

## The Best Exercise for Your Health?

Why, it's walking or running of course. These are not only the oldest forms of exercise, but among the most healthful. Here are just a few of their benefits:

- Running **burns more calories** in less time than almost any other continuous exercise.
- A regular running or walking program **lowers your risk** of life-threatening maladies such as heart disease, high blood pressure, and diabetes.
- Walking is a **low-impact exercise** that produces less stress on the knees and joints than many other activities do.
- Both walking and running produce endorphins, brain chemicals that make you **feel happy and confident**.
- Both walking and running **can put you in a great frame of mind** and help youth served by the social service system **pursue their educational dreams**.

What's that you say? Yes, walking and running **can** help youth pursue their educational dreams if **you** participate in the Run for Laptops (RFL) September 26th at Pittsburgh's Great Race. If you can't make it, you can still support the RFL'ers in their efforts. Check out their redesigned website at [www.runningforlaptops.org](http://www.runningforlaptops.org) for complete details.

Remember, in every walk (or run) you receive **far more** than you seek ■



Family Affairs is a newsletter of Family Services of Western Pennsylvania

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Pictured: Scene from the agency's annual picnic

## Helping Loved Ones Stay Together, Even When They're Apart

Imagine that you are ten-years-old sitting at home playing video games after school filled with anticipation and excitement as you kill time waiting for the phone to ring. Now, imagine that the phone rings and spring to your feet to answer it as fast as you can...because it's your father making his monthly phone call to you from prison. This monthly phone call is the only time you ever get to spend with your father, the only time you ever get to hear his voice and the only time you can hear him tell you that he loves you. For more than 1.5 million children in the United States, 7,000 of whom reside here in Allegheny County, this tragic situation is reality.

For over thirty years, Family Services of Western Pennsylvania's Families Outside program has been supporting the visitation needs of families of those incarcerated in Pennsylvania. Families Outside provides families and loved ones of people who are incarcerated free and low-cost trips to Pennsylvania's State Correctional Institutions (SCI). In an average year, we can provide upwards of 2,100 visits, serving over 900 families, 18% of whom are children who are most likely visiting an incarcerated parent.

Many times, inmates are sentenced hundreds of miles away from their families and loved ones, making visitation nearly impossible for many families, especially those who are struggling to make it in today's economic environment. Families Outside's visitation services enable the children, families and loved ones of those who are incarcerated to maintain and strengthen their relationship with their incarcerated parent

throughout the term of their parent's sentence. Our services include free or low-cost transportation and low cost Family Virtual Visits to eight state correctional institutions.

Family Virtual Visits consist of a 55-minute video visit between the inmate in the SCI and his/her family in our Families Outside office in East Liberty. These virtual visits are ideal for families with small children, as well as frail seniors or other adults who are not able to easily travel long distances on our Families Outside bus. Virtual Visitation enables families to hear and see their loved one and to communicate with them in a comfortable, safe setting, eliminating a lot of the anxiety that some people may have about visiting a State Correctional Institution.

We have found that many of our Family Virtual Visitation participants will seek out our transportation services to visit their loved one in person, further strengthening their bond. Recent research has shown that maintaining bonds with their families and consistent visitation from loved ones, especially family members and children, throughout incarceration helps to reduce recidivism amongst inmates by up to thirty percent (Bales & Mears, 2008). It is our hope that the unique and much needed services of Families Outside will help to support this reduction in recidivism and, in turn, help keep families together and parents, loved ones and friends out of prison ■



## The Prom

*The purpose of life after all, is to live it, to taste experience to the utmost, to reach out eagerly without fear for newer and richer experiences.*

*Eleanor Roosevelt*

Remember when you took three whole days to ask the red-haired girl out, or figure out how to get Schroeder to ask you out? Remember how you stressed out going to rent your tux, or buy your gown? Then the BIG NIGHT finally arrived and you looked in the mirror to check your hair one last time and... there it was...the mother of all zits!

Many of us still have cherished memories of our high school prom decades after. We remember who we went with...how wonderful they looked...the music...the decorations.

The majority of individuals served by our Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities (IDD) Residential program didn't have an opportunity to go to their Proms. While we can't go back and change that we can give our residents a "second chance."

On June 25th IDD held their "Second Chance" Prom at the VFW in Lower Burrell, complete with beautiful gowns, tuxedos, limousine ride and decorations courtesy of the Highlands High School Prom Committee. There were plenty of smiles to be sure and memories, well, memories to last a lifetime ■



A song from a few years back described a couple that had broken up because one wanted to explore greener pastures. The other mused of what he might say if some day she came back for a reconciliation and he thought wryly, "You forget about the sad and think only of all the laughs that we had."

As we age it is a natural tendency for us to remember the past fondly, our childhood friends, fun at school, playing ball from morning to nightfall, our first date or kiss, vacations with family, high school proms, making up goofy games to pass the time, and Petty at the Arena all become little pieces, positive pieces, of who we are when we grow up. The sadness we may have experienced is tempered or used as motivation or kept hidden...and we live our lives.

For others, though, life isn't that generous. The zest for a new dawn is muted. The disappointments, the pain they experienced when they were young become ghosts that follow them each day. The memories of being picked on or bullied, the loss of a loved one, sexual abuse, an incarcerated family member, or an emotionally distant or drug-addicted parent depress their ability to cope and their emotional health suffers. "During these times, when a child experiences one or more traumatic events," an ongoing study by the Centers for Disease Control and Kaiser Permanente has discovered, "he or she can respond in ways that are unhealthy, illogical, behaviorally inappropriate and even dangerous to self or others."

In 1980, Dr. Sandra Bloom, currently Associate Professor in the Dept. of Health Management and Public Policy at Drexel University, developed a new model of treatment for adults in an inpatient setting who had been traumatized as a child. The Sanctuary Model of trauma-informed care, now adopted by child-serving agencies across the state, recognizes that traumatic experiences "affect the entire person, each of

## Sanctuary Model: An Emerging Philosophy of Human Interaction and Care

us—the way we think, the way we learn, the way we remember things, the way we feel about ourselves and others, and the way we make sense of the world" and addresses organizational and individual stressors among staff that directly impact services to those we serve.

Last year, Family Services adopted the Sanctuary Model of trauma-informed care, not a small undertaking since it requires a systemic change in thinking and requires all staff, top to bottom, to be trained in the model. In September of 2009, staff from our Partial Hospital program, an intensive psychiatric treatment program and alternative to inpatient treatment, were the first to participate. They learned of the seven core commitments of the model—nonviolence, emotional intelligence, social learning, democracy, open communication, social responsibility, and growth and change— and the importance of the acronym SELF:

**Safety:** creating a safe place where healing can begin

**Emotions:** managing the overwhelming feelings we all experience

**Loss:** recognizing that to grow we need to leave something behind

**Future:** regaining hope and a life of possibilities

A third component, a "toolkit" that aids in developing new habits and assists in changing behavior and conditioned responses that are ineffective or appropriate, was also discussed in detail.

Carol Bowen, Manager of Family Services Partial Hospital program, said of the model "Sanctuary is the cornerstone of a great transformation in the agency for all individuals and families served and staff...it's exciting to be part of a community that supports one another to achieve their maximum potential."

## Fellowship Winners in Capacity Building Selected

Last January, Family Services President and CEO Don Goughler and our Board of Trustees announced the establishment of a competitive nine month fellowship for a graduate student who is enrolled in a Masters or Doctoral level program in one of the universities in Southwestern Pennsylvania. The work was to focus on capacity building i.e. an ongoing process through which individuals we serve can enhance their ability to identify and meet development challenges and become productive members of the communities in which they live.

We are pleased to tell you that two, yes two, proposals were selected. The first—“Planning for the Future”—by Terri Friedline, a Doctoral student in the School of Social Work at the University of Pittsburgh, is targeted to young people (approximate ages 12 to 18) served by Family Services in Western Pennsylvania in order to assist them in accumulating assets and financial knowledge to use as they transition into adulthood. A program such as this may promote meaningful change with long-term effects. Initially intended for a small group of



constituents e.g. youth served by our Educational Assistance Initiative, it offers the potential for expansion across all Family Services programs that serve children and youth. It also provides the potential for obtaining outside funding for the purposes of program implementation and expansion.

The second proposal selected—“Art and Recovery Program”—by Traci Darin and Laura Fleming, students in the Master of Art Therapy Program at Seton Hill University, uses a community-based art approach as a vehicle of expression in recovery. Through an “open studio” concept focusing on more than one form of expression, Traci and Laura hope to facilitate an artistic environment that encourages growth and self-exploration and shows that an individual’s road to recovery can be “paved, painted, sculpted and colorful.”

## Restoring Hope... Supporting Dreams

*Four simple yet elegant words that define a history of service*

For more than one-hundred twenty-five years, the staff of **Family Services of Western Pennsylvania** have worked tirelessly to meet the critical needs of our region’s citizens, young and aged, individuals and families, providing hope where there is none, shielding the flickering embers of a better life until dreams are ignited anew.

In the past year alone, we:

- ⇒ Expanded our Educational Assistance Initiative for youth aging out of services, allowing more kids to pursue their educational dreams.
- ⇒ Increased the range of services we offer for older adults.
- ⇒ Implemented community treatment teams in two counties.
- ⇒ Expanded our services to individuals challenged with intellectual and developmental disabilities.

We ask that you renew your commitment to those helped by these lifelines and others by designating **Family Services of Western**

# 66

**Pennsylvania** to receive your donation during United Way’s Fall 2010 Campaign. Our donor designation number is **66**. Thank you■

## Save This Date

Friday

December 3, 2010 from 6:00 p.m. – 8:00 p.m.

### Family Services of Western Pennsylvania *Anniversary Reception: Images of Caring*

Original Photography by Laura Petrillo

Depicting Family Services’ compassionate work in Southwestern Pennsylvania

- \* Full Access to the Roberto Clemente Museum
- \* Engine House 25 original wines and hors d’oeuvres
- \* Silent auction and raffle

Tickets: \$40 per person advance sale / \$75 per person VIP

Engine House 25, 3339 Penn Avenue, Pittsburgh 15201

For more information contact: [cholodofskya@fswp.org](mailto:cholodofskya@fswp.org)

Celebrating 125 Years of Caring



Family Services of Western Pennsylvania is accredited by the Council on Accreditation of Services for Families and Children, Inc.

Family Services of Western Pennsylvania is a non-profit organization declared tax-exempt by the federal government (under section 501 C 3 of the IRS code) and the Commonwealth of Pa.

A copy of our official registration may be obtained from the Pennsylvania Department of State by calling toll free from within Pennsylvania 800-732-0999. Registration does not imply endorsement. All donations to Family Services of Western Pennsylvania are tax deductible to the full extent of the law.

Family Services of Western Pennsylvania receives funding from the United Way's of Allegheny, Washington and Westmoreland Counties.

## Donate Now

Did you know it's easier than ever to make a safe, secure donation to Family Services? Whether it's in memory of, or in honor of, a loved one, dedicated to a specific program or event, or a continuing donation, you can do it by visiting us on-line at [www.fswp.org](http://www.fswp.org) and clicking on the "Donate Now" button. Of course, we will still accept donations through the mail, too. Whichever way you choose, thank you for your support!

## Upcoming Events

### • Running for Laptops, September 26, 2010

Running for Laptops walkers and runners who participate in the 5K or 10K at the Richard S. Caliguiri Great Race in Pittsburgh can raise money to purchase laptop computers for youth who are aging out of the social service safety net and who wish to pursue their educational dreams. Part of the agency's *Educational Assistance Initiative*. For details on how you can support Running for Laptops, contact Alyssa Cholodofsky at 412-820-2050 ext. 428. Check out the Running for Laptops website at [www.runningforlaptops.org](http://www.runningforlaptops.org).

### • Fourth Annual NAMI (National Alliance on Mental Illness) Walk, October 3, 2011

Family Services staff and the individuals we serve will be participating again this year. The 5 K walk will kick off at Pittsburgh's SouthSide Works/Three Rivers Heritage Trail at 10 am. Registration is at 9 am. Bring your family and friends for a morning filled with fun, food and the indescribable feeling of being a part of the NAMI Walk. To participate with the Family Services team, or for information on how you can support them in their walk, contact Joy Krumenacker at 724-335-9883 ext. 546 or via email at [krumenackerj@fswp.org](mailto:krumenackerj@fswp.org).

### • Fifteenth Annual Family Services Charity Golf Classic, June 3, 2011

It's never too early to think about golf. At Churchill Valley Country Club. Foursome package includes: Greens fee, use of locker room and driving range, cookout lunch, on-course beverages, dinner and program, \$50 lottery ticket for each golfer (\$5,000 prize to winner.) To register your foursome, or to join us as a sponsor, contact Dennis Kowalski at 412-820-2050 ext. 409.

Family Affairs

Restoring Hope, Supporting Dreams...

Autumn 2010

Celebrating 125 Years of Caring



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