



# update

SPRING 2015

## “Renewed Hope”

*CFS pioneering trauma-informed, integrated health model*

Dear Friends:

The Davis\* family was sleep-deprived and struggling. Their nine year-old foster daughter, Sarah, could not sleep and she kept the rest of the family, including two other children, from sleeping too. The Davises love Sarah and want to adopt her, but her anger and behaviors at both school and home were putting the adoption they all wanted at risk.

Fortunately, CFS had already begun the process of creating a new way to treat children and people of all ages with mental health issues. The CFS team contacted Dr. Jim Robertson at Kids Creek Children’s Clinic in Traverse City. He made arrangements to see Sarah the same day and was also able to quickly consult with pediatrician Mark Sloane of Western Michigan University’s Children’s Trauma Assessment Center (CTAC) to discuss Sarah’s medications and how the trauma she had experienced was impacting her behavior. A new treatment plan was made for Sarah immediately, and within days Sarah’s foster mom called her caseworker to report that Sarah had slept through the night. “We feel a renewed hope,” Mrs. Davis told her worker.

This is one of the first of what we believe will be many positive changes in the lives of children and their families, including Sarah’s. The Davis family is moving forward with her adoption, and they credit the team approach to her care and the support they have received for helping to save their family.



\*names have been changed



The Behavioral Health Team at CFS: Elizabeth Carrillo, Lori Minidis, Lisa Lederer, Margo Million, Linda Smith, Dr. Jim Robertson, Amber Lee, Jim Scherrer, Paula Smith

To help facilitate this new integrated approach to treating children and adults, this month CFS will relocate our Behavioral Health Department to Kids Creek. The redesigned 4,500 square-foot space will create a seamless way for children and families to get both their medical and behavioral health needs met under one roof. Referrals and initial assessments could occur on the same day, enabling us to treat children far more effectively and efficiently.

“This is a partnership that will provide incredible benefits for our patients,” says Dr. Robertson. “We will be able to achieve an unprecedented level of coordination of care, hopefully decrease the number and level of medications kids require, and offer much quicker and easier access to mental health services.”

A number of people have led the way through the visioning and negotiating to create this new practice. I am grateful for the expertise, energy, and ideas of our senior staff, including Paula Smith, Lisa Lederer, Mike Carda, and Dave Bitler.

*continued on page 2*

**Kids grow best in families! Be a foster parent.**  
To learn how, call 231 946 8975.

*“If you want to lift yourself up, lift up someone else.”*

*-Booker T. Washington*



*Renewed Hope continued*

A second, equally exciting development is our new trauma assessment and treatment center, serving all of northern Michigan in partnership with our mentors at Western Michigan University’s Children’s Trauma Assessment Center and Kids Creek. For more about the center, please visit our website blog at [www.cfsnwmi.org/news/](http://www.cfsnwmi.org/news/). To make an appointment with our Behavioral Health team, please call 231 946 8975.

I look forward to sharing more about these new services to our community with you as we move forward. Meanwhile, thank you always for your continued support.

Warmly,  


Jim Scherrer



Paper Angels volunteers helped facilitate the distribution of donations for 720 wish lists, valued at close to \$100,000! From left: Mike Rudzik, Michelle Goetz Grahl, and Sue Van Aelst



DJ serenades WTCM’s Joel Franck and Jamie Kramer on Paper Angels Drop-Off Day



Angels bring their gifts to CFS on Drop-Off Day



## GURLS in DC

Our GURLS (Girls United in Resilience, Leadership, and Service) Youth Corps team, a summer work/skills building experience for teens in foster care in partnership with SEEDS, won national kudos as The Corps Network’s Project of the Year in February. The Oleson Foundation and a number of individuals generously funded the girls’ trip to Washington, DC to receive their recognition and tour the capitol city. TJ Maxx outfitted the team in style with new luggage.

“Youth Corps made me stronger and smarter and brave. We all worked as a team. It was pretty cool,” said Cheyenne of her experience. Several of the girls look forward to another summer as part of the GURLS Youth Corps in 2015.

From left: Raven, Cheyenne, Savanna, Letitia, and Cheyenne

# good work

As a result of the merger of CFS and Third Level, our services now reach across **32 counties in northern Michigan** via offices in Traverse City, Harbor Springs, Gaylord, Alpena, and Mancelona.

## VOLUNTEER OF THE YEAR

*Mindy Binsfeld*



### In Her Words:

“17 years ago, I had a personal crisis and thought I had no place to turn. Third Level Crisis Center was suggested to me, so I called the organization. That phone call was life changing.”

“When my kids were young, I volunteered at their school, in county organizations where my family lives, and recreational sports programs. Once my youngest child left for college in August 2011, I wanted something other than working primarily with kids. This was when I thought of the difference Third Level Crisis Center made for me so many years ago. After an intensive training program in crisis counseling and additional training in suicide prevention, I began my role as volunteer crisis counselor.

“This experience has been very rewarding for me and I enjoy working with Third Level staff members—all compassionate people who, like me, hope to make a difference in peoples’ lives as these people struggle with difficult situations. Volunteering at Third Level can be challenging at times, but it is a fun place to work and I find great satisfaction knowing that I am giving back to the organization that made such a difference in my life.”

### In Her Supervisor’s Words:

“In January 2013 Mindy Binsfeld began her training to become a volunteer crisis counselor at Third Level,” says Ryan DeMarsh, Third Level Crisis Unit Supervisor. “In addition to providing quality crisis intervention and information and referrals to callers and walk-ins, Mindy has participated in many other capacities. She has been a resource person for Applied Suicide Intervention Skills Training (ASIST),

## Mark Your Calendar!

*Fun events to support children, youth, and families...*

**May; National Foster Care Awareness Month**

**Friday, May 1**

**“30 for 30” Telethon**

**Grand Traverse Pie Company, Traverse City**

*A benefit for Third Level’s 24/7 Crisis Services with the goal of \$30,000 for 30,000 crisis calls fielded each year*

**August Real Estate One Third Level Classic Golf Outing**

**August Backpack and School Supplies Drive**

**September 5-11 National Suicide Prevention Week**

**Monday, September 14**

**25th Annual Tee Up FORE Kids Benefit Golf Outing  
The Kingsley Club**

**Tuesday, September 26**

**Foster Families and Friends Appreciation Dinner  
Bliss Gardens Farm, Cross Village**

**Saturday, September 29**

**Traverse Magazine Home and Kitchen Tour (South)**

**Saturday, October 10**

**Traverse Magazine Home and Kitchen Tour (North)**

**Thursday, October 29**

**Annual Appreciation Dinner  
The Hagerty Center, Traverse City**

volunteered at National Suicide Prevention Week events at the State Theater, and at Child and Family Services/ Third Level fundraisers such as the ‘30 for 30’ telethon. Mindy has been the example of exactly what we are looking for in a volunteer on our crisis lines--flexible, compassionate, knowledgeable, capable. It’s a joy to work with Mindy.”

Thank you, Mindy, for all you do!



Incredible Mo's Chris Mohrhardt hands off a check to CFS' Gina Aranki for 10 birthday parties for children in care. The Incredible Birthday Party Project is going nationwide thanks to Chris's efforts. Incredible Mo's has been a generous partner in providing birthdays to remember for our community's kids. Thank you, Chris!

Professional Painter Dan Brady and interior designer Gretchen Knoblock discussing colors for one of our visitation rooms. With the help of 30 volunteers (including some of Dan's professionals), the Veterans Drive office was transformed on a busy Saturday. A big shout of thanks to all who helped make such a visible improvement!



# giving

Please visit our website at [www.cfsnwmi.org/charitable-giving/](http://www.cfsnwmi.org/charitable-giving/) for a complete list of our friends and supporters this year.  
**thank you for all you do!**

## The Donor We Never Knew—or Thanked

A woman left a legacy gift to our organization in her will. She was not known to anyone in our office but was a quiet supporter of many community organizations in her home town of Harbor Springs. She was described by her friends as a “no nonsense, great lady.” Before she passed away, she quietly did her research on various community charities by asking those she knew and trusted for their recommendations. She learned about Child and Family Services from her personal trainer who knew one of our therapists. She had heard about the important and difficult work in healing children from trauma. As she planned to give her estate away to charities, she decided CFS would use her support well. Her gift was vital in our work toward an integrated, trauma-focused approach to everything we do to help others in our community heal and grow.

She didn't wish to be thanked or acknowledged, but:

***Mary, we can't thank you enough for your poignant and generous gift. Your legacy will make a lasting difference in the lives of so many children and families.***

If you would like more information about how **you** can plan a Legacy Gift, please contact Linda Sommerville at 946-8975, ext. 1025. If you enjoy giving now and wish that you could do more, there are many ways that can happen. Planned giving allows you to make thoughtful, larger gifts to your favorite charities, while enjoying many different benefits based on the type of planned gift. In addition to wills and bequests, there

are a number of vehicles that allow you to make a gift with retention of income for yourself and/or beneficiaries and can have significant income, estate and/or capital gains tax savings.

***Give a gift that will make an impact on what you believe in.***



Brandon (l), Arianna, and Brooklyn (r) received special awards at this year's Children's Art Contest Celebration at Lucky Jack's. Over 100 guests attended and were treated to pizza and Mona's homemade cake, followed by bowling. A big thanks to our judges Sue Bingham, Caroline Hirth, Christie Minervini, and Angela Schuler, who pored over 133 art works submitted. Our wonderful volunteers helped greet people and distribute 53 awards, made possible in part by Diana Milock. Many thanks to all who made this a special day for our artists!



The 2015 Golden-Fowler DreamRoom Classic was a great hit with 350 guests and 80 volunteers who designed, donated, ate, drank, played, and made merry--all while braving a snowstorm the evening of February 13! Heartfelt thanks to Mike Mahn and the Golden-Fowler team, celebrity designers Brenda Biederman, Rose Hutchinson, Girls with Guitars, Terri Ray, and top vote-getter Jill Saarela, and everyone who donated their time or talent or participated. Next year's event is Friday, February 12, 2016!

DreamRoom celebrity winner Jill Saarela, General Manager, TV 7&4/UpNorthLive



Tap 30, a new beer bar in Harbor Springs, raised \$632 for Child and Family Services on Valentine's Day. Thank you, Tap 30 friends!

## OUR MISSION

*We strive to ensure the safety and well-being of children, youth, adults, and families in times of crisis, challenge, and life transition.*

### BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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# CFS Annual Report

For Fiscal Year

October 1, 2013 - September 30, 2014

## INCOME

\$5,199,416  
Grants, Contracts, Private Payers

\$1,041,516  
Development/Fundraising

\$784,206  
Miscellaneous Income

\$7,025,138  
Total Income

## EXPENSES

\$3,944,394  
Staff Salaries, Taxes and Fringe

\$1,291,273  
Foster Care Payments

\$911,735  
Operations, Facilities

\$148,069  
Services, Supplies

\$15,419  
Interest, Debt Charges

\$34,309  
Employee Development

\$12,365  
Uncollectible Charges

\$6,375,564  
Total Expenses

\$667,574  
Surplus Retained by CFS

Administrative Expenses 7.5%

Fundraising Expenses 5.0%

Combined Total 12.5%

# volunteers & friends



Members of Family of Faith Lutheran Church regularly donate holiday meals to families in need. Shown here are the dozens of Thanksgiving gifts of food made by the congregation under the leadership of Pastor Daniel LeCouteur.



Cookie Day at CFS -- Staff and volunteers baked dozens of cookies to help thank our friends and community partners for their support at Christmas time. From left: Teri Hedrich, Wendy Pattison, Kathy Ferguson, Mona Nelson, Linda Rookus, and Dorothy McCormick

## In Memoriam

CFS Licensing Supervisor Cheryl Buyze lost her son, Kevin, last month. Kevin had Down Syndrome, and after his funeral Cheryl mused about how parenting a child with special needs requires an intuition, a keen paying of attention to his nonverbal cues and signals. It's a lot like foster parenting, Cheryl said; they have to read the cues and signals of a child they haven't know for long in order to obtain their trust. It's one way she understands the work foster parents do, and the experience she brings to her job working with foster and adoptive families.

We're reminded, too, of the gifts we are given by all the different ways we parent, and interact as families. Cheryl's son Scott wrote this letter to his brother and it's a moving testimony to the impact we have on one another:

Dearest Younger Brother of Mine,

You have taught me so much about life, people, and happiness. Because of you I know the healing power of a returned smile, the value of a genuine hug, the importance of having optimism in every struggle, and the amazing joys that our Creator gave for us to discover in the seemingly



hidden little things in life. I may never be the pro that you were with life skills, but I will always work at it. I will never forget you and you will be missed dearly. Thank you for teaching me that when life hands you lemons you just say "no thanks" and dance. I will especially think of you when the thunder rolls and I'll know there's a dance party above. I have comfort that for possibly the first time ever you are now truly "okay." Say hello to heaven and give my love to dad. RIP, brother.

# changing lives

## Spotlight: *Pete's Place Shelter for Runaway and Homeless Youth*

One of Third Level's unique roles in the greater Grand Traverse area is to provide shelter and support to youth who need a place to go other than home.

Pete's Place opened in 2007 with support from Harvey and Marilyn Warburton. The shelter houses youth aged 14-18 for up to three weeks while they access community resources with the help of Pete's Place and CFS/Third Level staff.

Two programs are administered through Pete's Place:

- The Family Reunification Program, for youth 14-18 who work with counselors and members of their families and support systems in order to go home or to find safe alternate living situations.
- The Transitional Living Program, for runaway and homeless youth 16 ½ until their 18th birthday for residential services (non-residential services from age 16 till 21st birthday) to prepare for success as adults. This program is similar to CFS' Elements program for youth in foster care. Staff of both programs are exploring ways to bring joint services to youth to maximize efficiency while continuing to address their different needs.

"Our main goal at Pete's Place is to ensure the safety and well-being of all youth we interact with, no matter how brief or lengthy their stay," says Shelter Supervisor Courtney Russell.

"Last year Pete's Place was able to provide this service for nearly 50 youth while they worked things out at home or figured out what was next for them."

Gabrielle S. is one youth who is grateful for the help she received from Pete's Place during a particularly rough patch in her life.



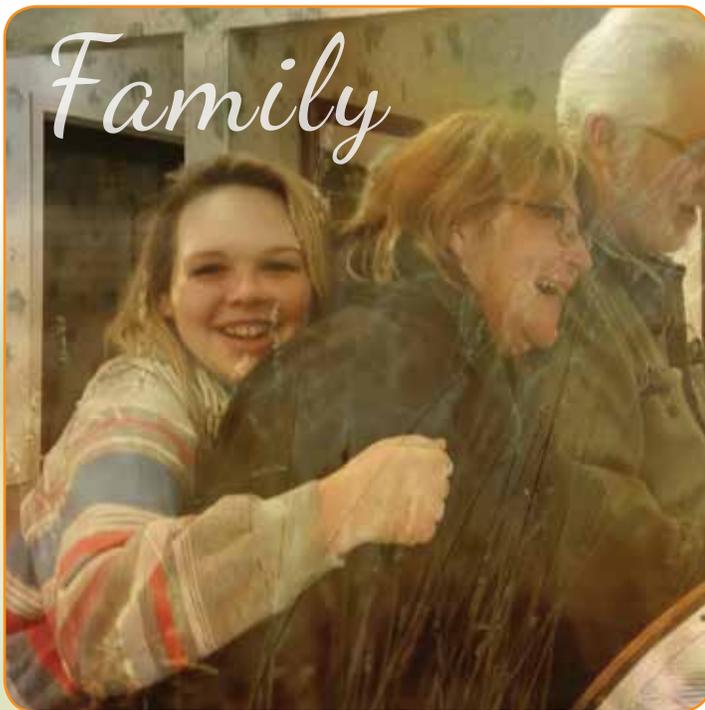
*Pete's Place Shelter  
Supervisor Courtney Russell*

"Pete's Place means home to me... a place to rest, eat, and feel loved. I was one of those kids people gave up on, one of those kids that wasn't well liked, and for one place to take every doubt I had about trusting people and dismiss them all is absolutely amazing. Every staff member I encountered there took time to get to know me and try to help me, that's what really inspired me... The support Pete's gave to me is still to this day unmatched. They pushed me to go back to school and graduate; not only did I graduate I graduated ahead of my class with a scholarship to Eastern Michigan University... I am forever grateful."

For more on Pete's Place and services call 231-922-4800 or email [crussell@thirdlevel.org](mailto:crussell@thirdlevel.org)



# help and hope



“What family means is that you love each other through everything... Family is when even through your toughest times, they don’t turn their backs on you. They love you even when it’s hard for you to love yourself. Throughout my time as a foster kid, I’ve been in and out of homes. For a while, I thought something was wrong with me. I thought that I was incapable of being loved. Could things have gone better for me? I’m sure they could have but I’m happy now. I won’t ever forget the day I met my foster parents. I never thought that I’d end up in their home. I never thought I’d become a part of their family. The best part is they wanted me for me... Family isn’t always blood. Family is the people that choose to stay in your life no matter what. I’m so proud to say that right there is a real smile. It feels so good to really be happy.”

*Destiny named her dog Foster and wants to be a foster care worker when she finishes school.*

*Thanks to  
Bill Marsh  
Automotive for their  
sponsorship of the  
newsletter.*