



ASTOR
SERVICES FOR
CHILDREN & FAMILIES

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Breaking News...

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OUR MISSION

To provide behavioral and educational services in a caring environment where children and their families find strength, healing, hope and trust.

ASTOR

SERVICES FOR CHILDREN & FAMILIES

...Because every child deserves a childhood



The Impact

Open Access: Hope in Time of Crisis

On August 2nd, a family called the Dutchess County Helpline for assistance with their 11 year old daughter who was having homicidal thoughts of engaging in a killing spree over the weekend. They were advised by Helpline staff to come in to the Poughkeepsie Clinic that same day.

When they arrived, the child was seen immediately by one of our mental health counselors. During her intake evaluation, the counselor noted that she had severe anxiety and symptoms of obsessive compulsive disorder, including hallucinations and homicidal/suicidal thoughts. The counselor recommended an evaluation for medication, either through a psychiatrist or at the hospital. While still at the clinic, the parents contacted their pediatrician who prescribed medication until a psychiatric evaluation could be completed.

Meanwhile, the counselor consulted with a supervising social worker in light of the severity of this youngster's symptoms. The supervisor spoke with the father about safety concerns

and options for keeping the child safe. The options of hospitalization and Home-Based Crisis Intervention services were discussed, but the family declined both since we were able to schedule a psychiatric evaluation at our clinic within 48 hours. They reported they could keep their daughter safe until that time.

The child had a psychiatric evaluation on August 4th that revealed the seriousness of her symptoms. She is being seen weekly by both the psychiatrist and the counselor to help manage/monitor her symptoms so that she is stabilized.

Prior to Open Access*, the parents would have contacted the Dutchess County Helpline and been given an intake appointment at least a month from the time of the call. For this client, that would have ultimately led to an increased level in the severity of symptoms and likely resulted in hospitalization.

Read more about Open Access on Page 5





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A LETTER FROM OUR EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR/CEO:

James McGuirk, Ph.D.

I am delighted to be writing my first greetings in our newly named and re-designed newsletter, The Impact! First, I want to let you know how thankful I am for all your support of our work on behalf of children and families.

We have been working on changing the name for sometime now. The former name, Tie Line, has served us well since the 1970s. However, as we thought about the work we do and the impact we are making on the lives of children and families, Tie Line, just did not convey that. We reached out to, and received feedback from many of our constituents during the year-long re-naming process. What became clear is that we were always talking in terms of how our programs, donors, staff, etc., impact the lives of our children and families; hence the new name, The Impact! – demonstrating, more overtly, how lives are being changed.

There are a lot of exciting things happening here at Astor, including, expanding our Early Head Start and Head Start

Programs through funding we received from the Stimulus Funds; Upcoming construction of new living quarters for the children in our Residential Treatment Facility Program – we hope to break ground next spring; Implementing “Open Access,” in our Dutchess County Clinics with the Bronx Clinics close behind; receiving funding to improve and expand several of our programs – all of which you will read throughout this issue.

We are looking forward to our Holiday Season which is a special time for our children. I hope you will consider participating in our Adopt-A-Family Program, where donors have an opportunity to help our children and families have a happy season. Information on how you can help is on Page 7.

I want to once again thank you, for your support of our work. And while the economic conditions of our country remain uncertain, we continue to thrive during these times because of our visionary Board, dedicated staff and you, our supporters!



Photo by Gerald Peurt, Photographer



Rose Garden Dedication:

On Thursday, May 6th, we dedicated a formal rose garden at our Rhinebeck location in memory of Sr. Rose Logan, our former Executive Director (1992 – 2002) who passed away after a short illness in December 2009; and in memory of all the Daughters of Charity, her religious community, that served the children and families at Astor since its founding in 1953.

The following poem was read during the ceremony:

May this be a place of peace-where children experience no hatred, but know that they are loved and capable of loving.

May this be a place of peace-where children learn not to injure others, but to be caring for each other.



MAKING A DIFFERENCE

Donors

Improving the Delivery of Services to Children Ages Zero to Five. With a \$25,000 grant from the W.K. Kellogg Foundation, Astor is improving the delivery of services to children and their families in Dutchess County.

Astor will replicate the success seen with improvement of efficiencies in areas such as billing, hiring and storage of medical records to enhance the quality of communication between members of agencies providing services that participate in the Enhance Childhood Coordinated Services Initiative. ECCSI provides coordination of services to children who are at risk for foster placement and/or abuse and maltreatment.

“Our implementation of Lean Six Sigma throughout the Agency has resulted in increased efficiencies and improved communication. We have been able to successfully use a manufacturing process improvement model to help people. The grant from the W.K. Kellogg Foundation will allow Astor to bring this proven methodology to the community to directly impact the children and families,” said James McGuirk, Ph.D., Executive Director/CEO, Astor Services for Children & Families.

Expanding a Proven Parent-Child Treatment Model. Countess Moira Foundation’s, \$25,000 grant will allow Astor to expand its Parent Child Interaction Therapy (PCIT) Training and to continue its Family Fun Day for our programs in the Bronx.

Parent Child Interaction Therapy is a proven parent-child treatment program that assists parents by giving them the tools to work with their children who have behavioral problems (aggression, non-compliance, defiance and temper tantrums). Because parents are videotaped, they can actually see themselves when they are using skills successfully and when they are not. It is a popular treatment modality that provides them

with immediate feedback and the appropriate tools to work with their children, This generous grant from the Countess Moira Foundation will enable us to expand PCIT – allowing

May this be a place of peace-where children learn not to harbor resentment, but to be always ready to forgive.

May this be a place of peace-where children learn not to give in to frustration and despair, but find reason for hope.



Bronx Family Fun Day, Spring 2010

us to go directly to where the families live for the parents who, for a variety of reasons, cannot come to our sites.

In addition, many of the children and families served by Astor face significant daily challenges as the result of unemployment, poverty and stress. When they have the opportunity to just be children, who can participate with their parents and siblings in a fun-filled afternoon, cherished memories are created and lives are transformed – these Family Fun Days provide Astor’s children and families this opportunity.

Expanding Head Start and Early Head Start Programs in Dutchess County. With \$1 million from the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009, we have expanded our Head Start and Early Head Start Programs, a federally funded program that works with poverty-level children and their families; where we are reaching over 570 children!

Astor has been providing comprehensive child-development services to children and their families since 1974. The focus throughout the program is relationship-based, strength-based and is parent inclusive. “We are thankful for the federal government’s confidence in our ability to provide such high-quality care to the children and families in Dutchess County,” said Mary Sontheimer, Assistant Executive Director, Astor’s Early Childhood Programs.

Identifying and Fulfilling Unmet Needs of Children & Families. With the Dyson Foundation’s continued support of \$45k of a Bi-Lingual Parent Infant Educator (PIE), Astor’s PIE works with children zero to five years old and their families through Astor’s Enhanced Childhood Coordinated Services Initiatives (ECCSI) in Dutchess County that provides coordination of services to those infants and children who are at risk for foster placement and/or abuse and maltreatment. The full-time PIE works together with families to identify unmet needs, strive to fill the needs and partners with other agencies to access necessary resources to address individual family as well as community needs.



“The Impact” – New Name for the Astor Newsletter

Since the 1970s, Astor has produced the Tie Line Newsletter that goes out to our donors, volunteers, partners and other key stakeholders to update and highlight donor/volunteer time, talent and treasure as well as activities and program updates. However, the time has come for us to change the name. The new name, *The Impact*, gives us an opportunity to better communicate the impact we are making on the lives of children and families and to demonstrate how the donors, volunteers, partners and other key stakeholders' investments enable us to do so!



MAKING A DIFFERENCE

Volunteers



Notre Dame Club members and Astor's Recreational staff Jan Weido and Wendy Teitelbaum

Revitalizing our Magic Garden.

Thanks to the members of the Notre Dame Club of the Hudson Valley, on May 1st we were able to reclaim our Magic Garden at the Residence in Rhinebeck. The Garden provides a wonderful outlet for the children where they work with staff to grow their own vegetables and learn about healthy eating habits. Due to age, and visits by animals, the Garden was in need of repair. In came the team of Tim Danielson, Paul Doherty, Lucille McCann, Les McCarthy, Linda Quinn, Ellen Raspitha, Ita Rahilly, Joseph Spiegel, Michael Sullivan, Vincent Sullivan, and Matt Wopperer of the Notre Dame Club of the Hudson Valley. They spent the entire day building beds, fixing fences, etc. “They worked very hard that day despite the 90 degree temperature – no challenge was too big or hard for them,” said Jan Weido, Astor Director of Recreations, who along with members of the Recreational Department worked with this group to make sure the Garden was ready for the children. We are most thankful for their hard work that “paid huge dividends for our gardening program!” said Weido.

Maintaining Our Magic Garden.

On Sunday, June 13th, 15 members of the Rhinebeck High School Interact Club, students in grades 9 – 12, volunteered their time at Astor! They were sponsored by the Rhinebeck Rotary Club, who support local, regional and international service projects each year. The group planted, weeded and built a step garden at the Residence. Members included Jonah Rosenberg, Emma Steele, Elizabeth Steele, Jenna Bergstraesser, Bryan Dewkett, Michelle Dewkett, Jake Chapman, Bailey Lyons, Parents Debi Duke and Steve Rosenberg, and Interact Advisors and parents, Kiki Steele and Kathy Dewkett.

“Spaces like the Magic Garden are important for bringing beauty and grace to a place of treatment,” said Jan Weido, Director of Recreation. It was great meeting all the students and the parents. We really felt it was a worthwhile project for all involved. It was our pleasure to help out and I hope we will be able to repeat the project next year,” said Kiki Steele.



Interact Club members and Astor's Recreational staff Jan Weido



PROGRAMS

Meeting the needs of our Children and Families

Our clients can now walk in, without an appointment: “Open Access” in action at Dutchess Clinics and coming soon to the Bronx Clinics!

The implementation of the Open Access Model of Clinical Care which enables clients immediate (same day) access to our services without the need to make an appointment, as is the current standard, began on July 7th in our Dutchess County Clinics and will be coming soon to our clinics in the Bronx.

The “Open Access” concept was developed in response to the upcoming reforms in the ways in which outpatient mental health care is provided and financed in New York. In addition

to helping service providers meet the challenge of the shift in payment mechanisms these reforms create for programs, Open Access will expand access to timely care and treatment. Research indicates this innovative practice will also enhance the engagement level between clinician and clients by reducing no-show/cancellation rates.

Astor is working with Management Training & Measurement Services (MTM) to prepare and lead the clinic staff and managers in a redesign of

the service delivery system within the Agency. This is a broad, in-depth analysis and evaluation that applies many of the concepts and tools used in Lean Six Sigma^[1], a process Astor has been engaged in for several years, to identify and eliminate redundant and/or gratuitous elements or processes.

“In the Dutchess Clinics, when patients made appointments, it was taking between two weeks to two months to be scheduled. Open Access has virtually eliminated the waiting and allows us to respond more rapidly to our clients while allowing our clinicians to spend more face-to-face time counseling,” said Konstantinos (Gus) Tsubris, Ph.D., Associate Executive Director, Astor Hudson Valley Community-Based Behavioral Health & Prevention Programs.

[1] The Lean Six Sigma process has been employed by Fortune 500 companies such as Motorola, General Electric, and Toyota). The methodology emphasizes process improvement to eliminate waste and provide better quality services in a more timely way.

Upgrading our Children’s Living Space in the Residential Treatment Facility Program

Astor is planning to break ground for a new building in the Spring of 2011 to replace the current living quarters for the children in our Residential Treatment Facility Program (RTF) in Rhinebeck.

The RTF is a 24-hour treatment facility for children from the Hudson Valley Region and New York City. The children range in ages from 5 - 12 at the time of admission and have a diagnosed, severe emotional disturbance/mental

illness. When there is evidence of a need for treatment beyond what can be provided in a less restrictive setting and the child’s behavior is such that he/she can be maintained safely in open-treatment surroundings, Astor’s RTF is most suitable.

“We are delighted to have the opportunity to build new living quarters for the children in our RTF Program. The current living spaces in our historic Rhinebeck location have been retrofit-

ted over the past 50 years and are not fully meeting the needs of the children. Construction of the new building will not increase the number of children we serve – that number will remain the same. Rather, the new living units will allow us to further meet our commitment to provide the best quality service in the best possible environment.” said James McGuirk, Ph.D., Astor Executive Director/CEO.



L-R: Msgr. Sullivan, Magee Hickey, Yvonne Garvin, Principal, Dr. McGuirk with the portrait.

The Hickey Center

On June 16th, the Astor Lawrence F. Hickey Center for Child Development (a therapeutic Early Childhood Development Program in the Bronx) installed a portrait of its namesake, Mr. Hickey.

“The Hickey Center” serves children of kindergarten age through 2.9 years old with behavioral and emotional needs. Mr. Hickey and his family have been dedicated supporters of Astor’s mission. The installation is a way to honor him and his family for their continued support,” said James McGuirk, Ph.D., Astor Executive Director/CEO.



Special Events

Proceeds from the, Hudson Valley Reception and Annual Stenberg Cup Golf Tournament will go toward meeting the health and safety needs of the children in our School-Age Day Treatment Program by enabling us to install an elevator in the historic building of the former Mt. Carmel School in Poughkeepsie, NY.

Hudson Valley Reception, Rhinebeck, NY.

The Hudson Valley Reception was held on April 16th at our historic location in Rhinebeck, NY. It was a wonderful reception made extra special by Eric Wist, a student in our Residential Program, who held a very successful art show! In addition, Astor Board member, David Crenshaw, Ph.D., conducted a poetry reading from his book, “The Vision of the Heart, a Tribute in Poetry and Prose to the Healing Mission of Astor Services for Children & Families.”



Photo by Joel Weisbord, jwArtWorks LLC, Photographer

Eric Wist signing one of his pieces that was purchased.



Photo by Joel Weisbord, jwArtWorks LLC, Photographer

First Place: Mike Analek, Mike Eidel, Gary Gyscek and Bill O’Neil.

New York City Reception

Proceeds from the NYC Reception went towards supporting our programs in the Bronx.

Ralph Acampora, a Bronx native and pioneer in the development of market analytics and one of Wall Street’s most respected businessmen, headlined our Benefit Reception on May 11th at Terrance in the Sky in New York City. It was a delightful evening where Ralph Acampora gave some insightful and helpful information on the “2010 Reform and Recovery,” and how to build a better future for children and families.



Photo by Gerald Peart, Photographer

Dr. McGuirk presenting Ralph Acampora with an original piece of artwork by one of Astor’s children.



Employees' Impact

On May 3rd, our **Bronx Outpatient Programs** were recognized during the NYS Office of Mental Health Children's Mental Health Awareness Day celebration. The program was nominated and chosen for the poster session for "What's Great in Our State: A Celebration of Children's Mental Health."

Our **Residential Treatment Facility Program** (RTF) was one of three RTF Programs recognized by the Office of Mental Health with the *Positive Alternative to Restraint and Seclusion Award* for providing a therapeutic environment through positive, coercion-free, recovery-focused treatment.



L-R: Drs. Button (holding her award) and McGuirk

Suzanne Button, Ph.D., Assistant Executive Director, Quality & Clinical Outcomes, was recognized with the *Buddhin Praed Individual Outcomes Champion Award* at the recently held 6th Annual CANS Conference in April.

June Helme, LCSW-R, and Jamila Codrington, Ph.D.'s proposal was selected and they presented at the International Summer School of Narrative Therapy in Toronto on June 7th. Their presentation was about their ongoing leadership with Astor's Bronx Child Guidance Center (Tilden Street) Cultural Sensitivity Series.

2010 Holiday Adopt-A-Family Program You Can Help This Holiday Season!

We need your help to donate gifts to the children and families in our programs. Our Adopt-A-Family Program matches children and families in need with volunteers that are able to purchase gifts. Many of the children that we help need basic goods and toys, such as: Winter Clothing; Hats and Mittens; Books; Board Games; Arts & Craft Supplies; Sports Supplies; Stuffed Animals; Gift Certificates.



L-R: Drs. McGuirk, DiBlasi (Assistant Executive Director, Astor's Bronx Community-Based Programs), Kurtz, Eyberg, and Tsoubris (Associate Executive Director, Astor's Hudson Valley Community-Based Programs).

Astor, in conjunction with NYU's Child Study Center, held a successful, inaugural Parent-Child Interaction Therapy (PCIT) Regional Conference for the Northeast region on April 23rd at NYU's Langone Medical Center. The primary goal of the conference was to provide state-of-the-art, evidence-based information about PCIT to beginner and intermediate PCIT Clinicians working with young children who have conduct problems, as well as providing empirically-supported information on a number of PCIT adaptations under investigation. Astor has been on the forefront of this training modality with positive results.

Dr. McGuirk and active PCIT Clinicians from Astor's Bronx and Hudson Valley Programs participated in the conference that was well-attended with over 200 participants.

**Visit our website
www.astorservices.org
for more information**



Every child deserves to have happy memories of the Holiday season. Please lend your support to make this wish come true.

Call Dana Valdez at (845) 871-1171 or email: dvaldez@astorservices.org to learn more about how you can help this Holiday season with gifts to families in need, or visit us online at www.astorservices.org. Thanks for your support!



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St. Nick's Craft Fair Sunday, Dec. 5

9:30am – 4:00pm
6339 Mill Street, Rhinebeck, NY

**Please participate in our
2010 Adopt-A-Family Program.**

See pg 7 for details.

Save the Date!

**13th Annual Stenberg Cup
Golf Tournament**

Monday, June 13, 2011
Trump National Golf Club – Hudson Valley

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Hudson Valley Reception
May, 2011

DID YOU KNOW...

- Astor serves over 6,000 children, adolescents and their families each year in 25 locations in the Hudson Valley and in the Bronx, NY.
- Astor is a trusted provider of quality children's services for over 55 years.
- Astor is accredited by the Joint Commission since 1974.
- Astor is recognized as a National School of Excellence by the US Department of Education.

