

Vicarious Trauma

Colorado Juvenile Council presented "WHY DO I FEEL SO BAD": "Vicarious Trauma" by Cynthia Geissinger MSW. Cynthia is an agency trainer with the Denver Department of Human Services. She received her B.A. from Vassar College and her MSW from Colorado State University. She has been involved in human services for over ten years. Cynthia counseled battered women and was a group facilitator for eight of those years. She has been a trainer, consultant, and professional public speaker since 1987. She has extensive training personnel in law enforcement, victim/witness offices, probation departments, non-profits, community coalitions, and volunteer groups.

The Vicarious Trauma Central Workshop was held at Denver Human Services on October 24, 2002. The workshop addressed everyone who works with or around people in crisis who is affected by the Trauma of victimization. This phenomenon of Vicarious dramatization (or traumatic counter transference) impacts us in a dramatic and durable way. Many of us either deny that it exists or try to believe that it is not impacting us on a daily basis. This session explored the roots and symptoms of vicarious trauma's impact on the interventionist and her or his organization, its effect on the victim, and strategies from mitigating and deleterious effects.

Cynthia received very high ratings on her evaluation of the workshop. Some of the written comments were:

"She was very enthralling and presented information in a real life type of way. She held my attention throughout the presentation and touched on many imperative subjects/issues."

"I felt a strong impact on my outlook on the way I've been feeling. Cynthia made me feel so relieved when she explained that all things I've been feeling are NORMAL"

"She was funny & used good analogies to illustrate her points. She was a dynamic speaker"

"Cynthia you are an awesome speaker. You really kept my attention, you are HILARIOUS! Laughing really released tension from my secondary trauma"

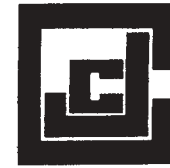
"Excellent material. Well presented, lively! Good metaphor. Make a lasting impression! Handouts were good, really appreciated the debriefing info"

ADDRESS SERVICES REQUESTED

Colorado Juvenile Council
P.O. Box 100247
Denver, Colorado 80250



Bulk Rate
U.S. Postage
PAID
Denver, CO
Permit No. 4199



CHINOOK



www.colorado-juvenile.org

October 2001

A Publication of the Colorado Juvenile Council

VOLUME 25•NUMBER 6

WORDS FROM OUR PAST PRESIDENT

SUCCESS THROUGH EXPLORING DIFFERENCES was our theme for the 2002 conference held May 8 - 10. Each year the Board of Directors has a long debate over a conference theme. Last year we decided that we wanted to explore some of the differences we run into in our work with youth, and some alternative methods to deal with the different issues and kinds of people we see.

The 2002 Conference began with an energetic and inspirational keynote presentation by Mohammed Soreano-Bilal. Mr. Bilal was chosen for his youthful, motivational style and his extensive work in the field of diversity, Mr. Soreano-Bilal entertained and educated the audience with his talk on the "12 Steps to Diversity". Although Mr. Soreano-Bilal was stricken by altitude sickness, that did not prevent him from captivating the audience. Additionally, he inspired us by reading his poetry and sharing his personal history. Many people recognized him from MTV (he was on the Real World) and were curious about his "Real World" experience. His incredible energy and powerful optimism gave the conference a great start.

Overall, the feedback from the membership was that the workshops were informative and entertaining. The presenters explored diversity at many different levels. The workshop topics included one about "normal" sexual behavior, neurodevelopmental and genetic disorders, treatment and advocacy for refugee families and the many faces of youth subculture. Alternative approaches to working with youth using play therapy, wilderness therapy, utilizing technology and equine therapy. Some of these workshops were standing room only. The most popular workshops were entitled "Diffusing Differences through Humor" and "At Risk Youth, A Subculture of Poverty; The Classroom as Microcosm".

A highlight of the annual conference, and one of my personal favorites, is the Awards Banquet. The Banquet is one of the ways that Colorado Juvenile Council recognizes outstanding people. Awards went to four remarkable youth, one from each region of the state, four individuals working in our field and one agency. All of the award recipients received a plaque and a video copy of the awards presentation. In addition, each youth was presented with a \$500 check to further their educational goals.

Another tradition is our live auction. The auction benefits Colorado Juvenile Council Foundation which funds the awards given at the banquet. The membership and other CJC supporters donate a variety of items that are then auctioned off by the one and only "Gary Corbett". Gary, who volunteers his time every year, is amazing and entertaining. This year Gary was able to solicit a little more than \$7,000 from those who participated. As some of you may know, Mr. Corbett presides over many exclusive charity auctions in Denver, therefore, we are very lucky to have him each year.

In addition to educating our membership, those who are working with youth, and offering awards to outstanding people in our community, Colorado Juvenile Council provides attendees an opportunity to network. Often, that networking occurs during the social events of the evening. This is a time to relax and get to know others also working with youth.

The conference ended with a bang. Colorado's own Manuelito Good Wind was our closing keynote speaker. He gave us a brief glimpse into the Native American culture and encouraged us all to learn more about our own cultures. Some may have seen him as confrontational as he challenged us to look deeper at our cultural beliefs. Mr. Good Wind ended the conference on a powerful note by reminding us that all of our work ultimately begins with ourselves.

"...reminding us that all of our work ultimately begins with ourselves."

As I ended the year, and passed the position of Presidency on, I had to reflect on how the year affected me. For all the years I have been on the Board of Directors, without question, this was the year that I worked the hardest. As well, it was also the best year for my own personal growth. The Presidency entails an incredible amount of work not only for myself, but also for the Board of Directors as we plan the annual conference and keep up on the day to day business of CJC. I realize that the membership may not always know the work that goes on behind the scenes, or how important it is that we have active support from the membership. We do not receive any support from outside our membership, therefore CJC is only alive because of the membership. Please remember how important you all are as we enter into a tighter economy. We need your continued support, financial and otherwise. So, as I end my term as President, I want to thank the membership for electing me, and the Board of Directors for their dedication to CJC and for supporting me throughout the year. I also want to thank Synergy for allowing me the time needed to fulfill my obligations, and my family for the extra patience and support throughout the year.

Colorado Juvenile Council
Board of Directors

2002
2003

President

Rob Bennett
Bennett Consulting
303-756-3508
dlaura9@qwest.net

President Elect

Matt Friesen
Dept. of Youth Corrections
970-535-9774 x17
matthew.friesen@state.co.us

Past President

Beth Lundin-Martinez
Synergy
303-934-1008
beth.lundin@uchsc.edu

Secretary

Ruth Dillon
Level Best Consulting, LLC.
303-949-8803
ruth@levelbestconsulting.com

Treasurer

Joel Painter
The Jacob Center
970-484-8427

Child Care Placement Rep

Olivia Barraza-Kee
Jefferson County DHS
303-271-4156
obarraza@co.jefferson.co.us

Western Vice-President

Nick Hruby
Mesa County Probation Dept.
970-257-3600 x3685
nick.ruby@judicial.state.co.us

Social Services Representative

Karen Williams
Denver Dept. of Human Services
720-944-1024
Karen.Williams@dhs.co.denver.co.us

Institutions Representative

Kent Moe
Rite of Passage
303-766-3000
kmoe@ropco.com

Probation Representative

Linda Baumgartner
SB 94
303-662-5954
linda.baumgartner@judicial.state.co.us

Judicial/Legal Representative

Vacant



Editorial Contributions
Contributions for articles must reach the executive office by the first day of every odd numbered month. Mail to:

Ardeth Stitt
2211 W. 27th Avenue
Denver, CO 80211
Office (303) 964-6987
Fax (303) 964-2976

Southern Vice President

Vacant

Central At Large
Janet Borowski
DAYS Paths Program
303-654-0465
janet@xenogate.com

Central Vice President

Brandi Thomas
Jefferson County DHS
303-271-4157
blthomas@co.jefferson.co.us

Northern At Large

Darlene Diechert
Dept. of Youth Corrections
970-535-0774 x
Darlene.Diechert@state.co.us

Northern Vice-President

Charlene Giggy
Adams County DHS
303-412-5128
charlene.giggy@state.co.us

Legislative Representative

Kevin Van Donselaar
Denver District Attorney
720-913-9127
kjav@denverda.org

Western At Large

Paula Mattas
Mesa County Partners
970-245-5555 x15
pgadventures@aol.com

Alternative Placement Rep

Jeff McDonald
1st Jud. Dst. SB 94 JAC.
303-271-4568
jeffm@jeffcojac.org

Mental Health Representative

Gretchen Ferreira
Level Best Consulting LLC
303-949-6501
sgferr@attbi.com

Education Representative

Ardeth Stitt
Denver Public Schools
303-964-2987
ardith_stitt@dpsk12.org

Southern At Large

Doug Lehman
Ft. Carson
719-577-3357
Douglashlehman@cs.com

Law Enforcement Representative

Tim Leon
Grand Jct. Police Dept.



is published six times a year by Colorado Council.



"Remember Me?"

The author of this poem is Karin Clint. Karin is a former Adams County foster child who had a very traumatic childhood and was in and out foster care beginning at age seven. At age sixteen, she began working with the Chafee Foster Care Independence Program (formerly ALIVE/E), and moved into the Independent Living Arrangement Transitional Living Unit at age seventeen. Karin was a very responsible member of the program and chose to remain involved in the aftercare component of the program even after her social services case was closed. She has continued to grow and mature, and is now a mentor and co-facilitator of the skills groups for youth entering the Chafee Program. She also works with the program performing clerical duties for the youth development part of the program. In addition, Karin is the mother of a three-year-old son and served for a year as a kinship foster care provider for her younger brother.

Karin was featured last year on a Channel 9/KUSA news segment for National Foster Care Month. So far, 2002 has proven to be a busy year for Karin. In April, she was chosen to join Governor Owens at the Child Abuse Prevention press conference. In May, she spoke and read her poem at the Adams County Foster Parent Recognition Dinner. In June, she was the graduation speaker at the Chafee State Teen Conference.

Remember Me? I'm the little girl with the lost eyes.

By Karin Clint

Do you remember me?

I'm the one they gave to you, so you could help me see.

I'm the little girl who had lost all hope,

Then they gave me to you and you threw me a rope.

I'm the little boy, who came frightened in the night.

And they gave me to you and you showed me the light.

I'm the little baby no one could come near,

Then you came along and held me close and took away my fear.

We came to you, all three of us,

Filled with hatred, covered in dust

You wiped our clothes and our tears,

You gave us hugs we hadn't felt in years.

I'm the teenager no one knew

I'd been beaten down and I crawled to you.

You picked me up, you cleaned my cuts.

You lifted me out of one of life's biggest ruts.

Why did you do the things that you did?
You didn't even know me, I wasn't even your kid
But walking in the grocery store, standing near to you
It still amazes me that no one ever knew.
No one ever knew I wasn't your kid
Or all of those other great things you did
No one saw the pain you've seen
Or knew that when I first met you, I was really mean.

I hated you, I hated the whole planet
I thought it would be better if I just ran it.
I scribbled on your walls in permanent black ink
Just to see if I could push you over the brink.
I'd scream in your face YOU'RE NOT MY MOM!
Just to see if you would blow like a bomb.

Why didn't you hit me when I kicked, screamed and spat?
I could understand if you wanted to hit me for that.
But you didn't; you just smiled and stood really still-
Here I thought by now you'd be ready to kill.
Although I was surprised by this, I stopped trying to make you mad
And it really started hurting me to see I'd made you sad.

I'm the little girl who saw life today,
Not as something horrible, but in a different way
You showed me these things, you gave me hope
Remember in the beginning when you threw me that rope?
I'm the little boy who was scared in the night
Remember me, you showed me the light
Remember that baby no one could come near
Well, I'm all grown up now, and I graduate in a year.

Remember me and my two little brothers, it was just me and them and no others
Well today I'm getting married to a nice man named Kyle,
And holding on to your arm as you walk me down the aisle.
It doesn't seem like much to most,
But to my new parents, I'd like to make a toast.
For everything you've helped me see and for everything you've done for me
For all those nights you stayed up worrying and wondering where I could possible be

But most of all I'd like to say thanks from all the other foster kids and me,
For keeping our spirits high and being the Moms and Dads that you didn't have to be..
I'm the little kid who came on a blizzard day
No shoes, no coat and no one to show me the way
You opened your home and called me your own
And I remember that 'til this very day.