

FALL
2017

the bridge

Bridging the gap for children and families in need

what's inside

p. 3
Mentoring Succeeds

p. 5
Warm Weather Fun

p. 7
Bend and Stretch

Jackie had been outgoing and a good student. By 5th grade, though, raising her hand at school was not an option anymore. She feared someone would see the bruises.

In the 6th grade, her grades declined so much that a teacher, Mr. Spalding, worried about her. "Jackie avoids speaking in front of the class," he told the school counselor. "In fact, she hardly speaks at all anymore. She

seems withdrawn, as if she's trying to disappear."

The counselor contacted Child Protective Services. An investigation found that Jackie's stepfather had been abusing Jackie and her mother for more than a year. The girl was afraid to report him, especially because she did not want to leave her mother. Like many children, Jackie was loyal to a parent who mistreated her and felt she could protect the other members of the family.

The bruises on Jackie were only a small indication of the damage done to her spirit. When she arrived at the Residential Treatment Center, she was essentially mute. She received psychiatric treatment for depression and attended support groups. As months passed, the staff counseled her, mentored her and nurtured her. And she began to heal.

By the end of Jackie's treatment, her case manager found a responsible family member, an aunt, who was eager to become her legal guardian. Today, Jackie lives safely and happily with her aunt. She is back at school this fall, looking forward to her classes and building a social circle. She is a survivor and no longer a victim.



Presbyterian Children's
Homes and Services™

MISSION: Presbyterian Children's Home and Services provides Christ-centered care and support to children and families in need.

a message from

Executive Director Robert Giegling

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If you'd like to receive our newsletter by e-mail, please let us know at moinfo@pchas.org.



Presbyterian Children's Homes and Services works with children and families everyday who have experienced an eclipse of hope. We serve children who have experienced the darkness of abuse, the humiliation of hunger and the panic of being abandoned. We serve parents, too, who find themselves in darkness – from working hard but losing a job, from divorce, or from a loved one spiraling into drug abuse or alcoholism. Our work lifts these children and families into the light of self-understanding and restored relationships.

How does a child's life look, when healing? In both our community-based services as well as our residential services, our employees work tirelessly to plant the seeds of a "normal" life. Once these seeds have been planted, they are then nurtured and cared for so that they develop strong, healthy roots. With patience and skilled care, these roots will one day bear fruit.

We see the fruits of the PCHAS mission in children and families developing healthy relationships and in kids re-joining their communities through sports teams, cultural activities and field trips. With patience and skilled care, we nurture children and families to develop healthy relationships. They remember the darkness, but with help from PCHAS, they are able to embrace the light that allows them to heal and move forward.

PCHAS Texas and Louisiana President/CEO to Retire



Dr. Ed Knight, President and CEO of Presbyterian Children's Homes and Services of Texas and Louisiana, will retire at the end of 2017. He has served on the staff of PCHAS there for 30 years, the past 20 years as President and CEO. For the past five years, he has also served as President of PCHAS of Missouri's Board of Trustees.

When he was drafted after college, he became a U.S. Army social worker. Following his service in the army, Dr. Knight began his distinguished career at PCHAS' predecessor organization, Presbyterian Children's Homes (PCH) in Itasca, TX. For 10 years, from 1973 to 1983, he served as one of the agency's social workers, and later as director of its Itasca Group Home campus.

Continued on p. 6
Retirement

PCHAS Programs

- Therapeutic Mentoring
- Family Solutions for Kids
- Foster Care Case Management
- Medical Care Case Management
- Residential Treatment
- Transitional Living

800.383.8147

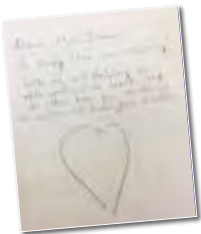
Therapeutic Mentoring

The success of our Therapeutic Mentoring program began in 2002 with 150 youth. The program continues to expand into new schools and communities and now operates in Boone County, Lincoln County and St. Louis County. Follow-up surveys show that 85% of children in Therapeutic Mentoring perform better in school and have better social skills.

Chanelle is one of those success stories. Her mentor, **Simone Zachary**, wanted to build on Chanelle's strengths, which include playing softball. She referred her to the Redbird Rookies, a children's program of the St. Louis Cardinals. In her first year on the team, Chanelle won a Gold Glove award. She has finished a second season and is now a candidate for a scholarship.



Some mentors meet with students at school. Here is how a fourth-grader, April, expressed her appreciation to her mentor, **Dawn Forte**:



Dear Mrs. Dawn, I really like that you are working with us and helping us with unfinished work and I like how you do things to make us feel good inside.

Parents can enroll children as young as five in this free program. Mentor **Carl**

Adcock of Lincoln County first met eight-year-old Lucas about a year ago. "Lucas was a very angry, frustrated and mixed-up little boy," Adcock says. "He was not doing well in school and was hitting his little sister. But I have witnessed a lot of positive growth since then." Lucas improved his grades. He



stopped being abusive toward his sister and now is able to play with her. He stopped arguing with his mother and is improving his relationship with his father, too.

Adcock sees another mentee, Beckett, age 14. Six months ago Beckett was described as selfish, argumentative and, at times, lazy.

"During the past six months," Adcock explains, "instead of fighting authority all the time, Beckett has started doing what is asked of him. He has passed his summer school classes and caught



up to grade level." Beckett has a better relationship with his parents, too. Now he sees that he can initiate positive changes in his life and is starting high school on strong footing.

Such results do not surprise **Jason Beard**, who manages Therapeutic Mentoring at PCHAS. He cites studies that show young people with mentors are:

- 52% less likely to skip school
- 46% less likely to begin using illegal drugs
- 32% less likely to hit someone or act out violently
- 27% less likely to begin using alcohol

Our Therapeutic Mentors, some part-time, some full-time, work with at-risk boys and girls in three counties. Mentors commit to meeting with a child once a week for up to a year. They are trained to help children who suffer with emotional or behavioral disorders and/or learning disabilities. A bachelor's degree and work experience with children are preferred.

If you are interested in becoming a mentor or referring a child to the program, please call (314) 785-0180 or visit <http://missouri.pchas.org/programs>.



Transitional Living

Inspiration

A youth group from Covenant Presbyterian Church in Wichita, Kansas recently visited our program in Columbia, Missouri. Development Officer **Erin Frasier** presented an informational class about foster care and our Transitional Living program.



"One of our topics was inspiration and how important it is to the kids in our care, who are going through very difficult times," Frasier says. Then the visitors, both teens and adults, made an inspirational book for PCHAS' clients in Columbia.

For more information on ways you can inspire a child through PCHAS, please contact a development officer today.

Roots, not Fruits

When visible progress seems slow, **Alisa Griffiths** encourages the girls at Ashley House to recognize the

emotional work they are doing beneath the surface. It is an attitude she applies to her own work, too.

Griffiths directs the Transitional Living program in Springfield, where her staff assists teenagers aging out of foster care. "We're here for the roots, not the fruits," Griffiths likes to say. "Our job is to help these kiddos establish strong roots. Much of what we do is not visible, but is vitally important. We may not see the fruits during their time with us but we prepare them to flourish wherever life may take them."



Alisa Griffiths



Family Solutions for Kids



Who we serve

Youth and their families who are:

- struggling with emotional or mental health issues
- struggling with family challenges
- struggling with substance abuse
- facing challenges in school or in the home
- recovering from emotional or physical trauma



How we serve

- Licensed Case Therapists provide counseling to children and families
- Case Therapists work with the family to determine goals
- Access to psychiatric services are provided if needed
- Case Therapists are available up to 6 hours per week for a child and family for 12-16 weeks
- On-call staff are available evenings and weekends



Services are free to families, regardless of income, in St. Louis County and Jefferson County. Family Solutions for Kids is a collaborative program with another agency, Every Child's Hope (ECH), which handles our intake evaluations at (314) 504-1935.

Residential Treatment Center

Children in residential treatment have experienced the trauma of abuse, abandonment or both. Although they are treated by staff who are compassionate and patient, they long to feel “normal.”

The staff watches for opportunities to let the children unwind and feel carefree. So, when the Fredericktown First Assembly of God offered free tickets to the Azalea Festival, they said, “Yes, please!” The youngsters enjoyed amusement rides, carnival games and many edible treats.



At the end of the school year, child care workers brought 12 children to the Bonne Terre Family Fun Center for a celebration. They received extra game tokens from the owner and they enjoyed riding Go Karts, driving bumper cars and playing miniature golf.

“It was really nice to be able to see our kids having fun and just being kids,” said case manager **Jonathan Thomasson**. He oversees some of the recreational activity in Farmington and organizes occasional trips to the St. Louis Science Center and Art Museum. In early July a group of the children, under supervision, attended a free day camp outside of Ironton, where “the kids and the staff had a great time.”

In addition to arranging these short-term activities, the Residential Treatment Center has established a Boy Scout troop in the past year. Scoutmaster Gene Bannister leads the troop, assisted by Jonathan Thomasson. The troop’s first camp-out included pitching tents, building a campfire and making s’mores. The next morning the boys cooked pancakes, eggs, bacon and sausage on a propane stove. Fishing and a nature walk rounded out the expedition.



Our staff help these children with their fear, their grief, their rage – and regaining their childhood.

Land auction

The agency has had some unused farmland for years. The board and staff have decided to sell this excess land through an auction on Saturday, October 14. For details, please call Robert Giegling at 800-383-8147 or write him at robert.giegling@pchas.org.

Staff update

A number of Residential Treatment Center employees marked milestones over the summer. **Susan Metzger**, currently a therapist, has served clients for 18 years and **Caren Mell** has been Director for 10 years. **Steve Williams**, Maintenance Supervisor, was on staff 26 years before he retired this summer. **Fred Manning** was on the medical staff at the RTC for 13 years until he retired. We thank them for their faithful service.



Steve Williams, left, and Fred Manning at their retirement celebration.

In St. Louis, long-time employee **Lyle Gramling** has moved into a new position: Special Projects Manager. He is researching and assisting with key projects and initiatives for PCHAS



of Missouri and our affiliated agency, which operates in Texas and Louisiana.



Jeanine Watson, who has been with the agency since 2014, has been promoted to Corporate Director of Human Resources.

Philanthropy

Do You Work for a Matchmaker?

Thousands of U.S. companies offer matching gift programs. Some match a percentage of a donation, while others match dollar for dollar. Yet, \$6-\$10 billion of corporate matching gift money goes unclaimed each year, according to www.DoubleTheDonation.com.

The irony is that it is getting easier to make a match. Many companies post a form on their employees' website so, with just a few clicks, donors can double their gifts. In some cases, a company will match donations from retired employees.

Here are a few of the companies in Missouri offering matching gifts.

AllState	General Mills
Ameren Corporation	Maritz, Inc.
Blue Cross Blue Shield	Monsanto
Boeing Defense, Space & Security	Panera Bread Company
Edward Jones	Schnuck Markets
Elsevier	Southwest Bank

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Volunteer Recognition

This December marks the conclusion of **Larry Dew's** tenure as a trustee of Presbyterian Children's Homes and Services. He joined the board of directors in the summer of 2003. After two terms (three years each), he took a sabbatical, and then signed up for two more terms. Dew has served as treasurer and as vice-president, in addition to serving on the board of our affiliated agency in Texas. He is a member of Whiteside Presbyterian Church.

"I was raised in the Presbyterian Church and in Scouts," Dew says. "I was taught to help others, to practice compassion, and to serve with nothing expected in return. PCHAS has allowed me to do this with happiness."

We appreciate his leadership and dedication.



Retirement

Continued from p. 2

In 1983, when Dr. Knight left PCH, he served as Hendrick Healthcare Systems' Director of Social Work Service and Case Management for 15 years until 1997. He then served as President of Presbyterian Children's Services (PCS) in Waxahachie from 1997-2001. In 2002, PCH and PCS merged to form Presbyterian Children's Homes and Services. A long-time friend of the late Jim Thurman, former president of PCHAS of Missouri, in 2013, Dr. Knight led discussions throughout 2013 which resulted in the affiliation agreement between PCHAS of Missouri and PCHAS of Texas and Louisiana, which continues to this day.

Presbyterian Children's Homes and Services of Missouri is a 501(c)3 charitable organization. All gifts are tax deductible to the fullest extent of the law. We do not render professional tax advice.

If you are receiving duplicate mailings, wish to make a change of address or no longer wish to be included on our mailing list, please contact us.

Foster Care Case Management

Bend and Stretch

You have to be flexible in social work.

“Our main concern is to support the child,” says **Lori Thomlison**, “so we drop everything to deal with surprises. Maybe a child runs away from a foster home, or a supervised visit ends in a meltdown. We need to be a sounding board, but stay calm, because they are depending on us to get them through a really painful time.”

Thomlison, a Foster Care Case Manager (FCCM), is comparing notes with colleague **Carrol Venable**. They are based in Jefferson County, but their assignments keep them on the move.

Thomlison’s schedule includes routine appointments for about a dozen children, such as a monthly meeting with Maggie, who has been in foster care since June. This week she added a new client, a boy named Frankie, to her caseload. For the first month after he is placed with a foster family, the State of Missouri requires the case worker to meet weekly with Frankie individually, with Frankie and his foster family and with Frankie’s biological parents.

Venable describes what can happen when *siblings* enter foster care. Ideally they live in one home, but there are too few foster parents in Jefferson County. She manages the case of four siblings who are staying with foster families in three different municipalities. “It’s 50 or 60 miles one way for me to see just one of them,” she says. “But all of us will go above and beyond -- we will do anything possible -- for the kids in our care.”

“It is not a 9 to 5 job,” Thomlison adds.

Case managers attend numerous appointments

with the Family Support Team, which includes an officer of the juvenile court, a therapist, a guardian ad litem, members of the extended family who have an interest, and perhaps others. Case managers also attend courtroom hearings, which cannot be postponed, so when the court is behind schedule or bad weather affects traffic, they substitute for one another. Venable, for instance, lives close enough to the courthouse that she fills in for colleagues during winter weather advisories.

To keep PCHAS in compliance with state regulations, case managers must provide documentation of their September meetings before the fifth of October. How do they track all the names, dates and regulations? “Color coding!” exclaims Thomlison. “I use a different color for each child to make my reporting easier.” Venable schedules many appointments early in the month, so if they get delayed, she can still meet regulations.

With years of experience managing foster care cases, Thomlison and Venable appreciate the teamwork within the agency. “The PCHAS team is incredibly supportive,” Venable states. “We get phenomenal support from each other.”



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Reserve Your Table

We invite you to a

Hope for the Children Luncheon

Springfield, MO

Friday, September 15, 2017

11:30 a.m. Registration

Noon to 1:00 p.m. Luncheon

RSVP Josh Marsh, Development Officer
(417) 546-1418 josh.marsh@pchas.org

Sponsored by Friends of Ashley House

Columbia, MO

Wednesday, October 4, 2017

11:30 a.m. Registration

Noon to 1:00 p.m. Luncheon

RSVP Erin Frasier, Development Officer
(573) 489-6872 erin.frasier@pchas.org

***With guest speaker
Sheena Greitens, First Lady of Missouri***

St. Louis, MO

Thursday, October 19

11:30 a.m. Registration

Noon to 1:00 p.m. Luncheon

RSVP Debra Paulus, Senior Development Officer
(314) 989-9727

debra.paulus@pchas.org

Hear inspiring stories from children in our care