



Kids Korner Connection

A newsletter from the Children's Division of ARC

Children's Division Completes Our First CARF Accreditation

By Shawn Preston, Director of Children's Services

Issue 1 Volume 6

January 2007

For the first time, the Children's Programs have joined the other ARC Broward programs in seeking the highly coveted national CARF Accreditation... and with tremendous successes! Our division has spent the past few years working very hard to ensure that we not only meet but exceed the standards of best practice as defined by leaders and top organizations in our field. Using information, consultation, and input from these individuals and organizations with such expertise, CARF sets the standards of excellence in business and service delivery practices.

Four CARF surveyors, who are leaders in organizations similar to ours in New York, California, Virginia, and Missouri spent three days at ARC Broward observing our programs; interviewing individuals served and their families, our funders and other stakeholders, our Board of Directors, and our staff members; reviewing our policies and procedures; reviewing our records; and looking at a tremendous amount of other materials, supplies and documents.

As I walked with them to tour our programs and sat with them as they talked with many of our team members, I was repeatedly moved to tears. As they observed all of us, they constantly reiterated how impressed they are beyond what they have seen in other top children's programs throughout the country. The overriding feedback relates to how passionately we care for our children and the exemplary quality of our services, which they referred to as "model" and "state of the art". They described the excitement, enthusiasm, respect and patience they saw in every observed interaction they watched between our team members and our children and families. On occasions, they too were moved to tears! They raved about our creativity and our endless drive and our obvious love for our work.

We all worked very hard to prepare for the Youth Links, PAT, Preschool, ABLE and Respite Programs to go through their first Accreditations and for the Mental Health Program to prepare for its third. The type of feedback that we have received (I am told by the surveyors) is relatively unheard of for such new programs or programs so new to the accreditation process.

On Friday afternoon, the survey team held a formal "exit" conference with us and shared their official recommendations, which will be provided in a report to CARF, who will then issue the final report and determination of Accreditation, which will be available for anyone who wishes to review it. Dennis Haas, our President/CEO stated, "During their exit meeting they shared that we received three EXEMPLARY recognitions and that it is highly unusual to ever even get one. Counting us among the best in the country, they were impressed with our culture of entrepreneurial spirit, cutting edge programs, deep commitment at all levels of the organization to those we serve, and a drive for excellence."

Of particular noteworthiness is the fact that two of the these three exemplary recognitions were directly related to Children's Services! Our Child and Youth Programs (PAT, Preschool, and ABLE) were commended for being state of the art, top quality model programs! Our Mental Health Program's Outreach and Education Efforts, including our Resource Kit (available to anyone who would like one) also received Exemplary Recognition as so impressive that it should be presented at National Conferences! I could not imagine being more blessed or proud to work with such a phenomenal, dedicated, wonderful team of professionals or such wonderful children and families! We are all especially appreciative of the privilege and honor to work with the children and families and share in the joys and triumphs of their achievements!!!

Articles

- ☺ CARF pg 2
- ☺ BCC Donations pg 2
- ☺ Graduation Plans pg 2
- ☺ Self Esteem pg 3
- ☺ pg 3
- ☺ Angel's Story pg 4
- ☺ Youth Links Holiday Fun Pg 4
- ☺ Students of Month pg 5
- ☺ Congratulations and Welcome Aboard pg 5

Upcoming Special Events

- ◀ January 26 at 10 a.m.: Barney Visits the Preschool.
- ◀ February 5 at 9.30: PLC Preschool meeting

**CARF: "What an Incredible Ride
For the Children's Division!"
From the Desk of Julie Price
Vice President of Program Services**

I hope that this level of excitement never goes away. What an incredible experience to hear the (CARF) surveyors talk about each of you and the impact you have on the lives of the wonderful children and adults who were are so blessed to serve and support. At every level of the organization I see leadership, drive, passion and commitment that in weeks such as last are beyond description.

For each of you who spent so much time preparing for this survey in addition to doing the wonderful job you do day in and day out I thank you so much. The lives of the children and adults we support are better each day thanks to your love and for that each of you will be forever blessed. The preparation for CARF is not an experience that one person pulls off and the recognition, although kind and thoughtful, must be passed back to each of you who are committed to the CARF process and all that it means. Shawn, Patty, Jerry, Jody, Sari, Ric, Gloria and Debbie, along with each of their teams, put in countless hours of prep to pull off what we did today.

And wow ... what an incredible ride for the Children's Division ... two exemplaries - one for the Children's Division in general and one for the outreach and education activities of our Community Mental Health program lead by Lee Brown!! And the third recognizing Debbie and all her hard work to get the PRIDE program up and running. Debbie has such a knack for these types of initiatives and it was so nice to see her hard work recognized and honored. We are so pleased that the Children's Division rejoined the CARF process this time around. There was so much to show off and who can't be engrossed when listening to Kim Fox talk about our state of the art Assistive Technology program! I wish that I had the composure on Friday to publicly acknowledge the efforts of everyone sitting around the table and the efforts of those staff who couldn't join us for the exit and for that I truly apologize. I could barely contain my emotions and have never been more blown away by the wonderful work each of you do with some really incredible kids, adults and their families. As I looked around the Board Room on Friday and when I walked with John and other members of the survey team last week showing off all that you do, I was so proud of the people that I have the honor of sharing the bus with and honored to be part of this team.

In the 20 years of my tenure with ARC Broward and BARC I can't recall a prouder moment when EVERYONE came together with such commitment and passion. Days like today remind me of why our success allows us to celebrate our 50th anniversary in March. How much we have to celebrate! And of course ... all of this affirms our journey of Good to Great by 2008! Look how far we have come and yet we know that with such dedicated and professional staff living and breathing our core purpose and values our possibilities are truly endless.

Congrats to each of you and on behalf of the children, adults and families who you love so much and who love you too ... I speak for both them and I ... Thank you from the bottom of our hearts.

**Broward Community College Students
Offer
Wonderful Donations to Our Students!**

On behalf of the children receiving supports and services at ARC Broward, we are so appreciative to Dr. Susan Finazzo of Broward Community College and her wonderful students for their generous donations of much needed school supplies for our students year after year. Each year, these items benefit all of the children who we provide services to. The school supplies are used to enhance materials in our classrooms and also to provide gifts to our graduating preschool students to use in their new schools during the next school year. Some of the many school supplies we receive include costumes, toys, books, puzzles, crayons, glue, pencils, arts and crafts supplies, coloring/activity books, and numerous other generous donations. Thank you Dr. Finazzo and students for enriching our learning environments!!!

Graduation Plans...Already!
By Jane Moreno, ESE Specialist

This year, ARC will have the largest preschool graduating class in its history - 37 children. How fitting that this milestone should come during our 50th anniversary celebration!

We have begun the transition process by meeting with Broward School representatives to find out what options are available in the public schools for our children. Parents will be asked to visit sites in their areas to "see what's out there". Then, in the Spring, parents, teachers and School representatives will come together to discuss the child's needs and decide which kindergarten setting is most appropriate. To help parents prepare for the Kindergarten year, the Broward School Board will hold a series of Transition Workshops in different parts of the county. Parents will soon receive a flyer ABOUT the workshops. ARC parents of children transitioning to kindergarten in August of 2007 should definitely plan to attend.

At ARC, we strive to make the transition process as easy and comfortable as possible for our children and parents and will support the children, families, and kindergarten teachers and schools in every way to make the transition process as seamless and comfortable as we can. I am available by phone or visit to help you!

HEALTHY SELF-ESTEEM

By Lee Brown, Coordinator of Mental Health Services

A sense of self-worth is critical for developing resiliency, adaptability and an "I can do it!" attitude that helps us learn, grow, and cope with life's frustrations and inevitable problems. Strong parenting provides "roots" and "wings." Children need to feel safe, secure, loved, and part of a family. This foundation provides roots from which the child can develop wings to explore the world. The child's first adventures experiencing the world are safe, small steps. As children get older, their attempts become bolder, and they gain a sense of who they are in relationship to their environment.

Parents are an essential part of their child's environment. Children see themselves like a branch on a tree. The parents are the trunk that provides stability and security. If the child thinks something is wrong with the trunk, he or she will automatically think something is wrong with the branch. Therefore, in order to foster caring, responsible and strong children, adults need to have a positive view of themselves (self-concept) and serve as role models for their children. 1

You influence your children's behavior the most when you:

- Become aware of and change your own behavior first
- Understand your own core values, teach them by example, and assist your children in establishing their own values.
- Provide security (emotional and physical) with non-punitive, positive discipline (natural and logical consequences) and a sense of belonging.
- Enable and encourage children to establish and assume personal and social responsibility for their own actions.
- Promote mutual, caring communication with dignity and respect.
- Develop a passion, a sense of purpose and share that purpose with your children. Most of all, model this passion for your children. Assist your children in setting goals so they can establish a passion that they value. 2

Use affirmations to boost your self-esteem. On the back of a business card or small index card, write out a statement such as "I like and accept myself just the way I am", "I am the master of my destiny", "I am somebody, I love myself, I believe in myself". Carry the card with you. Repeat the statement several times during the day, especially at night before going to bed and after getting up in the

morning. Whenever you say the affirmation, allow yourself to experience positive feelings about your statement.

Associate with positive, supportive people. When you are surrounded by negative people who constantly put you and your ideas down, your self-esteem is lowered. On the other hand, when you are accepted and encouraged, you feel better about yourself in the best possible environment to raise your self-esteem. Make a list of your past successes. This doesn't necessarily have to consist of monumental accomplishments. It can include your "minor victories" like learning to skate, graduating from high school, college, receiving an award or promotion etc. Read this list often. While reviewing it, close your eyes and recreate the feelings of satisfaction and joy you experienced when you first attained each success.

References:

- 1 Lucy Schrader, Building Strong Families Program Coordinator, University Outreach and Extension, 162 Stanley Hall, Columbia, MO 65211, 573-882-4071, SchraderL@missouri.edu
- 2 Parent Link, National Association for Self-Esteem, PO Box 597, Fulton, MD 20759-0597
- 3 Self-Esteem Booster, National Association for Self-Esteem, PO Box 597, Fulton, MD 20759-0597

Announcing the SibKids and SibNet Listservs

SibNet and SibKids are Internet listservs for and about brothers and sisters of people with special health, developmental, and emotional needs.

Both SibKids (for younger brothers and sisters) and SibNet (for older siblings) allow brothers and sisters an opportunity to connect with their peers from around the world. Both listservs have members from the US, Canada, Australia, England, Japan and elsewhere. SibNet (started in 1996) and SibKids (started in 1997) are informative communities where young and adult brothers and sisters share information and discuss issues of common interest.

Anyone who has email can subscribe to SibKids and SibNet. For a no-cost subscription and to learn more about SibKids and SibNet, you can visit the Sibling Support Project's Web Page (see address below). Finally, if you have further questions about SibKids, SibNet, our Sibshops, or the work of the Sibling Support Project, please contact: Don Meyer - Director, Sibling Support Project 206-297-6368; fax 509-752-6789 donmeyer@siblingsupport.org Sibling Support Project website: www.siblingsupport.org

Angel...Young and Fresh

Angel Guerrazzi is now a 21 year-old red curly hair gracious young lady who has been in our Youth Links Program since 2004. She has Cerebral Palsy and is a very self-determined high school student. Her career dream is to become a prosecutor. She is great in advocating for herself, she speaks up in her IEP meetings and she always makes her desires and her opinions clear to anyone she communicates with. The Youth Links Team, her mother and the school staff are very proud of Angel for her hard work in her classes and assignments and her attitude towards schoolwork. We are grateful for the bright smile that shines from her face when she feels encouraged and supported by the people who believe in her success. Below is a poem written by Angel for a school assignment.



City of Tamarac

Living in small city
It was a elderly town
Good - few years had past the city
Became young and fresh
With all new things to do
City is more active
Like a young tree in growth
Growing with the town

I'm spreading my wings through the
New growth, as I see the
New growth within me!!!
As I see in the town
I'm looking at me.

Living in small city
Quite elderly town
Few years past city became
Young and fresh

High Tech Program Participants Enjoy Holiday Cheer....

Youth Links Program Participants and Transition Specialists enjoyed all the festivities and mingling with some old and some new friends at the Holiday Party Event hosted by the Center for Independent Living and the High School High Tech Program. It was a wonderful party filled with refreshments, raffles, a visit from Santa Claus, gifts, and prizes. A presentation was provided by Volunteer Broward, which provided students with information about community service hours they need to graduate from High School with a standard diploma. It also was a great opportunity for our students for social interaction with folks from all parts of our community. We would like to thank the High School High Tech Team for their continuous and incredibly valuable collaboration with our Youth Links Program!



Youth Links Participant Julian Uribe and Transition Specialist, Monica Frigoletto take a moment away from the festivities to smile for the camera

Our Holiday Angel

It's not often that one meets an angel. The ARC Preschool is fortunate to have an angel of our own - a friend who is consistently concerned about the welfare of others. She is the mother of a child who once attended the ARC Preschool, who is so giving and loving and selfless that she wishes to remain un-named. During the holiday season, this mom once again selflessly took several of our families under her wing by providing them with everything from toys, furniture and gift cards to food, clothing and other necessities. Providing gifts for the preschool children was not enough - she wanted to provide for their parents and siblings as well. Because of our angel, several ARC families had a happier holiday filled with magic and wonder beyond their wildest dreams!

Congratulations Students of the Month!!!

Congratulations!!!

Welcome Aboard to Our Newest Members:

Dianne Bridges (Preschool Teacher)

Samantha Pitt (ABLE Behavior Associate)

Congratulations to our **Students of the Month** who are among our many students who are making notable gains this month:

Preschool:

Room 134 - Malik C.
Room 135 - Sebastian H.
Room 136 - Randy U.
Room 137 - Jesse W.
Room 138 - Thomas S.

ABLE:

Room 132: Joey R.
Room 133: Amanda F.
Room 325: Angelina D.
Room 306: Raymond M.
Room 307: Daniel W.
Room 308: Michael W.

Special Congratulations:

Congratulations to all of the phenomenal members of our division for **TWO Exemplary Recommendations** from the CARF Survey Team in Recognition for our Demonstration of Commitment to Excellence and Outstanding Service Delivery!!!

Team player of the month:

Fanny Salvador (ABLE Lead Behavior Associate)

Congratulations on Retirement:

It is with sadness and appreciation for a job very well done that we are saying goodbye to **Mickee Muckenfuss**, the primary therapist in the Mental Health Program. After many years of dedicated service to her clients, Mickee is retiring to take care of her family. We will miss her greatly and wish her all the best in her retirement.

Our hats off to All our students!!!

Children's Services

Preschool
ABLE After-School Program
Respite Care
Youth Links Transition Support
Behavioral Analysis
Summer 'Kamp Krayola'
'PAT' Parent Training
Rehab Therapy (OT, PT, SLP)
Mental Health Counseling

Adult Habilitation

Supported and Community Living
Community and Center Day programs
Individualized Supports
Transportation Services

Workforce Development

Community and Self Employment
Skills Development
Culinary Arts
Calypso Grill
Electronics Recycling
Landscaping Services
Vehicle Washing

Advocacy & Social Services

Nursing Services

Information and Referral

Human Services Training Solutions



ARC Broward

Achievement and Rehabilitation Centers, Inc.

Enriching the Lives of People With disABILITIES since 1957

ARC Broward

10520 N.W. 53rd Street

Sunrise, Florida 33351

www.arcbroward.com

Phone: 954-746-9400

Fax: 954-746-2954

*At ARC Broward, we take **PRIDE** in all that we do...*

*"We have a **Passion** for what we do, **Respect** for all of our stakeholders, **Integrity** for how we do our jobs, a **Drive** for excellence and an **Entrepreneurial spirit**."*

