

CSFC News | Volume 3 Spring 2013

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COLLABORATIONS QUARTERLY:

PERSPECTIVES FROM THE
CHILDREN & FAMILY SERVICES CENTER

WELCOME

Welcome to *Collaborations Quarterly*, Children & Family Services Center's quarterly e-newsletter, designed to keep stakeholders updated on happenings at CFSC and our member agencies. The idea behind the newsletter is that increased communication enhances collaboration. Please share the newsletter by forwarding it to your staff and supporters.

Looking Back on a Decade

On April 18, CFSC celebrates 10 years of shared service to the community

It's been nearly 10 years since we moved into our shared space and embarked on a journey together. That's 10 years of serving our community; 10 years' worth of dreams fulfilled.

We have a lot to celebrate. But we have much work left to do, too. On April 18 – our 10-year anniversary – we'll pause to reflect on what we've accomplished, celebrate what we've achieved together, thank those who've made it possible and look to the future to envision what the next decade holds. There will be celebrations held in the morning and the evening. Past and present affiliates will be invited to attend one or both. Look for more information in the coming weeks.

But before we move forward, I think it's useful to look back. Here, in no particular order, are what I consider to be our 10 biggest milestones from the past 10 years.

1. Located the property, designed and built a 100,000 square-foot building for nine partner agencies and furnished all nine offices and coordinated the moves into CFSC
2. Created the technological infrastructure to allow sharing of servers, wiring, phone system, etc. resulting in enhanced services and reduced costs
3. Raised \$10 million in cash and in-kind services and products to support construction, technology and collaboration
4. Added a 10th partner agency one year after opening
5. Became the hub of Charlotte Human Services gatherings, meetings and events
6. Created the synergy to bring the Nurse Family Partnership Program to Charlotte, and the program is now an integral program of Care Ring
7. Created Shared Services, providing financial and HR services for partner agencies, resulting in increased service, reduced risk, enhanced accountability and best practices for participating agencies.
8. Supported various partner agencies through four mergers, added an 11th additional partner agency in 2010 and assisted in incubation of Second Helping, a nonprofit employing women returning to our community from prison
9. Helped save partner agencies in excess of \$11.3 million when compared to market rent, furniture and technology costs over the 10 years
10. Collectively serve more 198,600 children and families annually in Mecklenburg County and across the state, plus advocate for all the 234,000 children living in Mecklenburg County.

Our shared strategic vision has made us a national model for collaboration. We've truly become a go-to resource for organizations across the country looking for ways to collaborate. They like our focus on efficiency that results in a better experience for those we serve.

On April 18, we'll ask everyone who attends an anniversary event to share his or her vision for CFSC in the next 10 years. We'll include everyone's ideas in a time capsule, which we'll bury under the Larry King Memorial Tree (our EDs will help with the dirt moving!) and unearth on April 18, 2023. How much of our shared vision will have come to pass? That depends on us!

Thanks for all you've done to get us this far. I look forward to the next 10 years.

Peggy Eagan, ACSW
Executive Director

AGENCY MILESTONES

RECENT SUCCESSES & UPCOMING EVENTS

A Child's Place

Annabelle Suddreth, Executive Director



A Child's Place has a new Toyota Sienna, thanks to Scott Clark Toyota. We won the new vehicle (after getting the most votes online) as part of the "100 Cars for Good" program in December. The van will be used to provide transportation to ACP client families for healthcare appointments and to purchase necessities, including clothing and shoes. In addition, the van can be used to take client children on fun and educational field trips!

Swing Fore A Child's Place golf tournament will be held May 13 at River Run Country Club in Davidson. For more information, including sponsorship and volunteer opportunities, visit <http://swingfore2013.eventbrite.com>. Proceeds benefit our My Place Summer Day Camp.

A Child's Place hosted our annual **Holiday Central** to make the holidays memorable for client homeless families. More than 840 sponsors made the holidays brighter for 1,458 homeless individuals. Thanks to 370 volunteers and 36 staff members who wrapped gifts.

A Child's Place received \$40,000 from the American Bus Association at its annual Marketplace in January. Each year, ABA selects a local nonprofit as part of its Marketplace Gives Back program. With the donation to ACP, Marketplace Gives Back has raised more than \$240,000 for deserving nonprofits since 2007.

The Relatives (Alexander Youth Network)

Brennon Graham, Executive Director



The Relatives will be celebrating Safe Place Week from March 17 through 23. This annual event highlights the strong network of business partners and community organizations that help extend The Relatives' reach to youth in Mecklenburg County. It is a time to raise awareness of The Relatives' Safe Place program and its partners as immediate options for young people facing abuse, neglect, bullying or other crisis situations. Look for a schedule of the week's activities to be posted on The Relatives' website soon.

www.TheRelatives.org

Care Ring

Don Jonas, Ph.D., Executive Director



On Saturday, Feb. 16, Care Ring's Young Professionals Council hosted its **5th Annual Casino Night** to raise \$50K to support our uninsured neighbors. The event, held at eXtravaganza Depot in Charlotte's NoDa district, attracted 350 party guests who enjoyed a spirited evening of Blackjack, Craps, Roulette and Texas Hold'em. Local and regional vendors generously donated gifts and services, from the practical to the luxurious, to ensure the Silent Auction was a success. Signature sponsors included Red|Ventures, OrthoCarolina, UnitedHealthcare, North Carolina Bank and Trust and Carolina Brewery. Missed out on all the fun? Check out our photos on the event tab at www.CareRingNC.org.

Please visit our weekly blog, www.InTheRings.org to share your perspective with us on healthcare issues and a host of topics critical to the well-being of our families and communities.

Children's Home Society of N.C.

Frank Crawford, Executive Director



To our CFSC friends and partners:

CHS will be moving from the Center during the month of March. Our 10-year journey with CFSC has been a valuable one for us, and we have established some important partnerships with our colleague agencies. We are excited about continuing those partnerships well beyond our move and wanted to express our appreciation to all of you for how you have contributed to our mission of promoting the right of every child to a permanent, safe and loving family. We are moving just a short distance down the road to 2200 E. 7th Street and will plan an open house soon after we are relocated.

We look forward to our continued partnerships with you in serving children and families in the Charlotte-Mecklenburg area. CFSC is a unique and creative operation and we wish you the very best in your journey.

Communities In Schools

Molly Shaw, Executive Director



We're already making plans for our two major community events for 2013. **Dine Out for Kids®** is on June 18, but promotion began in February with our save-the-date postcard.

This will be our 14th annual Dine Out for Kids® event. Check www.cischarlotte.org in mid-May for details and participating restaurants.

Lowcountry on the Green is on Saturday, Sept. 21. It's a fabulous lawn party at the Mint Museum on Randolph Road with Lowcountry fare, live music and a silent auction – all to benefit Communities In Schools.

Community Link

Floyd Davis, President and CEO



Community Link is offering free tax preparation service for households earning less than \$51,000. This community-wide initiative, known as **VITA** (Volunteer Tax Income Assistance) is spearheaded by Community Link's Family Financial Literacy Program. Taxes are filed by more than 200 trained volunteers at locations throughout Mecklenburg County. We expect to file more than 7,500 tax returns! Find out more at www.fflcivita.org, or call 704-761-VITA (8482).

Council for Children's Rights



Everything I Ever Needed to Know I Learned in Kindergarten ... and then again at CFSC!

1. You MUST Share. And it's not really sharing if you don't have to give up something you really want. If it benefits only you, it's NOT called sharing.
2. Always Be Honest. Telling the truth (and not just the good stuff) is important. It combats “stuck thinking” and allows others to see that every person and every organization struggles at times.
3. Ask For Help. If you need something, just ask. No one can help you unless you ask. At CFSC, there is always someone who has been there before. Collective wisdom saves heartaches.
4. A Fire Alarm Means You, Too. We all can begin to think that the rules don't apply to us because we are so busy, but sometimes the best and safest thing is to have the same rule for everyone.
5. Fear Is Not Wisdom. Fear of change is really just fear of loss of control and fear of the unknown, but no person or organization gets better unless they trust the process and embrace risk.
6. You Are Not Alone. As a nonprofit ED, it can feel like you are all alone and that neither your staff nor your board is your peer. CFSC has created a true safe community for visionary leaders.
7. Two Is Better Than One. We are all better off collectively than we ever were on our

own. We have done things as a building that none of us could have accomplished as one agency.

8. Remember Your Past. It is easy to forget the humble beginnings that we all came from, but occasionally it serves us well to reflect on our old, crummy, unsafe offices and dial-up internet.

9. People Are People. Our clients are just people like we are. They need and deserve to be treated with respect. One-stop shopping for clients it not just convenient, it is life-saving.

10. Be Thankful. Instead of complaining about the parking lot being full, we should all be thankful that we are the only place in uptown Charlotte where clients can park for free.

I am truly thankful to have been part of CFSC since the very beginning. The genius of this building and shared services may not be fully appreciated in any of our tenures, but one day, it will take its place as one of Charlotte's true gems. My time at the Council and in CFSC has been extraordinary, and I am continually in awe of the professionals in CFSC that dedicate their lives to serving people that might otherwise be forgotten.

Blessings,
Brett A. Loftis

Brett Loftis has left a lasting legacy on the Council for Children's Rights, CFSC and the children and families of Mecklenburg County. He will be deeply missed in Charlotte, but we wish him all the best in his new role as CEO of The Crossnore School in Avery County.

NC MedAssist

Lori Giang, MBA, Executive Director



On March 9, we will host our annual **Prescription for Hope Gala** at the Speedway Club at Charlotte Motor Speedway from 6 until 10 p.m. and will feature dinner, dancing, program and a live and silent auction. Tickets are \$50 and can be purchased by contacting Kelly Musante at 704-536-1685 or kmusante@medassist.org. The event will also be emceed by Colleen Odegard of WCNC's Charlotte Today.

Smart Start of Mecklenburg County

Jane Meyer, Executive Director



You're invited to our 2nd annual **Teddy Bear Breakfast** on April 20 from 9 to 11 a.m. at Pritchard Memorial Baptist Church. The family-focused event will feature Dr. Thomas Moore, a renowned children's entertainer, a performance by the Charlotte School of Ballet,

a teddy bear parade and a silent auction. Please call us at 704-377-6588 if you'd like to attend. You can purchase a table (for eight plus the table captain) for \$200 or buy a seat for \$25.

Smart Start Partnerships across the state are measured by criteria required by legislation. Each of the Partnerships receives a yearly report from the North Carolina Partnership for Children indicating how they have met the criteria. For example, in Mecklenburg County, 82 percent of children who attend licensed child care centers are in the highest-rated facilities. Compare that to 32 percent in 2001. We're proud of that increase and very grateful to our community partners, board members and staff who have helped ensure that the 2,000 days from birth to kindergarten are productive.

Safe Alliance
(formerly United Family Services)

Phil Kline, President and CEO



Our New Domestic Violence Shelter is Open

Construction of the Clyde and Ethel Dickson Domestic Violence Shelter is complete and clients are now being housed in our new 40,000-square-foot facility in west Charlotte. The building is the realization of a dream and a source of hope for those seeking sanctuary from violent and abusive situations. Each night in Mecklenburg County, on average, more than 55 women and children are seeking life-saving sanctuary from violent abusers/intimate partners. A few key points about our new shelter:

- We offer 80 beds versus 29 beds at our old shelter.
- We have state-of-the art security.
- We provide triage services in addition to longer-term care.
- We can offer longer stays for our clients – up to six months or a year. In our former shelter, clients were limited to stays of 30 days due to a lack of space.
- Our shelter is on a five-acre site convenient to public transportation and other support services.
- In addition to emergency and transitional accommodations, we offer expanded educational and counseling services for both adults and children.
- We have 10 emergency units and 19 apartment-style units, counseling rooms, conference rooms, kitchen/dining room, children's spaces, health clinic, laundry facilities, job training center and donation room.

As part of our strategic plan, we changed our name to Safe Alliance. We believe it more accurately reflects our mission and vision for the future. We believe all individuals and families deserve to live in safe and supportive environments and are working in alliance with clients, other organizations and the community toward our vision of everyone living in healthy and respectful relationships and enjoying lives free of domestic and sexual violence and child abuse.

Our new logo, the lotus flower, conveys a powerful message. The lotus flower begins life in mud at the bottom of a pond, grows upward and blooms into a beautiful flower. We believe this process is symbolic of the inspirational journey our clients travel with Safe Alliance.

Each petal of our lotus flower represents the national awareness color for domestic violence (purple), sexual assault (teal), child abuse (blue), and mental health (green).

NEWS YOU CAN USE

The Profound Effects of Virtualization

By PK Patel
Director of IT, CFSC

In a non-profit collaborative such as CFSC, perhaps nowhere are the economies of scale more visible than in IT. From the desktop/laptop replenishment program, an onsite IT help desk, to a feature-rich Voice-over-IP (VOIP) phone and voicemail system, collaboration has afforded CFSC's partner agencies a unique opportunity to visibly experience enterprise-class IT services and technologies that would otherwise be cost-prohibitive or impractical in a smaller environment.

In addition, there are also not-so-visible technologies currently being leveraged at CFSC, laying the foundation for a robust and reliable network. The foremost of which is virtualization. Virtualization is inherently a behind the scenes technology; after all, the word virtual refers to something abstract. And though the overt effects of virtualization may be subtle, the implications it has on our business operations are profound.

- **Reduced downtime/increased uptime.** Physical servers are prone to hardware failures and require human intervention to recover from errors. Virtual servers, on the other hand, are fault tolerant--they keep chugging along even if there is a hardware problem and can recover from serious errors automatically, often without users noticing. CFSC experienced very little downtime last year, thanks predominantly to multiple levels of fault tolerance provided by virtualization.
- **Faster provisioning.** Provisioning a new physical server takes a lot of time and resources, involving weeks or months of planning, procurement, testing and deployment. Virtualization squeezes that time frame into a few days. In fact, the CFSC IT department replaced, deployed and migrated 25 servers last year, a task that would've been monumental just three years ago.
- **Hardware efficiency.** Physical servers often have more hardware resources (think

processor speed, hard drive space, memory) than are required for a particular application. With each application requiring its own separate, dedicated server, physical servers cost more, take up more space and are heavily underutilized. Virtual servers can be “right-sized,” giving each server the exact amount of hardware resources it needs. The results are savings in cost, space and energy. CFSC currently has about 60 virtual servers running inside four physical servers, each the size of half a pizza box.

- **Disaster recovery.** Perhaps the chief limitation of physical servers is their mobility. Physical servers are inescapably bound to their hardware, making it extremely difficult to run them from another location in the event of a disaster. Virtualization wraps the servers into a bubble that can be easily migrated anywhere and run from completely different hardware, making it an ideal solution for disaster recovery and business continuity. CFSC anticipates having a fully operational disaster recovery site by the end of the year.

As more and more business practices become integrated with technology, the more we become reliant on technology, and the more there is a need to ensure that technology is reliable. Virtualization does just that, serving as the foundation of an IT ecosystem that's lean, flexible, fault tolerant, mobile, and most importantly, reliable.

THE LAST WORD

Let's start a conversation. Tell us your success stories, how collaboration has helped your clients and what you'd like to see in Collaborations Quarterly. Contact pageleggett@yahoo.com with your feedback and story ideas.

CHILDREN & FAMILY SERVICES CENTER

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