



WESLEY SPECTRUM
SERVICES

volume 4 • issue 2 • spring 2009

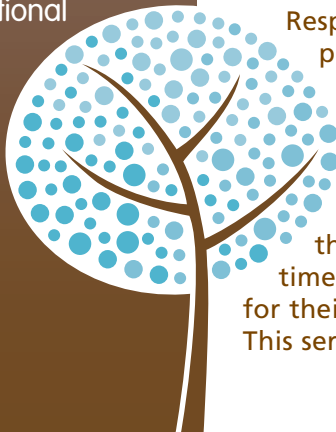
PRISM

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Learning New Skills



Wesley Spectrum Academy students are learning skills of fly fishing by tying flies and casting lines during their gym classes. After their training sessions, they took their skills out to a local pond where each student experienced the joy of catching a fish.

The fishing experiences are part of a partnership with the Family Tyes Program. The goal is to promote leadership skills, volunteerism and educational processes, while engaging youth in activities that encourage environmental stewardship and conservation.

The fishing experiences

The Statewide Adoption and Permanency Network (SWAN) Approves Wesley Spectrum Services for Respite Services

On April 1, 2009, Wesley Spectrum Services was approved to begin providing the SWAN Respite unit of service through Post Permanency.

Respite provides adoptive, permanent legal custodian, and formal kinship families with planned breaks to support a consistent level of parenting.

Respite may provide a time for the family to get some needed time alone and then return to caring for their child rejuvenated and revived. This service is designed to ensure that

eligible families are supported by developing resources to alleviate the pressures of parenting children with special needs.

Wesley Spectrum Services Respite activities are structured activities that take place outside of the family home and are supervised by WS Foster Care and Adoption workers. Some respite activities include: trips to the zoo, mini golf, pizza parties, craft nights, community service projects, and summer camp.

Couples get their personal time, children get an opportunity to socialize with other children and experience new opportunities, and in some cases, new community connections are established for the child.

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From the desk of Douglas Muetzel

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Dear Friends,

Spring is such an exciting time of year. The change of season resonates with new life and hope. I can't think of a more suitable analogy for this season at Wesley Spectrum Services.

This is the time of year we refresh Wesley Spectrum's strategic plan and prepare the 2009-2010 budget. There is no question that this is one of the most challenging seasons of our 43 year history. Wesley Spectrum's strategic plan will appropriately stretch all of us to do more for an increasing number of kids and families. We see significant and unmet needs in four key areas:

- Autism
- School Based Behavioral Health (taking our mental health and education expertise into public schools)
- Transition Age Youth (the great struggle in our industry, 18-25 year olds that age out of the system too often without adequate services)
- Researched Backed Services (WS can prove market leading results, but our best practices need improved and documented results)

Quite honestly, the budget process has been painstakingly similar to every business in this challenging economic environment. But ultimately every decision is made under the scrutiny of advancing Wesley Spectrum's mission to provide transformational support for children and families as they strive to become more independent, responsible and caring members of the community. It is the very essence of spring that provides a focus and resolve to ensure that every individual we are privileged to serve experiences hope and the newness of life.

For me, one of the truly great blessings of working for the advancement of Wesley Spectrum's mission is that there are frequent, clarifying moments. Last week, my eyes were opened, while searching deep into the eyes of one of the precious children we are privileged to serve. For confidentiality, I'll keep the details vague but hope the point is crystal clear.

This story is about a student that I have had the joy of getting to know in his senior year. The student invited me to participate in a school project a couple of weeks ago and I wasn't able to make it. A few days later, I asked him how the project went, and he responded quite enthusiastically and surmised that his fellow students got some value from his presentation based on their insightful questions.

We continued to walk and talk and I asked the student about his future plans. His demeanor changed immediately. He shared with me that he was desperate to have time "just to think." In the next few minutes I sensed my heart breaking....coming to grips that through his own eyes, his future had minimal clarity and little hope.

I sometimes fall into the trap of thinking that once those that we serve leave our programs everything will work out great. This was a deep and penetrating reminder that we must do more. The surprising outcome for me was that as I went back to planning and budgeting I had a new and fresh resolve. Deep in my soul was a determination for Wesley Spectrum to do more for more.

However, the story doesn't end there. After our walk and discussion I sought out the Wesley Spectrum staff that knew more of the details of this student's story. They shared that a meeting was scheduled that very day to work with this student to bring a new approach to help him better cope and plan for his future.

I was energized by their care and strategic approach for this treasured 18 year old. Later that day, the staff told me that the meeting was a major breakthrough! Now, I'm not naive enough to think "everything is fine." But, I am confident that Wesley Spectrum is the organization with the people that I want to lock arms with to help change the world.

I hope you enjoy this newsletter and the countless stories of how lives are being transformed. Thank you for all that you have done to truly make this a season of new life and hope for Wesley Spectrum.

For the kids and families we serve,

Douglas W. Muetzel,
CEO Wesley Spectrum Services

WS Makes an Impact

Expressing Appreciation

At Wesley Spectrum, people make the difference in the lives of those we serve. Over 725 dedicated, caring and professional staff work to provide transformation support for the children, families, youth and individuals that we serve. The stories below are excerpts from creative expressions written to describe personal experiences with Wesley Spectrum:

"Thank You / Finding Me"

*"...Many years of abusing his attitude brought along conflict with family, friends, the law, and schools
His mentality was do what I wanna do,
However I wanna do it, where ever I wanna do it
I make my own rules
Till he met Cathy Culbert of Wesley Spectrum and she worked with him
and helped him correct all his flaws
She's also helped him realize that this young man was me and the
changes I have made since then can drop jaws and draw applause
I sadly could no longer see my future but you've helped me regain my sight
I was lost in a dark place but you guided me straight to the light
There's nowhere near enough words in the English language to express my
gratitude in the end of how I feel
So I just want all of you to know at this agency you've gained
a lifelong friendship with me and that's for real"
Thank You!*

—Poem by an adolescent boy in the In-Home Child and Family Service. Cathy Cumbert is a Family Therapist for Wesley Spectrum.



"Character Sketch on Someone I Admire"

*"Katie Harrill is a very special person to children. She is a very talented piano teacher, who also manages our rock band, and knows a lot about music. Being with Katie is like a day at Kennywood Park, there is always a lot fun and laughing. She always knows songs that you like and helps you to learn how to play or sing them...
... Katie is a funny person, who makes us laugh and smile... Most of all she loves kids and music.*

*Katie is always kind and generous with her time, when it comes to children.... She always listens to our ideas about things we would like to do with the band, and helps us with new songs. Katie is the manager and queen of our band. The band likes to see Katie's smile when we do a good job...
Katie has been my friend since I was 5 years old. Katie and I have done a lot of things together besides music. We've gone to Build A Bear Workshop, and to Katie's favorite restaurant. ...*

...Katie Harrill is the nicest person in the world. If you want to learn music and have a good time while you are learning, she is the right person for you. If you don't believe me about Katie you could ask anyone in the band, they would all agree, Katie is the best."

—Composition by a young girl in the Creative Arts Program. Katie Harrill is a Music Therapist and Creative Arts Supervisor for the Family and Child Development Center.



Wesley Spectrum Staff Selected to Present at National Conferences

Maryann Raymer and Lynn Sholl, Education Supervisors at Wesley Spectrum Highland Services, led a presentation titled Integrating Brain Research into a Special Education Setting, at a national conference titled "The Creative Brain: Using Brain Research on Creativity and the Arts to Improve Learning."

The conference, held in Washington, DC, explored the latest brain research on how the arts can improve student's achievement. The presentation was authored by Padmaja Chilakapati, MD, Gary Swanson, MD and Lynn Scholl, MEd.

In early November, Barb Saunders, Assistant Director of School Based Behavioral Health Services will be presenting a session titled Integrating Mental Health and Education Systems at the "14th Annual Conference on Advancing School Mental Health" held in Minneapolis, MS.



WS Makes a Difference



Wesley Spectrum Resource Support Center: Coordinated Access to Services

Wesley Spectrum offers a place to go for help when mental health challenges are affecting a student's ability to learn.

Our Resource Support Center understands both mental health and education needs. We can answer your questions, provide direction and recommend services.

Contact our Resource Support Center at **412-885-7017** or **412-469-9771** or email dgrabowski@wesleyspectrum.org to present a student's needs.



The "American Dream" mural was created by Wesley Spectrum Highland students in collaboration with the Andy Warhol museum.

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Wesley Spectrum Services utilizes our certified resource homes as our respite providers. All of our resource providers are provided with the same orientation and preparation as our adoptive resource parents. Staff overseeing the Respite activities have experience in working with foster and adoptive children.

If you are interested in learning more about Wesley Spectrum's Foster Care and Adoption Services, contact Jarene Barnes, Resource Family Recruiter and Trainer of Placement Services 412-342-2359 or jbarnes@wesleyspectrum.org

Wesley Spectrum Placement Services will offer many training dates this summer, at our office on Penn Ave. in Wilkinsburg.

Foster Parenting Training:

Tuesday, July 14, 2009 (6:00pm-9:00pm)

Saturday, July 18, 2009 (10:00am-3:00pm)

Tuesday, July 21, 2009 (6:00pm-9:00pm)

Saturday, July 25, 2009 (10:00am-3:00pm)

Multi-Dimensional Treatment Foster Care Training:

Friday, August 14, 2009 (6:00pm-9:00pm)

Saturday, August 15, 2009 (10:00am-3:00pm)

Wesley Spectrum Celebrates Black History Month



The Wesley Spectrum In-Home Child and Family Services program celebrated Black History Month with special events during their all staff meeting. Staff from across the organization also joined the program in reflecting on the contributions made to the world by those of African descent.

The event included a special presentation by Garl Germany III, In-Home Child and Family Therapist, on the Congo drums, a song performed by Zulaikah Jones, In-Home Child and Family Therapist, and the recognition of Mrs. Ruth Richardson for her work to equalize racial tension. Ruth Richardson was one of the founders of community based services in Pittsburgh. She is a retired executive director of Three Rivers Youth, and currently serves on several boards of directors, including Ward Youth Services, and YWCA of Greater Pittsburgh. Wesley Spectrum was proud to honor her at the 2009 Black History Month Hero.

Are you Looking for Information or Services for a Child with Autism?

Wesley Spectrum Family and Child Development Center now offers an Intake Line at 724.443.4888 to help you learn more about the many services we offer for children and youth with an autism spectrum disorder, or other developmental delays. One of our Intake Coordinators will be happy to speak with you and help guide you through the referral process. Our Intake Coordinators can also help you to apply for Medical Assistance and obtain a best practice psychological evaluation. The Wesley Spectrum Family and Child Development Center is currently serving the following counties: Allegheny, Armstrong, Beaver, Butler, Lawrence, Washington, Westmoreland.

WS Makes a Difference

Local Landscaping Company Donates Time and Materials to Wesley Spectrum Highland Program



On April 22nd, 2009 JML Landscape Management volunteered their labor and materials to spruce up the outside of the Highland School building. Some of the services included in this donation were tree removal, topsoil installation, and tree trimming. JML also provided nine yards of mulch, twelve new shrubs, and both annual and perennial flowers.



We would like to thank JML Landscape Management for their time, materials and effort towards making our Highland School look so beautiful. Your work is greatly appreciated by our staff and students.

Working Together to Help Make the Mental Health System More Effective

Wesley Spectrum Highland Services hosted a "Recovery Dialogue" facilitated by two representatives from the Allegheny County Coalition for Recovery. The event gave young adults in the Highland and Integrated Services programs an opportunity to take on a different role and openly discuss their perspectives of mental health treatment and recovery. Wesley Spectrum staff and representatives from other mental health providers also participated in the discussion.

This event was the first time that the Allegheny County Coalition for Recovery held a dialogue with transition age young adults. The

youth were encouraged to say what was on their mind and to be open and honest with group. Each person in the group brought different experiences and perspectives that provided a great deal of insight around mental health and recovery.

The mission of the Allegheny County Coalition for Recovery is to increase awareness of behavioral health recovery and to promote the use of recovery principles and practices in behavioral health services in Allegheny County. The Coalition sponsors a variety of events designed to reach out to the general public, users of behavioral health services, and providers of those services with information and resources related to recovery. For more information, visit www.coalitionforrecovery.org.



Summer Opportunities

Digital Storytelling

June 15th – 26th

These classes will have students creating videography and photography to tell a story. Some of the projects will include biographies, scripts, plays, and talk shows that will allow the children to express themselves in a creative manner. 2 hours daily at the North Hills location in Gibsonia.

Creative Arts Program

Summer Camps

Disney Themed Camp

August 3rd – 7th

Kids will creatively explore a different Disney movie each day.

Gibsonia: MWF 1:00 – 2:30

Penn Hills: MWF 10:00 – 11:30

South Hills: TTh 10:00 – 11:30

Music Makers Camp

August 10th – 14th

Children will integrate music, art, and dance by constructing their own instruments and creating their own music in interactive music and movement experiences.

Gibsonia: MWF 1:00 – 2:30

Penn Hills: MWF 10:00 – 11:30

South Hills: TTh 10:00 – 11:30

Creative Arts Focus Camp

August 17th – 21st

A variety of creative arts approaches including music, art, and dance will be explored and integrated each day, utilizing and stimulating creativity.

Gibsonia: MWF 1:00 – 2:30

Penn Hills: MWF 10:00 – 11:30

South Hills: TTh 10:00 – 11:30

Call 412-706-2547 for further information on any of the summer camp and digital storytelling opportunities.



WESLEY SPECTRUM
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Issue 6 Spring 2009

Wesley Spectrum's Gala "People Make the Difference"

Wesley Spectrum's ninth annual Gala was held on Saturday, March 14, 2009 at the Westin Convention Center, Pittsburgh. Over 325 attendees enjoyed an evening with spectacular live and silent auction items, hors d'oeuvres and a formal dinner, while supporting the children and families that Wesley Spectrum serves. The event raised over \$130,000 for the children and families that we serve.

Deb Rice, Senior Vice President of Health Services, Highmark was honored for her advocacy for the well-being of children and families. Deborah and Richard Ostrowski were recognized as Wesley Spectrum's Resource Family of the Year, and Wesley Spectrum staff were recognized for "Making a Difference" in the lives of those we serve.

Ed and Nancy Borkowski and Joe and Hope Diggins served as co-chairperson's for the 2009 Gala. KDKA News Radio 1020 personality Larry Richert was the Master of Ceremonies.

All event proceeds directly benefit the children and families in Wesley Spectrum's programs and services. We could not have raised over \$130,000 without the support of the event's generous sponsors:



LEAD SPONSORS: Highmark · Mylan · Sherpa Software

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SILVER SPONSOR: Nemaocolin Woodlands Resort

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Hurry! Just a Few Spots Left at Laurel Valley Golf Club

The Wesley Spectrum Invitational Golf Tournament is being held on

Wednesday, May 27, 2009 at the Laurel Valley Golf Club. Come and join us for a fantastic day of golf, contests

and a superb lunch and dinner barbecue. Reservations are still available for foursomes, twosomes or individual golfers.

Plans for the day include registration at 10 a.m. followed by the lunch buffet, tee off at 1:30 p.m. and reception and prize awards at the Palmer Pavilion.

Contact Paula Huffman at 412-831-9390 for further details or email phuffman@wesleyspectrum.org.

Save the Date

Save the date for two great events this Fall:

Wesley Spectrum's Tour of Homes Sunday, October 4, 2009 from 12 Noon – 5 pm. Join us for our 18th tour of five beautiful homes in the South Hills.

Join us Monday evening, November 2nd from 7 – 9 pm at "LeMont Restaurant" for a "A Night for Autism". All proceeds will benefit children in Wesley Spectrum's programs for children with autism.

Highlighting
the Wesley
Spectrum
Services
Foundation



Walk Now for Autism and Support the Wesley Spectrum Team

Walk Now for Autism-Pittsburgh
Saturday, June 13, 2009 · Heinz Field
Registration opens: 8:00 am · Walk Start: 10:00 am

Powered by volunteers and families with loved ones on the autism spectrum, this fundraising effort not only generates vital funds for autism research but also raises awareness about the increasing prevalence of autism and the need for increased research funding to combat this complex disorder.

You can sign up for the Wesley Spectrum Walking team online, at: www.autismspeaks.org or link right to the Wesley Spectrum page from www.wesleyspectrum.org.

If you have any questions about joining the team or making a donation, contact Kelly Illig at 724-820-1590.

The Educational Improvement Tax Credit (EITC)

Your business may be able to make a contribution to Wesley Spectrum through the EITC in support of innovative educational opportunities or scholarships and receive 90% of your gift as a PA tax credit and receive the benefit of a charitable deduction for the full amount of your gift on your company's federal income tax return.

There are two common taxes for which your business may be eligible to receive the PA tax credit:

1. Corporate Net Income Tax

- Paid by C Corporations
- Paid by Professional Corporations (PC)

2. Capital Stock Franchise Tax

- Paid by C Corporations
- Paid by S Corporations
- Paid by Limited Liability Companies (LLC)
- Paid by Professional Corporations (PC) If your business makes a \$10,000 gift to Wesley Spectrum

If your business makes a \$10,000 gift to Wesley Spectrum Services for two years in a row, each year your business will receive a \$9,000 PA tax credit; also, at the same time, your business can record a \$10,000 charitable donation each year on your federal income tax return.

If your organization meets with the above criteria, and you would like to know more about the PA tax credit or Wesley Spectrum Services, it would be a privilege to meet with you or a representative from your organization. Call 412-347-3208 or visit www.wesleyspectrum.org for additional information.



Developing Skills That Last a Lifetime

Students in the Wesley Spectrum Academy Industrial Arts classes are building picnic tables for the greenhouse and garden area behind the school. Funding for wood and building plans has been made possible through grant money provided by the Johnson Family Foundation.

Looking for Volunteers

Are you interested in supporting Wesley Spectrum's fundraising events in a new and different way? We are looking for community individuals to join some of our event committees.

Time commitments vary, but most committees involve just a few meetings a year, a commitment to help raise revenue for the events and a desire to help support Wesley Spectrum to make a difference in the lives of the children, youth, families and individuals that we serve.

If you are interested in helping to make a difference in the community, contact Paula Huffman at 412-347-3219.

Memorials & Tributes

In Memory of:
Mary and Peter Gross, Sr.
Mr. and Mrs. Norman Gross

In Memory of:
Mrs. Gwendoline Kramer
Mr. and Mrs. Eric S. McCarthy

In Honor of:
Mr. Douglas W. Muetzel
Mr. and Mrs. Samuel L. Douglass

In Memory of:
Dr. Frederick P. Wucher
Mr. and Mrs. Lee Hughes
Mr. and Mrs. Brad Langerman

Wish List

School Based Behavioral Health:
PECS (Picture Exchange Communications System) for children with autism

Academy:
Picnic Tables
\$10- \$15 gift cards for positive reinforcement

To make a donation, contact Paula Huffman at: 412-347-3219 or phuffman@wesleyspectrum.org



WESLEY SPECTRUM SERVICES

Wesley Spectrum Services Believes:

- Our Purpose is to Serve
- Children, Families and Adults are at the Center of Decision Making
- Every Person is Valuable
- Every Person has Strengths

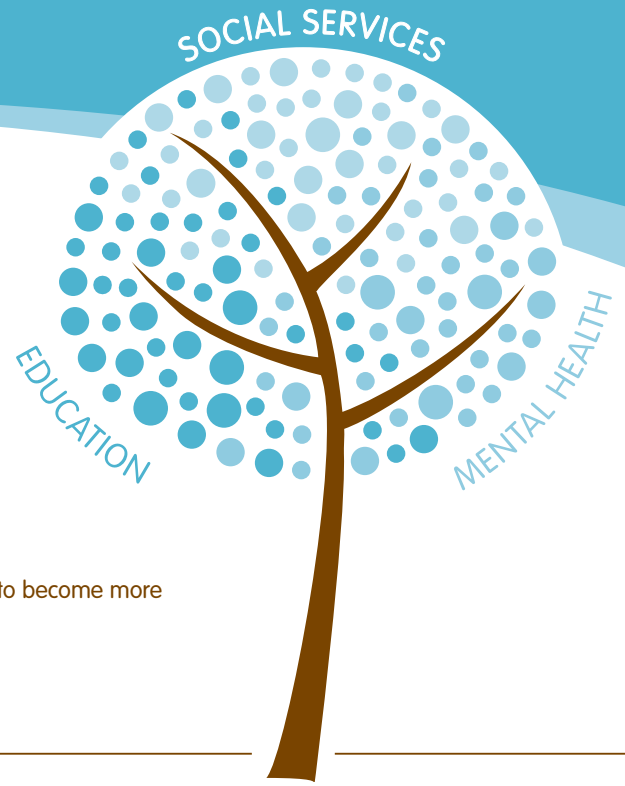
Our Vision:

We will be the regional provider of choice and a global resource for human services.

Our Mission:

Our mission is to provide transformational support for children and families as they strive to become more independent, responsible and caring members of the community.

www.wesleyspectrum.org



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