

MORE THAN JUST BABYSITTING

Tara Lansberry - Child Care Director / PKC Program Manager

The landscape of child care has changed over the years and now most child care centers are considered early learning centers. This is due to quality initiatives like Keystone Stars and changes to regulations from the Department of Human Services. We often forget about what all this change and quality means for the child care workers. Our staff do much more than just watch over children; this is why we call them “teachers”. In child care, we are required to supervise at all times and also promote learning and offer safe experiences. Our teachers follow weekly lesson plans, offer group activities daily, and complete observations on the children in order to individualize goals. From infants up through our School Age class, the teachers have activities ready for the children that include learning through structured routines and also through play. We can’t forget what the esteemed Mr. Fred Rogers said, “Play is often talked about as if it were a relief from serious learning. But for children, play IS serious learning”. Even Einstein said “Play is the highest form of research”. Teachers set up their classroom to encourage exploration in at least six key learning areas. Our child care is open twelve hours, Monday through Friday; therefore, teachers must be ready to be non-stop all day. Even during rest, the teachers must be supervising, taking notes, prepping activities, training, and planning for new experiences. The main goal is to get children ready for school and social experiences. Our staff build relationships with children and teach about positive social interactions. Our teachers also advance their own professional development and education in order to make all of this happen. The majority of our staff currently hold degrees or certifications in early education. So, the next time you think about today’s child care workers as “babysitters”, think about all things our staff provide for children within the structured learning environment.

THERE ARE SEVERAL WAYS TO HELP CHILDREN’S AID SOCIETY SERVE CHILDREN AND FAMILIES

- You may donate to a specific program, remember us in your will, or decide to offer an annual gift.
- Consider making a donation through the Clearfield County Charitable Foundation. Call (814) 765-7682 or visit www.clearfieldcharitablefoundation.org for more information.
- Businesses can donate through the EITC tax credit program by calling 1-866-466-3972.

☐ I have enclosed \$1,000 as a one-time Youth Mentoring match sponsor

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☐ I have enclosed _____ as a one-time gift

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☐ I would like the funds to specifically benefit the _____ program

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1008 South Second Street | Clearfield, PA 16830

The official registration and financial information of Children’s Aid Society in Clearfield County may be obtained from the Pennsylvania Department of State by calling toll free, within Pennsylvania, 1-800-732-0999.

YOU CAN ALSO DONATE ONLINE AT WWW.CHILDAID.ORG

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FALL / WINTER 2022

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A YEAR IN REVIEW

Bonnie Floro - Executive Director

In last December’s newsletter I predicted that 2022 would be “both a transformation of our programming and transition back to a familiar way of serving families” following the difficulties brought on by the pandemic. Let’s see what really happened at CAS this past year:

Our family support services underwent a major transformation. New funding sources allowed for a much-needed expansion of parenting education. Nurturing Parenting, the Triple P - Positive Parenting Program and Parents as Teachers now reach a multi-county area. Nurturing was our first parenting program beginning in 1995 and it has grown to serve families of all types - even prenatal families.

We transformed our buildings and grounds again this year with a complete repair and repave of the parking lots, the purchase of a nearby parking lot property, and renovation of our accessible ramp in the playground area. We also added a fourth vehicle to meet the demand of reaching families throughout central Pennsylvania.

Like the rest of the world, difficulty in finding new staff remained and the transitions were many. There were several changes in full-time positions at CAS. We welcomed a new fiscal manager, group supervisor, HR manager, Adoption manager, Foster Care manager, Pre-K Counts teacher, Mentoring coordinator, FSS and Permanency staff and custodian. Four long-term staff either have or plan to retire prior to the end of the year. The good news - we retained many great staff including those who were promoted, came back to CAS or changed positions!

We returned to more of our programming being offered in-person, which I feel is best, however the flexibility of virtual participation is here to stay.

So, were my predictions correct? In many ways they were. We did transform our services to better meet the changing needs of families, funding sources, and staff. But change is necessary. By transforming how we support and serve, we are better equipped to fulfill our mission of providing services to improve the lives of children and their families.

ADOPTION

Because a family isn’t made from blood, it’s made from love!

Jennifer Teats - Adoption Manager

November is National Adoption Month. This is the perfect time to bring attention to the approximately 15,000 abused and neglected children in the care of Pennsylvania’s foster care system who are awaiting some type of permanency in their lives, whether that be reunification with family or adoption. Many of these children are not the newborns most people picture when they think of adoption. Generally, they are older boys and girls and teenagers who often have unique medical, psychological, or physical needs. Each year, hundreds of youth age out of Pennsylvania’s foster care system due to unknown circumstances. There are currently more than 2,500 children with a goal of adoption in Pennsylvania, and many of those children do not have an identified permanent resource. Adoption gives these children a brighter future, brings great joy to the adoptive parents, and places fewer demands on social services.

If you have ever considered the possibly of adding another child/youth to your family, but are unsure of where to start, Children’s Aid Society can help. Children’s Aid Society can provide your family with a state wide approved adoptive home study, whether you would like to adopt privately or from the child welfare system. Our adoptive home studies are comprehensive and strength-based social studies of individuals or couples who wish to adopt. Our agency has experienced workers, who will help individuals or couples locate children/youth who will be the best fit for their family and will help them navigate the adoption process.

To get started, you can contact Jennifer Teats, Adoption Program Manager, at (814) 765-2686 x 209 or you can access the application and initial required documentation on our website: childaid.org.

Follow us on Facebook at [facebook/ChildAid.org](https://facebook.com/ChildAid.org)

HOW TO SURVIVE THE HOLIDAYS WITH LITTLE CHILDREN

Kara McGary - Family Support Services Manager

We all know that during the holiday season everyone is running around to events, baking, Christmas shopping, and so much more. This is a busy time for everyone, including your children.

The holiday season is such a fun time for children because they are seeing family members, having time off school, eating lots of treats, and gaining new and exciting gifts.

With all that excitement, children may feel overwhelmed and overstimulated, which may lead to different behaviors and children just not acting like themselves. Below are some tips from the Family Support Services team at CAS on how to avoid these feelings and enjoy the holidays:



- 1. Set strong boundaries:** The holiday season is a time for parents to allow rules to be broken to an extent, but not when it comes to your child's feelings and sense of safety. These boundaries will look different depending on age, but some examples could be; not staying out past a set time, only going to a set number of events per season, or only allowing close family members to hold or be alone with your children.
- 2. Do what is best for the well-being of your children even if that means staying home:** It is common during the holidays to have many events right in a row and that can be a lot for you as parents and for your children. If you notice signs that your children (or yourself) are becoming overwhelmed or overstimulated, Children's Aid Society is here to remind you to cancel or "just say no" to the event and do what is best for your family.
- 3. Plan around your family's schedule:** Let's talk about nap time. Nap time to a family with young children is very important. When it comes to holiday events, plan on going to them before or after nap time. This allows your child to enjoy the event without being tired. This also teaches your children the importance of being able to take care of themselves and their well-being.

Being able to maintain your family members well-being during the holiday season is so important. You want to appreciate the joy that the holiday season brings, but it becomes difficult if your children are not enjoying themselves. This also teaches children to have strong boundaries and protect their physical and mental well-being.

Children's Aid Society's Parents as Teachers program is having a special Christmas event for families with children from 0-5 years of age. Come to our office on December 7 from 6-7 pm to meet Mr. and Mrs. Claus!

Help a teen find their inner [Hero]



Open Your HEART. Become a foster parent to one of the over 16,000 children and youth who are in need of a loving home.

WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO FOSTER?

Brittany Blackburn - Foster Care Program Manager

By one definition, foster means, "to promote the growth or development; further; encourage; and to care for or cherish." There is more to foster care than having a youth stay in your home with your family for a period of time. Foster care provides a youth a better opportunity at reaching their full potential. It gives a youth the chance to learn new things, meet new people, and to grow as an individual. Foster care helps youth access the much needed resources they need to continue developing and striving. As quoted by Tonia Christle, "You might be temporary in their lives, they might be temporary in yours, but there is nothing temporary about the love or the lesson."

In Pennsylvania alone, the average number of youth in the foster care system is between 13,000 and 15,000. That is more than the TOTAL population of Clearfield and DuBois combined! Unfortunately, only a very small percentage of those youth are adopted each year. Children's Aid Society continues to have an important role in helping youth achieve permanency through our foster care program. So far this year, we have had 42 youth in our foster care program and 11 of those youth were able to find their forever home within our foster families! Without our dedicated and committed foster parents, we would not be able to make an impact on the lives on the youth or on the current foster care statistics. Foster care is not always about finding a youth for your family, but maybe it is more about being able to give your family to a youth. If you have ever wanted to be the change you wish to see in the world, being a foster parent would be a great way to contribute to the change. If you would like more information about becoming a foster parent, we encourage you to contact us to learn more!



YOUTH MENTORING WELCOMES NEW CASEWORKER AND CELEBRATES MATCH ANNIVERSARIES

Teresa Guaglianone - Assistant Director

Mary Beth Geppert started as the Youth Mentoring Caseworker on August 8, 2022. Prior to taking the caseworker position, Mary Beth was working in England and France teaching Theatre and English. Prior to living in Europe, she taught at Penn State University and in China as an online teacher of English as a Second Language. Recently, she returned home to spend more time with her family. Mary Beth is looking forward to working with the families involved in Youth Mentoring and changing their lives for the better, forever.



CONGRATULATIONS TO OUR MATCH ANNIVERSARIES

Community Based Matches

8-Year Anniversary <i>Mentor William Swanson</i> <i>Mentee Adam</i>	1-Year Anniversary <i>Mentor April McClellan</i> <i>Mentee Izzabella</i>	Under 1 year <i>Mentor Nicole Belkawski</i> <i>Mentee Natilee</i>
7-Year Anniversary <i>Mentor Jendi Baumgardner</i> <i>Mentee Liza</i>	<i>Mentor Kelly Shaffer</i> <i>Mentee Cole</i>	<i>Mentor Lori Brininger</i> <i>Mentee Maddelynn</i>
3-Year Anniversary <i>Mentor Lisa Bundy</i> <i>Mentee Emmalee</i>	<i>Mentor Rebecca Shaffer</i> <i>Mentee Tenia</i>	<i>Mentors Andi and Meri Collins</i> <i>Mentee Adelynn</i>
2-Year Anniversary <i>Mentor Denise Rebar</i> <i>Mentee Amya</i>	<i>Mentor Cade Walker</i> <i>Mentee Treston</i>	<i>Mentor Mary Rose</i> <i>Mentee Emma</i>



School-Based Matches

Under 1 year <i>Mentor Caitlyn Bohensky</i> <i>Mentee Kendahl</i>
<i>Mentor Courtney Charles</i> <i>Mentee Kennedy</i>
<i>Mentor Cassie Lanzoni</i> <i>Mentee Stella</i>
<i>Mentor Sydney Peace</i> <i>Mentees Hunter and Alison</i>
<i>Mentor Braden Renner</i> <i>Mentee Zayden</i>
<i>Mentor Alexis Sherwood</i> <i>Mentee Levi</i>
<i>Mentor Anna Weible</i> <i>Mentee Elijah</i>

WHO NEEDS VISA WHEN YOU HAVE SANTA?

Leighanne Hutton - Together Project Manager

The holiday season of giving brings an opportunity to spend time with friends, family, and coworkers through cherished gatherings and celebrations. Unfortunately, as we get older it appears that Santa has begun to downsize gift giving, and more and more people rely on Visa instead. Financial concerns can often place unwanted stress and anxiety on relationships during the most magical time of year.

Luckily, Dave Ramsey provides a festive holiday tree with 25 money saving tips that can be utilized before, after, and during this busy season of life. Once a couple completes our relationship education workshop, Together offers Foundations in Personal Finance, a FREE supplemental workshop focusing on financial education.

Together Workshops are entirely free and are designed for all adult couples, from people in committed relationships, to newlyweds, and couples married for 50 years! It's never too late or too early to focus on your relationship and invest the time into creating a future TOGETHER!



Ramsey Solutions. (2022, July 19). 25 Tips to Save Money This Christmas. <https://www.ramseysolutions.com/budgeting/tips-to-save-money-on-christmas>



Together



- 1. Develop a gift-giving philosophy
- 2. Budget
- 3. Track your spending
- 4. Rein in other spending
- 5. Choose time over money
- 6. Shop early
- 7. Give fewer gifts
- 8. Resist retail marketing
- 9. Use old gift cards
- 10. Order online early
- 11. Combine your orders
- 12. Live by the list
- 13. Say no to random gift exchanges
- 14. Go in on a group gift
- 15. Regift
- 16. Make presents
- 17. Sell your stuff
- 18. Make more money
- 19. Spend less on traditions
- 20. Get thrifty with stocking stuffers
- 21. Donate to charity
- 22. Have a virtual party
- 23. Don't shop at the mall
- 24. Wrap gifts creatively
- 25. Be a sentimental spender