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**A NEWSLETTER DEDICATED TO  
FRANKLIN COUNTY  
JUVENILE JUSTICE**

Franklin County Juvenile Probation Department  
425 Franklin Farm Lane  
Chambersburg, PA 17201  
Phone: (717) 261-3122  
Fax: (717) 261-1157



## **Pennsylvania's Aftercare Initiative— History and First Steps**

*Editor's note: This is the first in a three-part series on the Commonwealth's Aftercare Initiative and Franklin County's participation in it.*

In 2003, the Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention Committee (JJDFC) of the Pennsylvania Commission on Crime & Delinquency (PCCD) submitted a plan to Governor Rendell that would address the Commonwealth's system of better serving youth who are returning to their communities from residential placements. Not long after the Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention Plan was submitted, Pennsylvania was chosen as one of four states that would launch the *Models for Change Initiative*, which is supported by the MacArthur Foundation.

The MacArthur Foundation is, according to its website, "a private, independent grant-making institution dedicated to helping groups and individuals foster lasting improvement in the human condition." Providing over \$225 million annually, they are one of the country's largest private philanthropic foundations, and they believe that the most effect is seen by focusing on few areas of work and making sure there are sufficient resources over enough time to make a measurable difference.

The *Models for Change Initiative* is a new effort by the Foundation to create models for juvenile justice system reform that are "successful and replicable." The Foundation is hoping to accomplish this by using four key states, one of which is Pennsylvania. They are targeting their investment in those states and have indicated that aftercare is one of the main areas of reform that Pennsylvania needs to make to

move closer to being a model system.

In response to the Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention Plan and the MacArthur grant, Governor Rendell called for a multi-agency Aftercare Working Group to be established. Their task was to set reform goals, then create and communicate "a common vision for aftercare services in Pennsylvania." The Working Group included high-level officials from the state Departments of Public Welfare and Education, the Juvenile Court Judges' Commission, and the Pennsylvania Council of Chief Juvenile Probation Officers. There were also representatives from PCCD and the JJDFC in the group.

This group eventually worked out and signed a "Joint Policy Statement on Aftercare." This statement outlines the principles of an across-the-board aftercare system and it pledges all of the agencies to the goal of achieving it in all 67 counties by 2010.

There are 17 major goals outlined in the Joint Policy Statement, and we'll take a look at those in the next issue of the Franklin County Juvenile Justice Newsletter.



## Managed Care Is Coming to Franklin County

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Effective July 1, 2007 Franklin County will officially become a *Managed Care* County for behavioral health services. Juvenile Probation and C&Y clients who are eligible for Medical Assistance must participate in this program if they are receiving Mental Health and/or substance abuse treatment.

### What is Managed Care?

Managed Care or more formally, Behavioral HealthChoices, is Medical Assistance mandatory managed care for both mental health and substances abuse treatment. Behavioral HealthChoices has three goals; enhancing the quality of behavioral healthcare for persons who have Medical Assistance; ensuring that behavioral health services are easily accessible; and stabilizing Pennsylvania's Medical Assistance spending.

### Who will Behavioral HealthChoices affect?

The change will affect most people who have health care coverage through Medical Assistance and need or receive mental health and/or substance abuse treatment. Mental Health and Substance Abuse Providers will also be affected by this change in treatment authorization and payment model. Community, Social, or Educational Services that rely on Medical Assistance funded services to enhance their client/student goals will also be impacted.

It is important to understand, that this change will only affect people with Medical Assistance and Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services paid by Medical Assistance. People who have commercial insurance, like Capital BC/BS or Health America, will continue to access treatment through their insurers. Likewise, if a person's insurance coverage is inadequate or if they do not have health insurance to cover their behavioral health treatment needs, the Base Service Unit, should be contacted to assess whether the County will contribute to the cost of treatment. Any county funded treatment will not be included in HealthChoices Behavioral Health Managed Care.

### What will receiving treatment look like in a Managed Care environment?

Currently, for persons with Medical Assistance:

- A need is identified.
- The consumer locates a MA provider.
- The MA provider determines the level of treat-

ment needed.

- The service is delivered at a frequency that the Provider can accommodate.
- The Provider submits the bill to PA Department of Public Welfare Office of Medical Assistance Programs

• In the current model of treatment/payment, there are no formal mechanisms for level of care assessments nor is there a continual review of progress/symptoms during the course of treatment, by the payer source. Providers do not have to meet quality standards nor is the provider held accountable to "industry treatment standards" as a condition of payment.

Effective July 1, 2007, a person who has Medical Assistance can present at three different "doors" to be assessed for treatment needs; at the Base Service Unit, by calling toll-free to Community Behavioral HealthCare Network of PA (CBHNP) or by calling directly to any Outpatient Mental Health or Substance Abuse Provider.

The person with Medical Assistance will be asked to respond to questions that will indicated their severity of need. Based upon the answers to the questions, a Care Manager at CBHNP, will determine the level of care needed by the consumer. The Care Manager will authorize treatment and coordinate with the Medical Assistance recipient a choice of two Providers. The accepting Provider is required to offer the Medical Assistance recipient an appointment within 2 weeks from the referral. Periodic reviews by CBHNP for continued need for treatment and appropriateness of level of care will occur throughout the treatment authorization. Providers will have to submit to CBHNP regularly, treatment plans and progress in treatment as a condition of payment. CBHNP will review the treatment records against industry quality standards. Providers of Mental Health And Substance Abuse Services will have to undergo, on an annual basis, a credentialing process in order to continue to be in CBHNP's Provider Network.

For services that are more restrictive, such as CRR Host Homes, Behavioral Health Rehabilitation Services (Wrap-around), Residential Treatment Facilities and certain residential Substance Abuse Treatment, a more rigorous assessment and

*(Continued on next page)*

## Managed Care Information (Continued from previous page)

continued stay reviews will be conducted by the Behavioral Health Managed Care Organization throughout the authorization for treatment. The goal of treatment will be to resolve the identified mental health or substance abuse issue and return to a less restrictive level of treatment. The savings realized from reductions in the use of high intensity services will be redirected towards the development of services to Medical Assistance recipients that have better empirical outcomes and are community based.

### How is the County Involved?

Franklin and Fulton County have joined together to become the Tuscarora Managed Care Alliance

(TMCA). TMCA will be responsible to ensure that our contract with CBHNP authorizes services in a manner that enhances the quality of mental health and substance abuse treatment and ensures timely access to either treatment type. TMCA will also ensure that Behavioral Health Services reflect the needs of both Franklin and Fulton Counties Communities. TMCA along with CBHNP will be conducting education and outreach during the upcoming months to provide greater understanding of how the changes will affect consumers and the work of caseworkers and probation officers.



## Program Updates

- Judge Van Horn was asked by PJ Walker to head a local Roundtable for Children initiative. This initiative is a directive of the PA Supreme Court. Doug Amsley, Brian Bornman, Deb Pheil, and Kati McGrath participated, as well as other Juvenile Court officials from Franklin and Fulton Counties. The first meeting was December 11, 2006 and another meeting was held February 26, 2007.
- The County and the Union representing the Adult and Juvenile Probation Officers and the professional staff at Domestic Relations now have an Arbitration Award. The agreement became effective January 02, 2007.
- J.U.M.P. Program: The contracted therapist and the MH Intensive Case Manager resigned in August. Both positions have been filled and Ben Hardic was hired as the Juvenile Probation Officer assigned to the JUMP Program.
- C&Y and Juvenile Probation underwent a Title IV-E and TANF Quality Assurance Compliance Review by OCYF on November 7-9, 2006. This review went very well; we received 100% compliance. Kim Brookens, our Administrative Officer who heads up our Compliance Unit has been asked by OCYF to participate in it's mock audit of Title IV-E cases in Pennsylvania. This recognition by OCYF speaks well to the work that Kim does and to the efficiency of our compliance and fiscal operations at C&Y.
- The C&Y Independent Living Program underwent a review on January 17, 2007. This review went well; and, we have received a very favorable written report.
- C&Y in conjunction with the Waynesboro Area School District developed a program wherein a C&Y Caseworker will be assigned to work with the WASD 2 to 3 days a week as a liaison to screen and/or accept dependency referrals from the WASD. This worker started in Waynesboro the week of February 05, 2007.
- The C&Y Annual Program Licensing Audit was conducted by OCYF December 14-15, 2006. The Audit went well; C&Y again has a full license.
- Plans are being considered to provide Juvenile Probation additional office space. The County's Maintenance Director is meeting with architects to see if current storage space can be converted to office space.
- Juvenile Probation is working on developing a summer work/enrichment program for Juvenile Probation and C&Y youth. We have about \$10,000.00 in JABG money to use for the program.



## *In Memory....*

We regret to announce that Cindy Hospodar, Children & Youth Caseworker in the Parents' & Kids' Program, passed away on Wednesday, March 28, 2007 after a brief illness.

Cindy was with the County as a Caseworker for 8 1/2 years. Those who worked directly with Cindy knew that she was a compassionate and caring individual who greatly enjoyed her job. She was both a mentor and advocate to her clients.

Cindy is survived by her husband, Vince, two adult children, and two grandchildren.

## **A Look at Our Success...**

Submitted by Doug Amsley, Director

During the first few months of the New Year, the staff at Juvenile Probation and Children & Youth are tasked with completing and reviewing data and preparing a statistical report on work completed during the previous year.

While busy analyzing data and looking for trends, it is all too easy to forget about the human side of our work, which is the real reason why we all do what we do. With this in mind, I asked the Juvenile Probation Officers and the C&Y staff to prepare several vignettes of cases where they're especially proud of the outcome. These vignettes or "success stories" are included as a supplement to this edition of our newsletter.

## **Children's Memorial Flag**

The Child Welfare League of America launched a public awareness initiative in 1998 called the Children's Memorial Flag Initiative. The campaign aimed to direct attention to the tragedy of violent child deaths.

The flag is simple—it is red with blue paper-doll-like figures of children holding hands. In the center is a white chalk outline of a missing child, and that symbolizes the thousands of children lost to violence.

This flag honors every lost child and raises awareness of the continuing problem of violence against children. Franklin County will fly this flag in front of the Human Services Building the entire month of April.



## **Nurse-Family Partnership Program Coming to Franklin County**

Recently, the County of Franklin entered into a contract with Hempfield Behavioral Health to provide the *Nurse-Family Partnership Program* (NFP) in Franklin County. NFP is a nationally known scientific-based program that targets first time mothers and their infants. As prescribed by the model, specially trained, Registered Nurses will establish an intensive, long term, one-on-one relationship with first time, low income, pregnant women. The nurses will provide information, teach, coach, model, make referrals, advocate, and intervene in crises. Mothers will be visited in their homes weekly or bi-weekly from early pregnancy to the child's second birthday.

The program is currently interviewing Nurses and should be operational sometime in April. Franklin County C&Y has been planning to implement this pro-

gram for the past several years. C&Y will be financially supporting the program and looks forward to working with Hempfield Behavioral Health in this endeavor. We hope to have healthy, safe, and well-adjusted children as a result of the program.

## **Training Opportunity**

The PA Department of Welfare's Bureau of Juvenile Justice Services, along with The Pennsylvania Commission on Crime and Delinquency and the Juvenile Court Judges' Commission are presenting a training titled, "Female-Responsive Principles to Practice Forum." The forum will take place from May 9th through May 11th at the Holiday Inn Harrisburg-Hershey in Grantville, PA. For more information, contact Gail Holloway at [RA-bjstreatment@state.pa.us](mailto:RA-bjstreatment@state.pa.us) or call (717)-772-7013.



# April is Child Abuse Awareness and Prevention Month



Submitted by: Debbie Pheil, Franklin County Children & Youth Service

It's that time of the year again! We are sick and tired of the cold and ugly days of winter and are eagerly anticipating the warmth and blossoms of Spring. It's a time for growth and hopefulness, but not for everyone. Some families languish in despair and conflict, despite the season, with no real plan as to how to improve or change their circumstances. We can each be a part of helping these families.

Attention, concern, and information are powerful tools. You can use each of these to assist your own family, your neighbors, and your community. Knowing where to go and who to ask is a big first step toward change. Most caregivers do not want to harm or neglect their children though many are ill prepared to make good choices and to implement safe parenting practices. These caregivers are unaware that the child welfare system is available to HELP them keep their children safe and in their care. Too often the only expectation of the child welfare system is that we remove children from their homes for placement elsewhere. A lack of awareness is often a barrier to change. By being better informed about the services available to families that does not involve the removal of children from their homes, you can help increase awareness and prevent escalating problems.

Did you know that in 2006, the Franklin County Children & Youth Service received 986 calls, which initiated assessments to determine what intervention was necessary to assure and protect the safety of the children and to assist the family? These 986 calls reflected contacts with approximately 986 families and involved approximately 1,726 children. Many of these assessments were amicably resolved with the family and to the benefit of their children.

Caregivers are critical members of our intervention team and always have a voice and a significant role in the child welfare process. Safety and service planning are intervention tools, which are strength-based driven to empower parents to make dramatic changes in their family circumstances. We attempt to engage families in resolving their difficulties; real change comes from within the family system. Recognizing a problem, acknowledging the need for help and a willingness to work toward improvement are the steps we assist caregivers in taking to reduce the threat of harm to their children. You can help by understanding the purpose and mission of Children and Youth and by helping families to reach out for, or to at least accept an offer of assistance. Promoting

Children and Youth as a helping partner rather than a threat can be a first step toward engaging families in change.

To report concerns about physical abuse, sexual abuse, neglect or to get more information and/or materials, please contact Franklin Co. Children and Youth Service at 425 Franklin Farm Lane Chambersburg, PA 17201 or call 717-263-1900.



## CHILD ABUSE PREVENTION MONTH EVENTS

- During the month of April, Children & Youth will have three (3) display tables (one at the Human Services Building, one at the Court House, and one at Domestic Relations) with a display highlighting child abuse prevention efforts in Franklin County. The tables will have informational items and handouts available to the public.
- The Children, Youth, and Family Services Advisory Board will again be sponsoring its fundraiser of selling blue cutout teddy bears for \$1.00 each. Bears are being sold and displayed at the Human Services Building, Court House, and Domestic Relations Office. Local Veterans' and Social Clubs are also selling the bears and displaying them in their respective clubs. Anyone wishing to purchase a bear can contact Linda Jones at 263-1900, ext. 21130.
- On April 5, 2007, Children and Youth will be sponsoring a kick-off for Child Abuse Prevention month event at the Human Services Building. Children's Memorial Flag will be hung from the flagpole, and child abuse prevention banners will be at the Human Services Building and the Court House. Attendees at the kick-off event will be briefed on Children & Youth's Child Abuse Prevention efforts and recent changes in the Child Protective Services Law. Refreshments, including a Sundae Bar, will be provided.

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*"Bridging the gap between juvenile offenders, the community, and the victims of juvenile crime in Franklin County."*

If you would like more information on any topic, please call (717)-261-3122.

If you are interested in using Juvenile Probation to help complete a Community Service project, please contact Heather Evans at (717)-261-3122.

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## **New Staff and New Equipment for Juvenile Probation**

The Franklin County Commissioners approved three (3) new positions for the Juvenile Probation Department: two (2) Juvenile Probation Officer positions and one (1) Administrative Assistant position.

The new JPOs will deal primarily with youth that are in placement facilities, handling the case from the Disposition Hearing through several months after the youth's return to his or her community in order to facilitate his or her reintegration.

They will be visiting each facility that has a Franklin County youth monthly and acting as a liaison with both facility staff, the facility's local school district, and the youth's home school district to create, implement, and adjust the treatment plan as necessary.

Plans are to post the positions during the month of May and have the new staff on board by the end of June. Hopefully, we can time the completion of our new office space with the hiring of the additional staff.

the Juvenile Case Management System (JCMS) and will be responsible for scanning documents into our new laser fiche system. The new Laser Fiche system will allow easier access to documents and will provide a means to safely secure and store Juvenile Probation paperwork. Sending copies of documents to the District Attorney, the Judge or Master, and the defense attorney will also be made easier with the documents being scanned.

We're appreciative of the support and consideration given to the Juvenile Probation Department by the Franklin County Commissioners in the 2007 County Budget.



The Administrative Assistant position will oversee

## Juvenile Probation and Children & Youth Services Success Stories

The Franklin County Juvenile Probation department received criminal charges alleging numerous counts of Rape, Statutory Sexual Assault, Involuntary Deviate Sexual Intercourse and Sexual Assault in the interest of a thirteen year-old boy on August 16, 2005. Case particulars showed the victim's to be younger female cousins to the offender. Due to the serious nature of the charges and the fact that the alleged victims spent many hours in the offenders home, secure detention was authorized and the juvenile was removed from his home. The juvenile was returned to secure detention after the required hearing was held on August 18, 2005.

The all-important task of gathering social history information to aid in developing an appropriate treatment plan began directly after the detention hearing was concluded. With great difficulty, the juvenile offered an admission to many of the behaviors alleged in the juvenile petition during the course of an interview conducted in the presence of his legal guardian—a maternal aunt. Expectedly, the juvenile struggled to provide in-depth answers to direct questions and could provide no insight into his behaviors. He was visibly shaken but at times provided small hints that convinced the Juvenile Probation Department that the juvenile had experienced an extensive history of inappropriate behaviors and that the alleged incidents were not of an isolated nature.

The juvenile's legal guardian at the time the charges were filed was a maternal aunt and uncle. The juvenile entered this living situation along with his much older female sibling in 1998 after his mother died of cancer. The sister left the home in approximately 2003 to reside with her father. The juvenile's father had only limited involvement with his son, was currently residing in Texas with his daughter and was not a reliable resource. The aunt reported a strong relationship with the juvenile and a difficulty understanding what would have caused her nephew to engage in such acts. Overall, the aunt was very co-operative providing as much information as she could and reported that she would continue to be as supportive of her nephew as possible. However, she also reported that her daughter (victims' mother) was struggling with the victimization of her daughters and that she felt as though she would have to pick sides when deciding who to support. The Aunt also reported that she had a small babysitting business at her home and that she could not financially afford to give it up if her nephew was to return to her.

The adjudication/disposition phase of this case was set for September 09, 2005. The need for residential treatment was evident in this matter but choosing the correct provider would be critical for success when considering the juvenile's age and mental state. Probation referred the case to a facility in Lewisburg, PA that had proven very effective in the past. However, Probation was concerned that the juvenile would not be acceptable for treatment in their program due to the lack of an appropriate home for the juvenile to be released into after treatment and the lack of family support and participation in the treatment process. The facility in question expressed the same concerns. Due to the facilities reputation for outstanding treatment program openings are minimal and their selection process for acceptable students is rigorous. Generally, the program insists that prospective students have a strong family willing to participate in the treatment process and act as a potential community resource for the student. However, with Probation acting as a liaison between the facility and the maternal aunt, an agreement for family participation in the treatment process and consideration as a release source at a later time was struck and the juvenile was admitted into the program.

The juvenile entered the program on September 19, 2005 after being adjudicated a delinquent child. His initial response to the treatment process was poor and all involved became concerned that the juvenile would be unsuccessfully discharged from the program. Initially, the juvenile was verbally and physically aggressive towards program peers, resistant to therapy, displayed sexual grooming behaviors towards peers and attempted to be manipulative and dishonest with staff. All involved parties remained active in the juvenile's treatment and soon small amounts of progress began to be made. Eventually the juvenile assimilated to the program and began to divulge incidents of his own victimization at the hands of his older sister as well as other incidents of sexual offending on his part. The juvenile's self esteem, daily behavior and willingness to participate in the therapy process improved dramatically as he was able to report more and more of his past to program staff.

The first permanency hearing for this case was held in February 2006. At that time, the juvenile presented his treatment issues, progress and continuing goals to the Court in a prepared statement. The juvenile also reported program infractions and his own struggles. As expected the juvenile struggled somewhat in presenting the information to the Court but was able to provide all the information he needed to. Though

progress was being made the Court recognized the need for continued treatment. The Court further remarked on the visible improvement in the juvenile's demeanor since the disposition hearing was held six months prior and requested the juvenile to continue to work hard at his treatment.

The juvenile has had two additional permanency hearings since that time. Improvements in the juvenile's overall well being are easily noted and progress in his therapy has been great. The juvenile does not struggle at all now when presenting his treatment goals and progress during permanency hearings. He has come so far that the presiding Judge described him as a "delight" after his last hearing was held in early 2007. The juvenile's family, encouraged by the degree of improvement has maintained their support and participation in his treatment to the degree that they may be considered a community resource in the future. At this time, there appears to be reasonable cause for the belief that the juvenile can complete his residential treatment in the near future and someday be considered a safe and productive member of the community.

Although the juvenile has made great progress further treatment is necessary and the juvenile will likely benefit from some type of therapy well into his adult life. However the juvenile has come so far and achieved so much in such a short period of time that he is considered to be a great success now and hopes for a successful future are realistic.

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This juvenile was charged with several very serious felony charges including Robbery and Aggravated Assault. He was placed in jail because the District Attorney's Office felt the charges warranted being directly filed with the Adult Criminal Court system. This juvenile spent almost nine (9) months in county prison. During his incarceration he had numerous assaults on other prisoners and guards of the prison. This juvenile through his attorney petitioned the court to decertify his case to juvenile court. Evaluations and tests indicated that this juvenile was amenable to treatment in the juvenile system. He was court ordered back into the juvenile system and was released from prison and detained in secure detention.

Through all the court proceedings, this juvenile seemed to be one the meanest kids we ever dealt with. He would try to assault staff in the detention center, he did not acknowledge the courts during hearings, and he didn't seem to care about his family or himself. At one point the court even questioned the decision to return him to juvenile court based on his courtroom behavior. Several placement facilities interviewed him but rejected him based on the above. The end result was that the juvenile was committed to ARC Secure Treatment because of the serious offenses and his aggressive behaviors towards others.

His experience while at ARC was not real positive, although the staff could maintain him, he refused to take his medications on a regular basis and that impacted his rehabilitation. He then decided that he no longer wanted to take his meds at all. ARC Secure refused to keep him if he refused his medications. An emergency hearing was scheduled at which time the juvenile testified that he does not want to be on the medications and he wants to complete his treatment without medication. The court agreed that the child had a right to refuse medication but explained that he would restart his rehabilitation because each program is unique. The juvenile was extremely agitated that he was not given "time served". He was committed to Loysville Secure Treatment Facility.

His transition to Loysville seemed to go well, the medication was discontinued and all reports indicated he was doing as well as expected. There were no reports of his aggressive behavior towards staff or peers. He had a permanency review hearing in January 2007. The expectation was he would be disrespectful and ungrateful to everyone involved. Instantly, there was a noticeable change about his demeanor. He had a smile on his face and was actually having a conversation with the Loysville staff. He was respectful and pleasant prior to his hearing and asked several meaningful questions about his hearing.

This juvenile who less than a year ago, displayed anger, aggression, and hatred towards everyone is now thanking the judge for the opportunity he was given. He really could not explain what made him change his behavior other than he felt it was time to accept responsibility for his actions and move on with his life. He did say that he knew the courts would not release him until he successfully completed the program. Completing the program is important but the juvenile has completed so much more in the process. He now has a healthy relationship with his family, he has a plan for his future, and acknowledges that he is responsible for his actions. It is rewarding to see someone, whom few gave much hope of success to, decide to make changes and better themselves.

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This juvenile was charged with Criminal Attempt to Involuntary Deviate Sexual Intercourse. The juvenile was ordered to undergo a sex offender evaluation that was conducted by Northwestern. Prior to his Disposition Hearing he received new charges of Possession of a Small Amount. Due to his past serious offense and his newest charge he was placed at Children's Aid Society pending the next hearing. It was

determined that he would be committed to Adelphoi Village Residential Treatment Program when bed space was available. Until that time, he would be transferred to Cornell Abraxas Youth Center Detention Wing so that it would be easier for him to assimilate into the kind of program he would be attending.

The juvenile was transferred to the Adelphoi Village Residential Treatment Program at Harrison Valley. This is program works with sex offenders of different ages and keeps a close eye on the juveniles at all times. The juvenile adjusted to the program, but he seemed to adjust too well. He had his first Permanency Review Hearing and it was determined that the juvenile was making substantial progress in all areas of his treatment. After the hearing, it was determined that the juvenile would return to Adelphoi Village to complete the program. However, shortly after he returned to Adelphoi, he was in trouble for going on an off-campus visit with his guardians and making a phone call to his ex-girlfriend. After this incident, the juvenile was assigned to a new therapist. The new therapist had a different therapeutic style in which he was relentless. It came out that the juvenile was manipulative and was just going through the motions to complete the program. Knowing that he could no longer "slide" through the program, the juvenile started to make positive choices in his life. He decided to start over with his treatment and go through it the right way. He used to hide things from the clinical staff at Adelphoi, but now he requires less and less prodding from them to admit when he did something wrong. He is more open with his therapy and is now able to openly talk with family which is something that has not been successful in the past He also made a decision to go to a technical school so that he can succeed when he is done with Probation.

This juvenile has manipulated his way for many years. He has used it to get his way with his family, school, and even early on in his placement. For whatever reason, he made a choice to become open and take a productive part in his therapy. That choice may have added several months to his placement. He understood that and explained that it was time to make things right. He no longer looks at what happened to him as an excuse for him to be able to get away with things, but rather as motivation to succeed when he is older.

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This juvenile has a long history of delinquent behaviors and has been court committed to several residential treatment programs. His more recent placements include eleven (11) months at ARC in Lebanon and currently he is at North Central Secure Treatment in Danville for an adjudication of Aggravated Assault. Due to the long history of serious charges and this juvenile's lack of respect for the juvenile court system, this department tried to certify this matter to adult criminal court for prosecution. The certification hearing was unsuccessful so the juvenile was to remain in the juvenile court system for treatment. The juvenile was adjudicated delinquent and placement to a secure treatment facility was ordered.

A disposition hearing was held and a recommendation was made to commit him to North Central Secure. Both the attorney and the juvenile made attempts to avoid this placement due to what they considered "serious problems within the program". The juvenile even testified to the Judge that he would have to "fight others " and "hit anyone who touched him" because his safety was in jeopardy. In the end the Judge Ordered that he will be committed to the program and it was his actions that placed him there so it will be his responsibility to act appropriately.

The juvenile entered the program in August of 2006. The juvenile was doing well in the program and was receiving regular visits from his mother. In December his mother was involved in a serious automobile accident and was in serious condition. The Court granted an emergency visit so he could visit with his mother. Shortly after this accident, there was a riot at this program. Although this juvenile was not involved in the disturbance he could have used these incidents to have his case reviewed and possibly be moved to another facility.

In January 2007 there was a suicide at North Central. The Probation Department made an unannounced visit to the program to check on the juvenile. Our expectations were that he would use this as a way to get moved out of the program we based this on his behavior in court and the fact that he made it well known that he did not want to go to this placement. It was explained that because a death had occurred there was a chance he would be removed and placed elsewhere. He seemed very disappointed and stated that he wanted to remain in the program until he gets his diploma.

Two weeks later this juvenile had a permanency review hearing. He told the judge that he is scheduled to graduate in March and did not want to be released until that time. The judge reminded him about his previous behavior and attitude toward this placement and then asked the question why things have changed with him. His answer was "it is all real now" he was asked to elaborate on that and explained that during his last hearing he minimized his involvement and tried to take the easy way out. He said that everyone at court refused to give in and in fact told him he was placed in secure because of his actions and behavior and it

would be his responsibility to avoid conflicts and make it work. He felt that when he arrived at placement that same mentality was expected of him so it might be the truth and he decided to accept it and try his best.

At this time the juvenile continues to strive and be a leader. He is on schedule to graduate with a diploma in March and will then be released home. Although he was court committed to this program only he had the power to and internalize and use what was being offered. The juvenile probation department had no part in his success but it is rewarding to see someone in this situation take advantage of the opportunity given.

## **Children & Youth Services**

### **Title IV-E and TANF Compliance Unit**

The Franklin County Children & Youth Service was one of the first counties in Pennsylvania to develop a Compliance Unit. This was accomplished well before the State Department of Public Welfare mandated that all counties form a Compliance Unit.

The Compliance Unit was developed to ensure that all documents are contained in the compliance file for Title IV-E/TANF claims to ensure revenue maximization. The agency has been highly commended repeatedly for the thorough, accurate, and easily accessible files. All information to support initial and ongoing eligibility and reimbursability are in the files and easily located.

The agency developed internal forms to ensure compliance with the Title IV-E regulations and has been commended by the state for the development of these forms. The Franklin County Children & Youth Service Compliance Unit has been a role model for other C&Y agencies. Our files have been duplicated and our structure replicated by other Children & Youth agencies as they move to become compliant with state requirements.

The Franklin County Children & Youth Service achieved 100% compliance during the audits performed in 2006.

### **Parents' and Kids' Program**

The Franklin County Children & Youth Service Parents' and Kids' Program received a self-referral to assist a 26-year-old single mother of two children, a 4-year-old son and an infant son. When the agency started working with this mother, she has no driver's license, no car, no job, and was very stressed-out. She was requesting parent education and support on behavior management, stress management, and anger management.

Parents' and Kids' worked with her for 1 1/2 years. While she was in the program, her eldest son was diagnosed with Attention Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder and Oppositional Defiant Disorder. He proved to be a challenge for her. The agency assisted her with obtaining behavioral health rehabilitative services for her son. The agency also assisted her in enrolling him in Head Start. In-home services focused on parenting strategies and support of the mother's developing skills to meet her son's special needs.

The agency provided the mother with transportation in the beginning while assisting her to study for her driver's exam. She was able to obtain her driver's license. The agency also provided information on finding a job by checking the classifieds with her and helping her refine her resume. Ongoing parent and life skills training was provided in the home.

At the completion of the program, this mother had an extensive support network in place, obtained her license and a job, demonstrated that she was able to use appropriate behavior, anger, and stress management, and exhibited adequate child care skills. When asked what was the most helpful part of the program, she stated that she benefited most from having someone to mentor her and be there in her efforts to better herself as a parent and a person.

This is a prime example of the purpose and achievements of the Parents' and Kids' Program. Casework with young parents who have young children and are seeking to develop the support and skills necessary to be safe, effective parents while avoiding the inherent problems that can lead to abuse and neglect.

### **General Services**

The Franklin County Children & Youth Service facilitated a dependency in the interest of a 13-year-old male child who was adjudicated as a dependent child because of excessive truancy and his parents' inability to ensure that he attended school. The year was 1998. He was permitted to remain at home under a court order

to attend school regularly, which he failed to do. In February 1999, this young man was placed in foster care where he demonstrated immediate success. In January of 2000, he returned home to his parents' home with the hopes that the truancy problem had been resolved. However, he soon began missing school again and was returned to foster care in March of 2000. In August 2000, the child's placement goal was changed to long-term foster care. He remained in the same foster home throughout his placement, did extremely well in care, and successfully graduated from high school in June, 2004. Following his 18th birthday, this young man requested to remain in foster care in order to complete his education. He began attending college in August, 2004, majoring in criminal justice. When he left foster care in October, 2006 at the age of 21, he was a junior at a state university with an admirable grade point average. This young man is very grateful to the foster care system for helping him get to where he is today and to where he hopes to go. He continues to reside with the foster family during his breaks and vacations from college and is very much a part of their family. He also maintains e-mail contact with his longstanding C&Y Caseworker so we may all continue to relish his success.

This young man was the first, but not the only, teenager to continue in foster care beyond their 18th birthday in order to seek higher education with the benefit of the support of the child welfare system. This is a privilege extended by the Juvenile Court upon a teen's request and conditional upon compliance with the established placement plan until the age of 21 years.

We also have a young lady who left after many years of foster care to enter a state college in 2005. She is currently fluent in three languages, and plans to study abroad in the fall of 2007. Though this young woman elected not to remain under the jurisdiction of the agency, she recognizes that the support she received while in placement has given her the motivation and skills to pursue her educational dreams.

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In March, 2006, the Franklin County Children & Youth Service received a referral about a 16-year-old female that was 6 months pregnant and without a proper caretaker. She had been staying with her boyfriend's family with no firm plan or arrangement for her care. Her mother was not available to provide the supervision and support she required and the temporary arrangement with the boyfriend's family was faltering. The matter was referred to the Juvenile Court with a recommendation for foster care. This soon-to-be teen mother was placed in a foster home. The baby arrived in June, 2005, was adjudicated dependent and was placed in the same foster home. Both have remained in this foster home together. Mom has successfully completed the teen parenting curriculum through the Crossings Program. She is devoted to her son, who is the priority focus of her time and effort. Her son has thrived in the foster care setting and is very attached to his mother. Both are fully supported and nurtured by the foster parents. With the encouragement of the agency and the support of foster care, this young mother plans to remain in foster care with her son and to attend college in the fall of 2007. The hope is that both will leave care together as a self-sufficient, safe, and healthy family.

Franklin County Children & Youth Service has had numerous other mother-child placements. The goal is to keep the pair united while assuring the safety of both and assisting the young mother to become a strong, safe, and independent parent. Some pairs have been successfully discharged together with this goal fully achieved. Other moms have left placement at age 18 to pursue their own needs and their children have remained in care. These children generally find permanency elsewhere in the child welfare system, still loved, nurtured, and safe.

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Franklin County Children & Youth Service received a report about three young siblings who were missing a significant amount of school, were constantly complaining about being hungry, and were being left home alone for long periods of time. The mother had issues with drug addiction, which seemed to take over her life and impede her parenting skills. The agency attempted to provide in-home protective services to the family, but conditions continued to deteriorate. The children continued to miss school. They were not fed regular meals, often having to fend for themselves with cereal or cookies for meals. The conditions in their home were extremely dirty. Cats ate out of the same cereal bowls that the children did. When the caseworker visited the home, the mother was usually locked in her bedroom and the children were running around the home unsupervised.

Children & Youth and the Court determined that these children were at risk and it would be necessary for the children to be removed from their home in order to assure their safety. The children were placed together in the same foster home. The foster parents realized quickly that the boys had no concept of meal times, rules, or structure. It took a long time for them to understand that going to school every day was not an option and that rules were to be followed or consequences would be imposed. After a few weeks, the boys gradually became used to the routine of the foster home.

The Court-ordered goal for the children was reunification. To achieve this goal, their mother was required to participate in several services, some of which included: drug and alcohol treatment, psychological intervention, and parenting classes. Her progress with these services was minimal. She did not make a commitment to reunite with her children. She continued her lifestyle and made no steps to better herself. She visited her children sporadically, leaving them hurt and confused.

The Federal Adoption and Safe Families Act states that reunification must occur within fifteen months of children being in placement, or other permanency goals, such as adoption, will be explored. At the fifteen-month benchmark, the mother of these children had made no progress toward reunification. The placement goal was changed to adoption.

By this point, the boys began to recognize that, even though they continued to love their mother, she was not able to meet their needs. They began to understand that she was unable to make a commitment to them. They knew that they were in a loving home with foster parents who would do everything to assure that they were taken care of and protected. They loved their foster parents very much and thrived with the amount of love, guidance, and attention they received. They knew that the Court ordered that they be adopted, and were happy with that decision. The family was thrilled, as they had committed to these children as if they were their own from the first day the boys came into their home.

The finalization hearing for adoption occurred near the Christmas holiday. It was the best gift that these children and their adoptive family could have received.

In 2006, Franklin County Children & Youth Service finalized the adoption of twenty-two children.