

Family Connections

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A Newsletter from FAMILY & CHILDREN'S SERVICE OF ITHACA

Fall 2015 | Vol. 19 No. 2

Q&A with Community Outreach Worker Program, Tammy Baker

Tammy Baker joined F&CS in July of 2015 to staff our Community Outreach Worker Program. The goal of the program is to ensure a welcoming and inclusive environment enjoyable to everyone in the State Street Corridor from the Commons to Route 13, and extending on Cayuga Street from the Library to Dewitt Park. Funding for this position is provided by the City of Ithaca, Tompkins County, and the Downtown Ithaca Alliance.

Q: The Community Outreach Worker Program is brand new in our community. In your first 4 months what have you been focusing on?

A: Building relationships. I spend a lot of my time building relationships with our downtown's homeless population as well as the individuals that often are found hanging outside on the Commons, in Dewitt Park, or in the surrounding areas.

I also have met with most of our downtown service providers, whether they are non-profits or public entities, to determine where there are opportunities for collaboration. And I have also gotten to know many of our downtown business owners and their needs. By building relationships, and trust, which doesn't happen overnight, I can be effective at de-escalating conflicts, help individuals ready to make a change in their lives make those changes, and be an effective community resource.

Q: What's a day in the life of a Community Outreach Worker look like?

A: Every day is different but more often than not I am listening to help people identify their needs and support them in whatever way they can use support. For a homeless individual in need of clothing I may be able to provide them with clothes that have been donated. I also escort individuals to appointments with other service providers. If a business owner feels uncomfortable confronting an individual outside their



Tammy Baker
can be reached at:
607-793-3776
Program Hours:
M-F, 10am-6pm

A longtime resident of Ithaca,

Tammy brings with her over 15 years' experience in conflict management and effective communication training for both businesses and school groups and has mediated over a hundred cases involving workplace conflicts, neighbor disputes, small claim mediations, and family issues. Tammy is a trained permanency mediator through the NYS Unified Court System in the 6th judicial district.

business, I can step in and help address the business owner's concerns. I brainstorm with individuals what they would like their day to look like and what choices would be in their best interest.

Q: Are there misconceptions about what you do?

A: Yes, but that is expected with a newly created program in a community. While I can, and do, provide information about Commons regulations and city ordinances, I cannot enforce rules and ordinances. I can remind people what's not okay, and de-escalate situations, but my role is really more about supporting and promoting individuals and business owners' needs.

Another misconception is that I can find another place for the homeless population to sleep. Unfortunately, homelessness is a real issue and there are not enough beds available so many people do sleep outside, in tents, on porches, in doorways and under heating vents. I am there to support them, and when they are ready, help them access the services they need to help them have better lives.

Q: How does someone reach or find you?

A: I am outside about 75% of the time right now. I am often walking around the downtown or on my bike but I can always be reached on my cell phone which is the best way to track me down. During program hours I always take the call if I am able.



SAVE THE DATE
Sunday, March 20, 2016
2nd Annual
Peace of Mind Yogathon

The event will take place at the **Ithaca High School**. Stay tuned for more details! Learn about Sponsorship and Volunteer opportunities by contacting Stephanie Bailey at sbailey@fcsith.org.



CEO Remarks for this Holiday Season

David Shapiro, President & CEO

Most people look at the holidays as a happy season,

a season where you can catch up with loved ones and friends you haven't seen all year. However, this time of year can also be very stressful. For some people, the holiday blues also come with a reminder of past traumatic life events. Some of the less commonly known stressors

associated with the holidays include:

- Instances of childhood abuse increase during the holiday season.
- Parties with meals are especially difficult for those coping with eating disorders.
- People in recovery face difficult decisions about attending parties where alcohol is served.
- Culturally diverse, non-traditional families may be faced with prejudice and bias within their extended family.

With all these stressors we find that every November our community has urgent mental health needs. We are thankful to have the resources at F&CS to be able to respond quickly and effectively. But not everyone in our community knows that F&CS is a resource for them. That's why I also want to make sure that you feel equipped when confronted with your own needs, or those of your family and friends who may be experiencing the holiday blues. Some things to pay attention to during the holiday season:

- If you or someone you know is lonely, make an appointment to see a counselor or think of who you know that might be lonely and invite them to participate in your holiday gatherings.
- If eating or drinking is an issue, skip the parties and holiday toasts. If you feel obligated to attend, don't stay any longer than you are comfortable with.
- Don't overschedule. Politely turn down some invitations. If you're hosting a party, ask for help.
- Plan ahead for emergencies. Make sure you have enough of any prescription medication you may need to get you through the holidays. Contact your doctor or psychiatrist now if you don't.

Know your limits and don't ignore warning signs if you find your mental health is deteriorating. I also urge families of teens and young adults facing mental health and addiction issues to remain vigilant around the holidays – they may not know when or how to ask for help. That should not stop you from offering it.

I wish everyone a happy and healthy holiday season and remind you to be mindful of those who need a little more support – they need it from you this time of year more than ever.

“Since I joined F&CS in 2011, I have been privileged to work with a tremendous Board of Directors. In May we said good-bye to two dedicated community leaders that had been there since before I began my tenure. Pam Swieringa, who took on numerous leadership positions, and Linda Crumb, who was always ready to step in wherever there was a need, will both be missed. Having served six and seven years respectively, their unique perspectives, dedication to our mission, and commitment to serving our community were unique. Our appreciation to both is immense.”

– David Shapiro, President & CEO



Linda Crumb



Pamela Swieringa

MISSION STATEMENT

Family and Children's Service supports, promotes and strengthens the well-being of individuals and families by providing high quality, accessible mental health care and related social services, with a particular sensitivity toward the needs of children.

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EDITOR: Jessie Stone He

CONTRIBUTORS: David Shapiro, Karen Schachere, Sarah Michael

DESIGNER: Westhill Graphics

ADMINISTRATION

David Shapiro, MPA
Karen Schachere, PhD
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Open Doors Program Impacts Our Most Vulnerable Teens

Launched in January of this year, Open Doors is already making a difference in the lives of our community's homeless and runaway youth.

In less than 10 months, staff in Open Doors has received over 60 calls for our supportive services. In many cases our staff is working with youth and families struggling with very high rates of conflict – where alcoholism or drug abuse, risky and exploitive sexual behavior, and physical or mental abuse are often prevalent. Our program's approach does not just address the needs of the youth but instead works to support the family as a whole so we aren't just providing a short-term band-aid approach but are instead working towards strengthening the whole family unit.

In January our staff hit the pavement to establish essential relationships with schools and other providers working with youth at-risk of running away or becoming homeless. "The outreach that we began doing at the beginning of the year is really starting to sink in. Our staff is incredibly responsive when someone reaches out for help. Whether it is a teen in need, a school, or family members of a youth who is struggling, we are focused on being as responsive as possible. We know that this is a community issue that wasn't being addressed so over the past year we have been focused on building up our credibility with schools and community groups. And now we are really starting to see the impact." Marisa Matsudaira, Director of Youth and Outreach Services.

continued on next page

DANIEL'S STORY:

"Daniel" was a sophomore in high school when he decided to run away. He was living with his father in a tiny cramped trailer that was falling apart. His father, a disabled alcoholic, would threaten to kick Daniel out almost daily and was physically abusive when he drank. Daniel learned through a friend about Open Doors.

Our staff worked with him to identify safe options for him when he was concerned that home was dangerous. An uncle was contacted and agreed to provide short-term housing for Daniel and our staff helped Daniel develop a safety plan that included both family friends and extended family that could help if called on. Daniel's father was also provided resources to help him deal with his alcoholism and anger issues. The family is in the process of healing and Daniel is beginning to feel safe.

Names and identifying details have been changed to protect client confidentiality



Make a gift to-day!

Your donation can make a huge difference in someone's
Enclosed please find a gift of:

- \$15** To supply hygiene kits to runaway and homeless youth in our Open Doors program
- \$30** To provide therapeutic toys and activities to our youngest of clients
- \$75** To cover the cost of an educational workshop
- \$150** To ensure 10 individuals are able to access our sliding fee scale for counseling
- Any amount that's meaningful to you \$ _____
- Check Enclosed (please make checks payable to *Family & Children's Service*)
- Visa MC Amex Discover

Card No. _____

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Signature _____

Name _____

life! *where to turn...*
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Please mail to:

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To make a gift online, please visit us at

www.wheretoturnithaca.org

Family & Children's Service of Ithaca is a 501(c)3 non-profit organization under IRS guidelines and all donations are fully tax deductible as allowable by law.

Annual Meeting Award Recipients

At our Annual Meeting this past May we were proud to recognize JoAnne Miner as the recipient of our Agda Osborn Award. This award is presented annually by F&CS to an individual or organization that has made significant contributions as a community volunteer. JoAnne's volunteer contributions both in Tompkins County and throughout the region epitomize the dedication to service that the late Agda Osborn personified.

Mark Campagnolo, owner of The BoatYard Grill, was also recognized at our Annual Meeting with our Family Partner of the Year Award. This award was created to recognize our local businesses that do so much to support the community. The BoatYard Grill has for many years, including this one, donated and served delicious appetizers at our Cayuga at Twilight event. In addition, the BoatYard Grill is also generous to many other non-profits in our community and that is why we were proud to present this year's award to them.

We would also like to extend our grateful thanks to our wonderful event sponsor THERM!



Mark and Kristin Campagnolo



Andrea Mooney, Board Chair, JoAnne Miner, Alex Miner, and Karen Schachere, Clinic Director



Panel Provides Insights on Kinship Care



In September, F&CS recognized Kinship Care Month by offering a free panel, open to the public, to discuss important issues related to kinship care. You may be wondering what kinship care is? Kinship care is provided by kinship caregivers - family members, or close family friends, who have stepped up to become formal or informal foster parents to children in need.

For more than a decade F&CS clinician, Claudia Lewenstein, LCSW-R, has facilitated Grandparents Raising Grandchildren, a free support group for grandparent kinship caregivers. This support group is made possible through funding from CFCU Community Credit Union and is offered on the 3rd or 4th Monday of each month.

This fall F&CS extended the services we are offering to support kinship caregivers by launching KINNECT, which provides a variety of supportive and educational services to kinship caregivers. If you know of an individual who can benefit from kinship caregiving resources, please call 273-7494.

Open Doors Program (continued from page 3)

What important lessons have been learned since launching Open Doors earlier this year?

- **Our staff has been struck by the high need for safe and secure housing.** These kids, already extremely vulnerable, are in desperate need of safe, short-term sheltering options. F&CS is currently looking for individuals interested in providing short-term housing. If you are willing to open your home to a vulnerable youth, please call 607-273-7494 today.
- **Many of the youth requiring services are engaging in risky and exploitative sexual behavior.** We have made a commitment to developing closer working relationships with other community service providers experienced in providing services to high-risk youth engaged in risky behavior. We have strengthened our ties to the Advocacy Center and Planned Parenthood and have developed strong ties with the Learning Web's Youth Outreach program. This program supports older youth who may have goals of independent living and family reunification/preservation.

HOST HOMES NEEDED

I remember how hard it is being a teen and it seems like it's getting harder...

If you feel that you might be able to open your home to a youth in crisis on a short-term, voluntary basis, call today. Open Doors offers free, confidential services to youth and families.



where to turn...

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www.fcsith.org/opendoors

Call 607-273-7494 or text 607-793-0574

Supporting the Mental Health Needs of College Students

By Karen Schachere, PhD, Director of Clinical Services



Karen Schachere, PhD

One of the pleasures of living and working in Ithaca is being part of a college town. At F&CS, we have the opportunity to extend our clinical expertise to young adults who make Ithaca their home during this period of their lives. Every fall our Intake Department receives numerous calls from students at Cornell, Ithaca College, and TC3 who are seeking counseling because they feel anxious, depressed, and overwhelmed.

There are many reasons why college students struggle. For some, academic expectations and the pressure to succeed are overwhelming. For many, relationship problems seem insurmountable. Some students' coping skills are challenged by living in a new environment away from family and friends.

Sometimes in lieu of face-to-face contact, students are spending more time by themselves on social media. Unfortunately, social media can actually cause more stress as many students spend time trying to create a picture of who they want to be and then feel inadequate as they compare themselves to others. It is low self-esteem that often creates the cycle of anxiety and depression that we see in students who come to our agency.

Anxiety has now surpassed depression as the most common mental health diagnosis among college students, though depression, too, is on the rise. More than half of students visiting our clinic cite anxiety as a major concern. In fact, according to the American College Health Association, nearly one in six college students has been diagnosed with or treated for anxiety within the last 12 months.

At F&CS each year, roughly 10% of our clients are undergraduate or graduate students. In addition, we provide services to their partners and children. Many of the students we serve are international and face cultural and relational challenges after moving to Ithaca.

Students are a vibrant and important part of our community and I feel proud that F&CS is a place they can turn when they are in need of support.



Leigh Ann Smith-Gary, MSW

Thank you to Alphabet Soup for its donation of a dollhouse!

"I was particularly happy to receive this dollhouse in addition to the wooden one that F&CS supplied me because many of the children I see come from blended families and spend time in more than one home. Having two houses, which a child can move between, helps us play out family struggles (& celebratory scenes!) in ways that normalize the experience of divorce and separation." —Leigh Ann Smith-Gary, MSW

Spring Fling

While we weren't blessed with the lovely weather we usually can count on, we still had a great evening with wonderful friends interested in learning more about F&CS. Thank you to our new event sponsor, Wells Fargo, as well as our hosts at King Ferry Winery for a great evening!



CAYUGA at TWILIGHT

JAN FEB MAR APR MAY JUN JUL AUG **SEP** OCT NOV DEC

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16
17 18 19 **20** 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30 31



PHOTOS BY DAVE BURBANK



**Congratulations
to our Taucck Raffle Winner
Susanne Solomon!**

"The weather was perfect, the houses beautiful, the food, flowers, wine, music and art terrific. But it was all the wonderful donors that came out in support of F&CS that made this year's Cayuga at Twilight such a lovely event. **Thank you all of our sponsors – Warren Real Estate, Morgan Stanley, Tompkins Trust Company, True Insurance, Palisade Corporation – as well as supporters, HOLT Architects and the Frame Shop – for making Cayuga at Twilight possible.**

And let's not forget Chuck Taucck and Fran Littin for donating the trip of a lifetime to cap off the event. To the coordinating committee and all our volunteers, and of course the terrific homeowners, you made the day. Together we raised over \$58,000 to support mental health services. I am already excited about next year!"
–Sandy True, Cayuga at Twilight Chair

Grant Support Essential for Programs

F&CS is proud that so many of our local foundations are committed to supporting the programming we offer and we would like to extend our grateful thanks. Programs in our Youth and Outreach Services department, many of which rely on grant funding, are possible because of this type of support.

Some of the recent grants we've received are from the Community Foundation of Tompkins County and the Lewis G. Schaeneman, Jr. Foundation. The Community Foundation is providing support for our Rural Outreach Program, which provides therapeutic one-on-one mentoring, family case-management, and skill-building through group recreation to high-risk children in rural Tompkins County. The Community Foundation is also providing support for our Open Doors Program (see article on Page 3).

Grants from the Lewis G. Schaeneman, Jr. Foundation also are helping to support the Rural Outreach Program and provide stipends for student interns in the summer. F&CS offers summer interns the opportunity to coordinate and facilitate a summer camp-like experience for youth enrolled in the Rural Outreach Program as well as youth in our Dispositional Alternatives Program (DAP), which serves at-risk children in danger of being placed in foster care.

Other grant funders who have provided support in 2015 include the JM McDonald Foundation, the M&T Charitable Foundation, the United Way, and the Park Foundation.



Derek Burrows and his daughter Evangeline deliver check from the Lewis G. Schaeneman, Jr. Foundation

Leaving a Legacy of Community Support— Making a Bequest

Family and Children’s Service is a safe haven for families and individuals.

Every day, the generous support of our donors provides invaluable support and services for people who are in need, regardless of their financial circumstances. Making a bequest to F&CS is an important way to contribute to the health and well-being of our community not only for today, but for many years to come.

A bequest is a gift made from your estate—a transfer of cash, securities, or other property made through your will or living trust. It can be a specific amount or percentage of your estate or a share of what is left after you have made bequests to your family. An unrestricted bequest would allow F&CS to direct the funds from your gift as needed, whereas a restricted bequest would direct funds to a specific program or usage of your choice. You can make a bequest to F&CS by including language in your will or living trust naming F&CS as a beneficiary.



Some of the advantages of creating a bequest include:

- A bequest costs nothing today, but gives you the knowledge that F&CS will be able to continue to offer outstanding services to our community when you are gone
- You retain control and use of your assets during your lifetime
- You may modify your bequest at any time if your circumstances change
- Gifts to F&CS from your estate are exempt from federal estate taxes
- You will be recognized as a member of The Ruth R. Pettengill Society, which

honors individuals who have made or will make legacy gifts to F&CS

With only a few lines in your will, you can provide lasting support. By remembering F&CS with a bequest from your estate you will help F&CS to continue providing compassion and care long into the future.

For more information on the Ruth R. Pettengill Society, or on making a planned gift through your estate, please contact Jessie Stone He in the development office at 607-273-7494 or via e-mail at jstonehe@fcsith.org.

New Board Member Spotlights

CHRIS APKER has been the controller for 15 years at HOLT Architects where he is in charge of financial and overall business operations for three organizations – Green



Square Development, HOLT Architects and MCCI Corporation. Prior to joining F&CS’s Board of Directors, Chris served as a member of our Assessment

Committee where his extensive experience in accounting, budgeting, contracting, and financial reporting have been put to use. Chris received his MBA from Le Moyne College and his Bachelors from St. Bonaventure University. Chris has extensive volunteer experience as a Little League Treasurer/Board Member, youth soccer and baseball coach, as well as a Finance Committee member for Homer Central Schools.

DR. COLLEEN COLBERT is a licensed psychologist in private practice, who has worked in upstate New York, the metropolitan New York area, and for many years in Rhode Island. She also has graduate degrees in the field of education and was a teacher prior to becoming a therapist. Colleen brings to F&CS’s Board of Directors a great deal of experience in child and adolescent treatment of learning-related, attention, and impulsivity problems as well



as social-emotional issues. She also has extensive experience with family-system work, women’s issues, addiction, and eating disorders.



KEVIN MAHANEY is assistant dean for alumni affairs and development in Cornell University’s College of Veterinary Medicine. Prior to assuming this position in 2006, he

was vice president for development and alumni relations at SUNY Oswego and executive director of the Oswego College Foundation, Inc. With more than 20 years of experience in higher education fundraising, Kevin has also held positions at Wells College and Cornell’s College of Agriculture and Life Sciences. His previous non-profit volunteer experience has included Hospicare and the Oswego County YMCA. A graduate of Cornell University, Kevin has lived in Central New York all his life and currently lives in Ithaca with his wife, Sheri. They have two sons.

where to turn...

Family & Children's

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For more information or to register, call 273-7494.

