



Our Community, Our Children

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Drinks? Drugs? NAH!

Take Action Arkansas...Prevention Works



Division of Behavioral Health Services • Prevention Services

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Did you know that Garland County has an unusually high and troubling percentage of youth abusing prescription drugs? According to the 2014-2015 Arkansas Prevention Needs Assessment Student Survey (APNA), 22.1% of high school seniors in Garland County have abused prescription drugs at least once, a significant increase from 16.9% in 2013-2014. Garland County also has a steady rate of prescription drug abuse by all youth at 9.7% compared to a state average rate of 7.6%. These are not numbers to be proud of—or ignore!

The drugs used are those kids often find in their own home, having been prescribed to **parents or other family members; but many times they are available for “purchase” or trade** from friends and schoolmates. The prescription drugs most commonly abused by teens are painkillers, prescribed to treat pain after surgery or injury; depressants, such as sleeping pills or anti-anxiety drugs; and stimulants, mainly prescribed to treat attention-deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD). Teens abuse prescription drugs because they can get to them easily, often without paying for them. The misperception is that there is little or no harm in improperly using prescription—or even over-the-counter drugs—by both youth and their parents which is another major contributing factor to this growing problem.

To help address these growing concerns for our youth, Ouachita Children's Center joined the statewide Partnership for Success Project and is now in its second year of funding from Arkansas Department of Human Services - Division of Behavioral Health to focus on education and prevention of substance abuse in our community. By now, you should have seen or heard something from the state-wide media and education campaign, with the **Drink? Drugs? NAH!** message. New and abuse-prevention focused Parenting Classes along with a **Lock 'Em Up** campaign will be key activities of the project in Garland County as well.

As parents, there are ways to protect your kids from prescription drug abuse: Monitor, Secure, and Dispose. Keep track of medications you're taking, lock them away, and dispose of unused medications by taking them to the permanent drop box located at the Garland County Sheriff's Department or the Hot Springs Village Police Department. You can also **contact OCC if you need a medication lock box; we'll help with those too!** For more information—or to arrange for a community presentation on this growing concern—please **contact Cicely Hicks, Outreach & Volunteer Coordinator at the Ouachita Children's Center.**

Our New Outreach & Volunteer Coordinator



We are pleased to announce that Cicely Hicks assumed the responsibilities and title of OCC Outreach and Volunteer Coordinator in May. Cicely first came to OCC in December 2013 as a Case Manager, working primarily with our DCFS children for approximately one year. She left OCC in late 2014 to explore some other local social service possibilities, but we were glad to have her return to OCC.

Cicely holds a Bachelor of Science in Child and Family Studies from Baylor University and is currently working toward a Master's degree in Public Health Education. Although originally from Hot Springs, Cicely has worked professionally in Los Angeles, California where she provided case management to troubled teens dealing with substance abuse and many other issues, and was also employed as an Early Childhood Interventionist in Dallas, Texas providing specialized skills training for children with developmental delays and medical needs. Upon returning to Hot Springs, she trained and worked as an advocate for the Cooper Anthony Mercy Child Advocacy Center as well.

Cicely is a strong proponent for prevention services to help many of the youth we serve through OCC, and she believes the key to good prevention is education—education for both our clients and for our community. This makes her a great candidate to lead our Outreach initiative—which is focused on targeted education and frequently involves finding and training volunteers and other professionals who can help educate, supportively guide or mentor the youth and families who come to or through the doors of OCC.

Please join us in congratulating and supporting Cicely Webb Hicks as she takes on these new and very important challenges for Ouachita Children's Center!



A group from Relyance Bank making a spaghetti lunch for our kids! We are so grateful for such random acts of kindness!

Volunteer Spotlight



Dr. Harold "Hal" Koppel is a well-known orthodontist in Hot Springs, with Hall and Koppel Orthodontic Specialists, and has been in practice for 48 years. Through his practice, he has acquired extensive experience with countless children and parents in the community. Dr. Koppel has also served on Boards and Committees of several organizations, including the Dental Peer Review Committee, CASA, Hot Springs Planning Commission, House of Israel Congregation, Fifty for the Future, and OCC, just to name a few. For the past year, he has been a volunteer Mentor with Ouachita Children's Center's Dare 2 Dream Mentoring program, and states he has a sincere "desire to see that [children] have opportunities to reach their potential." He is a wonderful model and support for kids he mentors. OCC is pleased to announce that Dr. Koppel has just recently become an OCC Board Member again, as he has long been an outspoken advocate for OCC's mission and services.

Staff Spotlight—Ms. Renee & Life Skills



Growing up with a mother who had a mental illness and a drug addiction is not an easy road for anyone. It means seeing and going through things that no child should. **There were times when we didn't have any utilities, food, and were even completely homeless. Every summer my mother would decide that a car was more important than a house because "it's too hot to walk", and with her limited income we couldn't afford both a house and a car. I put all of my efforts into school, volunteer work, my job, and extracurricular activities; anything to keep from being at home and to help our situation.**

One night when I was 17, I woke up to a police officer shining his flashlight into the front seat of our car where I was sleeping in the Family Park parking lot. I was placed in foster care. The next day, I was told I was going to live at **Ouachita Children's Center until things were sorted out. I still have fond**

memories of being at OCC. I enjoyed taking drives downtown and up the mountain with Ms. Latoya on Sundays. **I wasn't there as much as the other children since I worked at McDonald's; however, the staff still had an incredible influence in my life.**

I have always had a love for children. When I was in between jobs about two years ago, I asked a former teacher and lifelong mentor, if she knew of any available jobs. When she mentioned OCC, I jumped at the opportunity to give back to an organization that helped me so much as a teen. Since working at OCC, I have learned so much about helping, teaching, and supporting youth.

About a year ago, a 17 year old in DCFS custody come to me so frustrated that he was throwing chairs and almost flipping over tables simply because he was scared. He would be turning 18 soon and had no idea what he was going to do after he was released from state care. He had no idea how to be an adult. No one had given him the tools he needed to become a successful adult. He felt he was being thrown out on his ear and forced to fend **for himself. I asked him why he hadn't said anything to anyone before then. He said he had, but no one would listen to him or do anything about it. That day I decided that something had to be done. We could not continue to send youth into the real world with no idea how to live in it. A lot of youth have not even been taught how to do simple things like how to make their bed or wash dishes, so how are they going to manage the bigger things like how to get their first apartment or driver's license?**

So I started the journey of developing a life skills course, using evidence based curriculum plus my own knowledge, to give our teens the tools they will need to begin their journey into adulthood. It took a couple months to lay out the basics and to be able to present what I could offer to management. Now our Life Skills program has been up and running since March of 2015. The actual class is currently aimed at youth aged 14 and up, but we teach all of our youth basic life skills such as: following instructions, asking permission, accepting the **word "no", accepting criticism, accepting consequences, and how to maintain a clean living environment.**

The first key topic youth study in the course is emotional intelligence because we believe it is critical that they learn self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, and relationship management. They also learn how to: gain employment, manage money, rent a place to live, obtain a drivers license, purchase a vehicle, apply for assistance if needed, apply to trade school or college, navigate the financial aid system, and so much more. As with anything, we live and learn as we get older, but if we introduce these ideas and processes while at OCC, it will give them a firm foundation to begin adulthood.

This summer, we have had the opportunity to give our youth a look at how bright their futures could be. Thanks to our Summer Enrichment program through Hot Springs School District, our youth toured National Park College, Ouachita Baptist University, Henderson State University, the University of Arkansas at Little Rock, Pulaski Technical College, and Ouachita Technical College. If you are interested in learning more about this program or being a guest speaker, please feel free to contact our Volunteer and Outreach Coordinator, Cicely Hicks.



Projects & Progress



New OCC van, "Ol Sal", lovingly nicknamed for Dr. Sally Carder



New fountain in the Serenity Garden and the first honey harvest from our bee hives!



New metal bunk beds provided by a grant from the Hot Springs Future Fund and all new flooring in the bedrooms.



Donors March 2015 – September 2015

Matt & Tara Adams
Tiffany Addison
Teresa Allen
Douglas & Lori Arnold
Steve A. Baldwin, D.M.D.
Roy & Christi Batts
Susan Bean
Hollace Beard

Bennett's Oaklawn Service, Inc.

Ashley Bishop
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Donald Brady
Thomas & Michelle Brock
Keith Brown
Stephen & Tammy Browning
Tim & Helen Bumpas
Beth Burgess
Katherine Calandro
Carmike Central City 10 Cinema
William & Dianna Cattaneo
Victor & Valerie Claar
Ken & Vicki Cook
Layton & Mandy Cordell
Luck & Mary Cox
Creative Life Church

D's Downtown Barbershop

Lawrence & Caren Dodd
George & Karen Dooley
Gary & Patricia Doublin
David & Melissa Draper
Jason & Angela Dugger
Larry & Amy Ebner
Kay Ekey
Max English
Sunny Evans
Faith & Hope Circle (Christ of the Hills UMC)

First Christian Church—Christian

Women's Fellowship

Jim & Kelli Fram
Howard & Carol Freeland
Rev. Warren & Sandra Freiheit
Melinda Gassaway
Kristi Golden
Nicole Good
Don & Dana Gooch
The Grace Village Foundation
Grand Avenue UMC Outreach
Anita Gray - First Baptist Church
The Grooming Room
Maggie Haase
St. Mary of the Springs Catholic Church - Hands of Mary
Shane & Leslie Hardin
Gerald Hatley
Terri Helms
Helping Hearts
Amy Horner
Hot Springs Future Fund

The Hot Springs Giving Circle
The Hot Springs Music Festival
Larry & Brenda Huffman
Donald & Malka Ivy
Janet Jenkins
Anne Jensen
Retha Johnson
Caprice Jonas
Lynda Kass
Mattie Kim
Phyllis Kincannon
Hal & Sue Koppel
Sue & Tom Legal
Golden Lloyd
Evan Lockwood
David & Rachel Mangan
Michelle Mariencheck - In Memory of Homa Lee Shurden
Jonathan & Racquel Martin
Master Gardeners
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Isabelle Muir
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Christ of the Hills UMC - Naomi Circle
Nearly New, Inc.
Anna Nishimura
Bernard & Zina Nugent
Oaklawn UMC
Donna Osborne
Sam Pitner
Kirk In the Pines Presbyterian Church - Presbyterian Women
Ann Prince
Promiseland Outreach Ministries, Inc.
Barbara Pruitt
Linda Ragsdale
Relyance Bank
Lee & Brenda Richardson
Tommy & Beverly Riggins
Martha Rodgers
Linda Rupp
Sacred Heart of Jesus Catholic Church - Ladies of Sacred Heart & **St. Michael's** Guild
Daniel Sampson
Corbett Sanders

Greg & Kate Schaffer
Sandra Schepers
Betrille Schnell
Vivian Schroeder
Sally Schuck
Shell Oil Company HERO Program
Todd Shiver
Travis Smith
Dee Soderstrom
The South Hot Springs Lions Club
Spa City Bop & Swing Dance Club
Ralph & Eardie Stadler
Michael Standfield
Carol Stanfill
Larry & Chris Stein
Todd & Lanette Stineman
Wesley Stone
Ron Sublette
Toy Chest
Trent's Floor Solutions, Inc.
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Ray & Rebecca Tromater
Gary & Michelle Troutman
Steve & Marilyn Trusty
Unitarian Universalist Village Church
United Way of Greater Philadelphia & Southern New Jersey
Mary Velazquez
Tom & Peggy Vincent
Cynthia Wagstaff
Dustin Wallace
Laura Weston
Dan & Ann Whitt
Margaret White
Jay Williams
Pamela Williams
Timothy & Angela Wilson
The Woodmen of the World Life Insurance Society
Zeta Chi Chapter of Epsilon Sigma Alpha International
Robert Zunick



Upcoming Events

Save the Date
for the 3rd Annual
*Mystic Krewe of
Liberi Ball*

February 6, 2016
at the
Historic Hamp Williams

Christmastime at OCC

Christmas is a time of joy, family and togetherness. For the kids at OCC, it may be very different. Our Staff works with each child to identify their personal wish list, then goes shopping to make those Christmas dreams come true. The challenge is that we often don't know which kids will be with us for the holidays until the last minute. For this reason, OCC can't utilize angel trees or similar programs for to provide Christmas for our youth. **So how can you help??** We have put together a list of items that are popular with kids as well as a list of places that the kids prefer to shop so that we can use the gift cards to get those must have items on their wish list. Donations can be dropped by the center; however, if you have a large donation please contact us ahead of time so that we can ensure we have the staff available to assist with unloading.

FOR BOYS

Ball caps for College & Pro sports
Nike Ankle Socks
Watches
Cologne (Polo, Tim McGraw, Curve for Men, Usher, Adidas, Gucci, Lucky You, Nautica, Tommy Hilfiger.
MP3 Players & Headphones (Beatz)
Beanies and Gloves
Name brand Shirts & Shoes
CD's (pop, rap, Christian, R&B)

FOR GIRLS

Nail Polish, Make-up Sets & Lip Gloss
Perfumes (Britney Spears, Paris Hilton, Curve for Women, Rue 21)
Earrings, Rings or other Jewelry
Colorful ankle socks
Body Sprays & Lotions
Hair Accessories
Hat, Glove & Scarf Sets
MP3 Players & Headphones (Beatz)
Arts & Crafts Kits
CD's (pop, rap, Christian, R&B)

GIFT CARDS

VISA Cards
Aeropostale
Ross
Magic Springs
Movie Theater
Game Exchange
Game Stop
Hibbett Sports
Old Navy
TJ Maax
Fast Food Restaurants

Wal-Mart
CiCi's Pizza
Hot Springs Mall
Nail Salons
Foot Locker
Dillards
Best Buy
Dick's Sporting Goods
Restaurants
Amazon or iTunes

Celebrating & Expanding in Clark County

After 30 some years of working in Arkadelphia and Clark County, we decided it was high time to actually meet more of the leaders and concerned citizens of that great community, to tell them more about the Ouachita Children's Center and what we do for their kids. But how to do this? You ask your friends to help! So with many thanks to Dr. and former State Representative Tommy Roebuck—and his good friend Dr. Sally Carder, retired president of National Park Community College and new OCC board member, they put together a wonderful "Friend Raiser" reception on Thursday, October 1 at the delightful Honeycomb Restaurant. Approximately 65 people—representing schools and universities, city and county government, DHS, local foundations, the legal profession, and local businesses, as well as OCC board and staff came to enjoy tasty refreshments and learn more about the purpose and services of the Ouachita Children's Center.

Dr. Roebuck's opening remarks set the stage as he reminded guests that the children served by OCC in Arkadelphia are all OUR children, and it takes all of us to help them overcome their enormous challenges and often painful experiences. The Honorable Robert McCallum, Circuit Judge of 9 East District who serves as Juvenile Court Judge of Clark County, shared observations and appreciation from his long association with OCC and particularly with Arkadelphia Case Manager Cathy Dickens. He affirmed that OCC's community presence and readiness to help youth and their families often makes the difference in whether a child can transform from risky problem behavior to a successful and positive future. He informed the gathering that while many of OCC's services in Clark County involved frequent contact with Case Manager Cathy, he was also appreciative for and makes use of the available OCC shelter beds in Hot Springs, which gives families and sometimes even the youth a much needed break or time-out from their stressful conflicts.

Dr. Sally Carder wrapped up the remarks by stressing the importance and often unmeasurable impact that positive adult relationships have on our youth, like those that Cathy develops with youth all over Clark County. Carder validated this by telling a most moving and personal story of how she had unexpectedly become involved with and foster parent to a young boy and his even younger brother many years ago, both of whom had spent some considerable time in limbo and in OCC's care. Last month that young man started freshman classes at Henderson State University and is doing great, yet he recognizes Sally, as well as staff of OCC, as those who made all the difference for him because they cared and believed in him, giving him hope for the future. OCC Executive director Linda Ragsdale thanked everyone for coming and showing their interest in the efforts of OCC as she proudly announced OCC's new Arkadelphia location at 401 Crittenden, saying "we're so excited with this great space, and the sign just went up this evening!"





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CREDIBILITY • INTEGRITY • ACHIEVEMENT



WISH LIST

Items in Continual Need

Twin size Sheet Sets & Pillow cases
Bath Towels, washcloths & hand towels
Lice Treatments
Shampoo & Conditioner
Hair Gel
Lip Balm
Deodorant (non-aerosol)
Soap & Body Wash
Lotions
Toothpaste, toothbrushes, mouthwash, & floss
Electric shavers & hair clippers
Anti-bacterial hand soap
Medicated foot spray or powder
Female sanitary products
Hair brushes (both boar bristle & plastic)
Wide tooth combs
Hair grease, pomade, pink oil, moisturizer & relaxer kits
Wave caps, shower caps & head scarves
Small Black rubber bands, barrettes & ponytail holders

Men's & Boy's briefs & boxers

Women's & Girl's underwear & bras

White t-shirts & sleeveless undershirts

Socks & shoes (Boy's & Girl's)

Sweatpants & Sweatshirts, all sizes
Gift Cards to Wal-Mart, Old Navy, Shoe Stores etc.
School Supplies (pens, pencils, notebooks & paper)
Backpacks
Books & Magazines with Youth Appeal
Art Supplies (brushes, canvases, paint, etc.)
Sofa set or sectional set
Area Rugs

Cat Food for Tiger (OCC's therapy cat)

Special event tickets or passes
Winter gloves, hats and jackets
Summer bathing suits & Towels
Flip Flops
Stainless steel forks & spoons

Special Items We Currently Need

New Pillows
Window Treatments (curtains & heavy duty blinds)
Plastic or Fabric Wall Hangings
Storage Shelves & Racks
Outdoor plastic stackable chairs
Outdoor benches or wrought iron chairs
Indoor potted & outdoor bedding plants
Corolle or Melamine plates & bowls

Magnetic wall boards with magnets for resident rooms
New matching comforter sets
Paint
Area and throw rugs
Economy car for in-town client transport

Volunteer Opportunities

Adult Mentors for our youth
Assistance with the OCC Vegetable Garden
Assistance with OCC Flower Beds
Academic tutors
Maintenance assistance
Construction of a nature trail around the property
Volunteer barber or beautician services (Haircuts)
Dance or Music classes
Organized sports or games
Poetry, Writing & Arts & Crafts
Piano playing volunteers for sing-alongs
Assistance with painting and organization
CPR and First Aid Trainers