

# THE CROSSROADS CHRONICLE

JANUARY—MARCH 2015

## CROSSROADS YOUTH & FAMILY SERVICES IS CERTIFIED HEALTHY

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Certified Healthy Oklahoma is a program sponsored by the Oklahoma State Department of Health. Since 2003, OSDH has recognized and honored businesses, communities and schools who have made a concerted effort to incorporate healthy practices in the workplace.

We are pleased to announce that Crossroads Youth & Family Services Head Start / Early Head Start Programs and the Counseling Office were recipients of the 2014 Certified Healthy Award of Excellence! This award, which is the highest honor program participants may receive, was presented to our overall

program as well as each Head Start/Early Head Start center in all four counties we serve.

Special thanks go to **Cari Dunkle** ( Head Start Assistant Director, Comanche County) and **Donna Benson** ( Head Start Assistant Director) for completing the application process and accepting the award on behalf of the entire agency at the 2014 Certified Healthy Luncheon. We would also like to express our sincere gratitude to staff members at each Head Start center. Their daily contributions to the healthy lifestyles of our students and client is greatly appreciated!



"This is a GREAT honor for our program!"  
—Anita Bruce, HS/EHS Director

*(Note: On March 13, Anita Bruce moved on to another challenging position in her career. We are grateful for her fifteen years of service and her daily presence will be missed. Best wishes on your future endeavors, Anita! —Ed.)*

## CONGRATULATIONS, TERRAN MANNING!

At Crossroads Youth & Family Services, we pride ourselves on continually striving for educational excellence within our fields of expertise. Recently, several of our staff members have completed degrees or received certification in the field of Early Childhood Development. Leading the way in these educational endeavors is **Terran Manning**, (Director of Youth Services).

In addition to meeting the needs of the Counseling Office and Emergency Youth Shelter, Terran spent months preparing for the exam to become a Licensed Clinical Social Worker. In January, he completed all of the necessary requirements and has now been certified.

Congratulations, Terran! Thank you for inspiring all of us!



Terran Manning (Director of Youth Services) and Lisa Winters (Executive Director)

## MAKING A CHANGE: MARLA PARISH ON TOXIC STRESS

Did you know that 2014 research project showed that 17% of children in Oklahoma have experienced three or more Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs)? These experiences, such as abuse, neglect, or death/separation of parents, can have long-lasting consequences for children if they are not provided services that include proper coping tools to overcome the negative effects of such traumatic events.

That was the topic of a recent presentation by Marla Parish (Director of Administrative Services) at the Quarterly Meeting of the Oklahoma Association of Youth Services in Norman. This presentation, entitled *The Effect of Toxic Stress on Children: What Is It and What*

*Can We Do?*, focused on the mental and physical effects of Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs). Marla instructed the seminar participants on the many ways stress can be relieved, including diet, breathing exercises, physical activities and therapeutic interventions. Marla also presented several mobile apps to help both adults and children learn how to manage their stress in healthier ways.

The effects of Toxic Stress on children have huge implications for children's health throughout their lives, because Toxic Stress is implicated in later occurrences of heart disease, asthma and other respiratory diseases, high blood pressure, diabetes, and

numerous other serious medical conditions. In fact, left untreated, individuals who have the highest number of ACEs may die as many as twenty years prematurely.

We look forward to hearing more about Toxic Stress and what to do about it in the near future so that we can make sure children and families have more of the resources they need to deal with this important issue.



I AM ONLY ONE,  
BUT I AM ONE. I  
CANNOT DO  
EVERYTHING,  
BUT I CAN DO  
SOMETHING.  
AND I WILL NOT  
LET WHAT I  
CANNOT DO  
INTERFERE WITH  
WHAT I CAN  
DO.

—EDWARD EVERETT  
HALE

## CSBI IS GIVING BACK!

*This year, the staff, parents and families of CSBI chose to collect coats that our students had outgrown. By February 11, we had collected so many coats we had to clear space in our facility to accommodate even more!*

*Our Family Advocate, Heather Tickle, took them to Food and Shelter For Friends in Norman. Their organization was shocked by our initial donation of more than **THIRTY** coats! The director could not believe that so many children under the age of 5 could do so much for the community.*

*We have made a huge difference in the lives of children in Cleveland County. I am proud of our children, families and staff for being a part of the change that our community needs. CSBI rocked this Community Enhancement Project!*

—Carina Amrine  
Center Director, CSBI



## WE ARE FAMILY: STAYING ACTIVE TOGETHER

Kids need to be active in order to feel good and to grow up strong, happy, intelligent, and healthy. The regulatory bodies that provide evidence-based recommendations for physical exercise advocate a minimum of an hour a day of moderate to vigorous physical activity starting at age five. Prior to that, babies, toddlers, and young children should be active several times a day, accumulating three hours of varying kinds and levels of physical activity spread throughout the day.

Ideas, Suggestions, and Recommendations for Parents



*THE GREATEST  
MIRACLE ON  
EARTH IS THE  
HUMAN BODY.  
IT IS SO MUCH  
STRONGER  
AND WISER  
THAN YOU MAY  
REALIZE...*

—Dr. Fabrizio Mancini

- **Focus on fun.** Help your child find activities he enjoys doing. When exercise is boring or feels like a chore, children are like adults. They'll find reasons to avoid it.
- **Limit screen time.** Time on screens—watching television, playing video games, or surfing the web—gobbles up kids' free time, leaving little or nothing left over for more physical activities.
- **Make fitness a personal priority.** Display a positive attitude that being active is fun and feels good. Parents who are good role models for active lifestyles are a lot more likely to have children who enjoy physical activity.
- **Minimize sedentary commuting time.** Look for schools and extracurricular activities your child can walk to, or that don't require a long commute by car or bus.
- **Go outside.** From birth on, do your best to make sure your child gets some outdoor time every day, no matter the weather or your schedule.
- **Get active as a family.** Look for physically active things you can do together. Go to a playground, take a hike in the neighborhood, play ball together, go for a bike ride.
- **Ride a bike, walk, or run (don't drive).** Next to screen-time, an over-dependency on cars and public transit is the biggest reason kids and adults aren't as active today as they once were.
- **Give kids chores.** Starting at age two or so, children can help with physically active chores around the house, including taking out the garbage, making beds, sweeping the kitchen, scrubbing floors, raking leaves, clearing snow, washing the car.
- **Dance to the music.** Set a time every day when you put on some music and everyone dances. Just before you start dinner, when everyone's feeling frayed and grumpy, is a good time for a ten-minute dance break. You can rotate music choice privileges.
- **Encourage your child to run.** Teach him the joys of jogging. Run with him, or make it a social activity with friends or relatives.
- **Create healthy competition.** Competition can add fun to physical activity, as long as it's done in the right spirit. Set up informal running races (giving the younger children an advance start), see who can do the most jumping jacks, who can skip rope longest, and so on.
- **Make fitness time a social time.** Get together with friends, neighbors, or family to do something active together.

—Melanie Greenberg, Ph.D. (*Psychology Today*)

## Gratitude From An Instructor

*Just a note to share that I was there to observe recently (Learning Tree, Shawnee) and I must say your facility and staff are excellent. I visit many centers in [Pottawatomie] County and can honestly say I have never been so impressed with the professionalism and skill of your teachers. Special kudos to your teaching staff! Thank you for allowing me to observe.*

—Angie Porter

Ms. Porter was an Early Childhood Instructor at Gordon Cooper Technology Center for several years, so she is well aware of what it takes to maintain a successful education organization. This e-mail further affirms what we already know: Crossroads Youth & Family Services is setting the standard for excellence in Oklahoma!

## THROUGH THE EYES OF A VOLUNTEER



*I learned that children are good at destroying agendas. I came in thinking I was going to teach them something, but they taught me everything.*

*The shelter staff listened to me and included me in the daily tasks. I really felt like I was a part of the team.*

*I told my husband how much fun I had volunteering—now he would like to become a volunteer!*

*I learned you have to stay completely in the moment with these children. That's a skill I needed to develop and it will serve me well in the future.*

*This experience really made me want to work with children.*

If you would like to experience your own *aha* moment, consider volunteering at our Emergency Youth Shelter or an Early Head Start/Head Start Center today. We offer flexible volunteer schedules, opportunities to participate in fun group outings and, of course, the chance to make a difference in the life of a child who needs it most. For more information, please visit the Crossroads Youth & Family Services website or contact [Kayla Woodberry](#).

A hand writing "THANK YOU for your support!" on a chalkboard.

Every newsletter subscription, financial contribution and the many hours of volunteer service mean more to us than words could express. Because of you, Crossroads Youth & Family Services has been changing lives for over 45 years—and the best is yet to come! We remain grateful for your continuous support.!

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