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A MESSAGE FROM PRESIDENT & CEO, ELIZABETH MCPARTLAND

"In every conceivable manner, the family is a link to our past, bridge to our future."

— Alex Haley, Pulitzer Prize-winning author of *Roots*

I am proud to announce that Child & Family Services has been awarded five new contracts that are aligned with our planned growth of community-based programming. Each of these programs focuses on keeping children and families together in their homes and diverting costly out-of-home residential placements and hospitalizations that can further traumatize a child and their family. I am grateful to our government partners for recognizing this critical need and providing funding to make it happen.

C&FS' Parenting Education Program supports caretakers to identify and use their strengths when parenting a child displaying behavioral challenges. Our Preventive Services program has doubled in size and supports the needs of families who are experiencing stress and trauma and are at risk of out-of-home placement for the child. Our new Family Visitation Program offers a warm, welcoming space for family members to visit in a supervised setting, while Respite Care offers kinship caregivers a break to relax and rejuvenate. Finally, the Youth Assertive Community Treatment program will address the mental health needs of children and adolescents in Erie and Niagara Counties by providing intensive home and community-based clinical services to the youth and their families.



Desmond Truesdale, Parent Enrichment Specialist within the Parenting Education Program, and Michael Sweeney, Preventive Supervisor in Family Preservation.



The innovative approach interwoven throughout these programs is the use of evidenced-based practices. Evidence-based practices are interventions that are vetted and researched over time and have proven effective rates. We are pleased that our new programs are offering high quality services to families in the region.

Our work is tailored to meet the unique needs of our families and addresses safety, permanency, well-being and stabilization. This programming gives greater access to children with child welfare involvement or mental health needs and improves support for caregivers throughout the community. Thank you for supporting our efforts as we strengthen families and promote the well-being of children.

Sincerely yours,

Elizabeth McPartland



STRONGER TOGETHER: HINKLES ADDS FIVE TO THEIR FOREVER FAMILY

“We’ve been waiting for this day for a very, very long time,” said Roberta Hinkle after she and her husband Kevin adopted five siblings. Cassie, Jordan, Eli, Jack and Mia spent 1,647 days in Foster Care. Their adoption got a lot of attention in the community as it was the first in-person adoption since the start of the COVID pandemic. It is also unique to see five siblings adopted into one forever family.

It took fierce advocacy, coordination across programs and agencies and the commitment of the foster parents to make this all possible. Morgan Schumacher, Program Manager of Foster Care and Adoption explained, “We created partnerships and shared responsibilities, always trying to get closer to a home with all the siblings.” Child & Family Services was there to support each child and emphasized the importance of the sibling bond. “That was how we made our final decision,” explained Roberta, “We just couldn’t bear the thought of them not being together.” Now, they will share milestones and memories as a forever family.

You can learn more about foster parents like the Hinkles by calling (716) 882-0555.



Valerie Brown points out a former student in a photo in the hallways of the Rossler campus.

35 YEARS AND GROWING AT THE STANLEY G. FALK SCHOOL

In 1986, the number one movie in America was *Top Gun*, Whitney Houston's self-titled debut album topped the charts, and citizens linked the Atlantic to the Pacific with "Hands Across America." It was also the year that Stanley G. Falk School first opened its doors.

Now celebrating its 35th anniversary, Stanley G. Falk School has seen much change. "I can't believe it – 35 years!" laughed Falk teacher Valerie Brown. "Something is working!"

When Falk was founded, the maximum occupancy was 24 students in only four classrooms. During Valerie's 31 years at Falk, the school's location changed. More buildings were added. Technology evolved. "We are absolutely ahead of the game in terms of technology," raved Valerie. Also, new programs were implemented. There are now more than 540 students at Falk.

The Falk School represents more than just academics to its students. The relationships they build with teachers provide security – someone who will work to understand them as individuals. "I think forming a genuine, trusting relationship is 80% of what matters to the kids here," said Valerie. "The other 20% is academics."

The trust built stands the test of time. "I remember being at a Child & Family Services dinner years ago when a gentleman came up to me to say hi. You know you can recognize somebody in their eyes? He looked familiar," Valerie remembered. "It was a student who was in my very first class. His name was Chris and he was there with his wife, who worked for Child & Family Services. Chris was doing great!"

Valerie paused for a moment, deep in thought. She said, "Isn't it amazing how things come full circle like that?"

MAGGIE NICHOLS USES RESOURCES TO HELP OTHERS

Magdalena (Maggie) Nichols' connection to Child & Family Services is rooted in a deep sense of service. She finds true purpose and fulfillment, as she said, "in helping to make a difference in the lives of children and families in our community and beyond," setting an inspiring example through her commitment to all those we serve. How fortunate we are that Maggie is a member of the Board of Directors at C&FS!

At the age of eight, Maggie and her family relocated to Buffalo from the Democratic Republic of the Congo through the refugee resettlement process. Currently, Maggie serves as Chief Operating Officer of Jericho Road Community Health Center, providing life-changing medical services to communities around the world, including both the Congo and Buffalo.

When she first learned of C&FS, Maggie was seeking information on the legal guardianship process for her niece, who has benefited tremendously from being in her care. "People often don't know which direction to take or how to navigate these systems. C&FS makes it clear," Maggie said. The quality of programming has provided much needed structure and stability in her niece's life, and she is glad to see her to continue to grow and flourish.

In helping to steer the future direction of C&FS as a board member, Maggie stressed the importance of incorporating social determinants of health into our programming, which she said not only help the community but also our employees. C&FS' Employee Assistance Program (EAP) is tremendously important to her, as it provides much needed support for employees who may be facing challenges in their personal and/or professional lives. Maggie noted that C&FS sets an excellent example for quality EAP programming.

Also of great value to Maggie is a commitment to Diversity, Equity and Inclusion. From the moment she joined the board, she was thrilled to see a direct effort to implement DEI initiatives at C&FS. "At Child & Family Services, DEI is not just about checking off a box. The Agency is all about intentionality and is committed to seeing it through. As part of the board, I've always felt that I have a voice and that I am heard."

When asked why she gives to Child & Family Services, the passion and enthusiasm behind Maggie's words really shines through. She gives with joy and out of the goodness of her heart, and she has a firm grasp on the importance of our programs and services in the local community.

"God gives us resources to make a difference in the lives of others," Maggie said. "What I want is to continue to grow and use my voice to help move forward in whatever way I am called to do so. The reason I give to Child & Family Services is because I truly believe in the importance of the work."



Maggie with her husband and four children.

ALL NEW HEARTLIGHT THIS YEAR!

You told us you how much you liked the casual, family-friendly atmosphere of our virtual fundraiser, but you really want to help in person. We listened! This year, *Heartlight* will have a...

New Look: Concert stage will replace cocktail tables!

New Location: *Heartlight* will be at the Outer Harbor!

New Time: *Heartlight at the Harbor* will be in June!

What won't change is the commitment of supporters like you. "Who doesn't get emotional at *Heartlight!*" chuckled Erin Jordan, CEO of NCAComp, Inc. The local company has been a *Heartlight* sponsor since 2018, and it was one of the first companies to sign up to sponsor *Heartlight at the Harbor*. For Erin, it's all about supporting the mission of Child & Family Services. "When you take care of a child, it makes an impact on them and gets paid back to the community for decades," Erin explained. "It creates a ripple."

We look forward to celebrating this positive impact with you next to the waters along the Outer Harbor. *Heartlight at the Harbor* is an outdoor concert event for the entire family on June 9. There will be food trucks, spirits, a 50/50 raffle, and **Nerds Gone Wild** bringing back the fun of the 80's.



Erin Jordan, CEO of NCAComp, Inc., with her family.

THURSDAY, JUNE 9
DOORS OPEN - 5:30 P.M.
CONCERT START - 6:00 P.M.

BUFFALO OUTER HARBOR
LAKESIDE PARK
825 FUHRMANN BOULEVARD
BUFFALO, NY 14203

HEARTLIGHT AT THE HARBOR

TICKETS AT [CFSBNY.ORG/HEARTLIGHT](https://cfsbny.org/heartlight)



NERDS GONE WILD
(80s Cover Band)

\$20 PER
TICKET

\$50 VIP
TICKET

OR CODE FOR
TICKETS





Child and Family Services

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Child & 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

Conners Children's Center

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

Employee Assistance Program (EAP)

Tri-Main Center
2495 Main Street, Suite 357
Buffalo, New York 14214
(716) 681-4300

Downtown Counseling

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
www.cfsbny.org/our-services/hh/hh-chat/

Stanley G. Falk School

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



Child & Family Services of
Erie County, Inc.