

Children's Home

SUMMER 2011



EVERY CHILD DESERVES A SAFE PLACE

www.chowc.org

President's Message

As promised in our last newsletter, we are sharing our collaboration with other organizations who share a common message in advocating for children and their families. In this issue we are highlighting the **Broome County Family Violence Prevention Council**. Kate Harvey, Director of our Diagnostic Unit, is currently a Council member and is the recent past Chair of the Council.

The 40-member Council provides leadership to the community in its effort to reduce the incidence and severity of family violence. A largely professional volunteer organization with nine working subcommittees, it has devoted numerous hours to a wide variety of activities that focus coordination, advocacy and education on the prevention and treatment of family violence and corollary systems issues.

The mission of the Council is to reduce the incidence and severity of family violence in Broome County, including child abuse and neglect, domestic violence and elder abuse, by developing and implementing a comprehensive coordinated community program for preventing, as well as identifying, assessing and treating all forms of family violence.

Functions of the Council are:

- Interagency Coordination
- Program Development
- Training of Professionals
- Community Education
- Advocacy

For more detailed information on the Council and its Member Agencies we encourage you to visit their website: www.gobroomecounty.com/fvpc or call 607-778-2153.

Robert K. (Chip) Houser

President & CEO
(chouser@chowc.org)



"For us, the safety, stability and well-being of children and families are of utmost importance. For children, a safe, supportive, and nurturing home gives them the best chance for a successful life."

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Spiritual Life

One evening an old Cherokee told his grandson about a battle that goes on inside every person. He said, "My son, the battle is between two wolves inside us all. One is Evil. It is anger, envy, jealousy, sorrow, regret, greed, arrogance, self-pity, guilt, resentment, inferiority, lies, false pride, superiority, and ego. The other is Good. It is joy, peace, love, hope, serenity, humility, kindness, benevolence, empathy, generosity, truth, compassion and faith. The grandson thought about it for a minute and then asked his grandfather, "Which wolf wins?" The old Cherokee simply replied, "The one you feed."

I told this story in Chapel several weeks ago to reinforce the fact that God gives us freedom to make important choices in our lives, and that those choices have both immediate and long-lasting consequences. I left the young people with the question, "Which wolf will you feed?" As they were leaving the chapel, one young man whispered in my ear, "I'm going to feed the good wolf."

Much of what we do at the Children's Home is about encouraging young people to "feed the good wolf." This means helping them develop the desire and the skills to increase their positive choices and decrease their negative choices. One of the tools we use is a program called Rachel's Challenge - Character in Motion. This is an on-going character education program that I teach in every classroom in our on-campus school. Rachel's Challenge combats bullying and disrespect by challenging young people to start a chain reaction of kindness. In addition, we talk about topics such as honesty, compassion, trust, attitude and respect. Little by little, one act of kindness at a time, Rachel's Challenge is having a positive impact at the Children's Home.

A few days ago I meet a former resident in the lobby of the Administration Building. Her first question was, "Are you guys still doing Rachel's Challenge?" I believe that Rachel's Challenge, combined with other faith-based programming, is beginning to change the hearts of our young people. And I believe that, by God's grace, the good wolf will win!

The Rev. Bill Townsend,
Director of Spiritual Life
btownsend@chowc.org

KIDS HELPING KIDS

THE "FRIENDS OF RACHEL" CLUB WILL HAVE A BOOTH AT THE ICE CREAM SOCIAL. THEY ARE COLLECTING METAL TABS FROM BEVERAGE OR FOOD CANS. YOU CAN HELP BY SAVING THEM AND BRINGING THEM WHEN YOU COME TO THE SOCIAL ON TUESDAY, AUGUST 9TH. THEY WILL BE MELTED INTO SCRAP METAL, SOLD AND THE MONEY DONATED TO THE SHRINERS' HOSPITAL.



Joshua Russell

A graduate of the Family Support Program, Joshua completed AIT training for the National Guard in April and anticipates that he is going to be deployed to the Middle East at some point in the near future. He said "thanks to the Family Support Program because they helped my family and got me on my feet".

Family Support Program (FSP)

The evidence is irrefutable. The Family Support Program in Norwich is "new and improved," as the staff is taking its DBT lessons to heart, both for themselves and for the children.

Using the "observe and describe" aspect of dialectical behavioral therapy (DBT), the staff made improvements to its weekly DBT sessions with the kids, using more interactive lessons and sprinkling in rewards for students who demonstrate their understanding of their lessons and tell how they can apply them. Through the better use of more games, arts and crafts, the children are feeling more comfortable to say how they have used the skills successfully in the past.

One sweet example was when the staff literally took lemons, cut them up and converted them to lemonade as children watched, while the lesson was ongoing. Children got to sample both the sour lemons "straight up" and then later combined with sugar and water. Those with good behavior earned the lemonade and showed their approval with a smile.

One boy demonstrated that he was successfully using "radical acceptance." The boy had been struggling to control his anger after his father had become incarcerated. But after some lessons, the boy remarked that he knew that he was better off being patient and waiting for the day when his dad would be released from jail this year. The same boy also said that he has grown to understand that what he sees on television, like fighting in boxing matches, is not an appropriate way to react in public.

Staff social workers leading the second year of another new counseling program changed its name from the "Parenting" group to the "Skills Building" group to more accurately represent the broader family goals of the program. The skills group introduces the idea that parents can use skills that they already have, as opposed to the FSP staff teaching them or treating them as empty slates.

Stay tuned for more on our program.

Brian Murphy,
Staff FSP
bmurphy@chowc.org

Joan Sage Award Recipient

Taylor Roche spent her senior year at the Children's Home and completed all of the requirements needed to earn her high school diploma from Susquehanna Valley. Her strong work ethic, independence and commitment to her goal of graduating made it possible. Taylor's second goal is to go to college. She has been accepted to Broome Community College for the fall semester.

Excerpts from Taylor's speech made at the Children's Home Education Year End Program are printed below. For the full speech, visit www.chowc.org.

Just when the caterpillar thought the world was over, it became a butterfly." That quote can relate to my life. This has been a crazy year. There have been a lot of obstacles and difficulties in my life that have made my life harder. But it has also made me a stronger person.

Everyone has been through different difficult situations and somewhere, somehow, ended up here. And it doesn't matter how or why but what matters is your future. What matters is what you do with every choice and every decision you make.



Your future is the most important and most cherished item in this room. All of our decisions are what makes up the future. I've worked very hard this year for one goal, and that was to graduate. Graduating was very important to me because I was in and out of school a lot throughout high school. But I did it. I couldn't do it without the help of this school or all the wonderful teachers, peers and staff. I thank you for your help and support.

I want to remind you all to make the right decisions, to get through your rough times with a smile. Be good, be happy. And remember that each of you is unique ...and irreplaceable.

THE JOAN SAGE AWARD IS GIVEN IN MEMORY OF JOAN SAGE WHO DEVOTED 26 YEARS OF HER CAREER AS AN EDUCATOR TO THE CHILDREN'S HOME.

THE AWARD IS GIVEN TO A HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT WHO DEMONSTRATES ACADEMIC SUCCESS AND GOOD CHARACTER AND HAS ESTABLISHED SOME KIND OF EDUCATION GOAL THAT SHOWS COMMITMENT TO LEARNING. THE RECIPIENT OF THE AWARD IS CHOSEN BY THE EDUCATION ADMINISTRATION/ SUPERVISORY TEAM.

Little League Baseball



The Hillcrest Blue Little League baseball team completed their first season in the Little Chenango Valley League as well as a first time for many players on

the team. The kids always played hard and never gave up. As a team, we improved immensely throughout the season and the opposing coaches would often tell me after the game how much they were impressed with the improvement our team made throughout the season. The kids learned valuable lessons such as teamwork, social skills and being part of something that is bigger than themselves. Multiple parents from opposing teams came up to me during and after games to tell me how impressed they were with how the kids handled themselves on the field. Of course the number one reason the season was a success is because no matter what the score was the kids always had fun and just enjoyed having the opportunity to play baseball.

Jacob Carle,
Recreation Staff



Letter from a Child in the Therapeutic After School Program (TASP)

The reason you should keep trying is because I need help listening or sometimes I am really angry at someone. Sometimes I have bad days or sometimes something bad happens before I go to school, but I care about you even though I don't listen sometimes. But you should keep trying harder, even though you want to give up. Maybe people need to know what I did. I like to tell people what happened. I like to tell them how my day went so they can help me. Maybe I need help listening. Maybe I don't show I care, but I do care. I care a lot more than people think I do. So maybe you should keep trying harder like Sensei tells me to do.*

Submitted to Kim Stratton, Director of TASP and used with permission.

* Sensei is the term these children use for their karate teacher.

Friendships That Endure

Think of the adults in your childhood that impacted your life. Our families played a crucial role in molding us as individuals, but many of us remember other adults that influenced us as well. It might be the guiding hand of a teacher, the thoughtful words of fellow church members, or even a caring act of an adult in our neighborhood, that we remember fondly, who acted as a swaying force in our development into adulthood. One of the greatest contributions to society that an individual can make is to be a positive force in the life of a child. Volunteers at the Children's Home act as this positive force daily by working with the children on campus and through the Friend to a Child Program. Many of these friendships last for more than a few months to a year. They endure beyond that point and these adults continue to have an impact on a child's life.

A little over a year ago, a volunteer came to us asking if there was any way she could help in our mission. She was a person with a heart for young people, had time to give each week and considered herself a great listener. Once introduced to a teenage girl in the Friend to a Child program, she began to visit consistently each week. As trust in each other grew, they began to spend more time together, exploring each other's interests and together attending various community events. Eventually, after months in the friendship, this volunteer wanted to do more to share her home and family with this teen. Now, 10 months into the friendship, they spend most every weekend together and this child is an important part of family events for this volunteer and her husband. Their family doesn't seem complete without this teenage girl. This is the reason the volunteer and her husband are in the process of becoming certified as foster/adoptive parents. What began as a volunteer looking to make a difference in a life of one child has turned into the possibility of a family for this teen.

This story may not be typical of our matches in Friend to a Child program. Most visit weekly with a child for dinners, movies, fishing, or other types of community events. A common thread, however, is shared by all volunteers helping in our mission at the Children's Home. An adult is making a positive impact in the life of a child through consistent visits, shared interests and a caring presence. To find out how you can help impact the life of a child, contact us.

Kate Stacey
Volunteer Coordinator
kstacey@chowc.org

Thank You Notes...

...I AM ONE OF THE TEACHERS AT THE CHILDREN'S HOME THAT WAS AT ARNOLD PARK... I JUST WANTED TO EXPRESS OUR GRATITUDE TO THE STAFF AND STUDENTS ...FOR MAKING OUR DAY AT THE PARK MORE ENJOYABLE THAN WE ANTICIPATED.

...IT MEANS SO MUCH TO THE KIDS AND TO THE STAFF TO BE WELCOMED TO PLAY IN A GAME THAT WAS BEING HELD BY OTHERS. ALSO, THANK YOU FOR THE SNOW CONES AND ICE CREAM! IT WAS A PLEASANT TREAT FOR EVERYONE. ALL OF THE KIDS WERE SO NICE TO EVERYONE AND WENT OUT OF THEIR WAY TO INTRODUCE THEMSELVES TO KIDS THAT THEY DID NOT KNOW. ONCE AGAIN, THANK YOU FOR YOUR KINDNESS.

From a Teacher...

THANKS SO MUCH FOR THE NOTE. I AM VERY GLAD THAT YOUR STUDENTS HAD A GREAT DAY YESTERDAY ...BELIEVE ME WHEN I TELL YOU I WAS EQUALLY IMPRESSED WITH YOUR STUDENTS AND THEIR POLITENESS, GRATITUDE, GOOD MANNERS, AND SPORTSMANSHIP. THE APPRECIATION... IN YOUR STUDENTS' EYES FOR... ICE CREAM WAS A GREAT REMINDER TO ME WHY I AM A TEACHER AND WHY I LOVE INTERACTING WITH STUDENTS. AS CHEESY AS THIS SOUNDS, THE WAY YOUR STUDENTS ACTED YESTERDAY AND THE APPRECIATION THEY SHOWED HONESTLY MADE MY DAY.

A Thank You from DSS...

I JUST WANTED TO THANK YOU FOR INVITING ME (ALONG WITH THE OTHER CASEWORKERS) TO THE END OF THE YEAR PARTY FOR THE GROUP HOMES. I THINK I SPEAK ON BEHALF OF BOTH... AS WELL WHEN I SAY WE ENJOYED OURSELVES THOROUGHLY. IT WAS WONDERFUL TO SEE ALL OF THE RESIDENTS HAVING A GOOD TIME WITH THEIR FAMILIES AND PEERS. YOUR PROGRAMS ARE WONDERFUL. KEEP UP THE GOOD WORK!

~ Caseworker, Broome County Department of Social Services

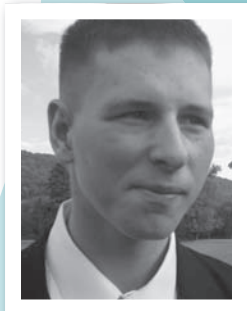
Countdown to 100 in 2012

The 100th Anniversary celebration is made possible through many people in our community working to keep children safe and families learning to work together through adversities. The ongoing success of the Children's Home comes through awareness of needs and initiation of programs to meet those needs with staff and community leaders working together. The 80's saw a tremendous growth in program development that envisioned care beyond the traditional residential treatment programs. The 90's continued that growth and vision.

We hope that you will **SAVE THE DATE for our kickoff luncheon on Wednesday, May 23rd, noon, at the Riverwalk Hotel and Conference Center.** For more information on these programs and the anniversary, check www.chowc.org.

- 1991** Day Treatment Program began
- 1992** The Residential Treatment Facility, Inc. was licensed by the NYS Office of Mental Health as a hospital for mentally ill children (now known as Stillwater, RTF.)
- 1993** James Friesner, Executive Director – until June 2000
Diagnostic Unit opens
- 1995** Family Support Program (FSP) opens in Norwich, NY
Wilderness Adventure Program (WAP) opens in Greene, NY
- 1998** Supervised Independent Living Program (SILP) opens
- 2000** Bruce Nisbet becomes President in June (until December 2003)

Suzanne Meredith is authoring a book to capture points in our history. Suzanne is the author and/or co-author of 20 books and has received the Jefferson Award, with local photographer Ed Aswad, for exceptional service in the preservation and promotion of local history through the writing of photo/history books. Books will be presented at the anniversary celebration.



Leonard E. is a class of 2011 graduate from Chenango Valley High School and Broome-Tioga BOCES with a Business Management Certificate. Lenny also received a scholarship and a Lifelong Learning award from BOCES. This fall Lenny will be attending Broome Community College studying business management.

Congratulations to all class of 2011 graduates!



**Welcome
April Lynne Johnson**
*Children's Home
Wendy's Wonderful Kids
Adoption Recruiter*

Beginning August 1, 2011, April Johnson will become our Wendy's Wonderful Kids (WWK) recruiter. Wendy's Wonderful Kids is a signature program of the Dave Thomas Foundation for Adoption and Children's Home has been a grant recipient since July, 2007.

Prior to becoming our WWK recruiter, April was a social worker in the Adoption/Homefinding Unit of the Children's Home. She brings seven years of experience in the human services field and holds both a Bachelor Degree in Human Development and Master of Arts and Social Sciences from Binghamton University.

April loves working with children and finds satisfaction in connecting kids with adoptive homes. In her volunteer time she also works with youth in programming at her church, Mt. Sinai. Congratulations, April. For information about adopting, contact April or Alicia Gaucher at 772-6904.



— signature program —

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COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT...

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Garden of Hope ~ Kentucky Derby Style

May 7, 2011

Thank you.

**With your help we
made over \$48,000.**



Maggie Memorial Golf Tournament

June 24, 2011

Thank you.

**With your help we
made over \$23,000.**

YOU'RE INVITED!

ICE CREAM SOCIAL ~ AUGUST 9, 2011

- CHILDREN'S HOME HILLCREST CAMPUS, 5:00 TO 8:00 P.M.
- \$3 TICKET INCLUDES ICE CREAM AND HOMEMADE CAKE.
- LIGHT PICNIC FARE AVAILABLE FOR PURCHASE.
- KID-FRIENDLY ACTIVITIES, CORPORATE TOPPING CONTEST, AND MUSIC BY LORI & DOUG OF CLEAR CHANNEL RADIO AND THE MAINE COMMUNITY BAND.



Thank you
CADENCE
DESIGN

for hosting another fun day of golf on May 30. Great golf, great food and great people. We are so pleased you invited us to be a part of this wonderful event. Proceeds from this tournament were donated to the Children's Home to assist in programming for kids!

3rd Annual
TOM'S SERVICE
OPEN

TO BENEFIT CHILDREN'S HOME
Saturday, August 13, 2011
8:00 am shotgun start
Belden Hill Golf Club
1820 Rt. 7, Harpursville, NY
For further information,
please contact Tom Leahy,
Home: 772-6222,
Work 724-1774



1182 Chenango Street
 Binghamton, NY 13901-1696
 Telephone: (607) 772-6904

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How to Contact Us

- Telephone. 607-772-6904
 800-772-6904
- Robert (Chip) Houser ext. 121
President/CEO
- Patricia Giglio ext. 237
*Chief Administrative &
 Financial Officer*
- Kathleen Romer ext. 140
Chief Program Officer
- Maria Cali. ext. 101
Vice President of Education
- Rebecca Mebert ext. 131
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- Carol Aronowitz ext. 139
*Managing Director of Planning
 & Performance Improvement*
- Daniel Thomas ext. 216
Chief Facilities Manager
- Robert Allman. ext. 127
*Managing Director of
 Residential Programs*
- Frederick Mohrien ext. 208
*Managing Director of Preventive
 & Family-Based Services*
- April Lynne Johnson ext. 283
*Adoption Recruiter
 Wendy's Wonderful Kids*
- Kathryn Stacey ext. 186
*Friend to a Child
 Volunteer Coordinator*
- E-Mail info@chowc.org
 Web Site www.chowc.org

Donating IRA Assets to Charity

A new tax law passed in late 2010 reinstates a provision enabling retirees to take tax-free withdrawals from their IRA provided the money is transferred directly to a qualified charitable organization. **Retirees 70½ and older can donate up to \$100,000 tax free from their IRA each year.**

Under this temporary provision this distribution is excluded from income if it is made directly to a charity. This distribution is not included in your income, so is equivalent to a 100 percent deduction. By making a charitable contribution from your IRA, you can satisfy your RMD amount without reporting additional income.

Donating IRA assets can be a rewarding strategy for both you and the charity. AS ALWAYS, you should talk with your financial representative or tax advisor before making a decision that alters your tax situation. It is important to consider your tax situation before deciding whether to make a charitable contribution from your IRA.



Your donations and gifts help us to provide creative programming for kids! (Photos: Awards Ceremony and Field Trip for Day Treatment Program.)



Visit our website at www.chowc.org.
 “Like” us on Facebook.