



2007 Activities and Accomplishments

CHRIS Counseling Center

CHRIS Counseling Center: On July 1, 2007, CHRIS Kids opened the CHRIS Counseling Center, an out-patient mental health and substance abuse clinic. The State of Georgia made changes in both the child welfare and mental health systems to bring the state in to compliance with Medicaid regulations in response to a Medicaid audit of the State. Placement services were separated from treatment services, effective July 1. The CHRIS Counseling Center provides therapeutic and nursing services to children living in the community at large and as needed to the children in the group homes and other programs. All services are provided under the supervision and licensure of a Child Psychiatrist. Medicaid and contracts with three care managed organizations that serve PeachCare enrollees provide payment on a fee for service basis. Grants and charitable contributions make pro bono services available and a sliding fee scale is charged to clients who have the means to pay for a portion of their services.

Since its inception through the end of 2007, the licensed clinicians of the CHRIS Counseling Center have provided 117 behavioral health assessments and over 1350 individual, family and group counseling sessions for a caseload of over 250 youth. Our licensed psychiatrists have provided more than 280 contacts that include both diagnostic assessments and on-going medication management and treatment services. Through the Community Support and Intensive Family Intervention programs of the Counseling Center an additional 700 service contacts were provided in homes and in the community. The variety of groups offered include anger management, healthy relationships and boundaries - for both males and females using gender specific material, as well as a Relapse Prevention group for youth who have successfully completed a specialized offender-specific treatment program. In addition to mental health services, the CHRIS Counseling Center is licensed to provide treatment for co-occurring disorders and offers two different levels of groups, treatment and education to youth who have been identified as needing services focused on substance abuse.

Keeping Families Together Community Programs

Various contracts, donations and grants support the array of services offered through the Keeping Families Together Program. Prevention, Aftercare, Relative Care and Wraparound services are provided to children and families in their own homes and communities when they are experiencing serious problems and are either at risk of the children being removed from the home or when the child and family are re-unifying after an out of home placement. Services include 24/7 crisis intervention and stabilization. Program goals are to strengthen, preserve and restore the family unit and to help each family member attain his/her highest level of functioning during the process. Behavior Aide services are an adjunct service that provides one-on-one supervision and support designed to identify, validate and build on the uniqueness and strengths of each child. The goal is to help the severely troubled child learn skills that will enable him/her to participate successfully (without one-on-one support) in family life, in school, in mainstream children's programs and in the community at large. During 2007, 88% of the children and families served were strengthened, preserved and restored.

Camp CHRIS is a nine-week, no-eject summer day camp for children and adolescents, ages 6 – 16, with severe emotional and behavioral problems who cannot attend mainstream programs due to their disruptive behaviors. Transportation to/from camp and two meals/snacks each day are provided in addition to enrichment, recreational and educational activities. As needed, one-on-one supervision and activities are provided to ensure that children are able to participate and benefit from all activities. The Camp CHRIS goal is to provide a summer day camp experience which gives troubled children the attention, structured schedule and activities necessary to help them develop self-control, learn to self-reflect, improve their social skills/social awareness and learn how to interact appropriately within the context of a summer camp in the community. Another important program goal is to assist parents in maintaining their employment which otherwise might be jeopardized by taking time off the job to attend to the needs of a troubled child during the summer. In 2007, Camp CHRIS served 58 children and had to turn away 40 other children/families due to funding limitations. The camp is fully supported through grants and gifts from individuals, corporations and foundations. Outcomes for campers and their families were positive with 95% of camper parents able to maintain uninterrupted employment while their child/ren participated at Camp CHRIS and 86% of parents stated that their child/ren showed improvement in abilities or skills in their individualized target areas for improvement.

www.chriskids.org

CHRIS Kids - Creativity, Honor, Respect, Integrity, Safety

The Independent Living/Rainbow Program provides semi-supervised living in apartments for up to 22 youth, ages 17 – 21, at any given time. 70% of the youth are aging out of a foster care and 30% of the youth are homeless prior to entering the program. Youth lack the social, economic and/or family supports necessary to develop independence and are at high risk for exploitation, poverty, criminal behavior and homelessness. The program provides a safe place for youth to gain self-respect, confidence and build skills. Each resident works with staff to create a viable plan for self-sufficiency. The program provides instruction in life skills (employment, financial and household management, psycho-social issues, sex education, safe sex practices) and guidance in gaining/maintaining employment.

A primary emphasis is on attaining educational goals, completing high school, attending technical, vocational schools or college. The ultimate goal is to help residents create and maintain positive, healthy relationships with others, make a successful transition to self-sufficient adulthood, and demonstrate responsible community behavior. The outreach to homeless youth is targeted to youth who are homeless as a result of their sexual orientation or gender identity as these youth represent up to 56% of all homeless youth. Gifts and grants fully support services to homeless youth. State funding provides a portion of what is needed to assist youth aging out of foster care and donations are needed to fill the gap. During 2007, 100% of youth displayed improvement in life-skills knowledge and application, as measured by the Ansell-Casey Life Skills assessment. In addition, 92% were gainfully employed upon discharge and 89% were enrolled in appropriate educational or vocational training.

Community Based Residential Programs

The Group Homes provide a family-like home in residential neighborhoods. The homes are an intervention alternative in the community for children with high needs who would otherwise be placed in large campus/institutional settings and serve abused and neglected children, ages 6 – 17, who have severe emotional and behavioral problems and who, on average, have lived in ten prior placements, are on four psychotropic medications and are two years behind in school/social skill development. During 2007, over 65% of the children entering our homes did not have an identified relative involved in their lives. Nine homes with highly qualified staff and a case manager assigned to each home serve approximately 54 children at any given time. There are no more than 6 children in a home and the children attend local public schools. Approximately 70% of the funding for the children in the homes is state funding. Charitable funding is required to fill the gap and provide the essentials that help the children succeed.

The program's goal is to provide troubled children experiences of normal everyday life while they receive the needed supervision, support, guidance and accountability required to help them become productive members of their schools and communities. Special emphasis is placed on re-unifying children with their relatives if at all possible, on helping children develop positive relationships with family members, and on creating "families of choice" if there are no relatives involved. With a focus on "real world" social skill building, engagement in community and after-school activities is standard. Aftercare services focus on the development of natural support system as well as providing on-going support. Children in the group homes show a 73% improvement in their scores on the Child and Adolescent Functional Assessment Scale after 12 months and, during 2007, almost 50% were discharged to their own family or a family setting in the community and 20% went on to the Independent Living Program, college, Job Corp or entered the military.