

# Child and Family Services Update

October 2008

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*Please share your thoughts and ideas by sending them to Carol Miller at [CAROLMILLER@utah.gov](mailto:CAROLMILLER@utah.gov)*

## Betournay's Bits

*By Duane Betournay, Director*

Winter is fast approaching, and with our new schedule I have noticed that I arrive when it is dark and, often times, I leave with the same lack of light. Kind of a depressing feeling comes over me as I realize the warm days of summer are coming to a close, and we will be enduring both cold and dark for many months to come. It is truly bittersweet, though, because some of the fondest memories I have of childhood come out of winter and the holidays that approach.



It also brings to mind several cautions, and I just want to share those with you. Coming to work and leaving in the dark creates some risks to all of us, and I hope that you will give this some thought, too. Darkened parking lots create hazards. Please be aware of ice and snow as you make your way into buildings. I have asked DFCM and our administrative services to be aware of the potential risks to people and that they take extra precautions to plow, shovel, and salt walkways before you get to work. Sometimes, though, this may not be possible as there are well over a hundred buildings statewide to maintain. Please make sure that you are prepared if the sidewalks have not been attended to by wearing appropriate footwear and by being aware of the potential for bodily harm. Do not carry heavy items and tie up both of your hands if conditions are treacherous. If you are injured in a fall, please make sure that you notify your supervisor and also risk management. If you need immediate medical attention, please do not hesitate to call 911; or, if you feel that you can go to a health care provider, make sure that you have reported first and that you go to a provider that is recognized by workers compensation. There is an approved list of providers, and risk management will provide that list when you report your injury.

The dark also brings concerns about personal safety in the parking lots from intruders. Always be aware of your surroundings. If you arrive in the parking lot and you are alone, wait for someone else to drive in and enter the building together. The couple of minutes that you take to do so are far better spent

than putting yourself at risk. This also goes for CPS workers who will be going out more frequently when it is dark. Take others with you or have law enforcement accompany you if you have any fear for your safety.

Winter driving also presents many challenges and risks. Please make sure that you know what the road conditions are before you leave the office. Travel should be avoided during inclement weather. No meeting is worth travelling on roads that are not passable. Please do not put yourself at risk.

Thanks for letting me play father hen for a few minutes. Please protect yourself at all times and help those around you to do so also. We can all enjoy the fall and winter holidays together.

## Development

### The Pat Rothermich Memorial Scholarship Fund

*By Ann Cheves, Committee Member*

All of us can remember the shock and horror we felt when we heard that Pat Rothermich was dead. Many of us thought of her years of service to children and families in Utah, or of her mentoring and teaching the principles and practice of child welfare services. We thought of her as a dear friend, a devoted mother, a person dedicated to caring for others.



*Pat Rothermich*

The Patricia Rothermich Memorial Scholarship Fund is being established to honor Pat's work and contributions to the community. In this way we remember her life rather than her death. We plan to raise enough money to establish an endowed scholarship to be given annually to a student entering the field of child welfare services. The fund will be managed and disbursed by the University of Utah College of Social Work where Pat studied and taught. All the funds donated will go to fund the endowment. Our plan is to offer the first scholarship for the 2009-2010 school year. The amount of the scholarship will grow as the endowment increases.

***You are invited to a reception*** on November 7, 2008 from 5:30-7:00 PM at the St. Mark's Cathedral Center, 231 East 100 South, Salt Lake City. This event is the start of the campaign to raise funds, and a time to remember and honor Pat. Light refreshments will be served.

We hope you will be able to join us that evening. Please tell others who knew Pat, and invite them to come. For some this may be a difficult time to contribute. Don't let that be a reason not to come to the reception. We are remembering and honoring Pat's life. Together we hope to carry on Pat's legacy of service and teaching.

Members of the committee are Ann Cheves, 801-363-6395; Sue Lewon, 801-467-0334; Jean Nielsen, 801-278-3364; and Meredith Simmons, 801-583-1248.



## Organizational Competence

### Dr. Bruce Perry and the Value of our Children and Youth

*By Jerna Mitchell, New Employee Training Manager*

Dr. Bruce Perry was the speaker at this year's Child Welfare Institute. He spent the day talking with child welfare workers about the brain, how trauma impacts the brain, and how that is reflected in the behavior of a child or youth. Over the next several months a series of articles will review the information for those of us in attendance, and will share it with others who were unable to attend.

To set the stage for his presentation, Dr. Perry began with talking about the value of our children and youth. Some of the poignant things he quoted or said are:

- The health and creativity of a community is renewed each generation through its children.
- The family, community, or society that understands and values its children thrives; the society that does not is destined to fail.
- "The best time to influence the character of a child is 100 years before they are born" (W.R. Inge).
- Our society has changed from valuing interdependence and has moved to valuing independence.
- We have a weird focus in our society. We require three years of math, but no training on how to parent or in having healthy relationships.
- "To neglect a child is to murder them" (Daniel Defoe).
- "We cannot afford to postpone investing in children until they become adults nor can we wait until they reach school – a time when it may be too late to intervene" (James J. Heckman).

Follow-up articles about Dr. Perry's presentation will cover how the brain works, how trauma impacts the brain, the value of relationships, and what you can do to help a child or youth. You can also visit the Child Trauma Academy at <http://www.childtrauma.org/default.asp> for more information.



## **This Year's Child Welfare Institute**

*By Jerna Mitchell, New Employee Training Manager*

The Child Welfare Institute was held this year on the 26<sup>th</sup> of August. One of the highlights of each Child Welfare Institute is the recognition of individuals contributing to excellence in child welfare work.

The caseworkers that received recognition for their excellence in child welfare work this year were:

- Savannah Leonard from Price
- Kit Kounthong from Ogden
- Vedrana Ilic from the West Valley team
- Shari Gillins from Beaver
- Jeramie Rasmussen from Spanish Fork

Regions also recognized individuals who have worked with children, youth, and families for many years and helped to improve the lives of many. The recipients include:

- Al Young from Blanding who has been serving children, youth, and families for 37 years
- Ed Nicholson from Salt Lake Valley Region who has been working with children, youth, and families for 32 years
- Jim Young from Richfield who has worked in child welfare for 20 years, bringing with him his previous child welfare experience in Canada
- Lee Robinson from Western Region
- Jack Green from the State Office, who has kept the finances coordinated for Child and Family Services for 12 years (following 39 years of employment in other organizations)

The community partners that were recognized by the regions included:

- John Behn from the Eastern Region Quality Improvement Committee
- LeeAnn Herndon from the Department of Workforce Services in Northern Region
- Ray DePrizio from Touchstone Therapy Center in Salt Lake City
- Chantel Markel, a foster parent cluster group leader and Washington County and Quality Improvement Committee Chair in Southwest Region
- Bryant Jenks from Wasatch Mental Health in Western Region

Dr. Karen Buchi, a pediatrician at the University of Utah and Director of the South Main Clinic (which cares for foster and shelter children in Salt Lake City), was awarded the Marty Palmer Award for Excellence in Child Welfare Education award.

**Congratulations to this year's award recipients!**



## **Chantel Markel, Child Welfare Institute Recognition Award**

*By Jerna Mitchell, New Employee Training Manager*

It is with great pleasure that we recognize Chantel Markel, a Realtor by profession, as the recipient of the “Outstanding Community Partner of the Year Recipient for the Southwest Region”.

Chantel has been a foster parent for the past six years in Utah and was previously a foster parent in Colorado for a number of years.

Additionally, Chantel was the first cluster facilitator for Washington County. She held that position for six years from 2002-2008. She was instrumental in helping the Utah Foster Care Foundation form the cluster groups into the well functioning support networks that they are. For instance, she instigated a date night through the clusters as a way for foster parents to have a night out with fun and games and good food. Although no longer the facilitator, Chantel continues to get calls from foster parents who need advice from her or answers to questions. She has been previously recognized as the Cluster Facilitator of the Year for the Southwest Region in 2004 and was the Southwest Region’s Foster Mother of the Year in 2003.

In 2006, Chantel was voted in as the Quality Improvement Committee Chair for the Washington County team. She has moved this team forward towards improving the practice and outcomes for children in Washington County. She has participated in the State Congregate Care Task Force and the Washington County Shelter Task Force. Additionally, she was instrumental in the development in the Kin4Kids support group for kin providers and the “Success Night” for Child and Family Services staff recognition.

Chantel has exemplified the passion, heart, skills, and wherewithal to get it all done, and does it with class! Chantel continues to be a dedicated Child Welfare Advocate and continues to work towards the continuous improvement of not only the Washington County Child and Family Services but the Child Welfare System throughout the state. She exemplifies a true child welfare champion and is an extraordinary community partner. She is a wonderful asset to Child and Family Services, the Utah Foster Care Foundation, and the foster parents of the Southwest Region.

## **Professional Competence**

### **Don’t Be a ‘Loser’: Hang on to Those Electronics**

*By Carol Sisco, Public Affairs Coordinator*

Thumb drives, laptops, cell phones, Blackberries, notebooks, memory cards. We haul them around instead of pens, pencils, notepads, and quarters for pay phones. Some people have bags full of electronics. Most of us carry at least a couple.



They're getting smaller, lighter and faster, and many make our jobs a bit easier. We write reports on the laptop while waiting for court, enter case notes right after leaving a client's home. They're wonderful.

They're also expensive and easy to lose. Losing them doesn't just mean replacing expensive equipment. We can lose extremely important data: both our own and that of clients.

What can we do? A few safety tips follow:

### **All Electronic Devices**

- If you must leave them in your car, lock it and store them in the trunk out of sight.
- Pay close attention when taking computers through security lines in airports.

### **Computers**

- Save documents to your H or F Drives, not to the C Drive. If you're in a remote location and can't get to the network, briefly store documents on the C Drive but transfer them to the network as soon as possible.
- Use passwords to log on to your machine and for logging on to GroupWise.
- Either shut your computer off or put it in "sleep mode" if leaving it for a few minutes.
- If you're using a laptop, secure it with a cable lock.
- If using your laptop on your home wireless system, make sure you add security by password protecting your wireless network.

### **Phones & Blackberries**

- Password protect them, too. People can use your phone to run up outrageous bills or copy the data you have stored like phone numbers or email addresses.

### **Thumb Drives**

- Hang on to them.
- Password protect all data.

