

The Wittenmyer

A publication of the Wittenmyer Youth Center of Family Resources, Inc.

Wire

Volunteering at the Farmer's Market

By Tiffany Hood - Bridge House Lead Counselor

I have been recently taking some clients to the Davenport Farmer's Market every weekend to help sell produce and help out in other various areas of the market. I have been utilizing this experience to help the girls learn about marketing, social skills, and self pride. The girls have been able to find more confidence within themselves. They feel a sense of pride as well, when they are consistently being praised on their work by the Market Staff.

The girls are also exploring the options of farm life and healthy living, which is an opportunity many of the girls have not yet been exposed to. They have also been learning the art of marketing, how to get consumers to approach, how to appropriately address customers, different ways to advertise, bargaining, and building good rapport with customers. They have also learned about rejection and dealing with conflict appropriately. This has given them the opportunity to ignore negative people and manage their self control.

Some of these girls have difficulty in math. Their work at the Farmer's Market has afforded them experience in handling money, counting back change and applying math skills to practical life settings. We have seen improvements already in their math skills and self confidence. This opportunity also has provided them with exercise by walking, lifting, and keeping them continuously working.

I am proud to say that the girls have also learned respect. I have seen the girls offer assistance to customers who were affected by the heat. On one occasion they offered a chair and water to an elderly woman who had apparently overheated. The girls stayed by her side and continued to bring her water and offer assistance. The girls also offer to help carry produce to customer's vehicles, while being supervised by staff. It has been rewarding to see that they don't even have to be prompted to offer to help to someone.

Responsibility is one of the more important lessons they have learned. They not only help at the stand, but they also make sure no garbage is overflowing and the bathrooms are clean all around the market. They do these difficult jobs without complaint.

I would have to say though that the best lesson they may have learned from this experience is to have better self esteem. Many girls have stated to me that this experience has made them feel better about themselves. They are more vocal, more confident, more assertive, more enthusiastic, and they smile and laugh a lot more. They are touched by the fact that they are brought out there every weekend, they are trusted to do this work, and they are proud of the great work that they do. ●

“Their work at the Farmer's Market has afforded them experience in handling money, counting back change and applying math skills to practical life settings.”

Winter 2009

Family Resources strengthens children, families and individuals by providing quality services that engage community resources to create effective solutions.

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Girls Circle Curriculum Brought To Bridge House

By Kendra Schaapveld, Program Supervisor, Bridge House

In August 2009, several members of the Bridge House staff completed facilitator training for Girls Circle. In September 2009, Girls Circle groups began.

The curriculum offers 9 groups on self-efficacy, self-esteem, body image, diversity, and choice making. The girls are given pre and post-testing to determine how much progress they have made throughout attending groups.

The groups last between 9 and 12 weeks. They are offered for ages 9-18. The girls complete role-play, journaling, and open discussion about each week's topic. Often, there are creative activities, such as making a collage, sculpting, painting, so that girls are able to express themselves through other means. The groups focus on safety and sisterhood so that each girl will be heard and so that she will feel that relationship connection that girls thrive on.

As the new groups have continued, participants of Girls Circle look forward to the next one. They often ask if they can participate more and if they can have extra time to journal their thoughts. A typical circle lasts about 2 hours.

Girls Circle is working to be an evidence-based curriculum for girls. It has been identified as, best practice, for female responsive services. ●

“The groups focus on safety and sisterhood so that each girl will be heard and so that she will feel that relationship connection that girls thrive on.”



Sharon Sarver - Director, Child Welfare & Juvenile Justice Programs

Director's Letter

Happy winter to our friends and colleagues across the state! We have certainly been busy on campus since our last edition of the Wittenmyer Wire! Here's just a sampling of what we've been up to in the last few months:

- Our students continue to make us proud in their athletic participation bringing home the championship trophy in basketball and the third place trophy in soccer. Beyond their ranking, we're most proud that **our kids received the "Sportsmanship" award in both sports!**
- An astonishing *three* Family Resources, Inc. employees were awarded this fall with state-wide recognitions for their contributions in the field of social service by the Iowa Coalition for Children and Families. We are so proud of those employees: Kim Hessel, Anton Taylor and Felix Taylor!
- Thanks to an Alcoa grant, we were fortunate enough to bring Darin Carver to campus for two separate 2-day trainings on *Aggression Replacement Training (ART)*. We were able to train forty staff in this model and are currently implementing groups across campus in our residential programs.
- With the same grant, we provided training to staff on *Trauma Informed Care*, our research and evidence based foundation for practice across the agency.
- Responding to the unique needs of our female clients, several Bridge House staff were able to attend training on the *Girl's Circle* model through a grant awarded by the OJJDP. Girl's Circle groups are currently underway at Bridge House and the young women have been responding with true excitement!
- And to top off several busy months, the Newcomb and Shelton Programs swamped facility sites in response to a changing trend in referral activity that we've been monitoring for the last couple of years. Students and Staff are settling into their new digs, having some fun with decorating and arranging furniture as they see fit.



Above, Rep. Phyllis Thede with the Wizards Basketball Champs. Below, the Wizards Soccer team took the third place trophy. Both teams received the Sportsmanship award.

As always, we so greatly appreciate the ongoing support we receive from each of you! We could not do this important work without the confidence that you extend to us each time you entrust us to care for the young men and women on your caseloads. We take that responsibility and the relationships we have with you very seriously.

Campus is bustling with activity this time of year so we look forward to your visits. Please look me up as you stop by, I'd love to see you!

With gratitude and Happy Holidays,

Sharon

Kudos to Our Coalition Award Winners

Every year the Coalition for Children and Families in Iowa recognizes three social workers for outstanding achievement in their field. This year, all three winners were from Family Resources, Inc.



Felix Taylor, "Tom Lewis Award" winner, came to Family Resources, Inc. in 1993 where he worked with neighborhood youth in the gang prevention program. Felix has worked in a variety of programs throughout his years at Family Resources, Inc. Today he works in our MR waiver program called Sophie's Place. "Felix is a person who loves kids and is always willing to do whatever is necessary to help them reach their potential," said Ikenna Martin, Program Supervisor. The Tom Lewis Award is given by the Coalition for Family and Children's Services in Iowa to acknowledge staff that have shown outstanding service, dedication, longevity and diversity in duties to children and families.

The love of working with children and families runs in the Taylor household.



Anton Taylor is not only the recipient of the "Child Care Worker of the Year" award, he is also Felix Taylor's son. Anton has held several positions working with children at Family Resources, Inc. Today, he works as a Crisis Interventionist for the Wittenmyer Learning Center's new Autism classroom and as a Service Coordinator for the Fairmount Pines project in Davenport. "Anton possesses a true dedication and passion for this field and for the youth and families we serve, as an agency, on a daily basis," said Kate Lempke, Program Supervisor.



The "Al Schulte Memorial Award" was given to **Kimberly Hessel Pantier**, Safety & Permanency Program Supervisor in Family Resources' Muscatine

office. Kim began her career with Family Resources, Inc. in 1995 providing child welfare services to children and families in

need. "You can witness the impact Kim has on children through the connection that they keep with her long after services end," said Dawn Sturms, Director of Muscatine Programs. "Her dedication not only to the workers that she supports but to the children whose lives she touches cannot be matched." Kim received the Al Schulte Memorial Award in recognition of her outstanding achievement with children and families.

"Felix, Kim and Anton are three uniquely different individuals who share a core value; helping others in need," said Cheryl Goodwin, President/CEO of Family Resources, Inc. "I consider myself fortunate to have worked with each of them over the years. On behalf of the Board of Directors and agency staff, we are proud that these three are a part of our Family Resources Family!" ●

Gardening

By Regina K. BH

We do the garden one to two times a week. The garden is turning out really good.

Sometimes I would go out and do the garden with no help. I go out and see what needs done and if it's going to be a couple of days before the girls from Pleasant Valley come.

A couple of girls from Pleasant Valley High School comes and help us Bridge House girls with the garden; the girls are very nice who come help us. Sometimes the one girl's dad will come and help. I enjoy doing the garden.

We water the garden, we pull weeds out of the garden and we also get veggies out that are ripe. The Pleasant Valley girls take the veggies with them and give them to the food pantry. Sometimes Bridge House gets some veggies. We go and fertilize the corn and other veggies. It's a nice thing for us to do. I like it.

Davenport Noon Kiwanis Club & SUMMIT

Kiwanis International is a global organization of volunteers dedicated to changing the world one child and one community at a time! The Davenport Noon Kiwanis has always had a big heart when it has come to helping children but has always had a special place for the SUMMIT boys. Each year Kiwanis takes SUMMIT boys on various activities in the Quad Cities and surrounding area.

This past summer, Kiwanis took about 13 kids to a Quad City River Bandits baseball game. For majority of these boys it was their first opportunity to watch a minor league baseball game while enjoying

roasted peanuts, popcorn, hot dogs and all the fixings. The boys definitely had a lot of fun and were appreciative of this opportunity. The Kiwanis Club also sponsored another exciting adventure for the SUMMIT boys this past summer. Ten SUMMIT boys had the opportunity to attend the annual Doug Baker Canoe Outing. The group traveled about an hour outside of the Davenport area and canoed for a full day followed by grilling out before heading back to the barracks. This experience was one the students and Instructors will never forget! ●

New Research-based Intervention Implemented in Wittenmyer Programs

Family Resources, Inc was awarded funding through an Alcoa Grant to assist in the training needs of staff members. During the week of September 14th, 2009 Family Resources hosted (2) 2 day trainings by Darin Carver, "A Comprehensive Research-based Intervention for Aggressive, Impulsive and Behaviorally Disruptive Youth". Approximately 35 Family Resources staff were provided training as well as 6 Scott County Juvenile Court Liaison's. We are very excited to have so many staff across different residential programs providing components of ART. Programs currently providing this curriculum are; Victory House, Leslie, SUMMIT, and Bridge House.

This research-based intervention was developed from the Aggression Replacement Training Curriculum. ART is a 10-week program, meeting three times a week for one hour for each of the components. Each session focuses on Skillstreaming, Anger Control or Moral Reasoning. Skillstreaming is the behavioral components of ART®. Many youth with criminal behavior and/or difficulties controlling their anger lack social skills. Anger control training is the affective component of ART®.

“This moves from the teaching of social skills, to losing anti-social skills and replacing them with pro-social skills.”

This moves from the teaching of social skills, to losing anti-social skills and replacing them with pro-social skills. The anger control training uses the anger control chain. This is a process taught to the youth to deal with situations that cause them to get angry. Moral Reasoning is the cognitive component of ART®. This component provides adolescents opportunities to take other perspectives other than their own thereby learning to view their world in a more fair and equitable way. ●

“Who’s Who”

- Mary Macumber-Schmidt, Vice President 563-468-2218
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 - Jessica Barnhart-Clark, Assistant Supervisor. . 563-468-2189
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 - Erica Lee, Assistant Supervisor 563-468-2181
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 - Christina Cluff, Assistant Supervisor. 563-468-2272

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 - Kelley Yohe, Counselor 563-468-2186



A Few Words From the Wizards

By: Leann Noack (Principal)

Holiday greetings from the Wizards! We hit the ground running this fall with our student enrollment at an all time high to start off this school year. We are currently averaging 160 students, 70 of them referred to us from our surrounding school districts. We are celebrating the opportunity that this has given us to continue to help at risk students in our community, and support our struggling youth. Furthermore, we are also celebrating other successes that we have accomplished this year as well.

We are proud to say that we have been asked by Davenport Schools to take on the rewarding challenge of starting a unique program for severe and profound Autistic children. After months of research and

planning, we opened our doors on August 7th to the first program of its kind in our area. We are working closely with Board Certified Behavior Analysts from as far as the University of Florida, to help guide us in our curriculum programming as well as our behavior practices that we are implementing with this student population. It is our goal to one day serve as a model in this area for educators across the country.

Another accomplishment that we are celebrating is the completion of our 6th annual student food drive. This year we brought in 2,042 pounds of food to help feed the hungry in our community. This amounts to over 2,000 meals that can now be served through the hard work of our students, staff,



and families at Wittenmyer Learning Center. With that said I would like to personally thank our Student Council for taking the lead on this project and putting forth a tremendous amount of effort and time to make an impact in our community.

Lastly, I just want to note that we are approaching the holiday season and will soon be finishing up our first semester of the 09-10 school year. We have accomplished a great deal in a small amount of time and we invite you to join in this celebration! Thank you for your continued support! ●

GO WIZARDS!

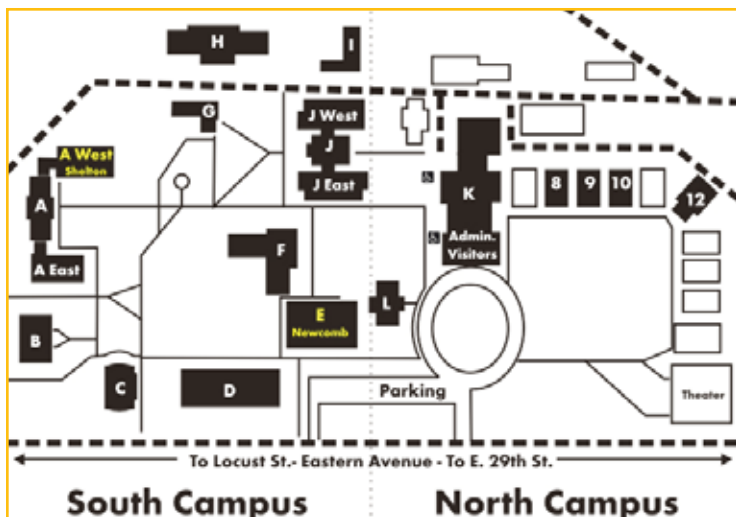
Newcomb & Shelton Programs Swap Sites

Over the past few years, we have observed a change in the population, or types of kids, we've been serving. Our Newcomb Program has experienced an increase in referrals and had literally outgrown its former location. At the same time, more communities have devel-

oped outpatient juvenile sex offender treatment programs so we've been seeing a decrease in referrals to our Shelton Program. As we evaluated this trend, we felt the time was right to swap sites in order to make better use of the space available within each facility.

when you come to campus. Parking should also remain relatively convenient for each new location:

- Parking for the new Newcomb Program location is directly off of Eastern Avenue in the parking lot closest to our Learning Center and Administration Building
- Parking for the new Shelton Program location is behind our Gymnasium off of Wittenmyer Lane



Contact information for the two programs will not change as a result of this move. Phone numbers and, of course, the campus address will remain the same. The only difference you should experience is visiting a new building

I am confident that as you continue your visits to campus, you will find that both new locations provide comfortable living space for the Newcomb and Shelton clients. The Newcomb and Shelton staff have been settling into their new facilities and to ease the adjustment for the clients, their feedback has also be utilized to the extent possible. I encourage you to visit the programs and see the work they've done setting up their new spaces!