

CHILDREN FIRST QUARTERLY

Children First FFA Newsletter NO. 5

November 2016

As Bob Dylan's song said, "The times, they are a changing..." This is so true in foster care. In the next few years we will experience more changes in how foster care is done than I have personally experienced since I founded Children First 18 years ago.

I wanted to use this opportunity to bring you up to date with some of the changes that will happen in 2017. In 2015 legislation was passed to create a new way of viewing foster care titled "**Continuum of Care Reform (CCR)**" which will be implemented on January 1, 2017.

The purpose of CCR:

- Have all children live with a committed, permanent and nurturing family with strong community connections.
- Have support for children that will be individualized and coordinated across systems, meaning children shouldn't have to change placement to get services.
- When children go to group homes they will be there for a very short time and then be placed back into their community.
- Child and Family Team (CFT) meetings will drive case planning, placement decisions and care coordination. All children will be involved with their CFT.
- There will be a new rate system that will not be "age based" but based on "level of care". This will affect you the most. The State of California is creating the protocol for this and I will update you as they send us the information later in the year of 2017.
- There will be a new home study which we refer to as our "psychosocial". The State is focusing on permanency so they want foster parents to be prepared to adopt (**if they chose to do so**). During the next three years **all current** and new foster parents will need to complete this new home study. This home study will now make it easier to allow parents to be ready for permanency/adoption. This does not mean you have to adopt the child placed in your home; only that you are prepared to do so if that is your choice.

One big change as of January 1, 2017, is that the name **Foster Parents** will be changed to **Resource Families**. This change was a difficult one for me to adjust to but I am now embracing it and understanding that it really reflects the changes that are coming. These changes have been huge to us and we have done some incredible things this year that will help us serve you better!

I understand that changes are not always easy to take, so my commitment to you is that we will make these changes as seamless as possible, and that as a team at Children First we will continue to support you. With the changes will be rate increases as well as some new requirements in how we care for children. Ultimately, I believe that the changes will be positive. If you would like to discuss any of these items, please give me a call.

I am proud to announce that we have become Nationally Accredited! We have become accredited through the Commission on Accreditation of Rehabilitation Facilities (CARF International), one of the top Accreditation organizations in the world. This was a requirement by the State of California and we are glad we went through this process. I

As an agency, we are preparing to be ahead of the learning curve and will provide you with information and support as we move into this new chapter of caring for children. I appreciate every one of you who has given of your time and energy for a child.

Thank you,

Mike Logan
Executive Director

In This Issue

- A Word From One Of Our Social Workers: Growing together is an important factor to success. Gain insight into how valuable this is to our social workers.

RECIPE CORNER

Check out the new Recipe Corner inside this edition! Find great recipes from our staff and friends!

- Lassen Counseling: Do you or someone you know have a need for counseling? Learn more about our program and how it is designed to help individuals live life to its fullest.

A Word From One of Our Social Workers... Growing Together

In my time as a social worker at Children First, I've been given the opportunity to experience firsthand the joy of watching remarkable people doing incredible things:

I've seen foster parents accept, nurture and love, challenging children in the selfless hope that this gift may one day allow a child to walk their journey without being crippled by trauma and pain. I've seen children discover, sometimes for the first time ever in their life, the connections that allow them to feel whole, to feel like a member of that great social fabric we call 'family,' and to find the freedom to live, to love, and to let go of the past.

I've seen fellow social workers and staff give what they had, and then give more, because they knew that just one more meeting, phone call, or visit could make a change in a child's life. Most importantly, however, in my time at Children First, I have been given the privilege of growing *together* with all of you, walking with you, learning with you, growing more patient and tempered with you, and watching lives change and people flourish because of our shared belief that the fundamental goodness in all of us will emerge despite the power of hardships, pain, and fear.

I have stood alongside of you, foster parents, as you helped confused, frustrated children navigate their emotions when returning to their foster home after a visit with their biological parents, their hearts and minds unable to fully comprehend why they can't just go home with their mom and dad.

I have watched you grow and mature in this regard, and watched you find the strength and discover within yourself an ability to help and to heal no matter how difficult the situation may be. I too have grown more steadfast, more resolute, and have discovered patience within my own life as a result. It has broadened my understanding and my faith in humankind to watch your inexhaustible efforts to make it okay for a suffering child time after time, to give a child hope, for one more day, one more hour, one more moment.

I have stood alongside of you as you have let go of children, calmly hoping that they continue their journey well in another home and with another family, finding that although they may never see you again, you have given them exactly what they needed exactly when they needed it at that time in their life. This has allowed me to let go, to understand that ultimately things will be okay, to grow in the knowledge that we are in one another's lives often only for a season, but that others will carry on our work.

I have stood alongside of you, children, as you found that you can face doubts and fears with courage far beyond that of which you thought you were capable, as you walked forward despite your fears and lived your lives despite your wounds. It has been an inspiration to me, and with this I have grown to know that I too can walk forward without having all the answers, without my doubts dictating my actions, seeking the joy and connections that every human being needs and deserves.

I have stood alongside of you as you have discovered what it means to trust again, to participate, and to allow others into your lives; with this I too have grown a willingness to trust, to be a part of, to open up and allow others in my life.

I have stood alongside of you, social workers and fellow staff, and watched you willingly and persistently give 100% to the foster families and the children. I've seen you selflessly work to do things how and when they needed to be done, without fail, without compromise, and without question.

I've watched you realize that no situation, no crisis is large enough to prevent you from acting with courage, dignity, and principles. Through this I've grown to know what service truly means. I've learned that no painful experience is powerful enough to break the human spirit, and seen what dedication, professionalism, and a passion for the work and for the families really looks like.

Ultimately, I am grateful to have shared these experiences with you.

I am grateful to have developed as a person and a professional alongside with you, to have been a part of your growth and your efforts, and to have developed my own as a result.

I hope to continue to stand alongside you as you discover within yourselves your purpose, and your capabilities as I continue to discover mine.

I hope, in this last analysis, that we can continue to walk this journey side by side, that we can continue to grow *together*.

Nathan Wallace
Social Worker, Children First



Join Us in Welcoming Our New Staff!

In case you haven't noticed, there are some new faces at the agency! These individuals have joined our team of professionals who are dedicated to serving you. Whether it is in the Foster Family Agency or the Counseling Center, they are here to give you the top quality care, commitment and support that we feel every individual who is involved with Children First should receive.

We wanted to officially introduce each new employee into the Children First family, and would also like you to become familiar with the great additions we have made to our staff.

Join us in welcoming: *Amy Neesby*, was promoted to Social Worker/Siskiyou County; *Angela Prado*, Clinical Intern/Red Bluff; *Arden Carr*, Counseling Director/Siskiyou; *Brittany Maria*, Administration/Counseling; *Jeff Hunt*, Clinical Intern/Red Bluff; *Jennifer Reynolds*, Social Worker/Siskiyou; *Kaitlyn M. Green*, Social Worker/Red Bluff; *Kasie Sousa*, Social Worker/Red Bluff; *Laura Ramsey*, Administration/Red Bluff; *LeRae Ariagno*, ITFC In-Home Support/Redding; *Leyla Smith*, ITFC In-Home Support/Redding; *Michael Tullis*, ITFC In-Home Support/Redding; *Rhiannon Liddick*, Administration/Siskiyou; *Su Lin Brouillette*, Social Work Assistant/Red Bluff; *Victoria Wuest*, Clinical Intern; *Karen Kemp*, Administration/Social Work Trainee; *Noel Pacheco*, Transporter.

With a team like this, it's easy to see the genuine nature that our agency has for empowering each and every child or client that we serve in the community. So if you are out and about, stop in and say hi!



RECIPE CORNER

Recipe Corner is a new feature in Children First Quarterly. Our staff are happy to share some of their favorite old family recipes. Our first recipe comes from Jessica Berry in our Red Bluff office.

RECIPE

Fresh Apple Cake with Cream Cheese Walnut Frosting

2 c. sugar	3/4 c. salad oil
2 eggs	2 tbs. vanilla
1 tsp. salt	1 tsp. baking soda
2 c. flour	1 1/2 tsp cinnamon
1 c. chopped walnuts	
4 c. chopped granny smith or golden delicious apples	

Preheat oven to 350 degrees. Cream sugar and oil together, add eggs and vanilla and beat until combined. Sift together flour, salt, baking soda and cinnamon then add to wet ingredients. Add in chopped apples and nuts. Pour batter into an ungreased 8 1/2" x 13 1/2" pan. Bake 45-55 minutes. Cool and frost (see below) or serve with whipped cream.

Frosting

8 oz. cream cheese	1 stick butter/margarine
1 box powdered sugar	2 tsp. vanilla
Chopped walnuts for garnish	

Mix together cream cheese and butter. Add sugar & vanilla and beat thoroughly. Frost cake and top with chopped walnuts.



Children First/Lassen Counseling Services is a private, non-profit agency dedicated to helping individuals of all ages enjoy life to its fullest. We provide high quality therapeutic counseling services to those in need with compassion, kindness and respect. Our goal is to assist people in resolving their issues in their life through focused individual counseling.

Lassen/CFCC was created in 2010, as a response to the growing needs for counseling services in rural Northern California and the desire to change lives by helping people through difficult times. At our agency, our behavioral experts understand that everyone struggles and faces challenges from time to time. It's when they become overwhelming that you may need support. Are you in need of assistance from one of our qualified counselors?

At Children First/Lassen Counseling Services we are here to support and serve you. Our caring and professional counselors are experienced in treating a variety of issues.

At Children First/Lassen Counseling Services, we understand that the decision to seek counseling is not always easy and that there may be some fear and anxiety regarding therapy. We realize that your decision requires overcoming these fears and getting past some of the myths and misconceptions that are commonly held about counseling. That is why we strive to make the process more comfortable by providing a safe and supportive environment with experienced and compassionate counselors. Our therapists have a wide variety of skills and specialties that offer our clients the best possible guidance and support.

We offer focused counseling for children, adolescents, and adults to address the individual needs of our clients. In addition, we use only evidence-based therapies including: **CBT** (Cognitive Behavioral Therapy), **Trauma Focused CBT**, **EMDR** (Eye movement desensitization and Reprocessing), and **PCIT** (Parent Child Interactive Therapy). These evidence-based therapies are excellent for treating issues such as ADD/ADHD, Anger Management, Anxiety and Child & Adolescent Behavior Issues, Depression and Grief Recovery. Services are provided on-site at one of our clinics/offices or off-site where needed, such as homes and schools.

Most major insurances are accepted including Partnership and California Health and Wellness. We also accept EAP (Employee Assistance Program) and Victim Witness. We are contracted with Tehama County Mental Health and receive referrals from individuals who have Managed Care benefits.

Children First/Lassen Counseling enjoys being part of a community that cares about, respects, and supports those we serve, and our counselors will work with you to empower you through knowledge, support and hope.

If you need help or know of someone who does and would like to talk to us, please call us at:

Tehama County
(530)690-2536

Shasta County
(530)529-9454

Siskiyou County
(530)841-1030

Or visit us on our website:
lassencounseling.com

Contact Us

Please call us for more information about our programs and services.

Children First Foster Family Agency

Red Bluff Office
590 Antelope Boulevard
Red Bluff, CA 96080
(530) 528-2938

Redding Office
2608 Victor Avenue
Redding, CA 96002
(530) 722-1022

Yreka Office
490 South Broadway
Yreka, CA 96097
(530) 841-1030

If you would like to make a donation,
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www.childrenfirstffa.com



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