



Child and Family Opportunities, Inc.

“KID’S COURIER”

Volume 9—Fall 2010

SOMETHING TO SMILE ABOUT !

COLLABORATIVE DENTAL PROGRAM TO PROVIDE SERVICES IN WASHINGTON COUNTY COMMUNITIES



Child and Family Opportunities, Inc.
(CFO) Administrative Offices and
Ellsworth Early Care and
Education Center
18 Avery Lane Ellsworth, ME 04605
207-667-2995 or 1-800-834-4378
www.childandfamilyopp.org

CHILD AND FAMILY OPPORTUNITIES BOARD OF DIRECTORS

- Grant Lee, Chair - Ellsworth
- Elizabeth Ehrlenbach, Vice Chair -
Trenton
- Pat Shellnutt, Treasurer - Ellsworth
- Mary Beth Dorsey, Secretary -
Franklin
- Jennifer Prout, Policy Council
Liaison - Jonesboro
- Melody Havey - Lamoine
- Ernie Reisman - Cooper
- Ann Sargent Slayton - Steuben
- Walter Kumiega - Little Deer Isle
- Roger Raymond - Bucksport
- Dottie Farrar - Brooklin
- Nick Henry - Penobscot
- Doug Orville,
Executive Director - Ellsworth

Helping families find and access comprehensive health care is a cornerstone of Child and Family Opportunities, Inc. philosophy. In Down East Maine however, there are significant barriers to achieving this goal. One of these barriers is a lack of health care providers in our rural areas and this is starkly illustrated in the field of dental health. According to a report titled *Maine’s Rural Health Challenges* (written by JD Lenardson and published in January 2007 by the Muskie School of Public Service), “Maine has far fewer dentists than the nation as a whole, with 48 dentists per 100,000 residents in Maine compared with 64 dentists per 100,000 throughout the U.S.” The dentists are also concentrated in Maine’s populous areas as illustrated by the fact that in 2002 Washington County was reported to have only 29 dentists per 100,000. Hancock County also falls below national average with only 46 dentists per 100,000 residents. Furthermore, as Lenardson reports, “Nearly 50 percent of Maine residents lack dental insurance compared to 13 percent who lack health insurance. While MaineCare covers dental care for children and emergency care for adults, many dentists refuse its coverage due to low reimbursement, paperwork burden, and patient no-shows.”



Brian Le showing his teeth on Dental Health Day - Ellsworth ECEC

As an agency, CFO works to identify challenges that families are facing, and then devotes time, energy, and staff power to find creative solutions. Often, this involves collaboration with other agencies to maximize services, efficiency, and networked support to families. This year, through collaborative work with the Washington County Children’s Program (WCCP), in partnership with the New York University College of Dentistry (NYUCD), an opportunity has arisen to provide comprehensive dental care for 2 years for the children and families in our programs. Starting in October 2010, NYUCD will be sending a team of 30 dentists, hygienists, and 4th year dental students, including 5 pediatric dentists, to Machias to provide dental care to the residents of Washington County. Students enrolled in CFO’s Head Start programs will be given priority to receive services, as will be students from CFO’s Child Care programs, and students from the Rose M. Gaffney School. Services will also be extended to people of all ages in the community. All services offered, from cleanings to crowns and extractions, will be free. To address other barriers that families face, Washington Hancock Community Agency will be coordinating transportation to assure that families can make and keep appointments. Pam Gagnon and Ellen Savage, CFO Health and Family Partnership Managers, will be working to help families fill any gaps in transportation needs, and make sure all necessary documentation is completed so that everyone can take advantage of this opportunity.

To receive our newsletter, learn more about CFO programming, or to support our work

visit us online:

www.childandfamilyopp.org

or contact:

Rachel Nobel at

1-207-667-2995 ext. #223

racheln@childandfamilyopp.com

“We are delighted to work with the dental program of WCCP, Caring Hands of Maine, and the New York College of Dentistry to provide dental services for our children and families in Washington County” said CFO’s Associate Director of Program Operations, Britt Urh-Morse. “There is a shortage of dental providers in Washington County, and yet there is so much information linking dental health to overall health. It is critical that children and families receive good care. Projects like this highlight the need for strong collaborations to serve our communities, and we are so thankful to have dedicated partners to work with in providing our communities with resources to support their health and well-being.” In addition to this program, CFO will continue to work with families both in school and one-on-one to provide education, resources, and support in health care.

MEET DOUG ORVILLE—CFO EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

With a Master's degree in Business Administration, a Bachelor's degree in Computer Science, and over 10 years of leadership and consulting experience in the non-profit sector, Doug Orville has been named the new executive director of Child and Family Opportunities, Inc. (CFO) based in Ellsworth.

"Taking the helm of such a quality organization with an inspiring vision for helping young children and their families is a dream come true," shares Orville. With new programs starting in Ellsworth for both CFO's Healthy Maine Partnership and CFO's early education programming, the agency is gearing up for a busy fall season. Additionally, this is a particularly exciting time for CFO. This year the agency begins celebrating its 40th anniversary as a leading nonprofit in the field of Early Care and Education in Washington and Hancock Counties.

Orville's strong leadership credentials extend to his career experience as well. He is a retired Major from the US Air Force where he specialized in software development and spaceborne computer technology. After leaving military service he turned his sights to the non-profit human service and education sectors where he held senior leadership positions for two community action agencies, a large educational non-profit, and ran a small private consulting business. He has significant experience in strategic planning, finance and community development. Doug and his wife Lynn recently moved to Ellsworth from western Pennsylvania, and have quickly become involved in the local community. This fall the family will be hosting two AFS foreign exchange students who will be attending Ellsworth High School.

FACING THE FUTURE**A MESSAGE FROM CFO BOARD CHAIR
GRANT LEE**

Grant Lee extending a warm welcome to Doug Orville - August 2010

It's an exciting time for CFO! After an extensive search, we're pleased to welcome new Executive Director, Doug Orville, to the agency. Doug will be building upon the achievements of our past leader, Jeanie Mills, who is moving on to new opportunities after 20 years of service. We celebrate both of their successes as they begin these adventures and tackle new challenges and opportunities.

This transition provides CFO with a unique opportunity to revisit our strategy for the future. As an agency that is responsive to the needs of children and families in Washington and Hancock Counties, it is our responsibility to make sure we ask ourselves challenging questions that address these changing times. We do so to ensure that our vision for the future, and the plan for pursuing that vision, is up-to-date, relevant, and achievable.

We will use this time to look at where we are, where we've come from, and where to go next. We know that the answers to the questions we ask will not reside in one person, but will be found in the whole CFO community. Staff, parents, volunteers, clients, funders, and partners possess valuable insight and knowledge that will help CFO be the best it can be in service to our clients, and in representation of our stakeholders. The Board of Directors is excited to be working with Doug and the entire CFO team as we move toward the good work that lies ahead.

**HEALTHY PENINSULA EXPANDS COMMUNITY HEALTH PROGRAMS
IN ELLSWORTH AND SCHOODIC AREAS**

Healthy Peninsula

In July, the Maine Center for Disease Control awarded CFO a one-year contract to expand the HMP work of Healthy Peninsula (HP) to the Ellsworth and Schoodic areas. This contract will extend HP services to 16 more towns in Hancock County.

To facilitate the project, CFO hired Kenneth Miller, a community health coordinator, to work out of HP's new Ellsworth office. Prior to joining HP, Miller worked for the Union River Healthy Communities program, the former HMP provider for the greater Ellsworth area. Miller's work with Healthy Peninsula will include reducing tobacco use among youth and adults, supporting management and prevention of chronic diseases such as diabetes, asthma, and COPD, and assisting local businesses and organizations in adopting worksite wellness practices.



Welcome Kenneth Miller!
HP health coordinator in
Ellsworth /Schoodic areas.

Supervising work in the Ellsworth and Schoodic areas will be Amy Vaughn, director of Healthy Peninsula, who is currently engaging community input by developing an advisory committee and coalition specific to the Ellsworth area. She is joined by Denise Black, a community health coordinator responsible for substance abuse prevention efforts and increasing opportunities for physical activity in the Blue Hill and Ellsworth areas, and Marybeth Judy, a registered dietician and Nutrition Manager, who is expanding her responsibilities to create new opportunities for parents of young children to receive support and education about healthy eating. Healthy Peninsula will also be providing stipends to teachers or staff at Sumner and Ellsworth high schools to coordinate youth advocacy programs beginning in September.

PARENT POLICY COUNCIL**MAKING SURE THAT EVERYONE HAS A VOICE
AT THE TABLE**

CFO believes that parents should have a strong voice in agency governance and decision making. To support this idea parents are provided with the opportunity to serve on CFO's Policy Council. In this way, dedicated parents and community representatives serve on the Council, and work in conjunction with the Board to make important agency decisions. In adherence to Head Start Performance Standards, Council responsibilities include:

- Developing, reviewing and approving policies
- Reviewing and approving funding applications
- Approving short and long term agency goals and objectives
- Developing criteria for enrollment and selection
- Assisting in communicating with all parents regarding their rights and responsibilities, and providing opportunities and encouragement to their participation in the program
- Assist parent committees in planning and coordinating and organizing program activities for parents
- Assisting in recruiting volunteer services from parents, community residents and community organizations
- Working to resolve community complaints about the program

The Council convenes on a monthly basis, with meetings covering a variety of topics. Parents share information from their centers, receive training, and serve on a variety of sub-committees including Health Services Advisory Committee, Child Development Committee, and Personnel Committee. Each Council annually elects liaisons to the Board of Directors.

Policy Council is a vehicle for parents' voices to be heard, and is invaluable to the organization as parents have important insight into what works, or does not work, for families and young children. For members, being a Policy Council representative is often the first step to serving on boards and committees of all kinds. Many parents pursue serving on school boards, agency boards, and volunteering for other groups, and often cite CFO's Policy Council as where they learned about their potential to serve their communities in a decision making capacity. For members, benefits include creating life long friendships with other parents, peer support, and opportunities to represent parents at the state and regional level. Annually, members are invited to attend conferences around the New England region—often a deeply enriching experience. As one parent said after attending a conference in Rhode Island earlier this spring, "It's official; I'm a Head Start groupie."

WANT TO KNOW MORE? OUR WEBSITE HAS INFORMATION ABOUT GETTING INVOLVED AT CFO, PROGRAM NEWS, AND EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES. CHECK US OUT AT:

www.childandfamilyopp.org

**QUALITY MATTERS IN EARLY CARE
AND EDUCATION**

Science is telling us more and more about the development of the human brain. We now know that the most critical period for brain development occurs in the earliest years of life, and at this time the foundation for the future architecture of the brain is developed. Variables that impact the foundation for brain development are a child's interactions with the physical environment, and interactions with parents and other care givers.

A child's development of communication and interaction improves through positive practice with adults. These interactions become the foundation for future healthy social and emotional development. In families with working parents, children can spend a significant amount of time in the care of others. Parents need to know that their children are in the care of individuals who will encourage development through positive interactions, and by providing a safe, stimulating environment.

In 2008 Maine initiated the Quality for ME program to assure that parents have relevant information and excellent options when choosing child care. Quality for ME is a four-step quality rating system (QRS) that measures family child care homes and child care centers against a set of standards. Providers on Step 1 meet basic standards, while providers on Step 4 meet all of the state's highest quality standards. Although participation in Quality for ME is voluntary, participation is a requirement for providers who accept children who receive voucher subsidies.

Child Care Opportunities Resource Development Center (CCO-RDC) plays a major role in improving the quality of early care and education programs in Hancock and Washington Counties, and in providing child care information to parents. When parents call the CCO-RDC seeking child care, staff can provide specific information on which programs are enrolled in Quality for ME, what step the program is on, and whether or not the program accepts vouchers. Judy Nevells, Resource and Referral Specialist, also provides the parent with information and materials on what to look for when seeking quality child care. This assists parents in evaluating child care options for their child, whether or not the program is enrolled in Quality for ME.

For child care providers, the CCO-RDC provides low-cost training in both counties. Trainings help providers meet annual training requirements, as well as help them meet requirements for professional development, and advance in the Quality for ME system. The Quality for ME specific trainings provide levels of technical assistance and consultation, and career development support.

This year, between 10/1/2009 and 8/24/2010, the CCO-RDC staff were very busy. Altogether the CCO-RDC provided 321 hours of training to 150 child care provider participants in Maine Roads to Quality training. In addition, 94.5 hours of trainings were provided on elective subjects to 386 participants. 254 hours of technical assistance were given to child care providers in that timeframe.



Child and Family Opportunities, Inc.
18 Avery Lane P.O. Box 648
Ellsworth, Maine 04605
Phone: 207-667-2995
Fax: 207-667-2212
www.childandfamilyopp.org

GARDENING FOR TODDLERS—INTEGRATING OUTDOOR LEARNING WITH NUTRITION

In July the Infant/Toddler classrooms at the Ellsworth ECEC received a fabulous seasonal donation from local business EBS Building Supply to purchase child-sized garden tools, compost, and soil for the building and maintenance of two raised garden beds.

While enjoying one of the most lush summers Maine has seen in years, and recognizing an opportunity to integrate outdoor learning with nutrition, Mary Beth Judy, CFO Nutrition Manager, dreamed up a gardening project, and sought out assistance to fund the building of raised garden beds for the Ellsworth infant/toddler classrooms. When presented with her idea, EBS shared in her vision, and the project began. “I am so happy EBS shared our philosophy!” Mary Beth said. “We believe that all children deserve the chance to learn about the food they eat, and should have the opportunity grow fresh fruits and vegetables. When children are involved with planting seeds, they start to understand that food does not start out at the grocery store, and that the seeds they find in fruits and vegetables can be planted to grow more food. Additionally, they eat more vegetables when they grow them themselves.”

When the gift was received, Karen Bowden, IT lead teacher, organized a garden party for volunteer parents and their children. An afternoon of enthusiastic digging, hammering, and mulch mixing resulted in two 2ft. by 6ft. raised beds for the center’s youngest gardeners. Local gardeners, Chris Keith from Seal Cove and Tammy Turner from Tremont, were inspired by the project and donated healthy seedlings including tomatoes, cherry tomatoes, and garlic chive plants for the children to enjoy immediately. EBS staff, David Radcliff from the Blue Hill store and Mike McGowen in Town Hill, also helped the project with their time and expertise.



Karen Bowden with toddlers Felicity Evans and Angie Song planting vegetables in the new garden beds.