



youth homes

where hope lives and grows

NEWS

Volume 12 Number 1

The Community Outreach Newsletter of Youth Homes, Inc.

Youth Homes, Inc. is a non-profit organization committed to serving the needs of severely abused and neglected children and adolescents by providing comprehensive strength based, family centered and culturally sensitive residential treatment that acknowledges and promotes the strengths of individuals and families in the county of Contra Costa and beyond.

New Treatment Approach

In an effort to improve the quality of our clinical work, Youth Homes has implemented a new therapeutic model in our long-term residential programs. Last spring several Youth Homes clinicians and residential counselors attended 40 hours of training in Dialectical Behavioral Therapy (DBT), which is based on the work of Marsha Linehan, Ph.D.

This is a type of Cognitive-Behavioral Therapy specifically designed to work with adults and teens who, due to underlying mental health problems along with a history of childhood trauma, have difficulty regulating their emotions. This difficulty in emotional regulation causes a tendency to act in impulsive and self-destructive ways. DBT is one of the only therapeutic methods proven through extensive research to be effective with the kinds of children we have in our homes.

DBT emphasizes a constant balance between simultaneously accepting clients where they are at and pushing them to improve their lives. This balance is done through the use of traditional behavioral techniques along

with specific skills training and mindfulness or purposeful self-awareness exercises. Therapeutically this is done through weekly Skills Groups, individual counseling and the program-wide treatment philosophy.

Anderson House began this new treatment model in May 2005 and Cherry Lane just started it in September. We are all very excited about this and already see some improvement in many of the girls at Anderson House and in their ability to manage their emotions.

Youth Homes is also in the process of developing an outpatient DBT program as part of Turning Point Counseling Center for both adolescents and adults and is using many of the DBT skills in our behavioral coaching through our TBS program.

All of the Youth Homes clinicians who have been trained in DBT also meet monthly for a Study Group so that we can all continue to improve our skills.

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Edelweiss Chapter of Youth Homes

CRAB FEED

Crab, Salad, Pasta, Bread & Beverage

Rossmoor Del Valle Sierra Room

January 14, 2006 6:00 p.m. \$40.00

For tickets and reservations, call Diane Yribarren at 925-228-3246

+ OR -

If unable to attend, your tax-deductible donation will be gratefully accepted at Youth Home Auxiliary, P.O. Box 5759, Walnut Creek, CA 94596-1759

Executive Director's Report

This has been a year of concerted change at Youth Homes. We have a new logo, colors, newsletter and web site. We are fortunate to have Imelda Alejandrino, of Alejandrino Design, choose Youth Homes to be her one volunteer client this year and Ms. Alejandrino and her team have done a complete makeover of our organizational image. Our little house, which has been our trademark for over forty years, has been replaced with two figures that extend their reach upwards and includes our new tag line "Where hope lives and grows." These changes reflect the changes that are occurring in the design of the foster care system in California and for Youth Homes specifically.

I have had the privilege of sitting on the Residential Care System Redesign Committee, sponsored by the California Alliance of Children and Families. With ongoing participation and regular attendance from almost all of the major stakeholders, who are deeply concerned about foster children, we are attempting to design a new foster care system that requires:

- very high quality residential treatment,
- demonstrated positive outcomes in the long-term, and
- a systemic commitment to permanent placements in settings other than high end group homes, preferably with a child's family member.

Our intent is to sponsor legislation to change the structure of foster care system funding to reflect these values. I wish to commend Carroll Schroeder, Executive Director of the Alliance, and his staff, who have done a masterful job of coalescing a very disparate group of leaders and advocates into an effective planning team.

Toward Youth Homes' commitment to create reliable and permanent homes for our residents, we have taken steps to become a Foster Family Agency. With the encouragement of the Contra Costa County Department of Employment and Human Services, we are reorganizing our treatment

continuum to include therapeutic foster homes under our corporate umbrella. We are also determined to follow the country's lead to become very proficient at finding relatives of our clients and to facilitate the rekindling of long-lost family ties. In keeping with this new strategic plan, we have closed one of our residential treatment homes. Labri has been a state licensed facility for over fifteen years. Many young souls have overcome great hardship within its walls; however, with no increase in state funding for residential care for a fifth consecutive year, we had no choice but to close this specific facility. This does not signal a lack of commitment to continue to provide residential treatment, but identifies that a change in the mechanisms for funding foster care must take place, otherwise the system will slowly but inexorably grind to a halt.

In this edition of our newsletter, you will read about the many people who pitch in to create a world of opportunity for children who so richly deserve it. To that end let me encourage you that if you read only one book this year, please read "Don't Think Of An Elephant," by George Lakoff. The definition of two basic family models: the "strict father model" and the "nurturing family model" is a truly illuminating description of why our social and political society is so polarized. Here at Youth Homes we align with "nurturing family model." We work every day to create treatment models based on the underlying value of discipline versus punishment and the vision that our world, while hostile at times, is not innately dangerous. We want our residents to grow up with the belief that each of us should be committed, not just to our own families, but also to society as a whole. We are so very fortunate to be surrounded by so many volunteers who share these values and make them a reality virtually every day.

Stuart McCullough
Executive Director



Report by Lorna Martyn

To assume the mantle of President of Youth Homes Auxiliary, and to follow in the footsteps of Ivy Robinson, presents a real challenge. As President, Ivy ably led the Youth Homes Chapters through many years of dedicated volunteerism, to help our group home residents.

At the June 22 Pantry Showers, the newly elected Auxiliary Officers for 2005-2006 were inducted by retiring Parliamentarian, Marge James. They are: President, Lorna Martyn; Vice President, Ivy Robinson; Recording Secretary, Anna Rose Stebbins; Corresponding Secretary, Carole Brown; and Treasurer, Joanne Taylor.

Three Chairpersons have retired from the Standing Committees. Tat Welcome has been appointed to replace Marge James as Parliamentarian, Donna Herdman will replace the retiring Auditor, Betty Rowe, and Sandra Abram assumes the Birthday Chairman's office from Cathy Gross. Other Standing Committee Chairpersons will continue in their current positions. Your new President is grateful to these ladies for their support.

The Pantry Shower, which was held at St. Paul's Episcopal Church, was a memorable event, so well-organized by Carla Panheco. The Auxiliary ladies in their usual inimitable style produced many culinary delights that were eagerly consumed by Auxiliary members, guest Board Members, and the group home residents and staff. Our program included musical renditions and original poetry readings by the residents. Those in attendance were visibly moved. The event culminated in packing up all the wonderful pantry supplies and "wish list" gifts from the Chapters.

Although regular Chapter meetings have not been conducted during the summer, the Auxiliary has not been idle. There have been planning meetings for future slated events, craft workshops to produce fascinating items for future sale, and preparation for the resumption of the regular fall agendas.

As your incoming President, I pledge that I will do all that I can to further the cause of Youth Homes. I hope to be enthusiastically available for all the Auxiliary needs.

Meet Ronnie Mabou

The oldest of five children, Ronnie Mabou holds the honor of being the person who has been working in the field of Therapeutic Behavioral Services (TBS) for the longest period of time in Contra Costa County... five years.

But what is TBS? TBS was developed in response to a lawsuit filed which claimed that the foster care system failed to provide behavioral support to the children in their care. The goal of the foster care system is to facilitate placement in the lowest appropriate level of care in the most home-like environment possible. To aid in this goal, TBS provides training in positive reinforcement and skills, anger management, communication skills, development of positive relationships, coping skills, and general life skills.

Ronnie began working with Youth Homes as a residential counselor in 1999. In 2000 she left to take a job with Family Stress Center in the then new field of TBS. Youth Homes did not begin our TBS program until 2002. Since its inception in 2002, the Youth Homes TBS program has tripled in size. Youth Homes is a leader in TBS Services in the county and serves as a role model for other agencies. Ronnie returned to work for Youth



Ronnie Mabou, a very special TBS worker with Youth Homes.

Homes in 2004 as a TBS worker. Ronnie excels working with the children on an individual, one-on-one basis, which is what TBS is all about. The TBS worker is allowed to tailor the program to meet the child's individual needs.

In addition to her years working with children in a group home setting, Ronnie spent 8 years working (seasonally) at Camp Boggy Creek, which was co-founded by Paul Newman and Norman Schwartzkov. Camp Boggy Creek serves children with chronic illness, many of whom have severe behavioral problems. The camp focuses on behavioral interventions.

Working with children is in Ronnie's blood... her brother Bobby is an Administrator at a Police Ranch in Oregon (a residential facility for teenage boys on probation), and her mother Linda is a Residential Treatment Counselor here at Youth Homes. Her father runs his own telecommunication business. She also has two brothers in high school, one in the Air Force, and one who is a poet.

Surprisingly, Ronnie credits her success in the TBS field to her 10 years working as a horse trainer. When asked if it's really that similar training horses and kids, she replied, *"We are all animals. Behavior training is behavior training."*

Ronnie enjoys working for Youth Homes because we allow our staff to bring their individual talents to the program. Policies were made which allow Ronnie to use her beloved horse Cowboy and dog Patch in her behavioral training work with the children. *"Pets have a way to encourage kids to develop better communication, empathy for others, and to experience a more normal childhood."*

What does the future hold for Ronnie? YH supported Ronnie in obtaining her Group Home Administrator's license. She would like to put it to use in the foreseeable future. Also, working with children has kindled Ronnie's own desire to be a foster parent. What a loved child that will be!

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Mary O'Leary
for Olga Alpen

Carla Pancheco
for Nola Frewell Perata

Penny Parr
for Pernina Collins

Joseph Pearce
for Margaret Pearce

Joan Wood Pedron
for Mercedes Wood

Ken & Linda Peterson
for Vauneta Wiinthrop
& Irene Peterson

Anne K. Pierson
for Mary Browne

Marilyn Ponting
for Belle Bennett

Elaine Prendergast
A. Joyce Price Jones

Nancy Cook
Professional Printing
for Robert Bodine

Karenl Pruitt
for Ida Sabbath

Mildred & Jeffrey Ratto
Doris Ream
for Gertrude Wright

Lucille Richey
for Dolores DeForce &
Dorothy Healy Seeman

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Barbara Riggins
for Marguerite Hussey

Phyllis & Bud Riggs
for Randy & Daniel Riggs

Al & Kathleen Robinson
for Alton Robinson Sr., Elvira
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Leigh & Ivy Robinson
for Muriel Robinson, Gladys
Levno & Mayme Frank

Betty Rowe
for Mary Louise Benham

Galyn Savage
Lorraine Schillinger
for Bea Slocomb

Craig Schlatter
for Theresa Schlatter

Marlene Sakol
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Claribel Schildler

Michelle Siegfried
for Beverley Siegfried

Terry Simmons
for Bill Holsberry

Tad Smith
for Katie Smith

H. E. Solem

Arline Spieler
for Ethel Moorhead &
all mothers everywhere

Anna-Rose Stebbins
for Stuart McCullough
& Ivy Robinson

Betty Steinbrugge
for Lola Warbritton,
& Marie Vathauer

Robin & Charles Studebaker
for Carlu Monje
& Jean Holloway

Jo Sunderland
for Thelma Barlow

Helen Suter
for Ruth Young

Cris Tarozzi
for Mary Alanzo

Helen Taylor
for Edna Biles & Clara Bopp

Joanne Taylor
for Edna Taylor, Mary
Lockwood, Carla Pancheco
& Virginia Sweazey

Ann Thelwell
for Sally Platt & Sarah Platt

Monica Venables
for Mother

Christine Versti
for Diane Pelletier

Sandra Weber
for Loneta Luce
& Elizabeth Weber

Tat & Wayne Welcome
for Nancy, Grace & Susan
Welcome, Lorna Martyn
& Catherine Rodgers

Clara B. Wentz
Josephine Bordogna

Mrs. Frederick Wentz
Diane E. Williams
for Emily Woods England

Carol T. Wilson-Bunn
for Josephine Monseur
Wilson

Jean Wilson
for Aunt Isabel &
Great Aunt Belle

Michelle Wisecarver
for Janet Wisecarver

Lisa Wiley Woelfel
for Marlene Wiley, Kathi
Woelfel & Helen Wiley

Winifred Wootten
for Elva Roach

Gertrude Wright for
Daisy Gassociat-Madeno

Evan Young
for Elinor Young

Joy Young
for Alan Young

Belynda J. Zobb
for Marjorie I. James, Lynn
Nelson & Phyllis Gotelli

Ellen Zucker
for Cele Berman



In Kind Donations 2004-2005

Many thanks to all the following people and organizations for making these much needed and appreciated donations.

Mary Lou Bouchard
clothing

Brite Smile, Maria Woodrow
oak bookcase, 8 office chairs,
2 mahogany credenzas, 4
cafeteria tables

Basic Brown Bear Factory
6 bears & a tour

Alan Brown
bicycle

James Cahill
3 Dell monitors

Liz Callahan
clothing

Robert Carroll
1990 Ford Escort Station
Wagon

Elaine Cline
dress & make-up bag

Consignment Treasures
couch & loveseat

Madeline Crandall
phones, clothing & misc

Bob & Faith Cushman
antique roll-top desk, cassette
player, color TV, jacket, file
folders & binders

Liz Cuthbertson
computer & monitor

Beth Darrow
household items

Diablo Home Economists
household items

Diablo Lincoln Mercury
facilitated donation of 2 cars

Mt. Diablo Druids #170
cereal and school supplies

Kate Fordham
1990 Cadillac

Ingrid Gardner
18' sectional couch & 50" HDTV

Matt Guichard
dining table, VCR, patio chairs,
household items & clothing

Lorraine Guthmiller
rose-colored chair

The Hasegawa Family
hundreds of stuffed animals

Michael Heinz
dump runs

Jack & Marcia Hicks
TV & VCR

Joan Hodgkin
refrigerator-freezer

Susan Iversen
clothing & accessories

Gladys Jimenez
freezer

Anthony & Lori Knaapen
game console, bed sheets, PDR
& craft materials

Willa Lampi
computer, monitor & printer

Dr. Eugene Lipson
1996 Lincoln Town Car

Mr. Maguire,
Sea Dog Industries
shelving storage cubes

Barbara Marsh-Wetherell
fax machine & computer
monitor

Bridget McCarthy
clothing

Mary Lou Bouchard
clothing, canned goods &
bathroom supplies

Tim McCreery
4-drawer bookcase, antique
solid oak corner bookcase,
teak entertainment center,
solid oak dining table,
6-drawer dresser with
matching mirror, 5 boxes of
toys, skateboard & hand-made
easy chair

Rolf & Michelle Mehlhorn
TV & VCR

Bruce Mello
2 color TVs, VCR, cassette
player, amplifier & speakers

Ashley Mills
couch, chair, ottoman & 2 rugs

Nick Montano
clothing

Moraga Rotary Club
blankets

Carol Orme
dresser

Margie Darnes is Honored as a Patriotic Employer

On October 17, 2005, an ESGR Patriot Award was presented to honor Mrs. Margie Darnes, Residential Supervisor of Youth Homes' Pryor Center for her support of Laura McKay, Residential Counselor, while Ms. McKay also performs her duties as a Staff Sergeant with the California Air National Guard, Hayward, California. (ESGR = Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve)



Left to right: Staff Sergeant Laura McKay; John Woolley, CA Vice Chairman, ESGR; Honoree Margie Darnes; Richard Johnson, ESGR; and Stuart McCullough.

Ellen Osmundson
household items

Bill Bratt
wood door

Amar Rajeseckhar
camera, calculator, sporting
goods & clothing

Randy's Mobile Auto
auto supplies

Ivy Robinson
five 10-piece cookware sets,
towel sets & plastic food
storage containers

Mr. & Mrs. Roth
bed frame, headboard &
mattress

Robert & Thalia Siegel
Maytag washing machine &
dryer

J. Lee & Shirley Snell
microwave & saucepan

Mike Sweeny
dishwasher, lounge
chairs & track lighting

Talbots
clothing

Wildpackets
camcorder

Two Terrific Volunteers!



Board Members Lorna Martyn
and Linda Peterson

thank you
thank you
thank you

Youth Homes Needs

If you can donate any of the items listed or if you would like to make a contribution, please call Laura Stark at 925-933-2627.

Cooking Oil
Macaroni & Cheese
Hamburger Helper
Canned Goods:

vegetables, fruit, soups, etc.

Salt/Pepper

Sugar

Cereal

Flour

Laundry Detergent

Fabric Softener

Bleach

Dish Soap

Dishwasher Soap

Hand Soap

Cleaning Supplies:

Pinesol, Windex, 409, Tilex,

Pledge, etc.

Sponges

New Tupperware/plastic
storage containers

Plastic Wrap

Aluminum Foil

Paper Towels

Paper Plates

Napkins

Toilet Paper

Freezer Bags

Sandwich Bags

Office Supplies:

paper, pencils, pens,

staples, paper clips,

binders, spiral notebooks

Shampoo

Conditioner

Feminine Hygiene Products

Combs/Brushes

First Aid Equipment

Blankets

Single Bed Sheet Sets

Pillowcases

Dish Towels

New or Used (well-maintained) 7 Passenger Van



P. O. Box 5759
Walnut Creek, California 94596-1759
Phone (925) 933-2627

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Our Mission

Youth Homes, Inc. is a non-profit organization committed to serving the needs of abused, neglected and delinquent children by providing comprehensive quality group home treatment programs and services that promote the well-being of individuals, families and the county.

United Way Donor Option #3225

Donate Online

Secure and convenient online donations may now be made at:
www.youthhomes.org