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Mazie Warters	Program Coordinator Cornerstone, Trinity Place
Charles Blount	Program Coordinator CrossRoads
Danyale Isaacs	Program Coordinator Project Respite
Tim Cross	Program Coordinator Project Home Base, Case Management
Rachel Fuller	Program Manager Angels Watch
Christy Riopelle	Program Manager Therapeutic Foster Care

\$.91 of every dollar that is contributed to CARING for Children goes directly to provide services for Buncombe County children and their families.

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cannot always provide: a solid structure of therapeutic treatment, individualized academic assistance, and empathetic professionals to help him five days a week. Without the three legs of this support system, children often fail or "fall through the cracks" of a less than seamless social services system. This was so in Jack's case.

Initially, Jack viewed CrossRoads as punishment, a place for "nut cases" and "losers." Over time, he learned that CrossRoads helped he and his family set realistic expectations and goals, and Jack learned about both the positive and negative consequences of his behaviors. Jack graduated from CrossRoads and returned to public school.

So, there are times when the figurative "thunderstorms of life" come fast and hard; the whirl winds make you feel hemmed in and helpless. Then, suddenly the sun comes out and all that "rain" has nourished the seed. It sprouts, straight and strong, and its roots go deep. Maybe the soil is richer than we first imagined!

** Name has been changed*

Project Home Base – By Tim Cross, Program Coordinator

Sarah (not her real name) is 16 years old. She and her family were referred to Project Home Base (PHB) by Buncombe County's Department of Social Services (BCDSS). Sarah was considered to be at high-risk of an out-of-home placement following a substantiation of abuse against her father. While the family was involved with PHB, Sarah's father worked to complete a series of anger management groups.

The PHB worker met with the family two to three times a week for a period of six weeks. The worker helped the family to negotiate appropriate house rules for a 16-year-old and to set up an age-appropriate reward/consequence system in the home. Also, the family began to learn new ways to communicate and, towards the end of the PHB intervention, the family decided to begin family counseling so that they could continue to improve their communication with one another.

At the family's last meeting with the PHB worker, the family said: "Thank you so much for coming into our home, not to judge us, but to help us learn how we can do things better ... to help us keep our family together." The family successfully completed the PHB program; Sarah's father

successfully completed his anger management groups; BCDSS closed their case with the family; and, the family has just completed their work with a family counselor.

Nine months after completing the PHB program, Sarah remains in her home and the family reports that things are "better than ever." Recently, the family just called their home-based worker to proudly announce that Sarah was just accepted into a North Carolina liberal arts college.

Angels Watch Needs Foster Parents

By Rachel Fuller, Program Coordinator

Angels Watch is a unique foster care program that serves children and their families in Buncombe County. Ages for children in care range from birth to 6 years old, with siblings up to 10 years of age. Fully licensed foster families provide direct care, with 24/7 support from the staff of Angels Watch. There is no direct charge to the parents/guardians of the children in care. Length of stay has a one-night minimum, and children can stay up to 90 days. Extended placements are available on a case-by-case basis.

CARING For Children Inc, recognized a growing need in Buncombe County to provide an alternative to loss of custody for families by providing the opportunity of time and assistance to secure healthier arrangements for their children.

For most families, Angels Watch will be a voluntary program. There are many families who are in need of child care or placement for their children due to unexpected circumstances such as: loss of job, hospitalization, domestic violence, illness, etc. This program is an alternative to the traditional loss of custody.

Angels Watch has been progressing during the past six months. Angels Watch received the Janive grant, which allows the program to serve children who are not in DSS custody. There are currently nine youth in care, and there are six active foster families. We are always recruiting foster families for the growing need of the community.

Our Place Emergency Shelter

By Renaye Owen, MSW, Program Coordinator

Our Place is a temporary emergency shelter for children 0-13. Children enter the program and stay while their case managers are working on a permanent placement in foster care. Some children are able to stay with one foster family;

The following is a letter written to Danyale Isaacs, Program Coordinator of the Respite Scholarship Program:

Dear CARING for Children Family,

I want to express my deep gratitude to you for allowing my family the opportunity to access the Respite Scholarship Program. My husband and I have two adopted children who were in the social services system for quite some time prior to the adoption. Our oldest has some severe emotional disorders and has been very difficult to control, especially as she gets older. She has very little impulse control and gets in very dangerous situations sometimes.

We found out about the CARING for Children Respite Scholarship Program a couple of years ago. Danyale helped us find a couple of Respite Providers that we have worked with over the years. It is wonderful to be able to take a break from the high intensity of our home and just be able to go to dinner, or the grocery store without worrying about what will happen. We have used the Therapeutic approach to respite and it has virtually saved our family. If it weren't for the respite program, I am sure that we would have already had to place our child in an out-of-home placement. We were considering this as an option when we found out about respite. Thankfully for our family, we found a respite provider who was willing to work with our child and her therapist to give her the best care possible and help us learn some new ways of parenting without having the extreme power struggles that we were so accustomed to.

We appreciate everything that you do and hope for all the families out there like ours that this program can continue to be funded and even receive more funding so that all families in need can receive as much respite as they need.

Thank you for your continued support of children and families in Buncombe County.

others cannot find "the right fit" and come back to Our Place while working on another foster placement.

A year ago, a young lady came to Our Place and was in the program over the Christmas Holidays. She was 16 years old, and she believed she was "quite grown up." It was very difficult for the Department of Social Services DSS to find a foster home for this young lady because of her age and because of her "independence." Staff tried to help DSS find a good placement, but each placement option "was not the right one for her." She ran away several times from her foster placements, and each time returned to Our Place. Finally, in August, the young lady walked into Our Place on her own and asked for help. She had struggled with "life on life's terms", and was really ready to ask for help and try again. Recently, the young lady accepted a placement into a therapeutic foster home through CARING for Children. So far, she is doing quite well. When I talked with her after her move and asked her how things were going, she was happy and said, "Renaye, it is not the best place, and it is not the worst place. I believe it is the ONLY place for me."

Counterpoint Group Home

By Renaye Owen, MSW, Program Coordinator

Counterpoint is a behavior management program. Last spring, a young man came to Counterpoint stating clearly that he did not belong in the program. He believed he was above learning new skills and accepting consequences for his behavior. He was referred to the program because he liked to smoke marijuana; he would even do it in front of the police, and he truly believed there was nothing anyone could do about it. Counterpoint is not a substance abuse program, and we accepted him into the program with some hesitation. But his assessment showed that substance abuse was not his primary issue – his own arrogance was the real problem. After several months, the young man began to realize he was responsible for his actions and his behaviors. In short time, he turned his life around and he graduated just a month ago. I spoke to him recently, and he states things are going well and that he will not be coming back to Counterpoint ever again! Yeah!



CARING for Children, Inc. Caring Voices

Annual Report from CARING for Children, Inc. November, 2005

Director's Report: Thirty Years of CARING

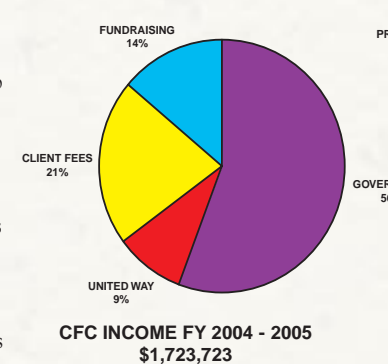
In 1975 Gerald Ford was President, the Viet Nam War ended with the surrender of Saigon, Jaws was keeping people out of the water, Saturday Night Live started keeping people home on Saturday nights, and Bobby Bowden was still coaching at West Virginia. In 1975 a small group of people from Central Methodist Church decided to try to do something to help children in Buncombe County. In 1975 CARING for Children was created with the goal of providing safe shelter for children who were victims of neglect or abuse. In 1975 CARING's focus was solely on helping children.

I hate to disagree with one of America's foremost pundits, philosophers and deep thinkers, Jimmy Buffet, but despite all the "changes in attitudes and changes in latitudes," in 2005 some things do "remain quite the same." Over those 30 years, through all of the growth and all of the changes, CARING for Children is still focused on helping children.

CrossRoads, CARING's Day Treatment Program for youth who have been long-term suspended or expelled from school is a case in point. Even though CrossRoads has been a financial drain on CARING since we adopted it in 2000, the Board of Directors has remained committed to the program because it provides a unique and valuable service for Buncombe County children who have been long-term suspended or expelled from school.

The summer of 2004 presented a number of challenges for the CrossRoads program. First, CrossRoads' expenses had exceeded income for the third year

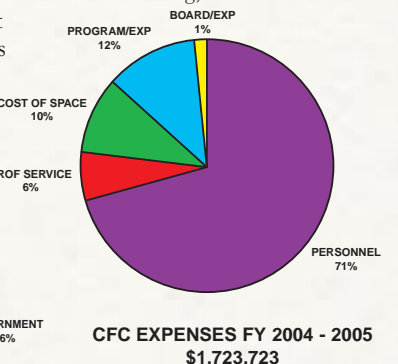
in a row. Second, North Carolina's on-going process of Mental Health reform was creating a questionable environment for CrossRoads. And, finally, CrossRoads had to move to a new facility in September of 2004.



Moving a program like CrossRoads is more involved than just locating a new facility. The move required approval from local government agencies as well as approval from the state licensing body. Under the best of circumstances, meeting all of the requirements and getting the requisite approvals takes time. In the fall of 2004, the devastating floods that hit Asheville drastically complicated the situation. Although CrossRoads was not directly affected by the floods, all of the people involved in re-licensing the program – from city officials to architects – were focused on working on the problems the floods created. The result was that a process that should have been completed by December took until the following July.

When it was clear that CrossRoads would have to move, the Board of Directors seriously considered closing the program down until the move was complete, all licenses were obtained, and we could bill Medicaid for eligible clients (only about half of the clients

served by CrossRoads are eligible for Medicaid funding).



Closing the program would clearly have been the most financially conservative course of action. The problem, however, was the youth being served in the program at the time of the move. The questions the Board repeatedly asked were, what would happen to those youth? Where would they go? How much education would they lose? Would they ever go back to school? What would their families do? As has been the case for the past 30 years, concern for the children overrode financial and business considerations and, even though we did not receive any Medicaid funding from September 2004 through July 2005, CrossRoads remained open and served 21 young people who would otherwise have received no services at all.

Keeping CrossRoads open was clearly a risk and required a total agency commitment. The unreimbursed expenses associated with operating the program last year exhausted most of CARING for Children's limited reserve funds. And, we certainly could not have kept the program open at all had

(Continued on page 2)



CARING for Children Attains Accreditation

In July 2005, CARING for Children received notification that it had been accredited by the Council on Accreditation (COA). COA accreditation attests that CARING for Children meets the highest national standards and delivers the best quality services to children and families in Buncombe County. Remaining true to its mission, CARING for Children is the only COA accredited agency in Buncombe County that exclusively serves Buncombe County children regardless of their ability to pay or draw on third party insurance or Medicaid.

COA is an international, independent, not-for-profit accrediting body of social and behavioral healthcare services. COA's mission "promotes best practice standards; champions quality services for children, youth, and families; and advocates for the value of accreditation." COA accreditation attests that an organization meets the highest national standards and is delivering the best quality services to the community it serves. CARING is proud to join COA's Community

of Excellence that includes more than 1,000 private and public organizations that serve over 6,000,000 children, individuals, and families in the United States and Canada.

The COA accreditation process involved an in-depth examination of the organization's compliance with best practice standards. The process included a review of organizational standards including human resources, financial and risk management and continuous quality improvement as well as reviewing all of CARING's services. CARING for Children accomplished the goal of accreditation using existing staff and volunteers. Unlike most agencies seeking to become accredited for the first time, CARING did not hire outside consultants or additional administrative staff.

The programs provided at CARING for Children and accredited by COA include Our Place, Trinity Place, Cornerstone, Counterpoint, Angels Watch, CrossRoads, Project HomeBase, and Intensive Family Preservation.

Director's Report: Thirty Years of CARING (Continued from page 1)

It not been for the commitment and contributions of people like Bob Weiler, a Board member who was instrumental in finding a suitable facility; Bob Spear, Board member and contractor who donated much of his time to help renovate the new facility; John Fisher and Pete Booth, architects who donated their time; and, people from the City of Asheville and the Division of Facility Services who helped facilitate the licensing process.

Fiscal year 2004 – 2005 was indeed challenging. Throughout all of the challenges, however, CARING for Children remained true to its formal mission of nurturing hope and creating safety in the lives of children and families in crisis by providing high quality care, shelter, education and treatment. And, perhaps more importantly, CARING for Children remained true to the vision of that Sunday School class from 1975 – and, despite all the problems, roadblocks, and risks, kept the focus of the agency squarely on helping children and families.

Yes, some things can "remain quite the same."

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CELEBRATING 30 YEARS OF CARING for Children

CARING for Children, Inc. celebrated its 30th birthday at a party on Saturday, August 27 at the Cornerstone Group Home. Donors and community members were invited to attend and tour Cornerstone, the program for young women who are learning independent living skills, and to participate in the birthday activities, which included a silent auction balloon pop, a cake walk, face painting, clowns, and caricature drawing, as well as cake and ice cream refreshments. Asheville-Buncombe Community College freshmen students helped by volunteering their support for the event.



A Commemorative Book celebrating CARING for Children's 30th Birthday is at the publisher. Thanks to Dr. Mario DiCesare for taking on this monumental task and additional thanks to those who contributed to the book. We expect to have it completed by the end of the year.

Just a Few of CARING for Children's Success Stories...

Cornerstone – By Mazie Warters, Program Coordinator

Four years ago, L.N. arrived at Cornerstone after being taken into the custody of the Department of Social Services. She was a senior at Asheville High School and had plans to attend college. The shock of losing her family created doubt and fear about her future. Cornerstone staff were determined to show her she could still pursue her dreams.

As part of the program, the staff took the girls to tour several colleges, and L.N. became interested once again in pursuing her dream of a college education. Staff provided emotional support and encouraged L.N. and helped her search for scholarships, student loans, and donations. Staff hosted a "college shower" for L.N. and, finally, the big day arrived. L.N. graduated from Asheville High and left to attend UNC-Charlotte. L.N. worked hard, graduated in May, 2005, and already has a job.

Cornerstone has continued to help other girls learn about opportunities for higher education. Since L.N. went to UNC-C, Cornerstone has provided encouragement and assistance to young women entering Asheville /Buncombe Technical College, Central Piedmont Community College, and Winston-Salem State University. At Cornerstone, we believe education is a big part of building the road to success, along with employment, self-care, and housing.

Trinity Place – By Mazie Warters, Program Coordinator

A couple of years ago, two young boys (Bob and Fred, not their real names) showed up in the early morning hours accompanied by a police officer. The boys and their mother were facing a hopeless situation. They had been living in a car, and the winter temperatures had made it impossible for them to stay warm. Mom was homeless and had an addiction problem. With Bob and Fred safe at Trinity Place, Mom knew the boys were warm and safe, had three meals a day, and could stay focused on school. She was able to check into a substance abuse program, look for a job, and find public housing. After a short period of time, the family was reunited for their new start.

The best part of this story occurred around the end of this September when Bob dropped by Trinity Place to say hello and to update us on how everyone was doing. Fred had completed school and lives in Panama City, Florida. Mom has stayed clean and continues to be part of the boys' lives. Bob is a junior in high school and plays football so well that scouts have been talking to him about college scholarships. Bob's smile could not have been bigger as he shared his good fortune. As he gave me a goodbye hug, I could not help but think about how far he has come and how far he will go.

The event raised over \$6,000 to fund CARING's programs to provide services for Buncombe County children and their families, regardless of their ability to pay or draw on third party insurance or Medicaid.

2004-2005 Donors to the CARING for Children Mission

The Board of Directors and staff of CARING for Children extend sincere appreciation to the following individuals, families, businesses, and churches. The generous support of our donors enables CARING to continue the programs necessary to serve youth and families in need.

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Mr. and Mrs. Michael Goodman
Mr. David Gray
Mr. and Mrs. Robert Hall
Mrs. Dorothy Hamill
Ms. Diane Hammar
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Dr. and Mrs. Stanley Holt
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Mr. and Mrs. Mark Hornsby
Mr. and Mrs. George Howell
Mr. and Mrs. Alex Huang
Dr. and Mrs. Olson Huff
Mr. and Mrs. Donald Inlay
Mrs. Carey Jackson
Ms. Janet Jenkins
Mr. and Mrs. Stephen Jones
Dr. and Mrs. James Karegeannes
Mrs. Leah Karpen
Mr. and Mrs. Charles Killian
Judge Rebecca Knight
Mr. S. David Knisley
Dr. and Mrs. Mark Knollman
Lavonia Baptist Church
Ms. Deborah Lawrence
Ms. Geraldine Lawrence
Mr. and Mrs. Mark Lindsay
Mr. and Mrs. C.R. Lowe
Mr. and Mrs. George Macatee
Mrs. Norma Marcotte
Mr. Dennis Martin
Mr. and Mrs. Luck McElreath
Mr. and Mrs. Gary McMahaill
Mr. and Mrs. Kerney McNeil
Dr. and Mrs. Robert Merrill
Mr. and Mrs. Steve Miller
Mr. John Modaff
Mr. and Mrs. Gerard Mozian
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