Thanks to our Sponsors and Outstanding Supporters!
Annual Report 2012
The Austin Child Guidance Center has served as a pillar of the community - supporting children’s mental health and well-being for 61 years. ACGC is where the Austin community turns to receive advice and insight on significant mental health issues involving children. However, there have been a lot of changes in the mental health field over 61 years. The cultural fabric of Austin has changed as well. Therefore, ACGC, like all successful non-profits, continues to evolve to meet these shifts in the external environment.

It’s Spring, and you can feel it in the air! Austin Child Guidance Center is bursting with seasonal renewal. From clientele and programmatic growth through aesthetic renovations and fun new branding and signage, spring is everywhere. An enormous amount of community outreach is mushrooming, including hosting and visiting agencies, engagement in coalitions and planning, as well as attending and providing educational workshops. There are additional therapists, who allow clients to continue to enjoy the center’s happy environment. Children look forward to appointments, often times not wanting to leave - quite telling of the children’s comfort and safety levels in receiving care! Our Children’s Healing Garden is sprouting with life, thanks to all the local Austin corporate volunteer groups that routinely assist us in this delightful addition to our landscape.

Just as in our Children’s Healing Garden, the soil of the programmatic and administrative fabric of the Center has been cultivated. We are improving our technology profile and our administrative efficiency. Many new programs for children and family are ramping up and addressing Austin’s gaps in services for children’s mental health. Development and communications activities are increasing, and social media is now an increasing method for getting our message out to our community. A lot of good things are prepared to bloom! It is an exciting time to be part of ACGC.

The fundamental nutrients that allow us to strengthen as Austin’s leading provider for children’s mental health, are our supporters. We are profoundly grateful for your time, interest and resources you have so generously given in support of our community’s children. We look forward to working with you as Austin Child Guidance Center continues to be recognized as the best-in-class children’s mental health support system for our whole community!

With deepest appreciation,

Paula Aaronson
Board President, 2012
Our Mission
To improve the mental health of children and their families through early intervention, diagnosis, and treatment to help them develop the emotional skills for meeting life’s challenges.

About Us
In 1951, Austin Child Guidance Center became Austin’s first outpatient mental health facility solely dedicated to children’s mental health. Throughout its history, ACGC has used a multidisciplinary approach, with psychiatrists, psychologists, social workers, and professional counselors to treat children and their family members. The team works closely together to provide individual, family, and group therapy; psychiatric evaluations and psychological assessments; parent education; community presentations; and training to current and future mental health professionals. Bilingual services are offered in our main office at 45th and Lamar, as well as in various community settings.

“I see a vast improvement in the emotional health and coping skills of my child.”
Client Success Story

Colleen, age 7, felt like she didn’t have friends, and knew that there was something that made her different from other kids. She had a hard time picking up on social cues, following norms in conversation, and struggled with the necessary social skills to make and keep friends her age. Colleen had meltdowns and would get upset easily and frequently. So, Colleen’s dad brought her to Austin Child Guidance Center for a psychological assessment and she was diagnosed with Asperger’s Syndrome, which involves difficulty in social situations. Colleen began working with a therapist at ACGC, who helped her learn about friendship skills. Up until this point, Colleen didn’t understand that conversation needed to be a two-way process, that people like it when you act interested in what they’re doing, and that it’s hard to have friends when you get too upset all of the time. Thankfully, Colleen was able to remember a great deal of what she was learning in therapy and actually practiced it at school. When Colleen began 2nd grade, her dad reported that she was making friends and was less rigid with change, which undoubtedly made things easier for Colleen.

It is not easy being a child with Asperger’s, and it can be overwhelming for parents to find resources to help them navigate the rocky moments. Colleen was able to find the answers and the support she needed at ACGC, and she and her family know that the center will continue to be there for them should they need support in the years to come.
Our Core Services

The majority of services provided are offered at our central facility. Our multi-disciplinary team utilizes evidence-based treatments, including parent-child interaction therapy, cognitive behavioral therapy, solution-focused therapy, structural family therapy, trauma-focused cognitive behavior therapy, and play therapy. ACGC provides children and families the following services:

**Individual Therapy**
Therapists take a strengths-based approach to help children work through issues such as grief, loss, depression, anxiety, school phobia, and parent-child relationship issues.

**Family Therapy**
Therapy extends to all family members and guardians in the child’s life. Because change does not occur in a vacuum, family members are encouraged to work together to heal and learn new patterns of behavior.

**Group Therapy**
In order to promote positive peer relations, children in group therapy practice problem-solving and learn ways to build their self-esteem and improve their social skills.

**Psychological Assessments**
Psychological assessments are in-depth tests that may last up to 6 hours and often help answer questions regarding clients with complicated symptoms, neurological processing, differential diagnostics, or ways the child understands and relates to the world.

**Psychiatric Services**
Child psychiatrists are available to perform psychiatric evaluations for children who present with many complicated symptoms and where psychotropic medication may be clinically indicated. These evaluations integrate biological, psychological, and social factors that influence an individual’s level of functioning.

**ADHD Parent Education/Support Classes:**
Parents of children diagnosed with ADHD participate in group classes focused on managing and improving their child’s hyperactivity, impulsivity, and oppositional behavior.

**Walk-In Clinic**
In 2009, ACGC began the walk-in therapy clinic at the Center. These services are provided on a sliding fee scale and with no appointment, for children and their family members seeking guidance and direction. Clients are seen first-come, first-serve every Friday from 2 p.m. to 4 p.m. by licensed Psychologist Arnie Slive, Ph.D. and a team of qualified mental health professionals.

**Parent Workshops**
ACGC has expanded our offerings of workshops geared toward parents. Workshops on bullying, dealing with divorce, communicating with teenagers, and tempering tantrums are provided at no cost to participants.

**Sliding Fee Scale**
All services are offered on a sliding fee scale rate for un-insured/under-insured clients. No child is turned away for inability to pay for services.

A total of 581 clients and 782 family members were provided one or more of the Center’s core services in 2012.
Our Partnerships

Austin Child Guidance Center partners with several agencies and participates in a number of collaborations in Austin/Travis County, including:

**Community Clinic**
The TANDEM Project is a collaboration with People's Community Clinic, Any Baby Can, and Life Works to promote optimal levels of health, educational, and vocational achievement as well as social and family functioning to reduce the risk of subsequent pregnancies among participating teenagers. The project serves pregnant teenagers and teen fathers receiving prenatal care at People's Community Clinic. ACGC provides mental health services to teens, including individual & family therapy, psychological assessments; and psychiatric evaluations. We also provide consultation to the professional staff participating in the project. 193 youth and 11 family members served in 2012.

**Juvenile Court Project**
The Juvenile Court Project team provides individual, family, group and multifamily group therapy services to adolescents residing at Travis County's residential program, the Intermediate Sanctions Center. 156 youth served in 2012.

In the Juvenile Probation Services Division, Austin Child Guidance Center therapists provide a multitude of mental health services, including mental health screenings, psychiatric and psychological services, individual, family and group therapy. These services are conducted at multiple sites including, ACGC, the Day Enrichment Program, local schools and client homes which ensures that Juvenile Court clients have easy access to quality mental health services. The Center also provides clinical consultation and training to Juvenile Court and its staff. 402 youth and 41 family members served in 2012.

**Childcare centers and preschools**
The Infant and Early Childhood project provides direct service and consultation to select childcare centers in regard to early identification of mental health concerns in infants and young children. Parent workshops, staff trainings, assessments, and interventions with children/families are offered by two licensed social workers as well as graduate students from The University of Texas at Austin School of Social Work. Working in partnership with the United Way Success By 6 Social Emotional Learning Collaboration, including the YWCA and Raising Austin, this project is funded by United Way for Greater Austin, and St. Luke’s Episcopal Health Charities. 544 youth, 82 parents, and 148 childcare workers served in 2012.
Victim Services

Children’s Victim Recovery Project is a program that helps children and families recover from the psychological effects of crime, violence, and abuse. Any child or adolescent who was a victim or witness to crime or violence is eligible for treatment services at no cost. Funding is provided by a grant from the Office of Texas Attorney General. 63 youth and 113 family members served in 2012.

Kids In The Middle Project is an initiative in which we offer mental health services and support to children and families involved in high conflict divorce, family violence, or custody issues. Funding is provided by grants from the Travis County Domestic Relations Office and the Travis County Counseling and Education Services Department. 7 youth and 8 family members served in 2012.

Middle Schools

Middle School Matters is a collaborative project funded by United Way for Greater Austin. Through this initiative Austin Child Guidance Center delivers mental health support and counseling services on site at three at-risk local middle schools: Mendez Middle School, Decker Middle School and Webb Middle School. 64 youth and 48 family members served in 2012.
Volunteers & Training

Austin is a wonderfully caring, supportive, charitable community. So it should come as no surprise that ACGC’s local volunteers are top notch! Volunteers help make ACGC’s work possible. In 2012, our volunteers planted and maintained ACGC’s Children’s Healing Garden; provided governance, direction and oversight; and worked in the reception area as Play Leaders. Play Leaders are long-term volunteers who engage children in the waiting area while they wait for their appointment, and when their parents are in consultation with staff. Play Leaders are an important part of the therapeutic process. By being there for clients and their siblings, they also eliminate the barrier of finding childcare for families.

We had many wonderful corporate teams beautify the entire property, including the children’s healing garden. We want to say thank you to our volunteer groups from Samsung, 3M, Bazaarvoice, National Instruments, Target, Dell and the Rotary Club of Austin. These companies, with roots in Austin, exemplify Austin’s charitable spirit. It has been an incredible year of service and civic engagement.

Board and committee members provide strategic direction for the organization, ensure we are fulfilling our mission to our wonderful Austin community, and help us plan and run special events. Thanks ACGC Volunteers!

In addition to the volunteer program, Austin Child Guidance Center has an extensive and highly valued training program for graduate students studying mental health disciplines. Serving on a volunteer basis, student interns provide a variety of clinical services to clients, thus significantly increasing the number of clients we are able to serve. Interns are supervised by licensed clinicians and participate in student seminars, staff meetings and case consultations, as well as collaborate with many of our community partners. In 2012, Austin Child Guidance Center hosted interns from the following disciplines:

- Clinical social work interns
- Graduate business board fellow
- Administrative social work intern
- Psychology practicum students
- Psychology interns
- Counseling interns
- Marriage and family therapy interns
- 13 graduate students trained
- 3,788 * community individuals receiving community presentations/consultations.

*Because Austin Child Guidance Center participates in several ongoing collaborations and partnerships, this number may include duplication.
Client Success Story

Jacob is a six-year-old boy who, along with his younger sister, has made a very long journey. They were adopted internationally from an orphanage just over a year before he came to receiving care from Austin Child Guidance Center. This little boy had been through so much in his six years: abandonment, severe hunger and malnutrition, and a history of violence and sexual abuse. Jacob’s adoptive parents found themselves unprepared to handle the resulting fall-out of his traumatic experiences. Jacob was a very intelligent little boy who immediately showed cognitive aptitude through his play with puzzles and other games. Yet, he resisted emotional connection and displays of affection from his new, loving mother and was often aggressive.

Through the Infant and Early Childhood Program, the social worker helped Jacob’s parents put his behavior into perspective while he learned to practice self-care. The sessions with the social worker helped Jacob begin to recognize social cues and understand emotional interactions with others. Much of the therapy with Jacob and his parents has centered on helping him attach to his new parents by creating new experiences to help Jacob process the world differently. Through consistent commitment by the family, and their responsiveness to the work with the therapist, they now have a closer bond with Jacob. After the many challenges he faced in his young life, Jacob and his parents are establishing new roots and learning to connect and grow into a loving, healthy family.
### Statement of Financial Position

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assets</th>
<th>2012</th>
<th>2011</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Cash</td>
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<td>Accounts receivable</td>
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<td>Prepaid expenses</td>
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<td>Other assets</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Total assets</strong></td>
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<td>$1,061,381</td>
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<tr>
<th>Liabilities and Net Assets</th>
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<tbody>
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<tr>
<td>Accounts payable</td>
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<td>Accrued payroll expenses</td>
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<td>Unrestricted</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Total liabilities and net assets</strong></td>
<td>$887,424</td>
<td>$1,061,381</td>
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### Expenses

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<td>7%</td>
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<td>Program Services</td>
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### Revenues

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<tr>
<td>Other Fundraising</td>
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<tr>
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<td>United Way</td>
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<tr>
<td>Corp.</td>
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<td>1%</td>
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</table>

Client Progress on Treatment Goals

- 88% of clients participating in individual and/or family therapy made progress on their treatment goals.
- 94% of clients in group therapy showed positive increases or changes in knowledge and behavior.

Client Satisfaction*

- 92% of clients reported were ‘very’ satisfied with the services they received.
- 100% of clients reported that if they needed further mental health services, they would again choose Austin Child Guidance Center.

Ethnicity

- Hispanic 54%
- White 27%
- Other 2%
- African American 17%

Ages

- 0-5 yrs: 37%
- 6-12 yrs: 37%
- 13-17 yrs: 26%

Gender

- Male: 39%
- Female: 61%

*Data from 231 quarterly and closing client satisfaction surveys collected in 2012
The Austin Child Guidance Center embarked on a journey of growth and revitalization in 2012. Two years after the retirement of Don Zappone, we have moved from our transition time to an exciting period of renewal.

ACGC’s renaissance encompasses our space, our services, and our reach. One of the last things Don told me as I was coming on board in 2010 was, “By the way, the building is slowly sliding into 45th Street, as it needs foundation repairs.” I am proud to report that we are now once again on a firm, solid, and non-sliding foundation. With generous support of St. David’s Foundation and Lola Wright Foundation, those repairs will be coupled with new flooring, paint, and a colorful sign on the corner of 45th and Lamar. Throughout the agency’s 61 years of service to the Austin community, ACGC has typically been a quiet organization, due to the nature of our services and the historic stigma associated around mental health issues. However, with the new sign, and strong initiatives by our development team and board of directors, ACGC has made great strides in improving our brand and visibility within the community.

ACGC has increased its capacity to serve the growing need for mental health services in the community. As Austin continues to grow, so do we. Last year, we secured one-time funding from Travis County Health and Human Services to initiate the Latino Children’s Mental Health Project, which adds two new bilingual therapists. In the last year and a half, ACGC has added five new full-time therapists to our staff.

After a year’s hiatus, both because of transitions and due to our celebration of our 60th Anniversary, we brought back both the Music Event and the Children’s Mental Health Seminar in 2012. Our Austin Originals Benefit Concert was our most successful music event ever. The Seminar (also the most successful ever) showcased trauma-informed cognitive behavioral therapy to an enthusiastic room of mental health care providers. In 2012, Judge Darlene Byrne and Chief Probation Officer Estelle Medina named ACGC the “community champion,” leader in trauma-informed care for Austin.

This coming year we’ll see the completion of our building renovations, more growth and outreach, the beginnings of our rebranding efforts, and a continuation of our commitment to provide high-quality, evidence-based mental health services to children and their families.

Russell A. Smith, LMSW
Executive Director
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