



Spotlight on Children & Families

A PUBLICATION FOR FRIENDS OF SUMMIT COUNTY CHILDREN SERVICES

April Events Announced for

Child & Family Awareness Month[®]

“A Family is the Compass that Directs Me Throughout Life” is the theme of this year’s

22nd Annual “Child and Family Awareness Month[®]”

celebration – a month-long series of events planned for the month of April by a steering committee of representatives of a variety of area agencies and organizations committed to strengthening family life and community education as vehicles for child abuse prevention.

See Page 2 for a complete listing of events held during Child and Family Awareness Month 2009.



Anna M. Arvay, CPA, Joseph R. Morris and Gillian Solem, R.N. Named to Summit County Children Services’ Board of Trustees

Agency Trustee William D. Evans, II, Esq. Reappointed to Second Term

Summit County Children Services has announced the appointment of three new members to its Board of Trustees. **Anna M. Arvay, CPA** and **Joseph R. Morris** were appointed by County Council to four-year terms replacing outgoing trustees Cindy S. Johnson, CPA and Richard F. Marsh. A third new board member, **Gillian Solem, R.N.** was also named to the board by virtue of becoming the new Chair of Summit County Children Services’ Citizen’s Advisory Committee (CAC). Ms. Solem replaces former agency trustee

Mary Ann Freedman, who will remain on the CAC. In addition, **William D. Evans, II, Esq.**, first appointed to the board by County Council in 2005, was re-appointed to a second term through 2012.

“I’m very much looking forward to working with our new trustees and to continuing to work with Bill Evans and the rest of the board,” said Summit County Children Services Executive Director John Saros. “Our board is a very talented group of individuals and I’m sure the new

members will bring a lot of knowledge and energy to the table as we continue our important work on behalf of the children and families of Summit County. I also want to thank our outgoing board members, Cindy Johnson, Dick Marsh and Mary Ann Freedman, for all their hard work and dedication to the agency. Their skills and leadership were instrumental in helping successfully guide Summit County Children Services through a very challenging period of our history.”

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Would you prefer to receive future issues of Spotlight via e-mail? If so, please contact us at publications@summitkids.org.

Saturday, March 28 from 10 a.m.-5 p.m. Summit County Children Services/ Western Reserve PBS Family Expo.

Summit Mall, Fairlawn. Free and open to the public, this event features family-focused entertainment and information booths throughout Summit Mall, with special performances by 'Sid the Science Kid' and 'Gordon' from Sesame Street, courtesy of Western Reserve PBS.



Wednesday, April 1. Pinwheels for Prevention, Prevent Child Abuse Ohio's statewide public awareness campaign brings attention to child abuse and neglect throughout the month of April in communities across the state. More than 8,000 pinwheels will be planted on the grounds of Summit County Children Services, Summit County Juvenile Court and Akron Children's Hospital to celebrate the lives of children and to encourage prompt reporting of child abuse and neglect.

Saturday, April 4, 10-11 a.m. The Incredible Years: Reducing Children's Aggression. Child Guidance & Family Solutions, Family TIES Center, 682 E. Buchtel Avenue, Akron. Parents and children will experience an introduction to this evidence-based program designed to help families develop effective communication, appropriate discipline and positive parenting techniques. Come ready to learn and play with Detective Wally, Molly Manners and other life-size characters who demonstrate skills including how to learn new rules, make friends, understand feelings and do well in school. The program is free. To register, call Family TIES at (330) 762-2557.

Tuesday, April 7, 10:30 a.m.-2:30 p.m. – Family Fun Day for Kinship Care Providers. Bill White's Akron Lanes – 2911 E. Waterloo Road, Akron. Celebrate the arrival of spring with some family fun. Kinship care providers and their children are invited to spend this spring break day enjoying bowling and lunch together. For more information please call (330) 996-1080.

Tuesday, April 14, 8:30 a.m.-Noon. – Close-Up© on Dating Violence and Sexual Assault in Teen Relationships. Raymond C. Firestone Auditorium, Summa Health Systems, Akron. Teen dating violence is a hidden epidemic that usually goes unreported. Close-Up© 2009 will help parents and professionals recognize signs of a violent relationship and offer appropriate interventions and community resources to help teens get their lives back on track. Advance registration is requested. Call Summit County Children Services at (330) 379-2089. FREE.

Thursday, April 16, 7-9 a.m. Professional Recognition and Awards Breakfast. Akron City Centre Hotel. The Alliance of Summit County Childcaring Providers is proud to honor Summit County professionals who serve the abused and neglected children in our community. This recognition breakfast sponsored by White Hat Management will feature keynote speaker will be Victoria Didato, Director of the Child Sexual Abuse Institute of Ohio. For more information, call (330) 688-0044.

Thursday, April 23, 6:30-9 p.m. – Motivating to Learn: An Evening with Dr. Allen Mallory Presented by Akron Area Association for the Education of Young Children (AAAEYC), Guy's Party Centre, Akron. Dr. Mallory's "Bill Cosby" approach to experiences have led hundreds of child care directors to say that his workshop had a more positive and lasting influence on them and their staff than any other. Dr. Mallory has nearly 30 years of experience in all areas of child care as an aide, teacher, director, author and professor. His unique ability to inject humor into serious topics is unmatched. Cost is \$15 for members, \$20 for non-members. For a brochure, call Child Care Connection at (330) 376-7706.

For more information about **Child and Family Awareness Month**, please call Summit County Children Services, the coordinating agency for Child and Family Awareness Month, at (330) 379-2089.

Heart Gallery On the Road to Barberton

Summit County Children Services' popular "**Heart Gallery**" photography exhibit, which highlights agency children waiting to be adopted, is now on display at a new location -- the Barberton Public Library, 620 W. Park Avenue. The exhibit will be at the library through the end of April.

The Heart Gallery is a project that raises awareness of the need for adoptive and foster parents by displaying photographic portraits of individual children and sibling groups who are in search of a permanent home.



For more information on The Heart Gallery – or on becoming an adoptive or foster parent – call Summit County Children Services at (330) 379-1990 or visit www.summitkids.org.



Executive Director John Saros Delivers Second “State of the Agency” Speech

Summit County Children Services’ Executive Director John Saros delivered on January 23, 2009 his second “State of the Agency” speech – commending staff for the crucial role they played in the agency’s very successful 2008 and also asking for their continued hard work and support in meeting the unique challenges looming in the months ahead. Following are a few key excerpts from the speech (to read the full text, log onto Summit County Children Services’ website at www.summitkids.org).

On healing the agency . . .

“2008 began with the good feelings we continued to have in coming together to pass the levy. It was truly a united effort and gave us a sense that we could do anything we set our minds to. Last year I spoke of the need to heal both within the Agency and between the Agency and the community. The healing has progressed and we are doing well in this regard. Problems and challenges remain but we are in a different place than we were a year ago. I appreciate the contributions made by Robin Schenault and the CWA toward the healing as well.”

On today’s challenging environment . . .

“However, the environment we work in has become far weaker, and is in return affecting the Agency. As we look out ahead to the year before us, and beyond, the instability in our economy and the resultant impact on federal, state and local revenues is reducing our resources on an ever-increasing basis. All over the State of Ohio public children services agencies are struggling with closing programs, laying off staff

and making other cuts impacting on the critically important work of child protection.”

On the local impact* . . .

“The impact upon Summit County Children Services has been significant. Just since passage of the levy we have experienced:

- A Board of Elections charge of \$197,000;
- A change in property tax valuation that has reduced levy revenues by \$200,000 per year;
- A State Child Protection Subsidy cut of \$170,000 per year;
- A second State Child Protection Subsidy cut of \$162,000 per year;
- A third State Child Protection Subsidy cut of 10% to 20% (\$250,000 to \$500,000) expected in July, 2009;
- An audit reconciliation finding of \$209,000 in MRDD/CAFS funding for the years 2001-2004;
- A 17% increase in health care premiums, estimated at \$225,000;
- TANF/PRC cuts to occur later this year in an as yet unknown amount.

We are already beginning to see the impact of these very serious budget challenges with the placing on hold of the new visitation center, the need to implement an attrition plan to reduce the size of staff, and cuts in overtime. And yet, despite these decisions, I am concerned that these changes will not suffice.”

(*NOTE: Information accurate as of January 23, 2009)

On key agency initiatives for 2009 . . .

“In addition to the implementation of the Strategic Plan for 2009, there are a variety of other key initiatives now underway. These include:

- The important process of negotiating a new three-year labor-management agreement;
- Adjusting the management compensation program;
- Preparing a 2010 budget that takes into account the cuts in 2009 and those projected for 2010;
- Improving the delivery of services as measured by selected outcomes;
 - A. Maintain 90% face-to-face monthly contacts with individual children on the caseload;

- B. Reduce the number of waiting children in permanent custody without a match to 70;
 - C. Improving our CFSR results to a level of at least 4 of the 6 major outcomes being met 90% of the time.
- Initiating leadership development and succession planning within the agency;
 - Reducing average length of stay and the number of children in paid placement;
 - Participating in the development of an in-county residential treatment center for high risk kids;
 - Continuing to monitor the availability of funding for the new visitation center now on hold;
 - Continuing to enhance the Agency’s measures with regard to campus safety;
 - Integration of Team Decision-Making into social services;
 - Establishment of an evening Intake shift and Sex Abuse unit;
 - Addressing the problems created by SACWIS;
 - Completion of the Council on Accreditation self-study;
 - Maintaining positive relations with the media and the community at large;
 - Maintaining the number of grievances at a level where we are resolving them quickly and efficiently;
 - Reducing the number of children in our permanent custody.”

On the agency’s vision . . .

“Our vision for the future is of an Agency that is viewed as vital and effective in its work; intervening where necessary and only to the degree necessary, and believing that every child should be in their own home or another permanent home. It is a vision of an Agency that works and communicates well internally, that cooperates and works closely with families, relatives and all of our other partners in the community. It is a vision of an Agency that is well trained, culturally competent, focused on customer service and a commitment to continuous quality improvement in all its operations. And, above all, it is an Agency committed to protecting children and strengthening families.”

County Child Fatality Board Commended by the State of Ohio

The County of Summit Child Fatality Review Board (CFRB) recently received an official commendation from the State of Ohio “... for its consistent commitment to the child fatality review process as a way to improve services to children and families with the ultimate goal of reducing the incidence of preventable child deaths.”

“On behalf of the Child Fatality Board, I am very pleased and honored to receive this official commendation from the state in recognition of the important work we do on behalf of the children and families of Summit County,” said Dr. Daryl Steiner, D.O., Chair of the County of Summit Child Fatality Review Board and Director of the Children at Risk Evaluation Center at Akron Children’s Hospital. “Our ultimate goal is a most critical one – to reduce the incidence of preventable child deaths throughout our county – so it is very gratifying that the continued hard work of everyone involved has received such public recognition.”

The committee comprehensively reviews all Summit County child deaths and serious injuries from a systems perspective to improve services and reduce the incidence of preventable deaths. In addition, the group facilitates the cooperation and collaboration of child and family serving organizations, makes recommendations for service improvements and maintains a database of all child deaths.

For more information about the Child Fatality Review Board, or to receive a copy of the board’s triennial report, call Dr. Steiner at (330) 543-8453 or go to schd.org and click on reports.

Agency Unveils New Logo

Summit County Children Services has unveiled a slightly modified agency logo, specifically designed to keep the visual essence of the previous logo while at the same time greatly enhancing the logo’s overall impact and readability.



The agency is also poised to make one more change – to create a new agency ‘tagline’ or ‘slogan’ to go with the logo, replacing the present tagline, “Responding to Child Abuse and Neglect Since 1881.” Employee input was sought and the new agency tagline should be announced in the very near future.

“Like a logo, a tagline is a very important communications tool designed to truly capture the essence of what a company or organization does each and every day in a few short words. While our existing tagline has served us well, and reflects a long and noble history of serving children and families, we feel that a more positive, upbeat tone should be conveyed to the public through a new tagline,” said Executive Director John Saros.

Taste Buds Now Open for Business



Agency Community Education Manager Julia Mothersbaugh, left, and Taste Buds Employee DeAnna.

United Disability Services’ “Taste Buds” facility officially opened for business at SCCS on January 15, providing delicious breakfast and lunch service to agency staff and guests each weekday from 8 a.m. - 2 p.m.

United Disability Services’ rich history of providing opportunities for people with disabilities began in 1949. Since that time the agency has grown and today provides a diverse range of services to people with disabilities and their caregivers. Taste Buds, the newest program of United Disability Services, provides food service job opportunities and job training for individuals with disabilities.

The idea behind Taste Buds is to provide affordable, high-quality, healthy, home-made meals and snacks and excellent customer service in an environment that will educate, inspire and demonstrate United Disability Services’ commitment to supporting people with disabilities. For more information, call (330) 762-9755 or visit www.udsakron.org or www.buckeyebaskets.com.

Foster Care and Adoption Info Meeting Set for April 21 in Barberton

A special Information Meeting on the agency’s foster care and adoption programs will be held on Tuesday, April 21, from 6-8 p.m. at the Barberton Public Library, 620 W. Park Ave. in Downtown Barberton. Attendees will be able to learn more about the foster care and adoption process, support provided by the agency, costs involved and children who are coming into care. The agency’s recruitment DVD will be shown and refreshments will be provided. This event is open and free to the entire community. For more information, call (330) 379-1990.

Akron University's Margaret Baughman Named to Citizen's Advisory Committee; Gillian Solem, Shelley Walker and Mary Bishop Elected New CAC Officers

Summit County Children Services' Board of Trustees has named **Margaret Baughman, MPA**, to the agency's Citizen's Advisory Committee (CAC) for a term ending 12/31/2011. The CAC has also elected a new slate of officers: **Gillian Solem, R.N.** (Chair); **Shelley Walker, A.C.S.W., L.I.S.W.-S.** (Vice Chair); and **Mary Bishop**, (Secretary).

Ms. Baughman, of Stow, is Research Associate in the University of Akron's Institute for Health and Social Policy, where she has worked since 1999. Her research experience has ranged from evaluation of county programs for young children (birth to three) to longitudinal research with adult and adolescent drug addicts. She is also an adjunct professor for the Public Administration and Urban Studies Department at the university.

Ms. Solem (please see biography below in Board of Trustees article).

Ms. Walker, of Fairlawn, has been a social worker with Akron Children's Hospital for 31 years. She is a Social Work Department supervisor and provides social work services to the Craniofacial Center and the Behavioral Clinic in addition to coordinating the pediatric resident training program in Developmental Behavioral Pediatrics. She is an active member of the hospital's Ethics Committee and has served on Summit County Children Services' Citizens Advisory Committee since 1983.

Ms. Bishop, of Norton, is a Family Development Consultant for the Head Start program with Akron Summit Community Action, Inc. She has worked for more than 20 years in early childhood, family development and social services. In her role with Head Start, her responsibilities include: early childhood developmental outcomes, family development/literacy, social services and parent involvement.



Shown at the awards ceremony are (from left): Rev. Bruce Butcher; Nouvelle Gonvalo, John Saros, Michelle Stubbs-Thompson and Atty. Charles Greene.

John Saros Wins Stubbs Humanitarian Award

Congratulations to SCCS Executive Director John Saros for receiving one of this year's prestigious Harold K. Stubbs Humanitarian Awards from the Saint Paul A.M.E. Church in Akron. For the past 19 years, these awards have been given to leaders in the community who have made a difference in the lives of others. The awards are named after the late Akron Municipal Court Judge Harold K. Stubbs, an influential figure in the City of Akron and the State of Ohio who died of cancer in 1989 at the age of 48.

Board of Trustees *Continued from page 1*



Anna M. Arvay, of Akron specializes in not-for-profit and governmental accounting and auditing services, including governmental Single Audits and consulting specialty services. Ms. Arvay has been involved in public accounting for 28 years, 19 of those years involved with not-for-profits and governmental entities. She spent 16 years working for local firms and formed her own firm in February 1997.



Gillian Solem, of Hudson has been Director of Nursing for the Summit County Combined General Health District since 2002. Prior to that position, she served as Nursing Supervisor for the Communicable Disease and General Public Health Nursing Programs for the Health District from 1994-2001.



Joseph M. Morris, of Copley is Chief Operating Officer, Chief Financial Officer and a member of the Board of Directors of First Communications, Inc. of Akron, one of the largest competitive telecommunications companies in the country. He was a member of the senior management team founding the Company in 1998.



William R. Evans, of Akron is an attorney focusing on human resource and business matters and is president of Poly-Tech, Inc., a company that specializes in forensic services. He serves as a part-time faculty member at the University of Akron in the Department of Criminal Justice, is Chairman of the All-American Soap Box Derby, and is a 1998 graduate of Leadership Akron.

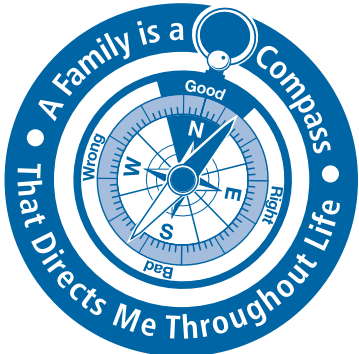


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**Child & Family
Awareness Month**

April 2009

See page 2 for event listing.



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It is the policy of Summit County Children Services to provide services to all persons without regard to race, color, religion, gender, national origin, sexual orientation, disability or age.

VOLUNTEER AND DONOR OPPORTUNITIES

PHONE: 330.379.2055

WEB SITE: WWW.SUMMITKIDS.ORG

'Beds for Kids' Program Still Seeking Donations

Many of the families served by Summit County Children Services face multiple problems, including overwhelming financial burdens which preclude their buying beds for their children. The agency's **"Beds for Kids"** program is designed to provide beds, cribs and dressers for abused and neglected children and children at risk of abuse and neglect.

As a public, levy-funded agency, Summit County Children Services is limited in its ability to use those tax dollars for certain expenses, such as the purchase of beds (except in situations of extreme emergency). Therefore, our "Beds for Kids" program funding is largely dependent on funds donated to the agency – so please consider donating to Beds for Kids by calling (330) 379-2055.



*For more
information or to
make a donation to
Beds for Kids call:
(330) 379-2055.*