

Family & Children's

SERVICE OF ITHACA

FALL 2018 | Vol. 22 NO. 3

INSIDE

How do I help someone considering suicide?

Why child advocate, attorney, and professor, Andrea J. Mooney J.D. loves F&CS



Coming Home

Maya Angelou once said, “I sustain myself with the love of family.”

I couldn't agree with this more. Feeling the love of family and the safety of home is at the core of what we hope people feel after working with staff at Family & Children's Service.

Many of our youth programs are specifically focused on strengthening home life and improving family relationships. Likewise, our clinical program supports countless individuals throughout Tompkins County with the goal of building strong family systems. Sometimes the biggest difference we make is with people who don't communicate with, or identify as being part of, a family. When they turn to F&CS for support, we work to help rebuild connections within themselves and their community.

Our fundraising events have always focused on family and a sense of home. Cayuga at Twilight was 20 years of community members welcoming us into their homes. That event has retired, but this year we are inviting you into our home.

On September 16, 2018 we'll welcome you to 127 West MLK Jr. / State Street to celebrate 10 years in our new home. I hope you will join us to take a behind the scenes look at the work we do; experience first-hand the innovative practices we use—from embodied play therapy to art therapy—and interact with the compassionate staff here at F&CS.

After your self-guided tour, meet us out back where the festivities begin. We will celebrate with delicious eats by Gola Osteria, a performance by the Fall Creek Brass Band, a birthday cake cutting, and live drawings of our fabulous Finger Lakes experience raffles.

I hope you will join the F&CS family in our home.



David Shapiro, President & CEO



Mission Statement: Family & Children's Service of Ithaca supports, promotes and strengthens the well-being of individuals and families by providing accessible mental health care and related social services, with a particular sensitivity to the needs of children.

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F&CS Commits to Being a “Zero Suicide Champion”

On July 18th, the Tompkins County overwhelmingly voted in favor of adopting the Zero Suicide model. The Zero Suicide framework brings a holistic and comprehensive approach to improving healthcare for individuals at risk of suicide.

As a “Zero Suicide Champion,” F&CS will ensure all staff members receive training to identify warning signs and utilize evidence-based prevention and intervention practices to care for someone who may be having suicidal thoughts. Implementing the Zero Suicide model also holds F&CS accountable by providing the framework for an annual review to continually improve and implement current suicide prevention strategies. F&CS will report back to the Tompkins County Suicide Prevention Coalition with what they learn and what changes are necessary for improvement.

Learn more about the Zero-Suicide model at: www.zerosuicide.sprc.org



How do I help someone considering suicide?



Source: www.cdc.gov/vitalsigns/suicide

When experiencing deep emotional pain, whether from mental health challenges or difficult life circumstances, some people begin to think about suicide as an escape from such struggles. You might hear statements of hopelessness, helplessness, isolation, and concerns about being a burden. You might see changes in behavior such as self-isolating, self-medicating with drugs and alcohol, or failing to attend to personal routines.

In these situations, it is important to ask about suicide thoughts in a clear and caring way. It might be as simple as, “Given how much you are struggling with all of this, do you find yourself wishing you were dead? Have you had any thoughts about suicide?” Your questions won’t give people the idea of suicide. Your willingness to ask these questions will show how much you care.

If the answer is yes, you can call the Crisisline (800-273-TALK). If the person you are helping is willing, you can both call the line and talk to a crisis counselor. The counselor will help you decide on next steps, whether it is building a safety plan that keeps the person at risk at home or making a trip to the hospital emergency room.

The Mental Health Clinic of Tompkins County (201 E. Green Street) has walk-in hours from 9 am to 2:30 pm daily. Go with your friend to make sure that the clinic staff understands the risk of suicide. The counselors will conduct a thorough review of the suicide risk and build a safety plan as well as recommending further resources.

If the person you are helping is out of immediate danger and is open to longer-term support, consider suggesting therapy. Family & Children’s Service provides high quality, longer-term therapy. Therapy can help people work with their emotions, strengthen supportive relationships, and develop healthier coping skills. Caretaking for a suicidal loved one can be emotionally taxing. Therapy may be a good option for yourself as well if you need the support.



Lee-Ellen Marvin is the Executive Director and Director of Education for Suicide Prevention & Crisis Service; she is also a storyteller and folklorist, always interested in hearing people’s stories.

Events



Annual Meeting

MAY 2018

Every spring, the F&CS family gathers to celebrate all the people and organizations that make our work possible. Congratulations to our award recipients this year: Lynnette Scofield, Claudia Brenner, and the Cayuga at Twilight Committee!



Community and Continuing Education Workshop Series

FALL 2018

Transform Your Emotional Energy, Transform Your Life: The Bridge Between Psychotherapy and Neuroscience

Anita Devine, LCSW-R

September 19th 1:00pm – 4:00pm

Location: Swieringa Education Center

Cost: Early Registration: \$59.00 | Registration: \$69.00

Credits: 3 CEU credits

The More the Merrier? Understanding Consensual Non Monogamy in our Work with Clients

Stephanie Zuber, LMHC

October 4th 9:00am – 12:00pm

Location: Swieringa Education Center

Cost: Early Registration: \$59.00 | Registration: \$69.00

Credits: 3 CEU credits

Foundations of the Play Therapy Relationship

Ann Beckley-Forest, LCSW-R, RPT-S

October 18th – 19th 9:00am – 4:00pm

Location: Borg Warner Room, Tompkins County Public Library

Cost: Early Registration: \$249.00 | Registration: \$279.00

Credits: 12 CEU credits

12 Step Programs as Cognitive Behavioral Therapy

Gepe Zurenda, LCSW-R

October 31st 9:00am – 4:00pm

Location: Borg Warner Room, Tompkins County Public Library

Cost: Early Registration: \$129.00 | Registration: \$149.00

Credits: 6 CEU credits

Staff in Their Own Words



“The resiliency of my clients inspires me the most at the end of the day. It’s incredible for me to see people go through loss and trauma, and still have the drive to make things better for themselves and to heal their own heartbreaks. To be part of that journey with someone is not only an inspiration, but a privilege.”

Melanie

F&CS Clinician | Specialty: Adults

Seeing the Whole Picture

Conversation with Andrea J. Mooney, J.D.
Clinical Professor of Law.
Advocate for children.
Lifelong supporter of Family & Children's Service.



“ These kids need somebody they can trust. They need somebody that they can go and unload all their stuff on and then go out in the world and be OK. I want to support that.”

Your current and past work have a strong focus on children and especially vulnerable children. What motivates your work?

People ask me that and I don't know. It's what interests me. When I was in college, I just turned on the radio one day and they were looking for volunteers in a special education classroom. So I signed up and just fell in love with it.

My best friend says I'm the most Catholic non-Catholic she's ever met. I've had 13 years of Catholic education. Maybe that's some of it. I was raised in a home and church environment that said you don't just go off and make as much money as you can—that you're part of a community.

How did you first get involved with F&CS?

I moved to Ithaca in 1978 and was looking for work. F&CS was looking for somebody to run their home health care program at the time. I didn't really know anything about home healthcare, but I knew about supervision. I was a special education teacher and I had supervised other teachers before. I got the job and it was great. I worked here from '78 to '81.

Fast forward many years. I became an attorney and went to work at Citizens Concerned for Children—it was then called the Law Guardian Office, and now Attorneys for Children—and many of the children I represented were being seen at F&CS. I always knew that if I called around 5:30 pm, 6 pm I would get Karen [the Director of Clinical Services]. Karen and I would talk about the kids I was representing, what her therapists were doing, and what we needed to do.

What do you wish people knew about F&CS?

How hard the work is. I don't just mean the therapists—I think their work is hard. But I think everybody here has hard work. The people at the front desk who are dealing with people all day long. The billing clerks. Everybody here. It's not easy work.

I know that resources are tight. People are always asked to do as much as they can and then some to stretch the resources much as possible and use the resources well. I think people, and donors especially, should know the money is not wasted. People are not frivolous.

Why do you continue to support F&CS all of these years?

I know what they're doing and I can see the work. I came up here in the elevator today with a therapist who has been working so hard with this client of mine. This therapist is one of the few people that this kid trusts and will talk to. She's had a lot of trauma in her life and I think this therapist will really help to pull her through. These kids need somebody they can trust. They need somebody that they can go and unload all their stuff on and then go out in the world and be OK. I want to support that.

If you had a visual representation of this building, it's holding a lot of pain, it's holding a lot of trauma, it's holding a lot of difficult lives—all while maintaining everyone's confidentiality. I never speak to any therapist about anybody except when I have a court order saying that they can give me that information. They're very careful about that.

What would people be surprised to learn about you?

I was a big crybaby for a lot of years. I was also a very flighty kid. It used to be if you asked anyone in my family they would say, "It's a wonder she can cross the street." We outgrow our identities as children, I guess.

So, there's hope.

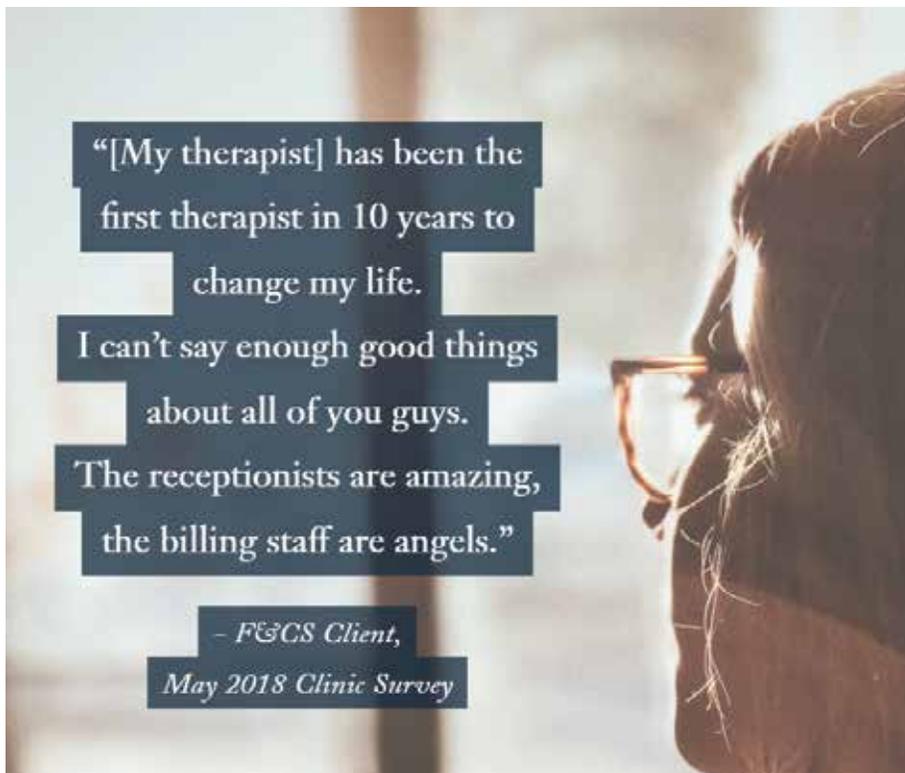
Yes! That's the thing with these kids—they're not the sum total of their bad behavior. They're not the sum total of their traumas. They have strengths. That's what these therapists do here. They see the kids and the families as more than just the set of problems that brought them in here. They see the whole picture.

Member Agency



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RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED



F&CS by the numbers

Jan - Jul 2018



17,934
clinical
appointments



456 children
receiving
mental health care



118
Community
Outreach Worker
clients

GO GREEN! Sign up to receive our newsletter by email: development@fcsith.org