creativity.

The Music is Power therapy group uses lyrical music to teach children struggling with emotional challenges how to develop confidence, self-esteem and social skills. Kids typically rewrite the verses of songs to make them more positive or create verses of their own. Sometimes local artists are invited to perform songs for the group to analyze. For example, lead singer from the band Oh No Not Stereo, Skyler Nielsen, dropped by one of our sessions to share his song “Time to Let It All Go.” The group listened to a recording of the song while following a lyric sheet to get a better understanding of Nielsen’s point of view.

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Message from our Board Chair



I am excited to announce that our 50th Anniversary year has finally arrived! I invite you to participate in our many activities over the coming months. You may volunteer, donate, take a tour of our facilities, and/or attend our gala. This milestone presents many opportunities for celebration. During the last five decades the Child and Family Guidance Center has grown to become the foremost leader in

providing community mental healthcare services in the greater Los Angeles area.

We have witnessed the tremendous impact the Center has had and continues to have in the lives of children and families struggling with behavioral, emotional, and mental health challenges.

Some of our major accomplishments include:

- Establishing an American Psychological Association accredited professional training program in 1967.
- Receiving national recognition for publishing “Coping with Children’s Reactions to Earthquakes and other Natural Disasters,” in 1971.
- Establishing Northpoint Non-Public School offering academic instructions and psychological treatment in a school setting as an alternative to hospitalization for children with severe emotional problems in 1973.
- Establishing Juvenile Offense Prevention Programs to provide therapy for youth involved in gangs, drugs, truancy, and other criminal behaviors in 1976.

- Establishing programs for child abuse prevention and treatment.
- Establishing public school counseling programs for children with severe emotional problems or pre-delinquent behaviors in 1980.
- Establishing outpatient mental healthcare in the Antelope Valley in 1996.
- Establishing our Community Family Center in a low-income Northridge apartment complex, improving overall safety and quality of living in 1997.
- Establishing a Community Resources Services Division to link children and families to community resources and needed social service in 2000.
- Establishing nationally recognized evidenced-based programs in 2010.
- Selected to collaborate in creating the region’s first clinic incorporating physical, mental, and community healthcare in a community clinic model in 2011.

We hope that you will join us in support of our work so we may continue to positively impact the communities where we all live and work for 50 more years. To donate, please fill out the attached envelope or visit www.childguidance.org and click the *donate* button.

Cheers,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Sari Scheer', written over a light purple background.

Sari Scheer
Board Chair

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President's Message



Since 1962 the Child and Family Guidance Center has established a long and respected history of addressing the community mental healthcare needs of children and their families. Over the last 50 years, our world has changed significantly yet the Center has remained true to our mission and core values. Just as our founding guild members originally sought to fill a gap in

children's mental healthcare; it is up to us to carry the legacy forward that has fostered our reputation as one of the best mental healthcare providers in the San Fernando, Santa Clarita, and Antelope Valley regions into our future.

This is an exciting time for the Child and Family Guidance Center, a time when anything is possible; a time when our collective expertise, wisdom, and hard work can craft the direction of the Center for the next three to five years. Our environment today has many challenges. Economic stagnation, continued funding cuts, increased demand for services, and limited resources are just a few of the obstacles we must overcome. Thanks to our highly qualified staff and our Board of Directors, who have made good decisions and worked steadily toward the stability the Center enjoys today, we are in a position to make the most of our talent and pave the way for our future.

You have made the Center what it is today – a strong and stable community mental healthcare resource for children and their families in need. In the coming weeks our strategic planning process will commence. As we progress, we will provide you with updates along the way. Thank you in advance for your contributions to our future vision and direction at this important time in our history.

Regards,



Roy Marshall
President, CEO

INTERN TESTIMONIAL...CONTINUED FROM PG.1

attracting her to the Center originally.

"I remain very impressed with my internship," Dr. Hall-Marley said. "At the time I did a nationwide search and the Center was my first choice. The internship more than met my expectations. I always had great support and training from knowledgeable superiors and staff."

Dr. Hall-Marley accepted a position with the Center after the conclusion of her internship and went on to become the director of training in 1993. More than 100 psychology interns have completed the training program since she took over. Many of them have remained on staff and some have grown into leadership positions within the Center. When asked about the greatest change the Center endured during her tenure, Dr. Hall-Marley states, "the continued growth of the Center, an increased number of staff, and expanded services and locations as the most significant factors. But we also offer additional types of services, too. Things here are always changing in a positive direction."

Turning her eye to the future, Dr. Hall-Marley would like to expand the reach of the Center's program to "stay on the leading edge for children and families."

She is committed to extending the reach of our training program. That translates to her dream of establishing a training institute. "I want to establish the Center as a source for expert training for professionals within the community," says Dr. Hall-Marley. Some of the elements she would like to offer include: more frequent programs to enhance the skills of professionals; broadening the audience for speakers, presentations, and seminars; and expanding training programs to serve the entire mental healthcare community.

With such an important anniversary being celebrated at the Center this year, the notion of looking forward becomes just as important as looking back at prior accomplishments. Dr. Hall-Marley embodies both of these unique sentiments in her vision for the future of our training program that is so deeply rooted in our legacy at the Child and Family Guidance Center.



Oh No Not Stereo band leader, Skyler Nielsen

Afterward the kids dissected the meaning of "Time to Let It All Go" and discussed the song thoughtfully. Each participant touched on many aspects of possible meanings and related the song to their personal experiences. After taking turns analyzing the different emotions presented in the lyrics, Nielsen shared with the group how he felt when he wrote his song. Inspired by his younger sister's emotional struggle, "Time to Let It All Go" is an expression of brotherly love. Nielsen later performed live an acoustic version of the song for the kids.

"Music is an outlet that kids should be familiar with and that's exactly what this program seems to be doing," said Nielsen. "I'm glad I visited the group and had the opportunity to have one of my songs analyzed by the kids." When asked to describe his experience in a single word, Nielsen chose the word "invigorating." It's a feeling that is obviously shared by most of the youth in the group. Four of the kids are active musicians or songwriters, and one joined Nielsen as he performed, creating a remix of sorts by rapping in unison with the band leader.

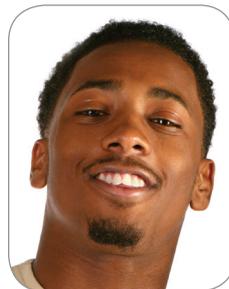
Using music as a form of therapy is a serious effort to introduce positive coping and social skills to our youth. Webb has also noticed more specific results. "I had a very shy girl who wasn't interested in participating in the group," Webb said. "But she showed real leadership skills after attending a few sessions. By her third meeting, she was leading our group discussions. Music is Power helped her build self-esteem and take the most important steps towards recovery."

"There's a lot of soul in the group, which is not typical of a gathering of teens," said Nielsen. "It's amazing how art can be used as a powerful coping instrument to help kids overcome trauma." Music therapies are being used in other parts of the country as well, but it looks like "Music is Power" is breeding its own success. "So far, so good," said Webb. "With more money we can do even more with the program. For instance, we're hoping to take a field trip to a music studio in the near future."

We thank Oh No Not Stereo for their generous contribution in helping make this program possible. To support our Music is Power program in the Antelope Valley, please email us at development@childguidance.org or call 818.739.5319.

Supporting Children

From High-Risk to Community Leader



"At first Bill was very reluctant and didn't want therapy," said Staff Social Worker, Zovig Boyajian. "His treatment history included severe behavior, four hospitalizations, and a high-risk classification with two residential therapy stints." Bill was one of Boyajian's first cases when she started working at the Center. He had been a long-term case

since the age of 6 or 7 and a student at our Northpoint School. Before coming to the Center, Bill moved frequently and had seen numerous clinicians. Boyajian remembers first seeing his chart from the patient archives and knew it would be a challenging case.

In Boyajian's estimation, Bill internalized the idea that he was crazy. When she told him he was a normal kid, it was the first time he had ever heard those words. His breakthrough occurred during one therapy session when Bill asked Boyajian, "Are you going to be here the entire time?" After reassuring him she would and confronting his abandonment issues, their sessions successfully allowed Boyajian to support him in his recovery. Through counselling Bill learned how to reframe his negative perspective and discovered his strength along the way. Over time Boyajian helped Bill re-engage in society, think positively, and guided him in understanding how he viewed himself within the context of others. In addition, she also convinced him that he was normal with similar problems to everyone else.

Today Bill is helping teens in his community discover their strengths.

A short time ago, Bill stopped in to give Boyajian an update about his life. After becoming mindful of his past choices and how they were affecting his goals, Bill completed high school. He enrolled in community college where he received his AA degree and went on to graduate from a 4-year university.

Today Bill is a youth sports coach, helping teens in his community discover their strengths. In Boyajian's estimation, creating a supportive relationship and a safe environment helps children learn how to make better choices. That is what the Center's tenant of supporting children is all about. "It's important to support both the therapeutic process and understand our children's struggles in order to create habits that will allow them to become healthy and successful adults," says Boyajian.

Strengthening Families

PRIDE in Parenting

“Parent-Child Interaction Therapy (PCIT) is the best program in the world for parents,” says Dr. Amalia Sirolli, PCIT coordinator and agency-wide administrator. Children who exhibit behavioral problems, have been neglected, or are autistic can prove challenging for parents to manage. If your child consistently exhibits negative behaviors such as: hitting, throwing objects, biting, and temper tantrums, what can you do to establish boundaries and instill discipline? PCIT teaches parents of 3 to 8 year-old children how to positively interact with their children. Our therapists first establish a baseline of a child’s behavior and identify measures for parents to assess their levels of stress tolerance for their child’s misbehaviors.



Parents are taught to use the principles of PRIDE (Praise, Reflect, Imitate, Describe, Enthusiasm) as initial skills for positively addressing their child’s misbehavior. Each session begins with 5 minutes of playtime where a parent is awarded points for sharing the three 10’s: 10 praises; 10 reflections, repeating their child’s comments; and 10 descriptions of their child’s appropriate play. This exercise is known as Child Directed Interaction and it helps parents criticize their children less and acknowledge the positive behaviors’ they exhibit. The exercise only allows three or less total critiques, questions, or comments.

Children frequently misbehave to get their parents’ attention. “Learning through play how to share quality time together is what PCIT introduces to our parents to curb negative behaviors in their children,” says Dr. Sirolli. The second stage of the program is about establishing parameters for discipline and can only begin after parents have mastered their PRIDE skills. Encouraging parents to use their learned skills and establish a minimum of 5 minutes of playtime each day helps many parents improve their children’s behavior. “I often found that when parents master the principles of PRIDE many of their children’s behavioral problems decrease significantly,” says Dr. Sirolli.

“**Parent-Child Interaction Therapy or PCIT is the best program in the world for parents...**”

Parent Directed Interaction exercises teach parents how to use a count down sequence that leads to a time out if their child is disobedient and praise if they obey. If a child refuses to obey, parents are taught to take away identified privileges. Our parents complete the program once they master giving four commands to their children and three out of the four are obeyed. For more tips on ways to praise your child, please visit our Facebook page at: www.facebook.com/childfamilyguidance.

The Phoenixes: A Positive Motivator



Northpoint School’s Football team, The Phoenixes, has proven to motivate many students to work hard to achieve academically. “The football team is a way to get your mind off things and I like it,” says one student. “It’s a good thing because kids are having fun and competing. That’s what teens like to do,” says another student. Mr. De Marq, one of Northpoint School’s Head Teachers, started the sports team to provide a more exciting physical education program.

Students who do not have 80% of their work completed and maintain high scores are not allowed to participate. It wasn’t long before The Phoenixes were challenging other schools like Park Hill where they won their first game 39-12 and have since gone on to compete against others.

Empowering Communities

Workshop: Community Family Play

“Park Parthenia Apartments, in partnership with CFGC’s Community Family Center, strives to create a community that provides families with opportunities to grow and thrive,” says Lorraine New, Administrator.

The only way a community can truly develop is if its citizens are willing to give back. At age 4, Erick Rodriguez and his mother enrolled in our In-Home Instruction Program. The program at Park Parthenia Apartments helped his mother learn how to prepare him for kindergarten. “Statistics prove that a pre-school education and parental guidance can increase a child’s chances of achieving a higher level of education,” said Jelga Ramirez, his one time in home instructor. As a current student studying architecture at Woodbury University, Rodriguez was given an opportunity to travel to China, Europe and Argentina.

“It was a tremendous eye opener. I was an L.A. kid that never knew anything else,” Rodriguez said. “I got a sense of how much the world was changing. When I returned home to L.A., I became more socially aware and decided to make a difference.” His experiences while abroad inspired him to do something for his neighborhood and now he is contributing back to other kids in his community.

“I want to contribute back and help other kids at the Community Family Center.”

City at Play is a program, designed by Rodriguez, which is intended to unfold dialogue between an architectural design process and a living community. With an emphasis on the word play, he has developed art workshops for children within his community to contribute to his dialogue. Introducing drawing and photography as art forms to capture their community, Rodriguez hopes to inspire children to participate through storytelling and collaging. The children will learn how to articulate how they would like to enhance their community with art. “I want to show the youth in my community how art can transform into architecture,” says Rodriguez. He hopes to visually bridge the ideas the children develop with shapes of architectural form.

City at Play will encourage youth to think of art and the community as one entity while heightening feelings of pride. Workshops will occur once a week for an hour and half, over the course of five weeks. The art exercises will engage ten to fifteen

youth between the ages of 10 and 17. After all of the workshops are completed, a closing exhibit will be held to display the finished project to the community. This closing exhibit will also serve as an opportunity to engage members of the community and discuss making the children’s projects permanent fixtures within the neighborhood.

“I would like to incorporate the ideas of our youth, their parents, and other members of the community into the program,” Rodriguez said. “I call it ‘City at Play’ because the idea is to combine both our youth’s visual and vocal skills to create an architectural structure through images everyone can appreciate.”

Rodriguez’s passion for empowering youth in his community motivates him to further grow the program. If City at Play is successful, he hopes to see more workshops bring the community together. Then ultimately, if there is enough support, the community can construct more architectural structures that were designed in the original workshops. When asked of his long-term vision, Rodriguez said, “I want to establish a nontraditional architecture office that produces projects that are both socially beneficial and engaging for our communities.”



Erick Rodriguez

“My vision is to establish a nontraditional architecture office that produces projects that are both socially beneficial and engaging.”

Impact Report: CalWORKs



Did you know that for more than 11 years the Center has provided services to adults who have a mental or emotional impairment? The California Work Opportunity and Responsibility to Kids program (CalWORKs) serves parents who struggle with barriers to long-term employment caused by a history of trauma and/or substance use.

“We have seen a 13 percent increase in our clients securing employment and/or attending school over the last 2 years. These successful outcomes are due in large part to our stronger focus on supported employment, which uses a ‘job placement with support’ approach,” says Amber Keating, assistant division manager. Supporting more than 350 parents’ goal to secure employment, CalWORKs is the only adult mental healthcare program offered at the Center.

CalWORKs is the only adult mental healthcare program offered at the Center and has served more than 350 families.

“Assisting clients at home, school, or in the community has helped our families make effective improvements towards securing jobs long-term,” says Keating. CalWORKs teaches parents to practice anxiety management skills, organize important documents, return important phone calls, improve their resume, and practice interview skills while removing mental health barriers to employment and improving family functioning.

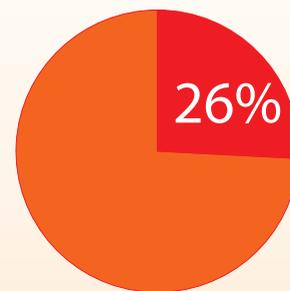
CalWORKs provides the following services:

- Comprehensive individual and family-focused assessments
- Individual family and group treatment
- Medication support services
- Crisis intervention
- Case management
- Rehabilitation services
- Supported employment
- Ancillary services for co-occurring substance abuse or domestic violence
- Services for children

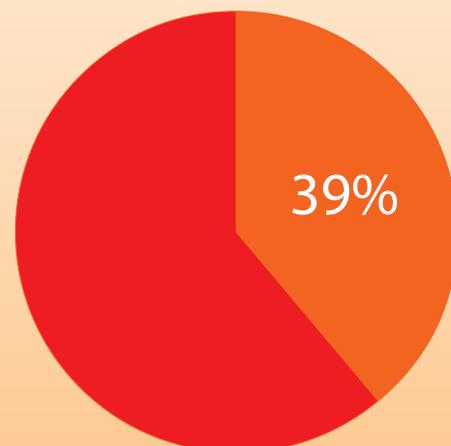
CENTER CALWORKS IMPACT

We have seen a 13% increase in our clients’ employment rates

Fiscal Year
2010-2011



Fiscal Year
2011-2012



Parenting Tip

Mental Health Topic: Childhood Depression



A common misperception about depression is that it is only a condition suffered by adults. Oftentimes, symptoms presenting in children and adolescents may be dismissed as normal teen behavior. However, nothing could be further from the truth. According to our Child and Family Guidance Center Psychiatrist, Dr. Davanzo, some symptoms parents

may notice, including increased irritability, temper tantrums, physical pain, isolation, and social withdrawal, may be caused by depression. There are also unusual symptoms that can be identified, such as increased appetite, hypersomnia (sleeping too much) and increased craving for carbohydrates in the diet, which may be linked to a more complex type of depression, bipolar depression

“It’s important to remember that treatment for pediatric depression is not just pharmacological,” states Psychiatrist, Dr. Davanzo. “Ideally, each phase of clinical care should also include education for both children and their parents.” Identifying symptoms as early as possible can help children and teens shorten the natural (untreated) course of illness, which may last up to 8 months. In addition, it may help with downward spirals specific to the fact that children and adolescents with depression become irritable, and therefore tend to alienate their parents, which feeds into a vicious cycle: the more alienated the parents the more lonely the youngsters.

Dr Davanzo advises parents to try identifying specific symptoms of depression for each individual child, and early signs of response (or not) to treatment. “Research (TORDIA study, Am J Psychiatry 2010) has shown that patients whose depression eventually remitted (at 48 and 72 weeks), had shown symptomatic improvement in comparison to nonremitters in the early weeks of treatment. For practical purposes, this means that if a child is not responding to psychotherapy and medication treatment alone or in combination, by week 4 or 5, she/he deserves a more detailed clinical assessment with updated rating scales for depression and anxiety, as well as a more inclusive family involvement, whenever possible. Part of this renewed effort to achieve early response may involve the assessment and prescription of ancillary interventions. For example, getting proper sleep and exercise, abstinence from illegal substances, and possibly over-the-counter agents with controlled data, like omega 3 fatty acids, are all interventions to be considered.”

“Often the expectation from parents and at times educators is that medication would solve 100 percent of cases, but that’s not congruent with the latest research,” says Dr. Davanzo. Early intervention is key, but it is important to keep in mind that a full recovery is a very long and dedicated process.”

Pablo de Amesti Davanzo, MD is Senate Emeritus of Psychiatry, University of California, Los Angeles and a former National Institute of Mental Health (NIMH) Career Development Awardee. He has worked as a consultant for the Child and Family Guidance Center since 1995 to the present date.



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Our Staff

Maral Papazian, Rehabilitation and Health Education Specialist



"I strive to empower and educate children and their families to make healthier choices," notes Maral Papazian, MPH, Rehabilitation and Health Education Specialist at the Center. In 2003, Maral began working at the Center's Community Family Center as Coordinator of the School Readiness Program for preschoolers and their parents.

Since 2011, Maral has served as the Rehabilitation and Health Education Specialist for our Community Resource Services Department, which serves the entire Center community. She assists children, adolescents, and parents by providing health education and prevention services pertaining to nutrition, sexually transmitted infections, teen pregnancy, and common health problems, such as diabetes and childhood obesity.

“There is a very serious epidemic of childhood obesity...”

Maral has improved the awareness of healthy lifestyle choices within our community. She indicates, "There is a very serious epidemic of childhood obesity and unhealthy nutritional habits. The health and wellness of children is not isolated to mental health but rather includes physical health as well. As a health educator, I have the opportunity to concretely improve the lives of our clients."

The Center's recent expansion of health education and rehabilitation services holds significant promise. Despite being in its infancy stage, the program's impact is reflected in clients' adoption of healthier eating habits, initiation of exercise routines and increased ability to practice self-care skills, all of which ultimately contribute to their improved mental health. "My vision is to empower clients to regain their optimum health and lead productive and fulfilling lives. If I am able to educate and motivate clients to balance their lifestyle by modifying their eating habits, increasing their exercise, managing their medication, and accessing medical services and resources, then I will have accomplished my goal," states Maral.

When not occupied educating families to improve their health, Maral enjoys music, photography, and spending quality time with her family and friends.

Changing Lives

Pass it Along

The Pass it Along Fund awards grants to individuals with a critical need who are committed to helping themselves. Since 2000, the Center has collaborated with the California Community Foundation (CCF) to assist 17 deserving families with direct assistance totaling \$70,620. Grant recipients are asked to commit to performing two acts of kindness in exchange for the support they receive. The donors believe that "acts of kindness and generosity, whether they are of a personal or financial nature, can be contagious."

Grants are approved only as a last resort resource, which means that requests are considered only after all other public, private, and personal and/or family funds have been exhausted. Prior to 2011, the Center had not received any financial incentive for assisting clients obtain these grants. However, on October 14, 2011, Sharon Feingold, Transitional Youth Program Manager for our Community Resource Services (CRS) Division, received an unexpected email from Gregory Shepard, Development Operations Specialist at CCF, who has been the Center's liaison for many years. Mr. Shepard stated, "As a small token of our gratitude for your ongoing commitment and excellent service [to the Pass it Along Fund], it is my pleasure to inform you that CCF has approved a one-time grant to the Center in the amount of \$12,500."

"We have seen the Pass it Along grant significantly impact the lives of our families," says Donna Venezia, Director of CRS. "It has helped recipients attain self-sufficiency, access medical care, pay for vocational training programs, and much more." The Center is exceedingly grateful to the California Community Foundation for their generous support and ongoing partnership.



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**Reggie Scheer's
80th Birthday**
David Gordon &
Donna Schwarzbach
Mrs. Joan Haywood
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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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