

## Children's Center Announces New Farmington Site

The Children's Center is pleased to announce that we will be opening a site in Farmington this month.



We will be offering center-based programming to children three through five with an autism or mental health diagnosis and/or children who may be exhibiting significant interfering behaviors under Children's Behavioral Health Day Treatment (Section 65 Services).

We also will be offering targeted case management to children birth through twelve and their families.

Overseen by Children's Center Associate Director Linda Riley, Licensed Clinical Social Worker (LCSW), Behavioral Health

Professionals (BHPs) will provide half-day or full-day specialized services in a highly structured setting with a high child to staff ratio.

"There are so many children in need of services – especially in rural Maine," said Associate Director, Linda Riley.

"The Children's Center is excited to have a part in helping prepare children for life-long learning and transition to kindergarten while meeting their individual special needs."



Jonathan Kimball and Krista Sylvain, Board Certified Behavioral Analysts (BCBA)s, will provide support for programming created based on principals of Applied Behavioral Analysis (ABA) using

discrete trials and data collection to inform treatment and create programs. These methods have proven especially helpful for children with autism.

Targeted case managers will offer children and families additional assistance in assessing and developing a plan to make referrals for needed services and access resources in the community.

"Early intervention services positively impact and improve outcomes for children, families, and communities," Linda said.

"Franklin County is a great next step in the Children's Center's mission to meet the needs of all children by offering quality programs that encourage individual growth, provide support for their families, and promote inclusion of all children in the community."



## Playground Renovation Update

The 2nd Annual Dinner & Auction was a huge success, raising close to \$17,000 for the Children's Center. The majority of the proceeds will go to support the playground renovation scheduled for the spring 2017.

We have raised approximately \$130,000 of the needed \$175,000 to complete the project.

Already busy planning for the 16th Annual Chili Chowder Challenge, the committee recently voted to designate the proceeds from the fundraiser to go towards the playground renovation as well.

Partnering with BYO Equipment, the playground committee has been working towards designing an inclusive play area that will be accessible and functional for children of all abilities.



The committee states that they are on target to begin the project next spring as they get closer to their fundraising goal and final project design.

The project will be completed and the playground ready for children by the end of summer 2017.

## Meet Kylee

Kylee was diagnosed with intellectual disabilities and developmental delays at the age of three-years-old. Uninterested in playing or interacting with others, she would yell, cry, and flop to the floor without much warning.

Discouraged by past experiences with providers, her parents, Travis and Stacey, were reluctant and uncertain in moving forward with services for their daughter. They decided to start with case management at the Children's Center.



Targeted Case Manager Samantha Thibodeau worked closely with parents to examine the current needs for their child and family and then to develop a plan to meet those needs with services available in the community.

They began by enrolling the child into early intervention services, scheduling an appointment with a geneticist, and gathering information about community resources.

"Kylee has progressed with language development, tolerating directions and attending to work tasks. She is able to tolerate her preschool envi-



ronment and being at home with less overreaction," Samantha said.

She said "Kylee is imitating play, interacting with peers and adults, and joining her peers at the table while participating in activities and feeding."

Travis and Stacey say Kylee is not having as many "meltdowns" at home and is using her words more often and/or signing to get her needs and wants met, Samantha said.

After learning that Kylee has Sotos syndrome, a rare genetic condition, Samantha has helped parents understand what that means for their daughter. Something she said "has been an emotional process."



Travis and Stacey have been open to the case management support and have expressed appreciation for receiving assistance without judgement, Samantha said. She continues to provide them with information about financial, respite, and advocacy programs in the community and helps monitor Kylee's progress in her current programs.

Samantha said the ultimate goal is to work herself out of a job once Kylee and her parents have the services in place and information they need to support her special needs.

## Where Are They Now?

Dylan was four-years-old when his mom, Pam, took him to the Children's Center for the first time.

"When I went to check out the Children's Center, once I went in and met everyone and saw everything they were doing – I was like 'okay, sign me up,'" Pam said.

Shortly after Dylan began attending the Children's Center, Pam enrolled him in case management to help in understanding his diagnosis of developmental delays and services available to him because of that diagnosis.

"It was one of the best experiences I've ever had with my children because if it wasn't for the Children's Center and all of the case management, I

would not be as empowered as I am with my children today," she said.



Dylan was having a difficult time communicating and learning, while Pam was still learning about programs that could address his delays and resources that could help him and the family. Case managers worked with them to figure out a plan.

"If I hadn't experienced case management, I wouldn't know how to do things to stand up for the rights of my kids," Pam said.



Pam said that case management helped Dylan progress by helping her learn about available services in the community. She even found out he required some medical treatment that she didn't realize he needed.

Pam said they had case management until "they felt I was ready to go out on my own."

Now, Dylan is 10-years-old and in the fourth grade. He continues to receive additional support for his disabilities and Pam now knows where and how to get him the help he needs.

Pam said she had the best experience with case management at the Children's Center, and she would recommend it to others who might benefit from it.

"Anybody that ever needs some sort of help should not shy away from it; because it is empowering. It makes you realize what you need to fight for for your children."



## Targeted Case Management

Targeted case management (TCM) is a community based MaineCare service that provides support to children with disabilities.

Case managers at the Children's Center provide services to children ages birth through twelve who have been diagnosed with a developmental disability and/or behavioral health disorder.

Children ages birth through five may also qualify if a qualified professional determines them to be at-risk of developing these diagnoses based on other medical and/or environmental factors.

Case managers work closely with parents and caregivers to assess child and family needs, develop a plan, and work with other providers or natural

ty to get the needed services for the child and family.

They also help by providing information parents and caregivers need to make informed choices.

Lindsey Jordan, targeted case manager at the Children's Center, works with parents or caregivers to identify areas of need for their child or family and support them in addressing those needs.

"I meet with parents or caregivers in their home, at the

supports in the communi-



Children's Center, or at a place in the community of their choice on average two times per month. During this time



we discuss the needs of the child and it's impact on family functioning and identify objectives to address these needs," Lindsey said .



"We work together along with providers to access services and resources for the child and fami-

ly. The service is flexible and individualized to each child and family. "

The service is designed to provide assistance to caregivers for a period of time, with the

ultimate goal that they are able to manage their child's services independently.

Lindsey said targeted case management is essential to the agency's mission to provide support to families and promote inclusion in the community. She and others provide assistance to families to develop their natural support system and help them to fully participate in the community.

"Having a child with disabilities and navigating the service system is challenging," said Lindsey. "Targeted case management offers support and assistance to parents to ensure that their child receives the intervention that they need to make gains across domains. We are able to provide parent's information and guidance so that they can make informed decisions in managing their child's care."

## Caregiver Education & Support

The Children's Center recently offered a six week training titled, Six Keys to Your Family's Well-Being: Sane Parenting in a Crazy World, which was made possible by the Maine's Children's Trust, an agency geared towards preventing child abuse.

The series offers specific support to caregivers who may be dealing with additional stresses due to their child's special health care needs or their own past experiences.

shops provide information regarding the Adverse Childhood Experiences Study (ACES) and concentrate on strengthening families' protective factors.

"We discuss how these experiences impact their own development and create patterns of behaviors within themselves as well as how this impacts their parenting and their children." said Shelley Livie, co-facilitator and Intake Coordinator at the Children's Center.

Shelley says the agency currently offers the training to

These work-

families that receive or have received services through the Children's Center, but they hope to open the series to

caregivers throughout the community in the future.



"Education and prevention is key when it comes to children's safety. The more parents seek to understand and educate themselves about

their child's development and their own history, the less likely (we hope) patterns of the past will repeat themselves," Shelley said.

"During the training, facilitators continuously emphasize that caregivers and their chil-



dren are not defined by their experiences," Shelley said.

Shelley said that being a part of the training is one of her favorite roles at the Children's Center.

"The opportunity to engage with families on a deeper level is something that I value personally and professionally," she said. "When each of us know that we are not alone, we have an opportunity to view ourselves and our experiences through a different lens."



## General Updates

The Children's Center has had a busy fall between expanding services in Augusta, preparing to open a new site in Farmington, and children graduating to public school. As our programs and children continue to grow, we remember to give thanks to the communities who support our mission.

We had a very successful 2<sup>nd</sup> Annual Dinner & Auction with proceeds going to support the playground renovation. We have had several volunteer groups give their time, individuals and businesses make charitable donations, and organizations offer gifts to our children and families during the holiday season. In turn, Children's Center staff have given back to our communities through volunteer opportunities, food pantry projects, and through the United Way over the past few months.

As we enter the season of giving and giving thanks, we are humbled and overwhelmed by the generosity of our communities. We would not be able to provide the quality programs to children with special needs without the continued support and encouragement from community members. On behalf of everyone at the Children's Center, thank you.

Katelyn Pushard  
Director of Development & Quality Improvement



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