

Welcome to the first issue of Children & Family Services Center's quarterly newsletter.



WELCOME

Welcome to the first issue of [Children & Family Services Center's](#) quarterly newsletter. This e-newsletter is designed to keep everyone who has a stake in CFSC updated on all the happenings at our member agencies. The idea was born out of the latest strategic plan; the CFSC Board of Directors and our 10 partner agencies determined that increased communication would enhance collaboration within CFSC. Much of the content is generated by the member agencies. Our distribution list is made up of agency Executive Directors and Board of Directors. We hope you'll want to share the newsletter by forwarding it to your supporters.

Thanks for sharing your stories. Let us know what you think and how we can keep making the newsletter relevant for you and your constituencies.

A National (Role) Model

When CFSC was just a twinkle in the eye 14 years ago, few of us could have predicted that we'd become a national model for collaboration. But thanks to the vision, commitment and generosity of Hugh McColl and other community leaders and the sheer will and determination of many of you, we've become a go-to resource for organizations across the country looking for ways to collaborate.

Fifteen groups across the country have contacted me in the past six months to conduct site visits or lead webinars and share the secrets of our success. I always start by sharing these three key points:

1. Collaboration only happens when it's based on trust and a shared mission.

3. Patience is key.

I emphasize the importance of a shared strategic vision. Our strategic goal – to create an innovative partnership of community resources, focused on efficiency to promote strong families and advocates for change. -- existed long before our building.

I tell the groups seeking our advice that we got lucky with our visionary leaders. Mr. McColl and Russell Robinson know how to make things happen. They gave us their support and challenged us to figure out how to truly collaborate. Our agencies decided we'd share space, programming, technology and back office support.

In short order, we began to see how collaboration benefited our clients. At the most basic level, they suddenly knew where to go when they needed our services. Before our center existed, some of our agencies were located in dangerous neighborhoods (I know; I used to work in one!) and were in buildings that were later condemned. Now, we're in a stable environment with a 50-year lease. Our clients know where to find us. And, inter-agency referrals happen easily and regularly.

As wonderful as our building – which we will have been in 10 years next spring – and shared services model are, our people are why this all works. Dedicated agency directors, hard-working staffers and committed volunteers that share their expertise so freely ... those are the real secrets to our success. Our collaborative model works – not because of our beautiful building – but because we have never forgotten our promise to the community to make it work.

Thanks for all you do.

Peggy Eagan, ACSW
Executive Director

AGENCY MILESTONES

RECENT SUCCESSES & UPCOMING EVENTS

A Child's Place

Annabelle Suddreth, Executive Director

We're seeking donations of school supplies for thousands of homeless children in Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools (CMS). ACP is asking for donations of pens, pencils and crayons, along with notebooks, binders and folders. In addition, A Child's Place is always in need of public school uniforms, particularly pants and long-sleeve shirts and book bags for elementary and middle school students.

[website](#) to see the complete list of needed school supplies. We also maintain a wish list registry through Walmart.com and Target.com.

The Relatives (Alexander Youth Network)

Brennon Graham, Executive Director

Save the date for Breakfast with The Relatives' "Opening Doors." The event will be held at the Holy Trinity Greek Orthodox Cathedral on Nov. 15 at 7:30 a.m. It's the biggest fundraising event of the year for The Relatives.

Care Ring

Don Jonas, Ph.D., Executive Director

Care Ring sponsored three water tables to keep everyone quenched at the OrthoCarolina Classic on Saturday, Aug. 25. The event – a 10K Run, 5K Run/Walk and a 50-yard dash for kids – was held at 1915 Randolph Road.

Our **Young Professionals Council (YPC)** is comprised of 21- to 35-year-olds committed to making a difference in Charlotte. The group meets monthly, and the next meeting is Wednesday, Sept. 19 at 6:30 p.m. Meeting details are posted the first of each month at our website.

Our Annual **Hope for Community Health luncheon** is **Thursday, Oct. 11** from noon – 1:15 p.m. at the Hilton Charlotte Center City, 222 East Third Street. We're expecting more than 500 guests at our largest fundraising event of the year. To reserve your spot or to serve as a table captain, contact Elizabeth Hyland at 704.238.3716 or ehyland@careringnc.org.

Children's Home Society of N.C.

Frank Crawford, Executive Director

Family Finding is a promising practice currently being evaluated by an independent evaluator. It's an intervention program that begins with looking through a child's record at DSS and conducting extensive searches to begin to connect the family tree. The program seeks to connect the maternal and paternal sides of the family in search of functional adults who may form a lasting connection for the youth. The program looks beyond blood relatives toward anyone who loves, has mentored or taught or provided spiritual support for the youth.

There are nearly 9,000 children living in foster care and 2,400 children awaiting adoption in North Carolina. CHS is looking for caring people to provide loving adoptive and foster families. You don't have to be married, wealthy, or own your home in order to adopt or provide foster care. For more information, visit www.chsnc.org or call 1.800.778.9955

Molly Shaw, Executive Director

Thousands of students come to school every year without even the most basic supplies, and many teachers spend their own money to try and meet the need. Communities In Schools, WSOC-TV and Classroom Central partner each August for the **School Tools Campaign** to collect and distribute school supplies to kids who need them most.

Join us on the lawn of the Mint Museum on Randolph Road from 7-10 p.m. on **Saturday, Sept. 22** for the fourth annual **Lowcountry on the Green**. Enjoy live music, a silent auction and traditional Lowcountry fare of shrimp and grits, crab cakes, lobster hushpuppies and more. For details and ticket information, visit www.cischarlotte.org, or contact Elaine Rhodes, erhodes@cischarlotte.org.

Community Link***Floyd Davis, Executive Director***

Nearly 200 people had access to 500 pounds of chocolate at the inaugural Sweet Escapes chocolate affair on May 19. Chocolate sculptures, candy, cookies, brownies and a chocolate waterfall helped create a delicious experience. The evening raised \$22,000 to help move working families from homeless to housing.

Council for Children's Rights***Brett Loftis, J.D., Executive Director***

Prayers for Children: An Interfaith Call to Action featuring Marian Wright Edelman, President and Founder of the Children's Defense Fund was held Sunday, Sept. 2 from 3-4:30 p.m. at Pritchard Memorial Baptist Church. We co-sponsored the event with Mecklenburg Ministries and Freedom School Partners with support by the DNC Host Committee. The event highlighted children's issues as the nation focused on Charlotte during the DNC and included a procession of local and national interfaith leaders.

Smart Start of Mecklenburg County***Jane Meyer, Executive Director***

We recently won a Shape N.C. grant from the Blue Cross Blue Shield of North Carolina Foundation to address goals and strategies to reduce childhood obesity in Mecklenburg County. A community group of experts developed these three main goals:

- Increase Mecklenburg County employers' efforts to support and meet the needs of employees that are nursing mothers.
- Reduce obesity rates among staff in family serving organizations.
- Reduce obesity rates for children enrolled in child care facilities by improving the nutritional value of foods/beverages offered to them and increasing opportunities for age-appropriate physical activity.

United Family Services

Phil Kline, Executive Director

The Clyde and Ethel Dickson Domestic Violence Shelter for Women and will be a reality in December. Each year, the Charlotte-Mecklenburg Police Department responds to more than 36,000 domestic violence calls. And each year, our 29-bed shelter has been forced to turn women and children away.

Our new shelter will have 80 beds that will provide both emergency sanctuary and transitional housing stays up to a year, versus the current 30-day maximum stay. Our services will include safety planning, trauma and sexual assault counseling, education, job training, legal advocacy and representation, child care, financial literacy training, transportation, housing assistance and an onsite health clinic staffed by nurse practitioners. We have raised \$8.6 million toward our \$10.6 million capital campaign goal. To learn more, contact Karen Parker at kparker@ufscit.org or 704.367.2760.

FAST FACTS

- CFCS celebrates our 10-year anniversary in March and April 2013. (Plans are already under way for a big celebration.)
- An estimated 2,500 clients come to the center each week.
- Our center contains:
 - ... 505 tons of steel
 - ... 2,493 cubic yards of concrete
 - ... 225 gallons of paint
 - ... 1,369 light fixtures
 - ... 16,867 square feet of glass

THE LAST WORD

Let's start a conversation. Tell us your success stories, how collaboration has helped your

*Name the Newsletter

What should we call this new newsletter of ours? It's up to you! Submit your best idea(s) to pageleggett@yahoo.com The winner will be chosen by the communications committee and announced in our second issue, scheduled for distribution in November. Besides bragging rights, the winner will also get a \$10 coffee gift card.



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