

Adoption • Chemical Health Assessment & Outpatient Treatment  
In-Home Services • Foster Care • School Based Services  
Outpatient Mental Health Services  
Residential: *Treatment Cottage, Boys Program & Teens in Transition*  
*Girls Program & Teens in Transition*  
I.T.A.S.K.I.N. Center: *Stabilization Shelter Unit,*



January/February Newsletter, 2014 \* North Homes Children and Family

# The North Homes Connection

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*NHCFS celebrates annual holiday party to raise proceeds for ITASKIN Center's youth holiday party.*

## A letter from Jim Christmas *Our President, Founder, & CEO*

It is with great pride and pleasure to kick off our new newsletter to our friends, colleagues, neighbors, staff, and customers of North Homes Children and Family Services. As you will see, this newsletter, which will be published twice a year, highlights Agency news as well as all the exciting developments that North Homes generates through our diverse continuum of care.

Like healthcare, services to children and families are rapidly changing in terms of funding, and the manner in which we deliver care and treatment. As an Organization, we are uniquely positioned to tailor mission driven services to not only adapt to these changes, but modify them to achieve improved outcomes. This is possible because North Homes' model of least restrictive, community based care has been our mission and philosophy from the on-set. Therefore, with 21 service components throughout our Grand Rapids, Duluth, and Bemidji locations, North Homes has one of the most comprehensive array of services in the state.

As you will read in this, and future newsletters, our quest to press on with new programs that meet identified needs continues

to be a priority in the strategic plan of North Homes. To that end, we have embarked on several key initiatives highlighted in this edition of the North Homes Connection.

I would like to take this opportunity to recognize and thank our Board of Directors for their support and participation, and expertise in their vital role of governing our agency. As you can see, our Board consists of a great group of volunteers helping us carry out the important work that we do: Char Alto; Lana Bjorgum, Vice Chair; Dr. Jack Carlisle; Sarah Gustafson, secretary; Gerry Johnson, treasurer; Tom Peltier; John Pugleasa; Jim Smokrovich; and Rachel Weis, Board Chair. I also would like to extend a sincere thank you to all of our staff (approximately 225) and Foster and Adoptive Providers (approximately 150) for their hard work and commitment on behalf of children and families. Finally, a special thanks to Toni for taking on our newsletter project, and we look forward to enjoying this resource for years to come.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "Jim Christmas".

# School Based Mental Health

*North Homes Children and Family Services began providing mental health services within the Bemidji schools in 2007. Since that time, our school based programming has expanded to eleven school buildings across northern Minnesota.*

In the fall of 2012, North Homes began providing CTSS and professional services at King Elementary school in Deer River. The program had immense success thanks to our wonderful team of mental health practitioners. The school district, along with our team indicated a need for further services and the King Learning Center was opened for the 2013-2014 school year.

## EXPANSION

The need for further mental health services is apparent around the state and

schools in our service area have welcomed and invited our mental health services. In the winter of 2013, we began providing services in Grand Rapids, Bigfork, and Deer River. The start of the 2013-2014 school year, our services have now expanded to Walker and Remer. The agency also received a five year school-linked mental health grant through the MN Department of Human Services to supplement school based services.

## “Next Step”

With an increase in referrals at TNT, North Homes opened a new DOC program, “Next Step”. Next Step is similar to that of Teens in Transition, but includes further independence for the residents and apartment style living. The program is located in the upper level of the previous Family Center and has been remodeled to hold the needs of a six bed residential program. The target population is adolescent males, ages 17-21, who have obtained, or who are close to obtaining, their GED or high school diploma, and are actively pursuing employment and/or enrollment in college. The program is staffed 24 hours with awake staff. The agency began taking referrals in October.

## Employee Highlight: Dave Hoolihan

*Dave has been a solid figure at North Homes and is a leader to both the youth and staff. He has worked hard at the Cottage creating projects such as bird houses, picture frames, benches and picnic tables. He has taken over as recreation leader, has headed the fly fishing, and camping/fishing trips. He works 40 plus hour weeks putting in extra time to provide supervision and show youth the consistency of a strong male figure in their*

*Lives. Dave was in the army and worked at Blandin Paper Co. When he retired from the paper mill, he chose to work with at risk youth. Dave shows leadership skills being a mentor to his co-workers. There is so much to say about what David has done and continues to do that makes working with him a joy each day.*



## Clothing Drive for Walker Schools



Within an hour a clothing drive was organized and in two days the generous students, staff and community members of Deer River donated twelve huge garbage bags full of hats, mittens, scarves, snow pants, jackets and boots - enough to fill an entire truck! Thanks so much to all who helped with this effort. Many kids will be much warmer due to their generosity.

On Dec 18th, Will Forney from the North Homes Bemidji office contacted Steve Teff in the Grand Rapids office to report that many of the kids he works with in Walker did not have warm clothes for winter. Steve contacted Karen Teff, a high school teacher in Deer River) and asked if there was anything the DR National Honor Society could do to help.



## Trauma Focused-Cognitive Behavioral Therapy

*Several of our therapists are in the final stages of being certified in an AMBIT Network training regarding trauma focused cognitive behavioral therapy (TF-CBT). This was made possible by a grant through the Minnesota Department of Human Services. TF-CBT is a short-term treatment modality to help children overcome the painful effects of experiencing traumatic life events. It is a treatment that teaches skills and strategies to help children and caregivers manage symptoms of trauma.*

# Two new buildings open in Deer River & Grand Rapids

*North Homes was proud to announce the opening of two new buildings in Grand Rapids and Deer River this fall*

North Homes Children and Family Services was happy to announce that together with the Deer River School District, it has opened a new building. North Homes offers outpatient mental health assessment and counseling services, outpatient chemical health services, and school-based CTSS services which provide therapeutic and rehabilitative intervention to students at King Learning Center. In the same building, ISD 317's KLC serves elementary students (grades K-5) with emotional and behavioral needs by offering a small structured setting with a high staff to student ratio. An open house for the new facility was held on November 11<sup>th</sup>.

North Homes Children and Family Services was also proud to announce that in conjunction with the Grand Rapids school district, the opening of a new facility that offers outpatient mental health assessment and counseling services, outpatient chemical health services, Children's Therapeutic Services and Supports, adult mental health case management, and ISD #318's Area Learning Center.

Adjacent to the mental health clinic is the new Grand Rapids Area Learning Center which provides alternative programming for students that are at risk of not graduating from high school. These services are provided to students from several local school districts including Grand Rapids, Greenway, Nashwauk-Keewatin, Remer, Deer River, Hill City and Bigfork. Renovations of the facility began in June of 2013. Jim Christmas, president and CEO of North Homes, states, "The collaboration between the school district and North Homes created the opportunity for these two vital services provided to youth and families to be housed in a central location in Grand Rapids."

An open house for the new Grand Rapids building was held on Thursday October 10 and it was well attended with many members of the community present. If you would like to make a referral for mental health or CD services please contact North Homes Children and Family Services at 218-999-9908 or visit the location at 413 13th St. SE, Grand Rapids, MN 55744.



## Meet our Mental Health/CD Staff

*Lisa Corradi, MSW, LICSW, completes diagnostic assessments and provides individual Therapy with youth & adults, family therapy, DBT related group therapy and is PACC certified.*

*Amy Mallum, MSW, LGSW provides diagnostic assessments individual therapy for adolescents and adults, family therapy, has co-facilitated DBT, cultural, and CD groups with youth, and is working on certification in TF-CBT.*

*Katie Rubesh, MSW, LICSW, provides play therapy, TF-CBT, clinical supervision, diagnostic assessments ages 0-3, and filial therapy.*

*Jennifer Sheppard, MSW, LGSW, works with individuals and families. She has over 15 years of experience working with families and children in crisis. She is working on her training in TF-CBT and she is also a senior trainer in Life Space Crisis Intervention (LSCI).*

*Dr. William Larsen, PhD, Psychologist, provides family and individual psychological evaluations, psychotherapy with adolescents and young adults, in-depth diagnostic assessments working in conjunction with various community resources. He also is a key element to our 35-Day evaluation program.*

*David Bransford, MD, Psychiatrist, provides direct clinical services both inpatient and outpatient in the Grand Rapids area. His emphasis is on working with the child and adolescent populations.*

*Ali Meyer, LADC, CCM, is the chemical health director. She is an Itasca County assessor and has practiced for 19 years.*

*Alex Meyer, LADC, is the clinical supervisor of the outpatient CD services and has been practicing for 3 years. He has an emphasis in adolescents and mental health.*

*Aricka Meyer, LADC, has been working at North Homes for two year prior and is now the LADC for the Outpatient Chemical Health Program in Grand Rapids.*

# How can you help a child in need?

*North Homes Children and Family Services is a non-profit, 501c3 organization. In order to continuously improve our programming to the youth and families we serve, we accept tax deductible donations and memorial gifts.*

If you would like to help the at-risk youth and families we serve, North Homes Children and Family Services accepts a variety of donations, big or small. Donations can come in the form of cash donations, memorial gifts, pledges, or through items such as clothing or other items. Giving can also come in the form of specialty talents you would like to share with youth. Each volunteer at North Homes must pass a background check and complete our volunteer orientation. Volunteers are needed to lead specialty activities such as music programs, art activities, outdoor/recreation activities, and serve as spiritual mentors. All volunteers are accompanied by a North Homes staff at all times.

## Items needed:

- Garden hoses
- Gardening gloves
- Rakes, hoes, shovels
- Snow shoes
- Fishing equipment
- Garden hand tools

For more information regarding giving to North Homes, please contact Toni Troumbly, 218-327-3000 or via email at [toni.troumbly@northhomes.org](mailto:toni.troumbly@northhomes.org).

## A Letter from a Thankful Parent

I want to wish each and every one of you a very Blessed and Merry Christmas. It will be great spending Christmas with my child this year. With all of your help he has come so far. I feel he has his sights on a path to continue following that will be good for him. He has adjusted real well into his school. He has met many friends that he is communicating well with. A few that he spends some time after school with. He has had some problems with the virtual class room on a I Pad but over break we have the paper bound text books to keep him on track. Please share this with all the staff and Mr. Christmas. Each and every one of you have a special place in my heart. You helped my son that was getting lead down the wrong path and have transformed him into someone that will be productive in society for the rest of his life.

Thank you again, GOD BLESS YOU ALL

## Employee Highlight: Ashley Seedorf

Ashley (left) and her mom, Patty>>

*From her supervisor, "I would like to recognize her for the hard work, effort and time she has dedicated in making our new program at the King Learning Center in Deer River a major success. She was the perfect fit for this position because she is extremely hard-working, maintains a positive attitude, and has an obvious passion for helping children with special needs. She has the ability to go-with-the-flow in all situations, even under pressure and in unpleasant or unexpected circumstances. She actively engages her coworkers, has a pleasant demeanor and a fun sense of humor. I know how much time and energy creating this program demanded, and I deeply appreciate all of Ashley's efforts to make it a great success.*



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