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The Lookout

**Austin Child Guidance Center's
E-Newsletter**

October 2010

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Greetings!

Next month, I will be retiring as executive director of the Austin Child Guidance Center. For the past twenty-nine years, I have had the privilege and honor to lead the staff in continuing our mission to improve the mental health of children and families. We would not have been able to do this without the tremendous support from our board volunteers, staff, and numerous community members who attended an event, made a donation, volunteered time, or wrote a kind letters of encouragement. We are excited about the future, as we will soon be making a public announcement regarding my successor. My hope is that you will give that individual the same wonderful level of support I have enjoyed over the past three decades. I will fondly remember those of you who have helped make the Center a continued place of healing and hope for children who suffer from mental illness.

Donald J. Zappone, Dr.P.H.
Executive Director

Third Annual Super Hero Show a Success



A great evening was had by all at Antone's on September 23 in support of the ACGC and the children we serve. We raised more funds than the past two years. We want to thank Susan Antone for her generous hospitality and use of Antone's. Our thanks also to Don Harvey and Alejandro Escovedo, who were the honorary co -chairs of the event and to the the following great bands: Jon Dee Graham; Ian McLagan and the Bump Band, Fastball; and Reckless Kelly.

Our thanks to Mary Knight, ACGC board member, who chaired the event and to Corcoran and Company for helping us put on the event. Thanks also to the many generous donors who made the evening a success.

Walk In Counseling Available



In addition to its regular appointment times, did you know that the Austin Child Guidance Center now offers a walk-in counseling service? Children up to age 17 and/or parents/legal guardians of children up to age 17 are welcome to walk-in on Friday afternoons between 2:00 and 4:00 p.m. They will receive a fifty minute counseling session with a mental health professional experienced with child and adolescent behavior and mental health issues. Fees are on a sliding fee scale based on family size and income.

There is a great deal of support in the literature for walk-in counseling. Whether by plan or design, most psychotherapy is brief. Numerous studies have reported the average length of treatment to be three to eight sessions. The modal or the most common length of treatment is actually only one session. Even with this the "briefest of brief" duration, many successful outcomes are reported. When clients are seen for one session, most report satisfaction because they receive the help they need at that time.

Joint Commission Accredits Center

By demonstrating compliance with The Joint Commission's national standards for health care quality and safety, the Austin Child Guidance Center has once again earned The Joint Commission's Gold Seal of Approval™. Founded in 1951, The Joint Commission is dedicated to continuously improving the safety and quality of the nation's health care through voluntary accreditation.



"In becoming accredited, the Austin Child Guidance Center was evaluated against a set of national standards by a Joint Commission surveyor experienced in the delivery of behavioral health care services," says Mary Cesare-Murphy, Ph.D., executive director, Behavioral Health Care Accreditation Program, Joint Commission." Donald Zappone, Dr.P.H., Austin Child Guidance Center executive director, noted that the Center has been accredited since 1986 and this most recent reaccreditation for the next three years shows that, "We continue to make a significant investment in quality on a day-to-day basis from the top down. We seek accreditation for our organization because we want to be the best and we view obtaining Joint Commission accreditation as another step toward excellence."

Client Success Story

ACGC is committed to providing high-quality, professional mental health services to Austin/Travis County children and families, regardless of their ability to pay. Common presenting problems are disruptive behavior, trauma, depression, anxiety, and parent-child relationships. With each e-newsletter, ACGC shares a story about a recent client's success in therapy.

William is an 8-year old boy who was referred to Austin Child Guidance Center due to increasingly withdrawn behavior, suddenly failing grades, decline in appearance and hygiene, verbal threats, and violent thoughts towards others. William and his family started counseling where he disclosed that he was experiencing auditory and visual hallucinations, delusions of reference and persecution, and homicidal ideation. He was then referred for a psychological evaluation and a psychiatric evaluation within the agency. A diagnosis of a severe mental illness was confirmed and William and his parents began the process of medication stabilization, education, support, and therapy to walk them through this episode. William and his family are now making tremendous gains. He started at a new school, is becoming more socially active, participates in extracurricular activities, continues to take his medication, and is utilizing counseling at a decreased frequency.

To learn more about ACGC's services and sliding fee scale, visit our website at www.austinchildguidance.org.

Help Us Meet the Challenge

Since 2006 Austin Child Guidance Center has been participating in the Austin Community Foundation's Nonprofit Endowment Initiative with the goal to increase our endowment fund to over \$100,000. For every \$4 contributed to our endowment fund Austin Community Foundation is matching it with an additional \$1 (for a maximum of \$20,000 in match). This is our final year to receive matching funds and **Austin Child Guidance Center still needs to raise \$16,600** in donations before the end of the year. Our endowment fund supports the long-term sustainability of the organization so that all families, regardless of their ability to pay, can receive mental health services. To ensure donations are processed by year-end and eligible for the match, Austin Community Foundation is asking for donations to be made by December 15, 2010. You may make your contribution directly to the Austin Community Foundation P.O. Box 5159, Austin Texas 78763. Please make your check out to the Austin Child Guidance Center Endowment. You can also make an online gift by clicking on this link http://www.austincommunityfoundation.org/?nd=nonprofit_endowment_initiative

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