

Special COVID-19 Edition

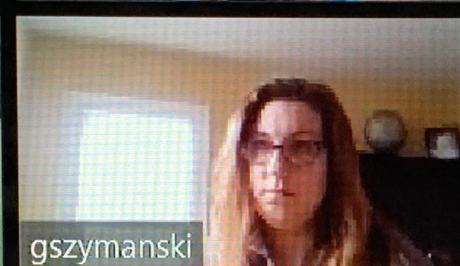
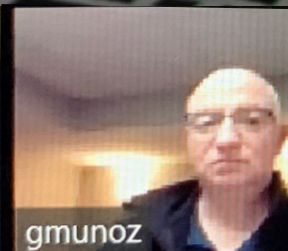
c&fs

Child and Family Services

Portraits of Hope

New President and
CEO Elizabeth
McPartland Leads
Child & Family
Services During
COVID-19 Crisis

C&FS Now Working Remotely



NEW PRESIDENT & CEO CONSISTENT THROUGH UNPRECEDENTED CHALLENGE



Shortly after being announced as the next President and CEO of Child & Family Services, Elizabeth McPartland began to lead the Agency through a time of unprecedented change. As news of the Coronavirus, also known as COVID-19, swept through our nation and around the world, Child & Family Services began to adapt and transform the way we operate and deliver services. This health crisis that plagues our community has forced us to re-examine our business and program operations through a new lens in order to provide uninterrupted services to everyone who needs them, especially during a time of such uncertainty.

Elizabeth's more than twenty years of experience with Child & Family Services spans across the Agency, ranging from administrative to clinically-based programming to Chief Operating Officer. Her transition to President and CEO has been consumed by the Agency's response to the COVID-19 crisis. "In my time with Child & Family Services, I have witnessed first-hand the incredible dedication that exists throughout our organization," she said. "I am in awe of the resilience our workforce has demonstrated this past month to transition their jobs in order to provide uninterrupted service delivery."

In the middle of March, Child & Family Services transitioned to providing remote service delivery for many of our programs with the exception of residential and child welfare programming. This includes Children's Residential Treatment and Haven House shelter, Erie County's only-licensed domestic violence shelter. Every day, workers in our child welfare programs check on families in their homes, to ensure they have enough food and basic necessities, and that children are safe from abuse and neglect. The Agency has equipped our staff and programs with training, and medical and protective supplies to maximize their safety while they work to keep our community protected.

The dedication of our team resulted in a great accomplishment for the Agency – every program has remained open! Mental health counseling, employee assistance, mediation services, vendor services and more now offer telephonic and web-based services. The Stanley G. Falk School has also proceeded with distance learning. Elizabeth remarked, "I have never been so proud to lead this 147-year old organization that prides itself on ensuring the health and safety of everyone we serve, particularly during a time when our community needs it the most."

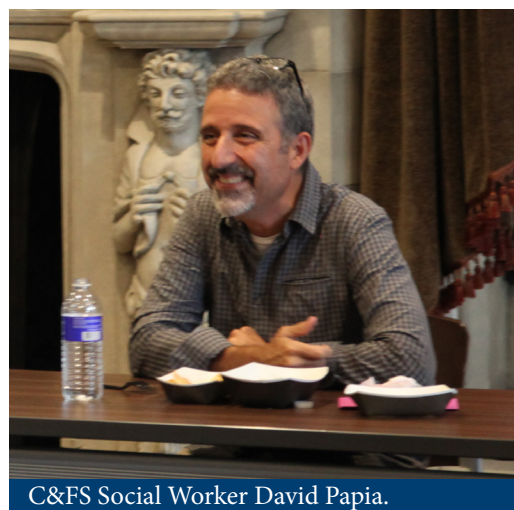
If you or anyone you know needs help, please call 716-842-2750. Please remember, help for domestic violence victims is available. Please call Haven House's 24-hour hotline at 716-884-6000.

A COMMUNITY UNITED

David Papia contacted Scott* and Angela* on Friday. They had been self-quarantined for five days with their newborn, Ava,* and David wanted to check in to see how everyone was doing. During their call, Angela shared that she was concerned about their diaper supply. They were running low, but the new parents were nervous about going to the store to purchase more in fear of bringing the virus back to their home and daughter.

Hearing this, David immediately took action. He went to a nearby store and purchased diapers. He then called the Walters to tell them that he was going to leave the diapers on their porch. Stressing the concern of social distancing, David asked them to wait ten minutes to retrieve the box.

The Walters were touched by David's generosity. "We couldn't thank him enough," Scott said. "In a time when nothing seems to be certain, David showed us that our best resource is the neighbors we have in our community."



C&FS Social Worker David Papia.

JOIN OUR C&FS TEAM TO HELP WNY

In these uncertain times, here's what Child & Family Services knows. We are here for our clients. We care about the safety of our staff. We are working with the best in our community for the best for our community.

We know times are tough, but we can get through it together.

“In spite of the uncertainty, Child & Family Services stays committed to helping our community,” said Collin Gehl, Talent Acquisition Manager. “Many of our services are deemed essential and we need interested individuals to join our team to make a positive impact on lives of the others. Consider becoming a part of our family today!”



One area where that positive impact matters immediately is our Residential Services program. “Child Care Therapy Aides have the opportunity to support youth and families throughout their treatment, teach, and engage youth in normalized activities,” said Dana Szalay, director of Residential Services. “We held a holiday party in December. Some children had families attend, while others did not. One child was disappointed that family was not there. An aide stayed with him to see Santa, play games, and share a holiday dinner. At the end of the party, the child looked at the aide and said, ‘Thank you! This is the first time I met Santa and got a gift! This is the best day and even better because you were with me!’ It is that type of stability that these children so badly need, particularly in times of crisis like now.”

To apply or to learn more about other open positions, please visit cfsbny.org/employment.



Gretchen Szymanski, Director of Clinical Services and Family Mental Health, working remotely from home.

MENTAL HEALTH CLINIC STAYS OPEN TRANSITIONS TO TELEHEALTH

Relieved! That is how Brad* felt when he found out he could get the medication he needed. Child & Family Services' mental health clinic is open through Telehealth. Brad's clinician, a licensed practical nurse and our psychiatric provider could work together to get what he needed in minutes, just as if they were in their offices. Telehealth offers counseling sessions through teleconference or telephone. Gretchen Szymanski, Director of Clinical Services at Child & Family Services explained, “It is especially important, particularly in the situation that we are in right now with elevated stress levels. The potential for increased anxiety and depression from social distancing in our community, as a whole, is significant.”

Telehealth is an option Child & Family Services had been considering because it can remove some of the barriers to care that existed before the COVID-19 pandemic, such as transportation. Implementation was greatly accelerated as regulations were significantly relaxed. It took an exceptional team effort to get all of the infrastructure in place. Szymanski said, “It's been a combination of feeling overwhelmed and in awe of what an amazing team we have at Child & Family Services.”

We needed to rapidly change the way we do business in the midst of COVID-19, but we haven't changed our focus on our clients. One child couldn't wait to show their counselor their room, something that would never have been possible before. Without this option, Szymanski explained, “There would be a lot of people without the support that they need at a scary time that we have never experienced before.” Instead, we are connecting in new ways to make sure our clients are not alone. Staying connected is a relief for us all.

*Name changed to respect confidentiality.



Child and Family Services

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Counseling Offices, Suite 110
3901 Genesee Street
Cheektowaga, New York 14225
(716) 842-2750

Center for Resolution & Justice

Tri-Main Center
2495 Main Street, Suite 357
Buffalo, New York 14214
(716) 362-2323

Cheektowaga Counseling

3901 Genesee Street
Cheektowaga, New York 14225
(716) 681-5718

Connors Children's Center

824 Delaware Avenue
Buffalo, New York 14209
(716) 884-3802



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Buffalo, New York 14214
(716) 681-4300

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330 Delaware Avenue
Buffalo, New York 14202
(716) 842-2750

Foster Care and Adoption

824 1/2 Delaware Avenue
Buffalo, New York 14209
(716) 882-0555

Haven House

Domestic Violence Hotline
(716) 884-6000

Stanley G. Falk School

848 Delaware Avenue
Buffalo, New York 14209
(716) 882-0090