



Quarterly Update

OUR MISSION

CFSUP aims to:

- Strengthen children and families by providing high-quality programs throughout Michigan's Upper Peninsula.
- Provide programs that preserve the dignity and enhance the well-being of families and their individual members, which are provided in a caring, compassionate and professional manner.
- Nurture and empower children and families for a brighter future.

IN THIS ISSUE

New Leadership	2
Before & After School	2
New Homelessness Prevention Assistance	2
New Staff	3
Strengthening Families Weekend Retreats	4
A Word From Norma	5
Events Coming Up	5

"So Tickled to Have a Full House" • *A Foster Parent's Story*

Archbishop William Temple once said that being humble does not mean thinking less of yourself than other people, nor does it mean having a low opinion of your own gifts. It simply means freedom from thinking about yourself at all.

His words ring true when you speak to Tara Fleis about her experiences over the past two years as a foster parent.

Tara and her husband Marc (Tony) became licensed foster care providers through CFSUP after concerns were raised whether they could have a second child of their own.

"My biological daughter was involved with Early On," Tara says, referring to the State of Michigan's early intervention system that provides services for children from birth to age three. "They recommended Child & Family when I moved here from downstate because I was interested in being a foster parent."

The Fleises have since cared for 9 children.

At one time, Tara and Marc had 5 kids under age 5 under one roof. "I was so tickled to have a full house," Tara says. "I couldn't sleep. I just sat there and giggled."

The Fleis' ultimate goal is to adopt one or two children and eventually close out their foster care license, but for now Tara and Marc temporarily care for three youngsters, ages 1, 2 and 4, as well as their 3-year-old biological daughter.

Sound busy to you? Overwhelming? Tara says simply: "It's a lot of fun in my house."

Tara says the kids learn a lot from one another. "It's like their own little live-in play group," she laughs. The kids like to do puzzles and color, as well as go camping and do outdoorsy things as a family.

In addition to her full house, Tara is a full-time student studying Management with a Healthcare emphasis. She is currently taking classes online "after bedtime" through Kaplan University. "I originally wanted to study Social Work, but now I can do that at home," Tara laughs. "I do my reading while they play outside with Tony."

Tara says her 3-year-old biological daughter is doing well despite the confusion of kids coming and going. "I worry about her having to say goodbye," she says. "She still talks about kids who have returned to their families. But she understands they're with their family and that we should be happy for them. She's resilient."

"It's not always easy, but you're continuously learning... It's a lot of fun in my house."

As for Tara, she says being a foster mom has "inevitably" improved her patience. "It's not always easy, but you're continuously learning. With kids who have been traumatized and neglected, you have to be quick on your feet. There's no traditional approach to parenting them."

Continued on Page 3

CFSUP Receives Federal Grant • *\$80,000 to help homeless youth*

Child and Family Services received an \$80,000 Basic Center grant from the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services to fund a program called Project: HOPE East, designed to help runaway and homeless youth in Chippewa County, where there are currently no emergency services available.

In the first year, Project: HOPE East will serve 13 residential and 17 non-residential youth using host homes for emergency shelter. HOPE East's aim is to reunite youth with their families when possible, to encourage stable living conditions and the resolution

of family problems, and to help youth decide on positive courses of action.

The program is an expansion of Project: HOPE West, a similar CFSUP program that serves Baraga, Houghton, and Keweenaw County youth. We hope to expand Project: HOPE East to serve additional eastern Upper Peninsula counties.

For more information, contact Katie Ritzenhein at (906) 228-4050 ext 107 or kritzenhein@cfsup.org.

Office Space Available

in Chippewa
Square

Call for details.
(906) 228-4050

CFSUP Welcomes Norma Semashko as Executive Director

We are pleased to welcome **Norma Semashko** as our new Executive Director. Since her arrival in July 2009, Norma has been busy meeting staff, reacquainting herself with CFSUP programming and moving the agency forward with new energy. Norma previously worked for CFSUP programs in several capacities, including Diversion, Wrap-around, Families First and the Better Futures Program. Since 2006, she has worked as a Multi-System Therapist and a Clinical Therapist for Genesee County Community Mental Health.

Norma has made children and families her life's work. She is passionate about ensuring that children are given the best possible chance to succeed, making certain that they have the

opportunity to help themselves, and arranging help from others when needed. Norma's favorite CFSUP program was a past mentoring program; she is currently working to get another program in place. Among a sea of other projects, she is partnering with Marquette's court system to bring Multi-Systemic Therapy Services to the Upper Peninsula.

Norma, pictured on Page 3, holds a Master's degree in Social Work from Michigan State University and a Bachelor's degree in Social Work from Northern Michigan University. We look forward to many exciting initiatives and new partnerships as a result of Norma's positive leadership, incredible focus and infectious energy.

Before & After School • *Fun, Convenient, Affordable* Childcare: *What More Could You Ask?*

We offer **Before & After School Programs (BASP)** to elementary-aged children who are enrolled at Sandy Knoll, Cherry Creek, Superior Hills and North Star Elementary Schools. This affordable program is offered in the safety and convenience of your child's school, with the goals to build and support leadership skills, community service, responsibility and respect in the students. BASP offer creative activities, homework time, games, arts & crafts, outdoor activities and all-around positive youth development.

Our staff is proud to be working in collaboration with the "Put the You into Youth" Campaign in association with America's Promise to ensure that children who attend the program receive all five of the fundamental resources children need to succeed: (1) a positive adult mentor, (2) protection in a safe environment, (3) healthy snacks and a nurturing environment for emotional well-being, (4) to be taught that learning is fun, and (5) to be taught the importance of serving your community through service projects.

Our **Kinder Club Programs** at Sandy Knoll and Cherry Creek Elementary Schools are offered for full- and half-days, with discounts for siblings. Kinder Club combines convenient on-site childcare with a curriculum that enhances and expands on what children learn in Kindergarten. Kinder Club teachers work closely with Kindergarten teachers to understand what students are working on and give extra help to students who are struggling in a certain area.

For more information, contact Shelley Young at (906) 228-4050 ext 120 or syoung@cfsup.org.



Above: A budding young artist attends our newest Before & After School Program at North Star.

New Assistance • *Homelessness Prevention and Rapid Re-Housing*

New help is available for families in several counties that are homeless or are at risk of becoming homeless. With funding from the Michigan State Housing Development Authority (MSHDA), our **Homelessness Prevention and Rapid Re-Housing Program (HPRP)** is part of the 2009 American Recovery and Reinvestment Act. Housing Resource Specialists assess the level of risk for each family, referring low-risk households to other CFSUP housing programs and/or local service providers. High-risk households are provided a housing assessment; the intake assessment process begins within two business days. HPRP funds offers short-term assistance to those who are at risk of becoming homeless and longer-term assistance to those residing on the street, so that they may obtain and sustain housing. Funds also go toward providing financial assistance to suit clients' needs, including back rent and utilities.

For more information about Homelessness Prevention and Rapid Re-Housing in Menominee County, contact Chasity Hruska at (906) 290-1650 or chruska@cfsup.org.

In Marquette and Alger Counties, contact Brooke Nyman or Cyndy Rankinen at (906) 228-4050 ext 106 or bnyman@cfsup.org and crankinen@cfsup.org.

In Baraga, Houghton and Keweenaw Counties, contact Christina Mayworm at (906) 523-5601 or cmayworm@cfsup.org.

All Aboard! • As We Enter Our 90th Year of Service, New Faces Abound

• Accounting

AnnaLynn Adams joined the staff in March 2009 as the Accounting Specialist. Originally from Marquette, AnnaLynn holds an Associate's degree in Business and a Bachelor's degree in Accounting from Northern Michigan University. Her responsibilities at CFSUP include accounts payable, accounts receivable, general ledger, contract accounting, and other billing responsibilities. AnnaLynn, pictured at right, previously worked as a bookkeeper for Frei Chevrolet.

• Grants & Fundraising

Bobbi Nease joined CSFUP in September 2009 as the Grants & Fundraising Coordinator. Bobbi, pictured above right, holds a Bachelor's degree in English/Writing and a Master's degree in Technical Writing from NMU. Her responsibilities include researching funding opportunities, authoring proposals, developing programs and partnerships, planning fundraising events, and contributing to communications projects. Originally from Marquette, Bobbi has written grants and other communications for several local organizations, most recently the Central Upper Peninsula Planning and Development (CUPPAD) Regional Commission.

• Marquette Wraparound

Jessica Ketchem joined CFSUP as the Wraparound Coordinator for Marquette County in April 2009. Originally from Marquette, Jessica holds a Bachelor's degree in Social Work from NMU. She completed an internship with CFSUP in our Child Welfare Division and previously worked as a Therapeutic Assistant in Marquette General Hospital's Youth Psych

Unit. As a Wraparound Coordinator, Jessica, pictured below right, coordinates services for children and their families, assists families in developing an appropriate plan, monitors the progress of services and supports, facilitates team meetings, and advocates for families.



Above: Norma Semashko, Bobbi Nease and AnnaLynn Adams

• Homelessness Prevention

Brooke Nyman, Chasity Hruska and Cyndy Rankinen joined the staff as Housing Resource Specialists for the Homelessness Prevention and Rapid Re-Housing Program (HPRP) in October 2009.

Brooke, pictured at right, is working for CFSUP through AmeriCorps. Brooke holds an Associate's degree in Criminal Justice from the University of Phoenix online, and is currently working towards a Bachelor's in Human Services. Before joining our staff, Brooke worked for Lutheran Social Services of Wisconsin and Upper Michigan, Inc.

Chasity, not pictured, holds a Bachelor's degree in Social Work from NMU. Prior to working for CFSUP, she worked for UPCAP Services' Long Term Care Connection as a Social Worker.

Cyndy, pictured below, has 10 years of experience working for human service agencies. She previously worked for the Women's Center as the Program Manager of the Families in Transition Program. Cyndy also served as Coordinator for the Marquette-Alger Continuum of Care for the Homeless from 2000 to 2006.

Christina Mayworm joined CFSUP as Housing Placement Specialist in Houghton/Keweenaw/Baraga Counties in September 2009. Christina, not pictured, administers various homeless prevention programs for the agency and assists clients with emergency needs and referrals. Christina worked for the Department of Human Services for over 5 years as a Clerk, Eligibility Specialist, and Children Services Specialist. She also worked for Keweenaw Bay Indian Community in the Outpatient Counseling Office for 7 years.

Our HPRP staff members conduct outreach with local service providers to identify persons in need of housing; increase access to existing services through information, referral, and advocacy; provide assistance locating emergency shelter; perform housing quality inspections; engage in mediation with landlords to resolve landlord/tenant issues; and provide follow-up support.



Above: Cyndy Rankinen, Brooke Nyman and Jessica Ketchem

A Foster Parent's Story

Continued from Page 1

CFSUP's Child Welfare Workers regularly admire Tara's creative approaches to helping her kids and responding to their individual needs.

"What works for a well-adjusted child might not for them," Tara says. "Their needs are always changing, as they're continuously going through things, and as

they develop. You have to be able to change things based on what they're feeling or how they're responding."

"You just stay really in tune with them, that's all," Tara says thoughtfully. "Eventually everything just fits. I think the more you go, the easier it gets. This past placement was the easiest for me, but I think it's because of my previous experiences."

One current "placement" is 2-year-old Adam*, who is severely delayed in lan-

guage. In addition to going to regular speech language therapy appointments, Tara and Marc work with Adam to learn sign language, which helps him develop his lagging language skills.

Tara says her philosophy is that she treats every child as if he or she were her own. "I think about my own daughter, if she ever had to be in care for one reason or another. How would I want her to be treated?"

Continued on Page 4

Strengthening Families Program • *Weekend Retreats a Hit*

Our Strengthening Families Program (SFP) hosted two weekend retreats during the summer of 2009. About 15 families attended the retreats, which were held at Clear Lake Education Center in the Hiawatha National Forest in Schoolcraft County and Presbytery Point on Lake Michigan in Marquette County.

Attendees included adoptive families, as well as single parent and two-parent families. Many families were self-referred, but a few came as a result of a referral from other community agencies.

“We do the entire SFP curriculum during our retreats,” says Ashley Jenema, our

SFP Coordinator. More commonly done as a 7-week course where families meet once a week, “SFP helps families to explore more techniques for communication and encourages family activities.”

“The most memorable part of our retreat was when we had a campfire and planned to roast marshmallows,” says Ashley. “A rainstorm came in, but we stayed out anyways because the kids were really looking forward to it. It was so nice to see the parents sticking it out and making s’mores with the kids.”

“We are currently pursuing funding for future retreats,” says Ashley. “We hope to be able to do this every year at various

locations throughout the U.P.”

Strengthening Families Program is an evidence-based educational program designed for parents with children ages 6-11 and 10-14. The program builds on a family’s strengths, while guiding parents on how to show love and set limits. SFP also helps youth develop skills in handling peer pressure, setting goals and building a positive future.

The Strengthening Families Program is free to all families. Contact Ashley Jenema at (906) 228-4050 ext 122 or ajenema@cfsup.org.

A Foster Parent’s Story

Continued from Page 3

Tara’s biological daughter apparently shares this outlook: “She treats each kid as if it were her brother or sister,” Tara says, laughing. “When new kids come in, she accepts them really fast. I see her with Adam—he’s been with us for 8 months now. She’s very protective of him.”

Tara’s advice for those interested in being a foster parent? “Be open-minded. It’s hard but it’s really enjoyable.”

Tara says she frequently hears how hard

it would be for other people to be a foster parent because they’d have to give the kids back. “It’s hard, yes. And you don’t always agree with what’s happening, but it’s not our place to choose,” Tara says wisely.

“I can’t know what’s best for them. So I just look at it as, we’re giving them what we can while we have them. We just pray that it works out for them. It’s not always easy, but it’s no excuse not to give them something. Someone has to do it.”

**Name changed*

***Open your heart.
Open your home.***

We are in need of licensed foster care homes, with a special need for placement of youth ages 8 to 14.



Call for details.
(906) 228-4050

Let Us Know • *How can we communicate better with you?*

Please return this portion for more information or to change the way you receive our communications.

Child & Family Services of the Upper Peninsula, Inc.
706 Chippewa Square, Suite 200
Marquette, MI 49855

NAME _____	PHONE _____
ADDRESS _____	E-MAIL _____
CITY/STATE/ZIP _____	

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Please update my address. | <input type="checkbox"/> I'd like information on CFSUP's programs. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> I'd like to receive the newsletter electronically. | <input type="checkbox"/> I'd like information on estate planning. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> I'd like information on volunteer opportunities. | <input type="checkbox"/> Other. Please use the back to communicate with us. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> I'd like information on a sustaining membership. | |

From the Executive Director

Dear Friends,

"What does this economy mean for our children and families?" is a question I have been hearing a lot lately. It's a question that deserves careful consideration and thoughtful action.

Children are particularly vulnerable to changes in the economic environment and social conditions. What can we do for our community's families and their children? We can assure them that their basic needs (like food, clothing, shelter, nurturing caregivers and caring, compassionate teachers) are met. Now more than ever, we need to invest our limited resources wisely in evidence-based, effective programs and policies—those that have proven to work after independent evaluation.

I am extremely honored to be joining Child and Family Services of the Upper Peninsula again. I am thrilled to be writing my first letter to all of you as the new Executive Director. It's been a tremendous four months so far and I appreciate everyone being so willing to take the time to sit with me as I learn about the opportunities and challenges we face.

The economy is troubling to everyone lately, but especially to those that provide services to our most vulnerable citizens—*children*. CFSUP is a patchwork quilt of diversified funding. We are sustained by private philanthropy, special events and the United Way, as well as federal, state and local contracts and grants. Rest assured that CFSUP will continue to forge new alliances, contract/grant opportunities and other tools to strengthen our organization, expand our reach and further diversify our funding.

My hope for Child and Family Services of the Upper Peninsula is that we continue to be a leader and a highly respected organization in the eyes of funders and donors, clients and consumers, and the community. As we move forward, we'll build on the success of CFSUP and commit ourselves to further organizational achievement and growth. I know that working as a team, we will be able to achieve great things.

What a remarkable history this organization has seen for the last 90 years—not only all of the good we have done, but also the obstacles we've overcome. We look forward to continuing to work with our community to make sure that children, our most valuable resource and most enduring legacy, have what they need and what works the best for them, especially in these unsettling times.

~Sincerely,




Executive Director
Norma Semashko

Board of Directors

Julie Frazier

President

Joan Miller

1st Vice President

Doug Morton

2nd Vice President

Anne Rydholm

Treasurer

Pamalene Grundstrom

Secretary

Lorna Addison

Thomas Clark

Lois Cohodas

Cathy Crimmins

Kathy Frazier

Al Hendra

Toyo Kaumeheiwa

Mary Knauss

Nancy Lutey

Rick Nebel

Karen Reese

Joyce Sauer

Darin Sizemore

Keli Truckey

706 Chippewa Square

Suite 200

Marquette, MI 49855

Phone: (906) 228-4050

Fax: (906) 228-2153

child&family@cfsup.org

Coming Up • *What We've Got In The Works*

90th Anniversary Celebration

In August 2010, we will celebrate our 90th anniversary with the production of a play, written by a Northern Michigan University student. The play will showcase six stories, three from elderly U.P. residents reflecting on their experience with the orphan train as orphans in the early 1900s, and three from families who are currently or have recently used our foster care or adoption services.

Ice Fishing Fundraiser

We will host an Ice Fishing Tournament Fundraiser on February 13, 2010 on Teal Lake in Negaunee. Families and avid fisherman alike are encouraged to buy tickets, which will be sold individually and at family rates. The event will have prizes, hot beverages and kids' games. *For more information, contact Bobbi Nease at (906) 228-4050 x 112 or bnease@cfsup.org.*

Operation Good Cheer

We will continue to participate in the annual Operation Good Cheer gift-giving program. Airplanes loaded with Christmas gifts will make their way to 4,870 children in foster care, residential treatment and group homes. In 2008, 38 foster children in placement through CFSUP had their Christmas wishes come true thanks to the generosity of donors and volunteers.

**Child & Family Services of
the Upper Peninsula, Inc.**
706 Chippewa Square, Suite 200
Marquette, MI 49855

**Child & Family Services of
the Upper Peninsula, Inc.
Quarterly Update
Fall 2009**

Child & Family Services of the Upper Peninsula, Inc., is a private, non-profit, non-sectarian agency that has been serving Michigan's Upper Peninsula with programs for youth and families for 90 years.

Working collaboratively with the Department of Human Services, community mental health agencies, state and local law enforcement, health departments, substance abuse treatment providers, hospitals, prosecutors, the courts and the school systems, CFSUP strives to strengthen children and families by providing high-quality social service programs.



**When you contribute to
Child & Family Services,
you really are changing a life.**

- You are helping a family get back on their feet after a rough time.*
- You are allowing a child a chance to safely remain with their family.*
- You are giving homeless and runaway youth HOPE.*
- You are providing youth a safe place to go before & after school.*
- You are offering alternatives for at-risk youth and their families.*
- You are equipping families with the skills to be healthy and happy.*
- You are preparing youth for a bright, successful future.*

**You are strengthening families
and brightening futures.**

- Adoption • Before & After School Program • Botvin Lifeskills Training • Counseling • Diversion • Family Outreach • Family Support Program • Foster Care • From Decisions to Actions • Housing Assistance Recovery Program • Homelessness Prevention and Rapid Re-housing Program • Homeless Prevention Program • Homeless Youth Initiative • Juvenile Incentive Program • Kinder Club • Project: HOPE Basic Centers East and West • Strengthening Families Program • Supportive Housing for Youth Program • Wraparound •