

Portraits of Hope

Fall 2023



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A Message From President and CEO, Elizabeth McPartland

For the last 150 years, Child and Family Services has served as a beacon of hope for those in need across Western New York. Stemming from a charitable Thanksgiving meal, we have grown into an agency that shelters, protects, counsels, and educates more than 10,000 individuals annually. Throughout this journey, we've opened and closed many chapters—each serving as a stepping-stone to where we are today.

As we enter our 150th year, we turn the page to a genuinely momentous chapter. This esteemed milestone is no small feat.

We are thrilled to use this achievement as an opportunity to unveil our new brand. This includes an updated visual identity with a new logo and refreshed colors. We've also updated our mission and vision statements, which will serve as our North Star for the coming years. Our previous brand and language needed to evolve as our services have.

I am honored to share Child and Family Services' new mission is ***nurturing a healthy and more equitable Western New York for the benefit of current and future generations***. Our vision for an ideal future is ***a thriving community where all people live in safety with dignity***.

Our new brand will carry us forward as we enter this new era. This rebrand will help new individuals and families find us. With it, we can better communicate how we provide meaningful programs and services to Western New York, both in moments of need and over the course of a lifetime.

Child and Family Services will continue to support people with client-centered



services that focus on family stability, education, mental health, and personal well-being.

Our brand has changed, but our commitment to Western New York remains constant. The path ahead is not a road traveled alone, but a journey we are on together.

With gratitude,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Elizabeth McPartland". The ink is dark and the signature is fluid and legible.

Elizabeth McPartland
President and CEO, Child and Family Services

EAP Provides Life-Changing Services for James

Emma* was worried about one of her employees, James.* James had been with the company for over ten years. He had always been a good team member, but recently struggled to get along with co-workers, demonstrated erratic behavior, arrived late, and was making poor decisions.

After attending an on-site wellness seminar presented by Child and Family Services Employees Assistance Program (EAP), Emma approached the EAP presenter to discuss James. Emma explained she had spoken with James a few times, but nothing had changed. Rumors about his personal life, including family problems and overdrinking, were spreading throughout the office.

“Everyone involved in an issue like this is in a tricky situation,” said Megan Andrews, Director of EAP. “It’s important to remember employees are not just workers; they are real people with real lives. That’s why EAP is here to help.”

During their conversation, the EAP worker asked Emma about the context of her conversations with James. She acknowledged how the talks had been casual and she had not been clear with



James about the specific expectations for change. Later, Emma asked James to have a formal conversation regarding the behavior.

Following that discussion, James contacted EAP to begin independent and confidential counseling. While meeting with a counselor, James spoke openly about the events and personal challenges he was experiencing. His mother had recently been diagnosed with Alzheimer’s, and he spent most evenings at her house to care for her. He was also navigating a divorce, which was causing tension with his 16-year-old son.

EAP was able to provide eldercare resources for James’ mother and access to a caregiver support group for James. James’ counselor also suggested ways to connect with his teen son, emphasizing open communication regarding both of their feelings. James later told his counselor his access to this confidential support was life-changing.

“I knew I need to make changes in my life, but I didn’t know how or where to begin,” James said. “It’s nothing I have ever had to deal with before, and I was lost. Talking with my counselor helped me find answers. It has been such a relief!”

With James making changes in his personal life, Emma also saw improvement in his work. To Emma, James seemed better rested, friendlier, and more focused on his job – much more in line with the James she had known in the past.

To learn more about EAP, please visit <https://eap.cfsbny.org> or call (716) 681-4300.

Residential Renovations Complete

Michael* excitedly walked into his new bedroom for the first time, his face lighting up at the sight of dinosaurs on the wall. "I love dinosaurs!" Michael shouted, as he ran over to his bed. "I can't believe I have my own room!"

On Monday, July 17, six children in Child and Family Services Residential Treatment Program moved into their new bedrooms. The Carriage House building located on the Agency's Delaware campus formerly served as an art therapy space. Beginning in August 2020, the Agency's facilities team paved the way for a three-year renovation project to provide more living and recreation areas for the children. The layout was strategically planned to have ample room for the children to decompress, play and complete schoolwork.

With the renovations now complete, the Carriage House has individual bedrooms, a built-in office and a room specifically for respite care. "Children need a private space they can call their own and personalize," explained Dana Delaney, Director of Residential Treatment. "Children in treatment are used to sharing everything, so for them to be able to have their own room is important to them."



"It was extremely satisfying and rewarding to see the end result," said Monica Bruce, Director of Facilities. "Seeing the children's reactions to their new bedrooms and taking in all the little details was truly remarkable. It was a long process, but definitely worth the wait."

While this phase of the project is finished, there are plans to continue improving the space for the children. A sensory room and hand-painted wall mural are currently in the works to help the children learn how to self-regulate their behaviors and improve their focus.

"Our program requires consistency to provide structure for the children, but we also know we need to embrace change because families change every day," emphasized Dana. "We are grateful to be able to provide these children with everything they need to feel comfortable and at-home."

Michael and Robert* started playing and rolling around on the couch in the game room. "This is so cool!" Robert exclaimed, admiring the large tv on the wall.

A huge thank you to our Residential, IT and Facilities team members for their collaboration, dedication and hard work throughout this project!

Josh Gets A Fresh Start at Falk

Josh did not like school. He was experiencing social and academic challenges, and there were also major transitions happening at home. His anxiety reached a point where he refused to go to school at all.

After being recommended for placement at the Stanley G. Falk School, Josh started going back to school after almost a year and a half of online instruction. Josh's mother, Jennifer, was nervous about changing Josh's school. What if he hated this school, too? What if his struggles grew worse in this new environment? It soon became clear, though, Falk was the perfect place for Josh.

Josh found a community, that accepted him, teachers who encourage him, and a principal who sent handwritten messages on his report cards. For the first time, Josh made the honor roll and the school awarded him for his achievements. He was now excited to go to school each morning.

Josh's seventh grade teacher, Ms. Arnold, also reflected on Josh's growth at school. She acknowledged how much progress he has made through his willingness to build relationships with his teachers and peers. "Josh has enthusiastically embraced and became a part of the Falk Family," expressed Ms. Arnold. "Josh continues to build more confidence in himself and his abilities. He is looking forward to entering the 8th grade."

Jennifer sent an email to Josh's teachers to express her appreciation. "From day one, Josh was welcomed into the Falk family like he had been there from the start," wrote Jennifer. "He made friends. His teachers encouraged him and showed him he was capable."

When asked about his experience at the Falk School, Josh was able to recognize his own improvement. Josh said he learned to love school at Falk. He credits his increase in focus and motivation to the faculty and staff at the school. "I like it at the Falk School because the teachers are really nice and help me in every way," Josh smiled.

As a teacher and a mom, Jennifer could not be more grateful with the Falk school for having such a positive influence on her son's life. "He began to smile again. He laughed for the first time in over a year. Falk brought my son back to me," described Jennifer.

If you are interested in learning more about the Stanley G. Falk School, please visit www.falkschool.com.



Josh poses with his seventh grade teacher, Ms. Arnold.

Employee Celebrates 30-Year Anniversary

"When opportunity knocks, you need to answer," laughed Penny Brown as friends and co-workers celebrated her 30th anniversary working at Child and Family Services (C+FS).

Sitting at the front desk, Penny has been a mainstay at the 330 Delaware Avenue clinic. It might shock regular clients to learn Penny's position was originally meant to only last six weeks. "It was a temp job, so I thought I was leaving. They even gave me a plaque," Penny recalled. Then opportunity knocked. "I got a call three days later asking if I could cover another shift. I told them I would only do it if they put me on payroll. About ten minutes later, they made me an offer."



Penny Brown at her anniversary luncheon.

The opportunities kept coming for Penny at the agency. Her relationship with C+FS evolved beyond just work – she was also a foster parent for fifteen years. During that time, she and her husband hosted eleven foster children, two of whom they went on to adopt. When asked what kept her committed to C+FS for so long, Penny didn't hesitate. "The clients and what this Agency does for them," she responded. "I think C+FS has done an excellent job serving our community, especially our children. I'm a people person. My goal is to make sure people are happy when they are here."

"Penny is always warm, calm, and kind to everyone. She is a big reason people come back to our clinic," said Elizabeth McPartland, President and CEO of C+FS. "When Penny isn't at reception, our clients ask where she is. She makes them feel comfortable and safe when they walk through our doors."

Penny has seen a lot of change during her time at C+FS. Programs have expanded. Buildings have been renovated. To Penny, the most satisfying feeling is seeing the change and growth in the people who come through the clinic's doors. "There are clients that I remember from years ago, when they were children, that are now bringing in their own kids," Penny beamed. "They say to me, 'Miss Penny, are you still here?' We laugh and then I get to meet their kids. It doesn't take long for the kids to come running up to me with big smiles, asking for paper so they can draw. Things are coming full circle."

Congratulations to Penny on her 30th anniversary! Child and Family Services is fortunate to have you spreading cheer to everyone who walks through our doors!

Fashion Show with a Twist

On Thursday, September 28, Child and Family Services (C+FS) hosted Fashion Show with a Twist at Samuel's Grande Manor in Clarence, N.Y.

Fashion Show with a Twist is an annual fundraiser event to benefit Haven House, Erie County's only licensed domestic violence shelter. For the first time ever, the event completely sold out, and over 300 guests attended for a night of shopping, dinner and, of course, fashion!

Last year, Haven House provided shelter to over 190 adults and over 90 children. Additionally, Haven House staff received over 2,200 hotline calls and provided over 1,600 counseling and advocacy sessions to survivors in need. It takes a village to be able to provide safety, resources and guidance for survivors of domestic violence. Together, C+FS raised over \$34,000 to support services like emergency shelter, food, counseling, community outreach and advocacy.

C+FS would like to thank this year's sponsors, vendors, donors, models and guests for your contributions to a very special and necessary cause for the Western N.Y. community.

If you would like to learn more about Haven House or would like to make a donation, please visit www.cfsbny.org.



Fashion Show with a Twist 2023 models.



Child and Family Services Board Member Kara Oliver strikes a pose.



Haven House volunteer Sarah Warner and her daughter, Elle rock the runway together.

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Domestic Violence Hotline
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