

Youth Shelter News

A NEWSLETTER OF THE CLARK COUNTY YOUTH SHELTER & FAMILY SERVICES, Inc. (CCYS)

“Serving youth and families in a safe and caring environment.”

Summer 2005

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We've Got A New Look!

As the month of June ended, the Clark County Youth Shelter & Family Services celebrated a new beginning with the completion of a six-month long, \$110,000 renovation of the facility.

The remodel, contracted by Upton Pry, Inc., included an updating of many of the inner workings of the 100-year-old facility – which can be felt, but not necessarily seen. During the warm spring and summer seasons this year, residents and employees have enjoyed a cooler and more efficient environment thanks to new ductwork

and insulation, as well as two new air conditioning units. Other improvements include 28 new windows, two new doors, two new furnaces, new sinks and countertops, a bathroom partition and new gutters and fasciae.

The new look (and feel!) of the shelter is thanks to an \$80,000 grant from the Ogle Foundation, \$2,000 from the Community Foundation of Southern Indiana, and \$28,285 brought in through shelter fundraisers.

Jumping in on the theme of freshening up the shelter was the United Au-

to Workers' Union of the Ford Motor Company, who volunteered their time to paint the administrative offices earlier in the spring. The Jeffersonville Lion's Club donated gift certificates for Sam's Club and Kohl's, with which new conference tables and pots and pans were purchased.

We thank these businesses and organizations for their continued support in our mission! We wouldn't look so good or feel so refreshed without you!

Flag caps off renovation



The Clark County Youth Shelter's outside appearance received an additional boost thanks to a Jeffersonville teen's contribution. Kyle Vissing capped off the renovation of the shelter with a special touch at the front of the building — a new flagpole. Kyle's efforts were part of a project to earn his Eagle Scout badge, which required him to purchase, plan and execute the placement of the pole as well as landscape around the finished product. We thank Kyle and his family, Carol and Kevin Vissing, for their hard work!

**Check us out on the
Web**



www.ccysfs.org



THANK YOU FOOTSTEPS FOR FAMILIES SPONSORS

The annual walk raised approximately \$5,000 to assist the Clark County Youth Shelter & Family Services in our mission to build stronger families ... one step at a time. We thank the following sponsors who made this event possible!

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CCYS Welcomes New Employees!

The staff of the Clark County Youth Shelter welcomed several new employees to the ranks since January.

Amy Schneidau joined the administrative team as the new Development Director in July. Amy, a native of Floyd County, recently returned to the area from Lafayette, Ind., where she was employed as a grant writer for the YWCA of Greater Lafayette Domestic Violence Intervention and Prevention Program.

The residential team expanded

by six, adding new youth workers for each shift.

Teresa Cruzan is a part-time third-shift youth worker;
Sherri Horn fills the full-time third-shift youth worker slot;
Samantha Setty serves as an on-call youth worker;
Lindsay Bostock covers a part-time first-shift youth worker slot;
Lindsay Caldwell will fill in as an on-call youth worker;
and, Erin McClish is also an on-call youth worker.

Congratulations to these employees for joining the efforts of

the Clark County Youth Shelter and Family Services in "serving youth and families in a safe and caring environment."

We're glad you're with us!



SCHOOL IS IN SESSION!

Getting kids off to the right start

The anticipation of a new school year can cause anxiety, excitement, or dread in students -- no matter what their age. Handling new classmates, new teachers, new lockers, new schedules, etc., often creates stress, which can catch up with kids after the first month of school. This stress can reveal itself in various forms like sleep problems, compromised nutrition, loss of interest in activities, loss of motivation, and general discipline problems.

Keeping kids on track during this critical transition is easier said than done. The following tips can help parents and guardians make sure they are doing all they can to assist their students in getting a successful start to the year and a routine to maintain throughout the year.

Tip One: Avoid morning madness.

Getting kids up and out of bed is one of the hardest obstacles to overcome after a summer vacation. The key is to create a routine and follow it -- even on "off" days.

Give your kids specific time points to gauge where they should be in their schedule (out of bed, 7:10 a.m., out of shower 7:30 a.m., at table for breakfast, 7:45 a.m.). Expect them to follow the schedule and make sure consequences are discussed ahead of time so they know what to expect if they don't. A second way to avoid the morning rush that can stress out kids (and parents) -- prepare things the night before. Choose your clothes, pack your bags, decide on breakfast foods, etc. Don't leave things undone that can be done the night before.

Tip Two: Establish a homework routine.

With your child, determine when is the best time to sit down with daily work -- and stick to it. Set up a space for homework and make sure all the necessities are at hand, so the child doesn't have an excuse to get up and goof around. Also, keeping abreast of what your child is doing in school will help you see potential rough points or problems they may need extra help with. Homework topics make great dinner conversation, especially during the

sensitive teenage years when your kids would rather die than talk to you about something more personal than algebra!

Tip Three: Give Them Some Time Off.

Everyone needs a break. Generally kids are excited to get back to school after the summer because it offers a change of pace. Make sure they get that "change of pace" feeling during the year, too. Give them a Saturday to themselves or plan fun things for the family to do together. Be certain everyone understands that this "off" time is a privilege, and avoid contradicting the morning routine.

Just remember, the goal is to assist your kids in having a successful school year and minimizing the stress for the whole family!

— Some information courtesy backtoschool.about.com and Discovery.School.com.

Program Profile: Counseling

When a child walks through the doors of the Clark County Youth Shelter, one of the most important opportunities provided to him or her is a channel to discuss his or her current situation or feelings.

The residential counseling program opens the lines of communication for these children and gives them a chance to step back and look at their situations from a different perspective, says Assistant Director and resident counselor Shara Wilson. "For a lot of kids who come here, this is their first contact with any kind of helping agency. Overall, I hope (counseling) helps kids gain insight to their own thoughts and behaviors."

Shara, who holds a Master of Science degree with a concentration in mental health counseling, has been talking with kids in the shelter for the past six years. In addition to one-on-one sessions, she also holds group

counseling sessions and offers free family counseling sessions. She works full-time weekday hours and remains on-call for after-hours sessions.

Although counseling is voluntary and many of the kids are only in the shelter for a short period of time, she has seen an average of 97 percent of the residents for at least one session.

However "family counseling is a different story," she said. Currently, only about 40 percent of the families take advantage of the family counseling program. "I would love to see more families participate. If they could learn that they could get more accomplished without yelling and screaming at each other ... That would go a long way to helping some of these kids. Better communication and understanding of each other is the key for families."

Group sessions, usually held once weekly for all of the residents in the

shelter, focus on common themes experienced by that week's residents. Topics like anger management, conflict resolution or self-esteem are typical.

Counseling sessions are provided to residents in the shelter and their family members for as long as the child is a resident of the shelter. Due to the nature of the emergency shelter, many of these counseling sessions are goal oriented in nature. Upon release, Shara will make a referral to an outside counseling service, who will then focus on the longer term care and sorting deeper issues. Ultimately she would like to see counseling sessions strongly recommended if not required for both the youth and their families, she said.

Clark County Youth Coalition
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The Clark County Youth Shelter & Family Services, Inc.
"Serving youth and families in a safe and caring environment."



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