



CARING Voices

Fall Newsletter - 2009

Mission Statement

CARING for Children, Inc. seeks to nurture hope and create safety in the lives of children and families in crisis by providing high quality care, shelter, education, and treatment.

CARING

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8 programs
funded

DO MORE WITH LESS!!

Director's Report by John J. Lauterbach

Given the economic crisis that faced the country last year, "Do More With Less" were the watch words for most non-profit agencies. CARING for Children was certainly no exception to that rule. Not that do more with less is a new concept for CARING. Since the beginning, do more with less has been a familiar mantra. Since the beginning, CARING has always operated with as little administrative overhead as possible. (Last year, less than 8% of the total budget went toward administration.) Since the beginning, CARING has always found a way to create and maintain valuable programs despite funding issues. Since the beginning, CARING's staff have been willing to work long hours for low salaries to help ensure that CARING's clients' needs are met. Since the beginning, CARING has responded to the needs of children and families first and worried about funding second.

For CARING for Children as well as the rest of the country, last year was difficult on a scale of epic proportions. CARING for Children was not immune from the economic realities facing Buncombe County, the nation, and the world. Funding cuts and increased expenses took their toll. And, since CARING always has done more with less, we faced the double whammy of trying to do more with less than less. To ensure the viability of the agency, many many Board and staff hours were devoted to making the difficult and painful decisions that had to be made. For the first time in CARING's history, we closed a program (the Latino Mentoring Program) purely for financial reasons. For the first time in CARING's history, we were not able to unconditionally accept all clients without regard to funding. And, for the first time in CARING's history, we had to attend to how services were paid for, as well as what services were the best for a particular child or family.

Although difficult, last year was also a year of many successes. CARING for Children was there for more than 500 Buncombe County children and families. One of those children, Susan (not her real name) came to CARING through Trinity Place - CARING's Runaway and Homeless Youth Shelter. At seventeen years old, Susan had lived in more than 40 different placements including kinship placements, foster homes, group homes, residential treatment centers, and jails. While at Trinity Place, Susan enrolled in CrossRoads, CARING for Children's Transitional Living Program, where she remains today.

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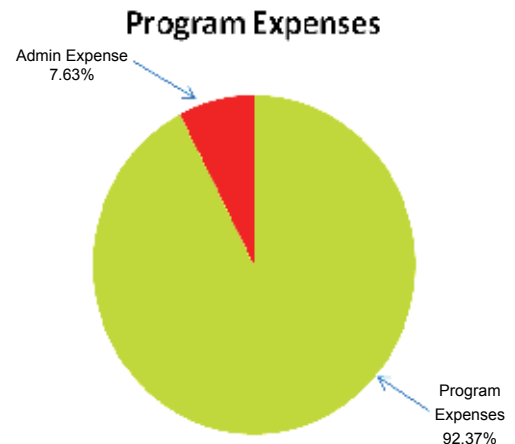
Director's Report (cont. from page 1)

Susan has been at Cornerstone for nearly a year, by far her longest stable placement since she was ten years old. With the stability provided by Cornerstone and CrossRoads, Susan is working on completing the GED, has a part-time job, and is beginning to make long-term plans and save some money.

Allie (not her real name) came to Angels Watch when her young parents fell victim to the country's economic doldrums and lost their jobs and their home. Homeless, and with no extended family in the area, Allie's parents had nowhere to turn for help. CARING for Children and Angels Watch were able to provide Allie with a safe and nurturing home while her parents worked to find new jobs and a new place to live. Knowing that their daughter was safe and well cared for allowed her parents to focus their attention on recreating their home. After just a few weeks, Allie went to her new home with her mom and dad. Perhaps as important as the new home was that the Angels Watch foster parents became a much needed source of long-term help and support for Allie's parents.

As difficult as last year was, this year may prove even more challenging. Due to the State's budget crisis, funding for mental health and social service programs promises to be severely reduced. It is likely that many area providers will be forced to either reduce services or close their doors completely. While needed programs and services are likely to be reduced, the need for those services will almost certainly increase. Fallout from the ongoing economic crisis will result in increased numbers of children and families living in poverty. And, when the number of people living in poverty increases, the need for social services also increases.

Although the outlook for the coming year appears to be difficult, the silver lining is that CARING for Children has been doing more with less for nearly 35 years. Through the dedication of our staff, foster families, and Board of Directors, we will continue to make the absolute MOST out of the resources we have. In ever-changing times like these, when resources will most assuredly decrease and needs will most assuredly increase, CARING, with your support, will continue to be a rock and a safe haven for Buncombe County's neediest children and families.



CARING for Children is Reaccredited by the Council on Accreditation

While working very hard to resolve the financial difficulties posed by the nation's economic downturn, CARING for Children also managed to secure its first reaccreditation by the Council on Accreditation (COA). CARING was first accredited by COA in 2005. The reaccreditation process entailed a comprehensive and exhaustive review of all of CARING's programmatic, administrative, and governance functions. CARING's staff and board spent countless hours completing the required self study. The review culminated with three reviewers spending four days in Asheville, evaluating CARING's adherence to COA standards.

COA reaccreditation is an objective and reliable verification that provides confidence and support to an organization's service recipients, board members, staff and community partners. The COA reaccreditation process involves a detailed review and analysis of both an organization's administrative operations and its service delivery practices. All are "measured" against national standards of best practice. These standards emphasize services that are accessible, appropriate, culturally responsive, evidence based, and outcomes-oriented. In addition, they confirm that the services are provided by a skilled and supported workforce, and that all individuals are treated with dignity and respect.

CARING Foster Care Continues to Grow **Renaye Owen, Foster Care Coordinator**

CFC's foster care programs, which include the Angel's Watch program, long term Therapeutic foster care, and PERCS (our short-term emergency foster care program), have continued to grow and evolve steadily since 2006. With recent mental health care changes closing many group care homes across the state, CARING's growth has been matched and exceeded by the need for even more quality foster families to fill the widening gap.

In an effort to face these challenges head on, recruitment for CARING foster families has been exceptionally vigorous this last year, with targeted informational events, active participation in community activities, and television, radio and print media advertising throughout Buncombe County and the surrounding areas. Over the last two years, CFC foster care recruiters have attended the Lure of the Dragons, Bele Chere, Goombay, the Mountain State Fair, the Mountain Sports Festival, RiverFest, KidMania, the Children's Health and Harmony Expo, and many other local community events.

CFC recruiters continue to work closely with other foster care agencies, including Buncombe County Department of Social Services, Eliada Homes, Grandfather Home, and Professional Parenting, to educate the public about the growing need for good foster families to provide safe homes for our children in need. CFC recruiters are helping to plan the annual Foster Adopt Fall Festival, hosted by Buncombe County DSS.

Looking forward to the coming year, CFC Foster Care Programs are expected to grow to more than 30 families, providing safe, appropriate homes for over 60 foster children in the western North Carolina region. Onward and upward, friends!

What's Happening at CrossRoads? **Brian Longacre, Therapeutic Teacher**

Last Fall, the staff and students at CrossRoads took a hike. Staff suggested a trail just south of Fairview that was moderately challenging, with a spectacular view at the end. It was a cold and rainy day, and the students were finding conditions difficult. Staff presented students with a further challenge: Students were asked to compare their hike experience with their time at CrossRoads. The following excerpts are direct quotes from the students' journals.

"When we started the hike, it was not that hard. And as we started getting higher, it seemed more challenging."

"The hike was similar to CrossRoads because some people were struggling and people struggle at school."

"...half way up is where I am now because it was a struggle to get where I am."

"When I reached the top, it really felt like I'd reached the top, and I'd conquered the world..."

"We started at an even path and that was like our first days at CrossRoads where we don't know what's coming and you are afraid. Then the path starts to get steep which means you are making your way to the top for your success. Then, you start to fall and slip on rocks...and just blow up and walk out of the room or cuss a teacher out or make some bad decisions. Then, you work as a team to get up the mountain and don't leave anyone behind...which means you should help each other for your success."

As the students at CrossRoads learn to take responsibility for themselves, it is much like hiking up a mountain in adverse conditions -- the student ultimately comes to a point where he/she must decide to climb, or quit, a crossroads. This decision always precedes the life-changing "view at the top" -- the view that enlarges the world and gives the confidence of an earned perspective from hard work accomplished.

CARING for Children, Inc. Management Team

John Lauterbach	Executive Director	Renaye Owen	Coordinator - Foster Care
Ham Fuller	Director of Development	Mazie Wartens	Coordinator - Cornerstone, Trinity Place
Bill Otto	Chief Financial Officer	Dawn Precour	Coordinator - Respite Scholarship
Patti Sharp	Administrator	Lisa Besses	Coordinator - CrossRoads & Clinical Coordinator
Merry Senko	Accounting	Tim Cross	Coordinator - Project Home Base
Dawn Precour	Human Resources		

Valentine Gala Moulin Rouge - Help Us Raise \$100,000 for CARING for Children

Announcing CARING's second Valentine's extravaganza celebration. The Valentine Gala for CARING for Children will be on Saturday, February 13, 2010 at the Haywood Park Hotel Ballroom and Atrium Promenade. Couples will celebrate Valentine's Day with dinner, drinks, dancing, and a live and silent auction.

At CARING.... of every dollar raised, 92 cents goes directly to programs -- only 8 cents to administration and fund raising. The Valentine Gala will make a difference to children and their families in Buncombe County by funding: 425 nights of shelter for runaways at Trinity Place; 2,500 nights of care for children in Angels Watch; or, three months of in-home services for 50 new families.

Report from Development and Marketing Committee by Hunter Lanier, Board Member

As one of the newest members of the CARING Board and the co-chair of the Development and Marketing Committee, I want to thank everyone who has participated in helping CARING ramp up its visual presence in Western North Carolina. The inside joke, when I first joined, was that CARING is Asheville and Buncombe County's "best-kept secret."

I am extremely impressed with the Executive Committee's ability to recruit board members and to identify individuals' personal strengths to help promote the CARING Mission. CARING welcomes our new Board Members and their talents as we grow and position ourselves to increase community awareness about our services and adapt our program to meet the needs in Buncombe County.

I am extremely excited to be a part of this team and look forward to the years ahead.



CARING Sponsors Spring Golf Tournament

CARING is making plans for a golf tournament fundraiser next Spring, and you're invited! Look for more details our Spring newsletter, and plan to bring friends and share in the fun.

Loaves and Fishes Alternative Gifts Market

CARING for Children will participate in the **Loaves and Fishes Alternative Gifts Market** on Sunday, December 7th, from 12:15 - 2:00 pm at the First Presbyterian Church, 40 Church Street, in Asheville. The event is co-sponsored by First Presbyterian, Trinity Episcopal, and Central Methodist Churches. It provides a way for individuals to purchase items that will benefit CARING and other local non-profit agencies as an alternative to traditional holiday gift purchases. You can participate in two ways: 1) Attend the market to purchase gift cards in person; or 2) Send in orders by mail or bring them to the church office. To obtain more information, call CARING for Children at (828) 298-0186 and ask for Ham Fuller.