



Facts about MonmouthCares

- In January, 2009, 200 children were enrolled in MonmouthCares
- In April, 2009, 578 children were enrolled in MonmouthCares
- There are now 37 Care Managers working with MonmouthCares children and families
- 13 new Care Managers
- transferred from Youth Case Management (YCM)
- One Care Manager Supervisor and one staff support person also transferred from YCM



The Monmouth ResourceNet Gets between 2,500 and 3,000 unique visitors each month

There are more than 1,250 resources listed You can find what you need in the Monmouth Resource Net

www.monmouthresourcenet.org

Bulletin

Information About MonmouthCares

Finding the Balance—Unified Care Management

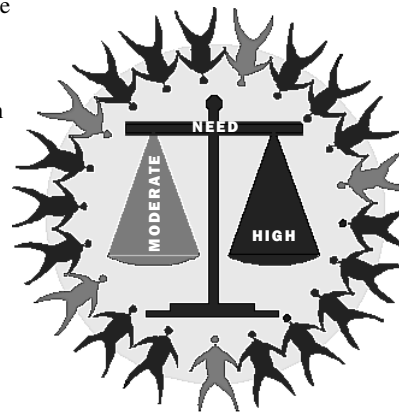
Kathy Collins, Executive Director

Welcome to the 350 Youth Case Management families who became part of MonmouthCares as we grew into a Unified Care Management Organization, we are glad to have you with us.

On April 1, 2009 MonmouthCares became the organization which serves all of the kids who need any kind of care management in Monmouth County. Families with kids where there is a behavioral health need or emotional challenge will be able to get planning, coordination, and advocacy from one agency. Each family will get MonmouthCares' services no matter how much time they need or how often they need to meet with their Team or Care Manager.

Each family will get a chance to meet with a Family Support Partner and to join other families for support, hope, and learning.

Throughout the need for care



management service the MonmouthCares care manager will be the same person. If there is more than one child who needs care

management, the same care manager will help the whole family.

This is a plan from the Division of Child Behavioral Health Services (DCBHS) designed to simplify and streamline services for families. Providers and others who serve kids – like schools, juvenile court, The Division of Youth and Family Services – will also benefit from one organization and one practice approach. Our new work includes increased activity with the Family Court in joint planning to prevent unnecessary stays in juvenile detention. We will also work more closely with kids in out-of-home treatment programs, forming stronger Teams with residential program staff and

continued on page 4

Wraparound—One Child's Journey to a "Forever Family"

Philip is a typical 19 year old boy. He roughhouses with his brother, he loves his dog, he's got girls on the brain and his family means everything to him. But how Philip got to this place in his life is anything but typical. His story is one of loss and abandonment.

Philip's story starts on the other side of the world in Romania. He and his identical twin brother were removed from their birth mother at the age of three due to abuse and neglect. They were then placed in an orphanage where their abuse worsened at the hands of the staff and the older children in the orphanage.

Luckily they were eventually adopted by a New Jersey couple at the age of eight and brought to the United States. While their adoptive parents loved them they were quickly overwhelmed by the violent and aggressive behavior of the young boys. Years of abuse had left the boys angry, scared and anxious. Philip in particular acted out to the point of his parents placing him in a group home at the age of nine. A year later they placed his twin at a ranch for failed adoptions in New Mexico.

Philip's placement in the group home was the beginning of an almost 10 year journey through

the child protective services system. He bounced from foster homes to group homes to psychiatric hospitals, acquiring labels and diagnoses in each. With each new placement he grew more isolated and institutionalized giving up hope that he would ever have a "normal" life. His adoptive parents cut off contact with him and although he asked to be reunited with his brother, neither was in a position to take the other in.

With no parents willing to speak on his behalf, few options and little hope Philip was about to age out of the system with a bleak future on his horizon. It was at this point that

Continued on page 2

Forever Family (continued)

MonmouthCares became involved in his life at the request of the court. He now had a team around him that not only listened to what he had to say they refused to give up on him. Philip's Child and Family Team worked to identify his vision which was simply to "have a family." Reconnecting with his brother in New Mexico his team started building a relationship with the New Mexico child protective services system to keep in contact with his brother and establish a strong connection.

Philip's brother had been taken in by a couple who found him living on the streets. He was thriving in the home and was eager to have his brother come live with him. Although both twins wished to be together it was unclear whether Philip would be allowed to go. There were concerns that it was

unsafe to send him to an unknown place and family or that he may not be able to handle the change. There were questions whether his adoptive parents, who were still legally his guardians, would allow such a thing. But it was his team who knew him best and saw this not as a threat but as an opportunity.

Confident that his self identified goal of having a family was what was best for him, Philip's team began to reconnect the brothers and sought to reestablish a connection with their adoptive parents. They found the boys adoptive mother in Georgia, she had relocated there after the death of her husband, and upon conversation with Philip's care manager she revealed she never wanted to lose touch with her sons but she was told repeatedly by profession-

als that it would be best if she cut off contact with them.

The team slowly built relationships between the boys and their mother as well as between Philip and his potential new family in New Mexico. Although many in the system thought Philip was too old to start somewhere new and that his days of being "saved" were behind him his team never gave up. They arranged a multi-day visit in New Mexico where Philip was able to visit his brother. The visit was financially and emotionally supported by his mother who although she wasn't able to care for the boys herself still wanted them to have a family.

The visit was so successful that a month later Philip moved to New Mexico permanently and

almost immediately settled into a typical teen life of high school and sleepovers and family outings. His adoptive mother calls the twins often, sends them gifts and is planning a visit to New Mexico soon. Philip has invited his "team" to his high school graduation.

Since becoming involved with a Child and Family Team, Philip has gone from having no family and seemingly no future to three parents, five grandparents, a brother, a group of friends and a plan to go to college, get a job and live a full and happy life. Through the help of his team Philip has learned that every child no matter what their age or background deserves a "forever family."



Wraparound — One Child's Struggle for Reunification

Disruptive, oppositional & difficult were just a few of the labels attached to 15-year old Richard long before he was enrolled in MonmouthCares. Removed from his mother's care when he was four, along with his older siblings, Richard had spent most of his life "in care." He acquired his first label in his first foster home. Separated from his siblings and all he had known in his brief life, Richard was "difficult" for the foster mother to handle and he was moved to another home, then another, then another. He acquired another label when he started school, "disruptive," along with a diagnosis of ADHD. The school recommended residential treatment and Richard was placed in a treatment facility at the age of eight. During his three years in residential placement, Richard acquired even more labels, returned to foster care with a brief period of success before his challenging behaviors once again resulted in removal. Richard was then sent to a diagnostic center and then another residential treatment program. Along the way, Richard repeatedly asked to be reunited with his family.

At the point Richard entered MonmouthCares, his Child and Family Team mem-

bers consisted entirely of the professionals involved in Richards life. His team focused on all of the challenges that Richard consistently presented to his care givers. Richard longed for a more permanent home and asked to be returned to either one particular foster mom or one of his now adult siblings. His large, far-flung, disorganized but loving family was not considered a resource for Richard. His team felt the family members could not handle Richard's challenging behaviors. There was sporadic contact between Richard and some family members but the family resisted becoming more involved because they harbored negative feelings about DYFS and were frightened to engage with that agency.

By this time, Richard was in a community-based Treatment Home where he was struggling. The Treatment Home parents were recommending a "higher level of care". The clinicians involved with Richard and DYFS, his legal guardians, concurred. The care manager was the lone voice on the team besides Richard's that wanted him to remain in the community despite his very challenging behaviors. With his history, the only

placements available to Richard were out of state and he would likely remain in residential treatment until he was eighteen - then he'd be on his own with no established supports or links to a community. With this sobering thought, the other members of Richard's team began to listen to Richard's pleas to be reunited with family and the care manager's determination to contact Richard's entire family group. As with many kids like him, Richard knew just how to contact many family members unknown to the team members - but no one had ever asked him before. When the care manager made contact and convinced the family that he was not "child welfare" he let the family know that Richard was headed for yet another treatment program, this time out of state. Aunts, uncles and siblings were strongly against the plan - they wanted Richard to live with one of them, have regular contact with Richard and agreed to be part of his planning process.

With the encouragement of the care manager, the family members con-

tacted DYFS and shared their concerns regarding the plans for Richard's future. The result was a family meeting at the local DYFS office attended by several of Richards adult siblings, their spouses an Aunt and an Uncle. One by one family members stepped up to the plate agreeing to have Richard live with them or play a significant role in Richard's life. A visiting plan was set to begin immediately. At the end of the meeting, the team addressed Richard on his prior talk about joining a gang - which frightened the team members. Richard responded to their concern by saying, "I don't need no gang - I got family now."

Donate Your Car to Family Lift

Take the full fair market value as a tax deduction

Call the Family Lift Coordinator

732-222-8008

New MonmouthCares Staff



Khatera Hamid
Supervisor (YCM)



Eric Meckler
Supervisor



Chuni Li
QI-Organizational
Effectiveness Lead



Tiffany Aguiar
Care Manager (YCM)



Cynthia Brain
Care Manager (YCM)



LilyAnn Cespuglio
Care Manager (YCM)



Jack Christophe
Care Manager



Mark Firth
Care Manager



Monica Gaines
Care Manager (YCM)



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Diannie Kaiser
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Brendan Kunzman
Care Manager



Sean Lee
Care Manager



Amy Lombardo
Care Manager (YCM)



Ryan McGinley
Care Manager (YCM)



Judy Mintz
Care Manager (YCM)



Shannon Mitchell
Care Manager (YCM)



Curtis Murray, Jr.
Care Manager



Aquisha Nedd-Espinal
Care Manager



Amber Railey
Care Manager (YCM)



Lycet Ramos
Care Manager Assistant (YCM)



Lori Roskey
Billing Specialist



Richard Sanger
Care Manager



Theeany Shannon
Care Manager (YCM)



4-H offers a wealth of activities for kids

From gymnastics to cooking to raising rabbits, chess, photography or styling hair, the 4-H program has a special interest club for almost every child.

What makes 4-H clubs possible are the wonderful adult volunteers who share their time and their special interests with children.

Consider sharing your hobby with a child twice a month.

Contact Mariela Osorio at
732-222-8008
Extension 312

Business Partners Help MonmouthCares Families

ATT Pioneers

For several years running AT&T employees, through the AT&T Pioneers program, have brought joy into the lives of our families in many capacities. This past holiday season was no exception. Through their year end project, Pick-An-Angel, employees graciously purchased gifts and food for MonmouthCares families, making sure holiday wishes were granted.

While Pick-An-Angel was certainly a highlight of the season it was only a small part of what the AT&T Pioneers program has done for our organization through the years. From providing laptops for families and supporting our Digital Lift program, to holding an annual book bag drive for the back to school season, to encouraging their employees to use the MonmouthResourceNet and donate cars to the Family Lift program AT&T Pioneers presence can be felt in all aspects of MonmouthCares life. Through the creativity and positive energy of Cindy Cama, our AT&T Pioneers liaison and a longtime supporter of Mon-

mouthCares, the program truly provides an effective support for our neediest families.

Borders

Borders at Freehold Raceway Mall held a book and stuffed animal drive that resulted in over a dozen boxes of gifts flooding our office. Care managers were able to choose from a wide range of books, games, activities and toys to give to their MonmouthCares kids and siblings for the holidays. Some were even able to stock up for upcoming birthdays and events making sure spirits would be lifted all year long.

We are thankful for Borders patrons and their willingness to donate to the book drive as well as the energy and dedication of the staff to increase participation. None of this would have been possible without the tireless efforts of a great friend to our organization, Borders Sales Account Representative Vicki Becker. Ms. Becker not only spearheaded this outpouring of support for us but has been a major community partner of MonmouthCares for the past year.

MonmouthCares is

moving

Sometime this summer we will have new larger offices, a big conference room, four meeting rooms and plenty of space for our 37 care managers

Look for announcements of our upcoming open house and provider event

We will still be in West Long Branch and will keep the same phone numbers

BALANCE—continued

ensuring that all community members from the youth's Team can participate in building his or her Individual Service Plan.

MonmouthCares continues to be available for resource identification and development. We are always here to look for a resource or to register a provider, a community or professional service, or recreational and cultural activities through our MonmouthResourceNet. We welcome ideas for innovative programs or services which will support our kids in our ultimate goals:

- To have one integrated Plan for each youth and family
- To use strengths to build new capacities and opportunities to succeed
- To never give up until the child and family can take over their own planning

Welcome YCM Families!



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www.monmouthcares.org
www.monmouthresourcenet.org

Bulletin

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The curled circle represents three elements; the wraparound philosophy of MonmouthCares; the labyrinth that our complex-needs families historically have had to negotiate in order to secure help; and, the waves at our shore.

Kathy Collins
Executive Director

Colleen Meyer
Community Resource Development Mgr

Contributing Writer
Janine Vasconcelos

Meet Carlton Cummings MonmouthCares New Program Manager



When a new management level position was created to help manage the enrollment and assignment of the multitude of children being referred to MonmouthCares as we became a Unified Care Management county, one person sprang to mind above the many talented and dedicated MonmouthCares employees. "Carlton has earned the respect of both our Care Managers and management team," said Cathy Sugden, coordinator of operations. "Over the years, Carlton has emerged as a leader and has consistently gone above and beyond his

role as care manager in helping train new care managers, coordinating the court involvement of our MonmouthCares kids, and participating in many after-hours and beyond the work-week events and celebrations organized around the achievements of the MonmouthCares children and families," said Sugden.

Carlton holds a Master's Degree in Business Administration and a Bachelor's Degree from Virginia Tech. He has been a care manager since 2002. His prior experience includes working at Pollak Clinic and Monmouth Medical Center's inpatient unit.