

Creative COMMUNITY
SERVICES, INC.

because we care



CCS Adventure Youth Program

ANNUAL REPORT

2010 July 1, 2009 -
June 30, 2010

CREATIVE COMMUNITY SERVICES



our
MISSION Creative Community Services’ mission is to improve the quality of life for children, adults, and families who are facing special challenges through community-based support and services.

who are those
FACING SPECIAL CHALLENGES? In Georgia, an estimated half a million children and adults are living with serious mental health conditions and illness, and another 75,000 with developmental disabilities.

- Mental illnesses are medical conditions that disrupt a person’s thinking, feeling, mood, ability to relate to others and daily functioning. Serious mental illnesses include major depression, schizophrenia, bipolar disorder, obsessive-compulsive disorder, post-traumatic stress disorder, and personality disorder.
- Developmental disabilities are physical or mental impairments that begins before age 22, and alters or substantially inhibits a person’s capacity to do at least three of the following: take care of themselves, speak and be understood clearly, learn, walk/move around, make decisions, live on their own, and earn/manage an income.” Common causes of developmental disabilities include chromosomal abnormalities, brain injury around the time of birth, extreme prematurity, drug/alcohol use during pregnancy, poor diet and health care, and child abuse.

The nature of these conditions can cause severe physical, mental, and behavioral issues that make it difficult or impossible for individuals to function in traditional family, school and work settings.

what does
“Community-Based” Mean? One of the core CCS philosophies is that we will provide children and adults with the services and supports they need to live in homes with families, as opposed to psychiatric hospitals, nursing homes, and other institutions.



Message from
Executive Director

CCS HAS PLAYED A MAJOR ROLE IN ACHIEVING PERMANENCY FOR OUR CHILDREN AND YOUTH

The State of Georgia has joined other states in a movement towards permanency for all children. We all agree that the state does not make a good parent-every child deserves a real family.

CCS has worked very hard over the past year to help support our children in achieving this goal by being adopted, having foster parents that become the child’s guardian, returning to their birth family or relatives and becoming successfully independent with the foster family being their family connection forever. Over a dozen children have achieved permanency this year. This is phenomenal because most of these children have been in state care for over ten years.

We have also expanded our services to provide support services to children and youth and their families to help prevent hospitalization or out of home care. The team has been able to achieve this goal by offering families respite, life coaching and a family support partner.

CCS is also very proud of the additional services we have been able to provide to children with Developmental Disabilities who have also been abused and neglected. CCS has worked very hard over the past year with the State of Georgia to obtain funding through Medicaid waivers to successfully serve these individuals. These children no longer fall through the cracks or age out of care with no place to go or services to help them.

Georgia has also worked very hard to help individuals, with a development disability, move out of hospitals to live in the community. Many of these individuals have lived for years in the hospital and have challenging behaviors. CCS is proud to announce that we have been able to successfully help with this transition.

We want to thank the State and our community partners for their help in making it possible to provide our new and expanded services. This has been achieved through partnership and collaboration and Because We Care.

Sally L. Buchanan

our PROGRAMS

THERAPEUTIC FOSTER CARE (TFC)

Our TFC program brings children ages 3 to 18 who have special needs together with dedicated foster care families who are highly trained to meet their needs. Children admitted to TFC homes are unable to live with biological families and are difficult to place in other foster homes due to their high level mental health needs or challenging behaviors. Therapeutic Foster Care allows these children to stay in family homes instead of psychiatric residential facilities. In 2010, we served 61 children through this program.



DID YOU KNOW:

- Creative Community Services, Inc. (CCS) was created by Sally Buchanan in 1988 as the first TFC program in Georgia
- TFC is not the same as state funded foster care. Typically, a child has moved through 15-20 state foster homes before they become eligible to come under CCS's care.
- The ultimate goal for TFC is progress in a positive direction that will result in a permanent home or plan for children. This can include re-connecting with family, moving towards adoption, or progress towards adult independent living.
- The CCS team approach involves Family Consultants (case management staff) who coordinate care between foster parents, therapists, psychiatrists, DFCS case workers, and school system staff.
- CCS TFC foster parents are carefully screened, highly trained, and receive 24-hour support to ensure that children benefit from the most experienced care available.
- No CCS foster family has more than 2 children, to allow for individualized services.
- The average length of stay for a child in CCS' care is over three years; this is evidence of the stability provided by our specialized care and homes.
- 60% of children leaving CCS last year transitioned to a less restrictive and/or permanent living arrangement.

our PROGRAMS

SUCCESSFUL TRANSITIONS THROUGH EMPOWERMENT AND PLANNING (STEP)

DID YOU KNOW:

Initial outcomes of the STEP Life Coaching Program show that:

- 100% of youth in the STEP Program are participating in Individual Service Plan (ISP) development and goal setting through Life Coaching,
- 75% have identified a caring and stable adult connection,
- 91% have maintained a stable placement and reduced disruption
- 97% indicate increased awareness of community resources available to them as they transition out of foster care.
- In 2010, the STEP Team offered 34 Community Youth Group activities to the youth in CCS Programs. Opportunities ranged from eating out at new restaurants, going to the Bodies Exhibition, Cirque Du Soleil, Advocacy events through EmpowerMENT, and a Community Scavenger Hunt.
- In 2010 CCS partnered with the Teen Parent Connection to expand our program to provide Life Coaching to pregnant/parenting teens in state care.

The STEP program provides essential supports for teenagers with special needs who are preparing to transition to independent adulthood. CCS provides supported transitional housing, Life Coaching, and youth group activities centered around life and social skill building, education and employment training, and community engagement. By providing necessary supports while normalizing the youth experience through peer-based programming, CCS helps prepare young adults for managing the realities of adulthood. In 2010, we served 39 children/young adults through this program.



our PROGRAMS

RESPITE PROGRAM

Respite serves families parenting a child with special needs by providing short-term or temporary care services. By providing rest from the behavioral, physical, and medical demands of parenting a child with special needs, respite care provides critical support and helps keep families intact. CCS provides several types of respite, including:

- Planned Respite, which provides parents and foster parents with scheduled breaks
- Assessment “Interim” Respite, which serves children who are transitioning between foster care placements
- Crisis Respite, which provides a safe home and crisis stabilization services for children who are currently homeless and may be experiencing psychiatric crisis

In 2010, we served 81 children and their families through our Respite program, providing a total of 5,661 respite days.

DID YOU KNOW:

- Respite care has been found to reduce caregiver stress, promote child well-being and safety, and promote family stability. (Department of Health & Human Services, OEI; 1998)
- Respite offers consistent support to children and families, creates alternatives in crisis situations, and widens the treatment team.
- Planned respite improves crisis stability.
- Children in Crisis Respite receive assessments and appropriate medical and psychiatric treatment, which facilitates more timely permanent placement.

our PROGRAMS

ADVENTURE YOUTH PROGRAM

DID YOU KNOW:

- Adventure Youth staff provide round-the-clock care with no shift changes and a low child/staff ratio, which allows children and staff to get to know each other and build trusting relationships.
- Adventure Youth excursions are offered year-round, in both week-long and weekend formats. Each trip is limited to 20 children.
- Adventure Youth also provides respite for the caregivers of these children, who struggle on a daily basis to manage doctor and therapy appointments, medication dosages and side effects, and the consequences of behavioral problems both at home and at school.
- Adventure Youth costs \$276 per child for a weekend trip, which includes all gear and supplies, food, and staff.



Adventure Youth Program is a camp that provides a hands-on and therapeutic outdoor experience for our kids, who typically are not appropriate for the traditional summer camp experience. An important part of our community-based and family-oriented philosophy is to provide the same opportunities for our children that other children experience.

The campground is a “tree house village” setting where children can experience nature, animals, food, and excursions in a quiet country setting that they may have never experienced before. The children participate in a variety of activities including kayaking, canoeing, hiking, bicycling, candle making, soap making and more. The camp is also a “working” experience for the children in that they assist in preparing homemade meals, clean-up, straightening the campground, and other elements of running the trip, which builds skills, confidence, and leadership in the children. In 2010, 126 children and youth participated in Adventure Youth, which also serves children from 7 other child welfare agencies from across the Metro Atlanta area.

our PROGRAMS

DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES

Development Disabilities program provides support services to adults and children with developmental disabilities and their families that allow these individuals to remain in the own homes and communities, as opposed to nursing homes or institutions. With a goal of empowering and supporting adults with developmental disabilities to reach maximum individual potential, the DD program is about quality of life enhancement. Beginning with an initial interview, the CCS “person-centered” planning approach ensures individualized serves to promote independence and success for each client.

Service options include:

- Community Residential Alternative Services: Independent Living Skills are provided in the community in a Host Home, Community Living Arrangement or a Personal Care Home.
- Community Living Support Services: Independent Living Skills are provided in the community- in the individual’s family home or individual’s personal home.
- Respite Care: Provided in the community at a Host Home for individuals who are in need of temporary care overnight.

Services include home-based supports for adults and their families, case management, respite for family members, life and social skills activities and development, education and training, medical supports, employment support, and community engagement. The DD program helps each individual live independent and healthy lives to the fullest extent of their capabilities, and we served 90 individuals through this program in 2010.

DID YOU KNOW:

- Developmental Disabilities occur before the individual reached the age of 22 and is likely to continue indefinitely.
- 1-3% of the American population has been diagnosed with mental retardation.

our FOSTER PARENTS

MELINDA JORDAN



Melinda Jordan has been a foster parent with Creative Community Services since 1991. Over the past nineteen years, Melinda has worked with a variety of children who have severe emotional disorders as well as developmental disabilities. Melinda is a patient, nurturing parent who empowers and advocates for the children in her home. She is committed to the children in her care and is dedicated to maintaining them in her home, even when they are resistant to treatment and services.

Melinda partners with members of her CCS team and collaborates with other providers in order to support the perma-

nency goals of the children in her care. Recently, she worked closely with the youth in her home and the youth’s birth family and helped successfully reunite them.

Even after nineteen years of fostering, Melinda is eager to work with new populations and to pursue new learning opportunities. She attends monthly foster parent support groups and acts as a role model for recently certified parents.

Melinda Jordan is a great asset to the agency and a skilled provider for children with severe emotional, behavioral, and developmental challenges. We are fortunate to have her as part of the CCS family!

quick facts
ABOUT CCS

- Creative Community Services has 100% participation from staff and board members in supporting our agency’s mission. By donating money each month through “Investment in Life”, they all show how they truly care about our children and adults, as well as the programs designed to help support and protect them.
- Costco joined Creative Community Services as a community partner in August. They have supported our agency again this year by supplying school backpacks and supplies to all of our school age children and teens.
- **CCS hosted a brunch for all of the 2009 high school graduates.** Many thanks to all who contributed and partnered in making the brunch such a huge success. This event recognized and applauded the amazing accomplishments of the following graduates: Lonnie E., David G., Ava L., Peter M., Reggie R. and Dwight W. The graduation brunch was truly THEIR moment, and each one of them shined.

My Participation in the Junior National Young Leaders Conference

By: Daryl K.

My reaction to being accepted to participate in the Junior National Young Leaders Conference was one of joy and excitement. The week that I spent in Washington, DC was no exception to that feeling. From the day of my arrival until my trip home, the experience was awesome! During this week, I learned so much about being a good leader. This exposure will last me a lifetime. My Journey of Leadership included LeadershipGroup Meetings where we were taught the impact of leadership traits: character, communication, goal setting, problem solving, respect, and teamwork. We had field study experiences which included visits to the following sites the Capitol, Lincoln Memorial, Jefferson Memorial, Vietnam Veterans Memorial, Korean War Veterans Memorial, the Washington Monument, the Washington Mall and much more. We traveled to Harpers Ferry, site of a Civil War Rebellion and learned about John Brown. This has been a wonderful experience, one that I will always treasure. I can never repay those persons who made this possible for me. I would like to give a special thanks to Creative Community Services for not hesitating to make it all a reality for me.



OUR COMMUNITY IN ACTION

Gourmet, Grapes, & Giving (G3) Virtual Auction

CCS had its very first Gourmet, Grapes, & Giving (G3) Virtual Auction online in September 2009. We would like to thank the following individuals who either donated auction items or sponsored CCS:

Air Tran Airways	Ms. Jan Curtin	NorthStar Printing
Mr. and Mrs. Woody Alpern	Ms. Damara Davidson	Mr. James Perschbacher
Mr. Jeff Armstrong	Distinctive Pet Sitting	Mr. and Mrs. Trevor Quander
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Mr. Jack Chilton	Mr. Mike Moon	
Mr. William Ching	Nelson & Mullins	



John’s Creek United Methodist Church

Members of John’s Creek United Methodist Church had a work day and gave up their Saturday to do much needed yard work for our host home in Suwanee. We are very appreciative!

Thank you to everyone who sold and purchased Macy’s Shop For A Cause coupons.

CCS Respite Department

The CCS Respite Department provided Crisis Respite services to a young female teen who was due to deliver her baby any day. Upon learning what baby items she needed, a call went out to CCS and all MAAC Partners. Within hours, the donations of baby items started to pour in. The teen received an infant car seat, bassinet, swing, stroller, diapers, blankets, clothing, onesies, etc. The CCS Respite Department would like to extend a huge THANK YOU to all Partners and Staff who gave so graciously. The teen had a 7 lbs and 2 oz girl. The mother and daughter are healthy and have a great start with the contributions you've made. THANK YOU!

CCS DD Department

One of the goals of our DD program is to encourage our homes to help the people we serve become a part of their community. From encouraging them to move towards independence by choosing their own meals and helping to purchase, and even cook, those meals to taking part in sports and community events, CCS wants it all for our program participants. With a little prompting and assistance, it's amazing what our people can do!

Two of our DD participants have been busy creating works of art and have had their work displayed at the Gwinnett County Fair in September.

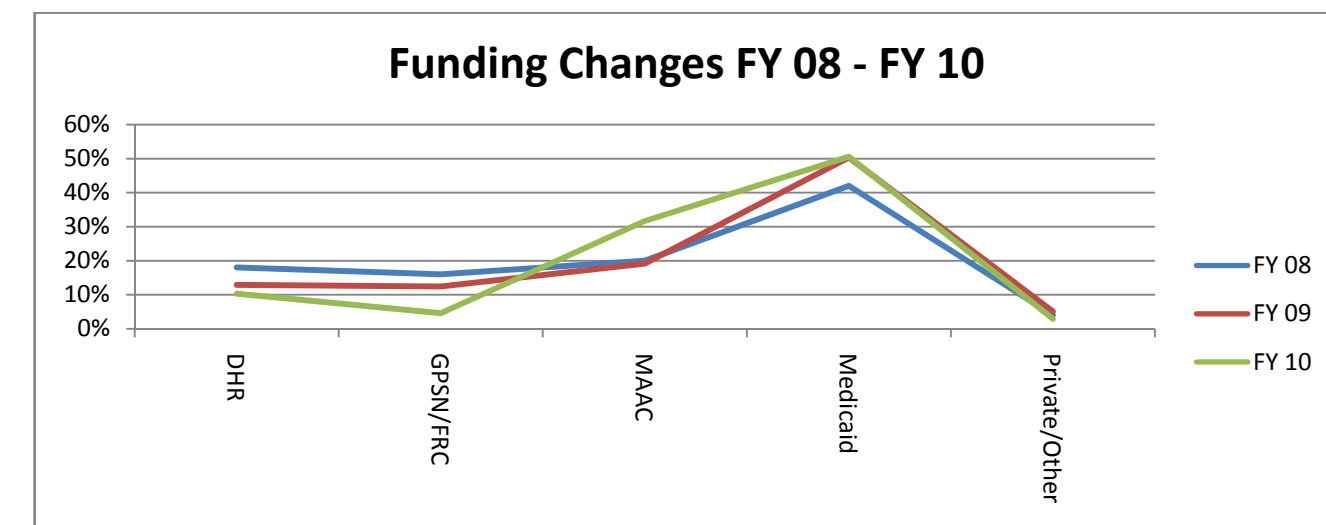
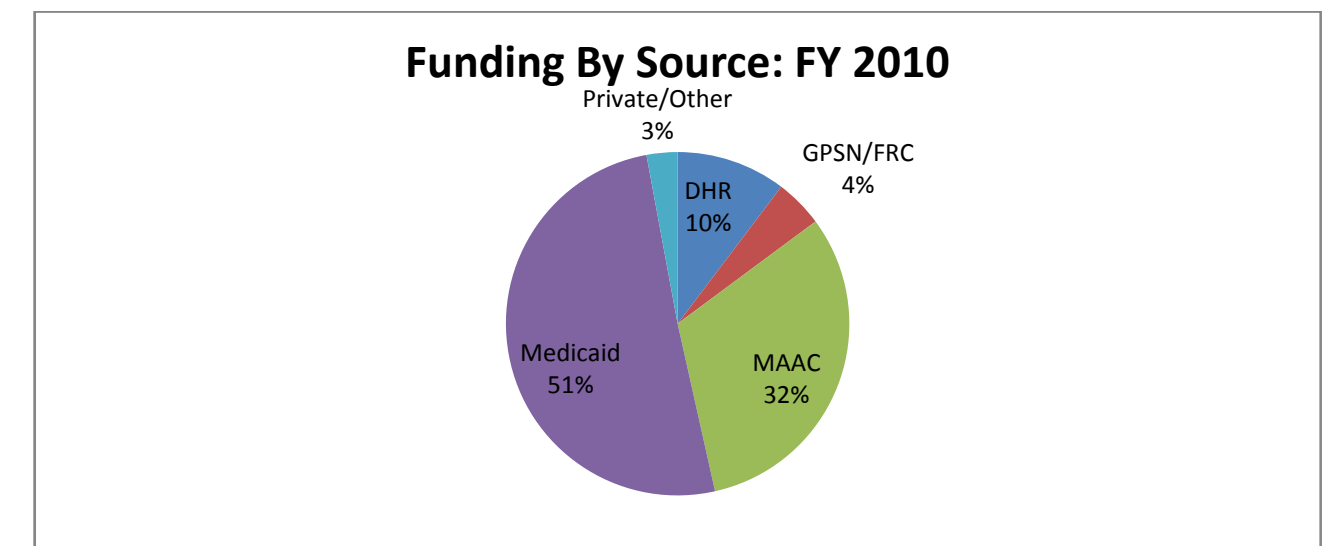
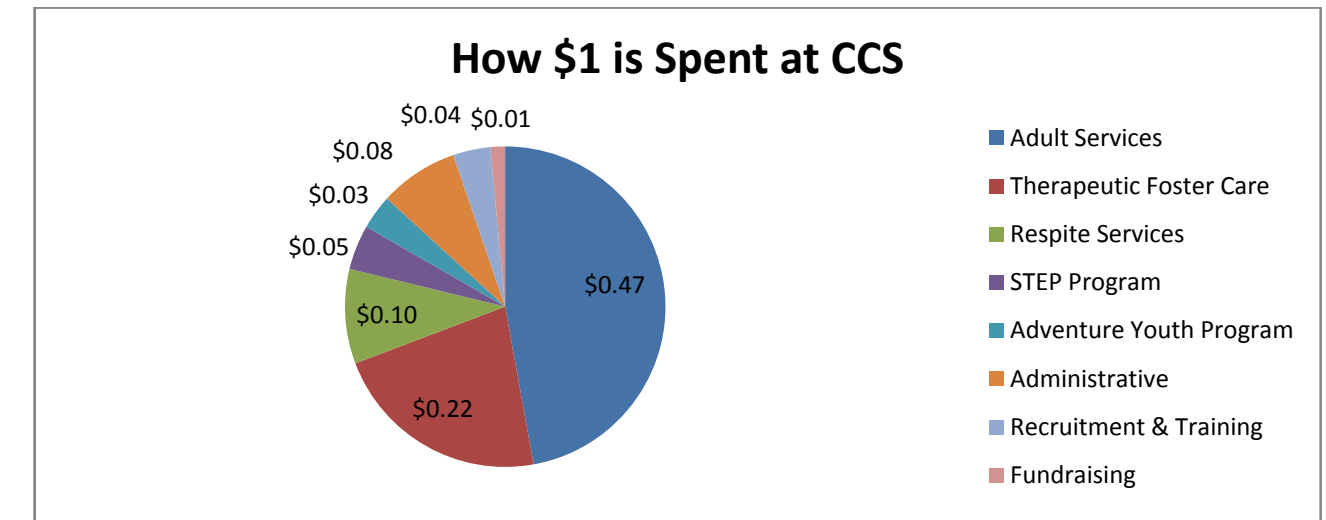
David, who is rarely spotted without his camera, entered a photograph of a covered bridge that he took while on vacation in Indiana this summer. He loves taking pictures of his friends and giving them the pictures when they are printed. David also spends his leisure time bowling and playing softball and he never met a microphone he didn't love! (Go, Elvis!). He likes to attend First Tuesday, a once-a-month program of First Baptist Church Snellville, where he and his peers enjoy socializing together.

David goes to Creative Enterprises during the day and has a very full and busy life and a smile to prove it!

Christy loves to do most any type of craft, but it was her painting that earned her a ribbon at the fair. Just as bright and cheerful as her paintings are, Christy has a great sense of humor and loves to laugh. She participates in First Tuesday, as well, and also attends Creative Enterprises for her day program. Keeping busy and spending time with her peers and friends are what Christy likes to do best.

You can see some of the beautiful artwork from each of these talented folks displayed on the walls in the CCS office. We love to celebrate the accomplishments of our people!

FINANCIAL INFORMATION



A Look Back at Our Special Events

As a community-based organization, CCS depends on the support of our community to do this important work. We host numerous events throughout the year, and community friends and supporters are always welcome:

- Annual Spring Picnic – foster and host families gather with staff, Board, volunteers, donors, and clients for a park play day
- Back-to-School – A time-honored tradition, each year supporters of our children make sure that they head back to school with backpacks full of brand-new school supplies to promote educational success!
- Christmas Wish Lists – Individual, families, church groups, civic organizations, and companies make holiday wishes come true for our children and adults each year, by sponsoring Christmas wish lists for each child and adult in our care.
- Holiday Parties – The children and adults we serve come together with their foster and host families and CCS staff and volunteers to share some holiday cheer including fun activities, lots of food and a visit from Santa!



CCS Would Like to Thank Those that Have Served on the Board during FY 2010

Julie Jones
President

Quinn Howard
Vice President

Kirk McMillan
Treasurer

Board Members

Kelly Bertier

David Danley

Damara L Davidson

Beatrice Kelly

LaKaya Quander

Trevor Quander

Robin Speir

Samori Self

Jacki Suckow



**Board Member, Robin Speir and Peggy Cottonreader,
Foster Parent Advisory Panel liaison to the Board**

THANK YOU DONORS

FY 2010

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WITH YOUR SUPPORT...

In the 2009-2010 fiscal year, Creative Community Services provided community-based supports and services to improve the quality of life for 372 total individuals.

