

Winter
2010

Together for children



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THE WASHINGTON COUNTY
COMMISSION ON CHILDREN
AND FAMILIES

An Ounce of Prevention

That old axiom “an ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure” is no less true in the realm of social services. The increasing cost of attempting to cure our social ills after they develop, versus the return on investment for each dollar spent on prevention, is astounding.

A recent report from the National Committee for Responsive Philanthropy named community organization “one of the most demonstrably cost-effective prevention strategies.” The study was a validation of the Commission on Children and Families’ focus on community mobilization as an effective way to address and prevent a number of the toughest issues facing families.

The report quantifies the return on investment from a wide range of community organizing projects. The finding was that for each new dollar invested in advocacy and community organizing \$138 dollars are gained. A return on investment (ROI) of 1:138.

The report also looked at specific prevention areas and released findings that the ROI for child abuse prevention is 1:34, substance abuse prevention 1:10, and juvenile crime prevention 1:25.

What does this mean in Washington County?



By plugging the numbers that Washington County Commission on Children and Families invested in 2007-09 into the ROI formula we can show approximately how much was saved from the treatment, or cure, side of the equation.

For instance, if we examine dollars spent by the CCF:

- An investment of \$3,422,000 in child abuse prevention saved \$116,345,756.
- \$944,575 spent on substance abuse prevention netted \$9,445,750
- \$587,460 invested in Juvenile Crime prevention saved \$14,686,500

Although the cost of failing to invest in prevention can be measured in dollars and cents it should also be remembered that there is a human cost, a cost of misery and despair that is incalculable.

An ounce of prevention, the creation of conditions, opportunities and experiences that encourage and develop healthy, individuals is the best cure of all.



Giving Guide

I Give Where I Live kicked off a campaign to raise its visibility and highlight others trying to make a difference in Washington County.

In cooperation with a network of dedicated organizations, I Give Where I Live empowers residents to be more informed about community issues, and actively engaged in finding solutions to some of Washington County's most pressing social concerns.

As part of the campaign the fifth annual Giving Guide was published. Meant to educate readers about the many wonderful organizations and agencies providing social services in our area, it contained brief, heart touching stories and paid advertisements.

One of the CCF's Comprehensive Plan strategies is to raise community awareness and involvement in addressing issues facing children and families. As part of that effort the CCF purchased a half page ad. (see on right)

The publication, distributed on Thanksgiving day, reached 20,000 Community Newspaper subscribers in Washington County. The over-prints were distributed by I Give Where I Live affiliates, public libraries and churches.

To learn more about I Give Where I Live visit their website: www.igivewhereilive.net

Together for Children in Washington County



Bringing people together in their communities to find solutions to issues facing families.

Enlisting community leaders to become champions for children and youth.

Coordinating services for children and families to maximize the effectiveness of limited resources.

www.co.washington.or.us/hhs/ccf

**Washington County Commission on
Children and Families**





Sarah Kopplin, RCWF Coordinator



Nicole Gulick, RCWF Coordinator

Reconnecting Children with Families

The Reconnecting Children with Families (RCWF) program for Washington County is finally underway!

RCWF is a program designed to reconnect youth who have been in foster care for several years with their biological family members. After conducting intensive searches for relatives, family members are brought together to create a lifetime network for the child, and to help the child learn more about their identity and family's history.

Recently, Nicole Gulick and Sarah Kopplin were hired as RCWF Coordinators, Nicole working out of the DHS/Child Welfare branch in Hillsboro and Sarah working out of the Beaverton branch.

They report that in November Kevin Campbell, creator of Family Finding, provided a half-day training entitled "Lighting the Fire of Urgency" for caseworkers, supervisors and community partners at each local DHS branch. He shared that, "My mission is to make sure families know where their kids are, and kids know where their families are."

The Coordinators have already received 10 referrals and along with the help of student interns, are doing family finding for 17 children. Lifetime networks are being created for some of the loneliest kids in the foster care system, and one case has already resulted in placement with a relative.

They are also in the process of creating a volunteer program and hope to have it up and running by spring 2010.



Responding to School Tragedies with Cheri Lovre

The Washington County Commission on Children and Families and the Washington County Partnership for Student Success hosted a two-day training, "Responding to School Tragedies" on October 23rd and 29th.

The training's purpose was to provide all schools in Washington County with a common foundation and response strategy for tragedies that occur in our schools and communities.

Participants learned a common language to help them communicate clearly, and strategies to strengthen tragedy/crisis response teams at the building, district and county level.

Trainer Cheri Lovre, MS, Director of Crisis Management Institute, has over 30 years of experience in the field of prevention, crisis response, grief, trauma and many related topics.

Over the course of her career she has worked extensively creating training and materials for crisis response teams. Much of her focus has been on working with schools in the aftermath of student and staff deaths, suicides, homicides, natural disasters and other traumatic events.

Some of the more publicized events she's taken part in include the shootings at Thurston High School, the shootings at Columbine, the September 11 terrorist attack of the Twin Towers, the Tsunami in Sri Lanka, hurricanes Katrina and Rita, and the shootings at Nickel Mines and Virginia Tech.

This considerable on-site experience makes her a valuable resource in the exploration of developing teams to respond to crisis and to help traumatized children cope with the after effects of natural and human-made disasters.

Attendees to the training included representatives from all seven school districts, law enforcement, both county and community mental health providers, faith community, universities, juvenile justice, the Northwest Regional Education Service District and various community partners.

For information on crime in school you may wish to read an annual report compiled through the joint efforts of the Bureau of Justice Statistics and National Center for Education Statistics. This annual report examines crime occurring in school as well as on the way to and from school. It provides the most current detailed statistical information to inform the Nation on the nature of crime in schools. This report presents data on crime at school from the perspectives of students, teachers, principals, and the general population from an array of sources--the National Crime Victimization Survey, the School Crime Supplement to the National Crime Victimization Survey, the Youth Risk Behavior Survey, the School Survey on Crime and Safety and the School and Staffing Survey. Data on crime away from school are also presented to place school crime in the context of crime in the larger society.

[Click here to READ REPORT](#)



CCF Intern Terra Neilson

I believe that strong communities can raise healthy, happy and confident youth. It is this belief, that lead me to the invaluable work at the Commission for Children and Families.

My name is Terra Neilson and as a Sociology and Social Work major at Pacific University, I have specialized in social policy and community organizing.

My love for community empowerment makes my internship with Washington County Commission on Children and Families a perfect match. Continually, I am inspired by the staff and volunteers of Washington County, and all of their hard work. This year, I hope to aid the Commission with diverse projects focusing on School Based Health Centers and the Youth Advisory Council (YAC).

Outside of the Commission and my undergraduate studies, I am also very passionate about baking and growing my own vegetables. This love for growing my own food has lead me to a recent research project on school gardens in Portland and how children relate with the organic food movement.

I love to ask questions, so research has always been one of my favorite pursuits in education. Someday, I would like to research social policies and help create more effective and culturally sustainable legislation.

Next year, I have applied to study youth and social policy in Sweden under a Fulbright Scholarship and look forward to learning from such a socially progressive country.



Terra Neilson, CCF Intern

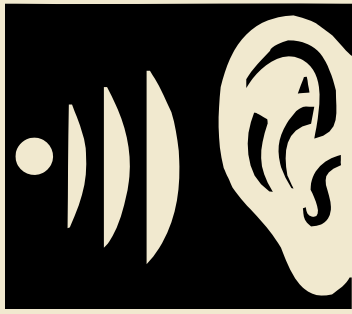


Concerned about children in Washington County? Check out the HEY! (Helping Empower Youth Together) coalition.

Sponsored by grants from the White House Office of Drug Control Policy, and the Washington County Commission on Children and Families, HEY! "brings schools, families and communities together with support and resources to promote safe, healthy and drug-free lifestyles for Hillsboro School District youth." HEY! is looking community members interested in becoming part of the coalition, as well as volunteers to help with community events.

Information: Coalition Coordinator Michelle Rodríguez, 503-681-5363; www.heytogether.org.

Listening Circles



The Legislature recently asked the Commission on Children and Families system to undertake a system review and report on findings at the February special session.

In response, the CCF set up a series of Listening Circles, where commission members, ex-officios, providers, and community partners were asked to share their perspective about how the CCF system works, its strengths and weaknesses.

According to the report that was developed by the State Commission, “Key findings were that the commission system is a much-needed component of government that fosters collaborative efforts in local communities to leverage community resources and agency collaboration. In simple terms, the commission is a good business model. When it comes to our children no dollar can be wasted, and the commission is about enabling ordinary people to do extraordinary things with scarce resources through people, communities, and systems that work together.

“That said, the review uncovered areas for improvement. Success moving forward requires better outcomes reporting, streamlined and efficient operations, strong data-driven planning, shared research on best practices, and more accountability throughout the system. A strong, system-wide strategic plan for outcomes and accountabilities of the commission system must be implemented to drive trust, collaboration, accountability, focus, and ingenuity.”

Recognizing that the Listening Circles provided valuable insight, the CCF will now use that information to improve and focus efforts in the ongoing work of improving the way we serve the children and families of Washington County.

CCF Intern Alina Maldonado

My name is Alina Maldonado, I am a graduate student from the School of Social Work at Portland State University. I am in my final year of school and my expected graduation date is June of 2010.

I am primarily interested in working in issues of parenting and family support; with a special focus in early childhood. I believe that the first three years of life are very crucial and the experiences that a child has in those three years have an important impact in the future of that child. And I also believe that every child and their families deserve equal opportunities to succeed.

I decided to pursue an internship with the Washington County Commission on Children and Families because I am interested in learning how to create and maintain partnerships that will help to build a community where all families and children have all the opportunities necessary to succeed. I am impressed on how Washington County Commission on Children and Families brings people, agencies and communities together to work in issues that affect the families and children of the county.



Alina Maldonado, CCF Intern



Workshop presenter Derek Peterson, BA., M.Ed., is an international child and youth advocate who has made over 2000 presentations around the world. He is a pioneer in the implementation of the principles and outcomes of youth development within school, communities, and families.

Web of Support

This fall the Commission on Children and Families, along with Washington County Partnership for Student Success, the United States Department of Education and the Northwest Regional Education Service District hosted a Youth Development Workshop.

The Web of Support workshop was a first step in helping to unify all Washington County community partners in their efforts to positively impact the lives of youth and their families.

The workshop was based on Integrative Youth Development which identifies seven phactors™ that are critical impact points in supporting young people to grow up to be health, principled and caring.

Web of Support was attended by over 100 individuals representing law enforcement, juvenile justice, health, mental health, social services, educators, the faith community, emergency responders and concerned citizens.

Attendees learned that providing a “Web of Support” promotes positive youth development. Positive youth development equals crime prevention, student success and community wellness!

Healthy Kids Grants Received

The CCF recently received notification that Beaverton School District, Youth Contact (for the Hillsboro School District) and the Oregon School Based Health Care Network (which will be working with both the Washington County CCF and the Yamhill County CCF) have been awarded Healthy Kids Outreach and Enrollment grants.

These grants will complement earlier grants to the Washington County CCF for the Tigard-Tualatin and Forest Grove School Districts. We hope to stretch our resources to include Sherwood, Banks and Gaston as well. Centro Cultural has also received a Healthy Kids Outreach grant for Latino families in Washington County serviced by Centro.

With these resources, the partners in the Washington County SBHC Initiative will be able to create a true countywide outreach and enrollment network, which we hope over the coming years can help get EVERY eligible but un-enrolled child and youth in Washington County enrolled in the Oregon Health Plan or the other Healthy Kids insurance plans!



Children of Incarcerated Parents

In November 2007, the Commission on Children and Families along with Washington County service providers launched the Children of Incarcerated Parents Project (CIP).

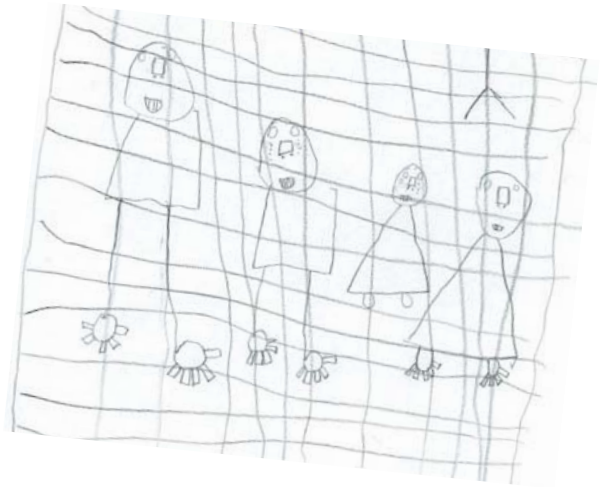
The project is a unique network of government and nonprofit agencies coming together to raise awareness about the impact having a parent incarcerated can have on kids. It was designed to remove barriers to services and establish a system to identify who these children are and what their immediate support needs might be.

In a recent Beaverton Valley Times article by Christina Lent, Mary Metheney, homeless liaison with the Beaverton School District was quoted as saying, “Prior to this group, a parent could be thrown in jail and there was no system in place to let the child’s school know.”

Schools have connections to resources and supports that can help these youth with everything from mental health assessments, counseling and crisis intervention to basic needs such as meals, school supplies, clothing, transportation and even health services.

But before service providers could help children, they had to reach out to their incarcerated parents and gain their assistance. The CIP created a form that allows inmates to decide if they would like their children’s schools contacted. They can also identify what support their children need.

Getting that from an incarcerated parent can be challenging since some parents are afraid that someone will come and take their children away. The project works with parents to dispel those fears.



Once the form is submitted, jail programs manager Maureen Frary contacts homeless liaisons in the school district for school-age children and representatives with the Family Justice Initiative program. Homeless liaisons then send an e-mail to a school principal, where the child is enrolled.

Principals let a caring adult with a connection to the children know so that they can keep an eye on them and provide whatever support they can. There is also a right to privacy issue as some families do not disclose to a child that a parent has been jailed and some children do not want others to know what they are going through.

Through ongoing education and a four-minute video featuring a former inmate – sharing what her family went through and encouraging others to reach out to their children’s schools – word is spreading among inmates that resources are available to help their kids.

“They just have to want to reach out to get that help for them,” Frary said, in the same article, “Initially, we didn’t get any referrals, but over time we’ve started to get a steady stream of them.” She also shared that, “We don’t want any of these students to go through this alone.”

Washington County Foster Care Summit



Jim Fun
Washington County
Circuit Court Judge

In an event marked by animated discussion and growing excitement over the opportunity to have a positive effect on a difficult issue, the Washington County Foster Care Summit was held on January 27, 2010.

The summit was hosted by the Washington County Commission on Children & Families, the Casey Foundation, and the Department of Human Services (DHS). The official hosts of the Summit were the Honorable Jim Fun, Circuit Court Judge Washington County; Rob Gordon, Washington County Sherriff; Kevin Aguirre, DHS District Manager, and Joan Brown-Kline, CASA Executive Director.

The Foster Care Summit brought together a wide variety of citizens and community leaders to dialogue and problem solve about an issue they care about deeply, the challenge of safely reducing the number of children in foster care.

A World Café format was used to engage participants in meaningful conversations to generate input, share knowledge, stimulate innovation, and explore action possibilities. Three rounds of conversation took place and participants grappled with ways to improve the foster care system for children and families and began to identify issues that need our immediate attention. Participants were also asked to identify one or two action steps that they were willing to take when they left the summit.



World Café

A follow-up meeting has been scheduled for Tuesday March 2, 2010 from 8:30 to 10:00 a.m. at the Beaverton Community Center to take the conversation to the next level - ACTION!

For information contact Tracy Northfield, tracy_northfield@co.washington.or.us



Kevin Aguirre
DHS District Manager



Advocates and youth in foster care were among participants



Rob Gordon
Washington County Sheriff

Washington County Commission on Children and Families 2010

WCCCF MEMBERS

Christine Murray, Chair, *Child and Family Therapist*

Susan Bender Phelps, *Speaker/Trainer/Consultant, Odyssey Mentoring*

Martha Brooks, *State Director, Fight Crime: Invest in Kids*

Anna Geller, *President, Geller Silvis and Associates*

Diana Groener, *Counselor, Allies in Change and Sunset Psychological Counseling Services*

Kristine Harris, *Retired School Counselor/Prevention Specialist*

Marilyn Harrison, *Executive Director, Child Development Services, NIKE, Inc.*

Nancy Kingston, *Retired School Administrator*

Donna Maddux, *Councilor, City of Tualatin*

Jill Raichel, *Trainer, Child and Family Division, Department of Health and Human Services*

Doug Riggs, *President, NW Grassroots & Communications*

Katie Riley, *Assistant Professor Emerita, Department of Public Health and Preventive Medicine, OHSU*

Enedelia Schofield, *Principal, Hillsboro School District*

Susan Stoltenberg, *Executive Director, Impact NW*

EX-OFFICIOS

Jill Archer, *Senior Program Coordinator, Washington County Mental Health*

Erin Calvert, *Division Manager, Washington County Juvenile Department*

Kelly Jurman, *Health Promotion Supervisor, Washington County Health and Human Services*

Karin Kelley-Torregroza, *Executive Director, Vision Action Network*

Janet Kretzmeier, *Community Advocate*

James Sager, *Assistant Superintendent, Northwest Regional Education Service District*

Dick Stenson, *CEO Tuality Hospital*

Tom Vlahos, *Branch Manager, Department of Human Services/Child Welfare*

Shirley Vollmuller, *Branch Manager, Department of Human Services/Child Welfare*

EDITOR

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Meetings:

7:00 - 8:30 PM

Second Thursday of the Month

Room 1411 E

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