



2015-2016

Annual Report



Strengthening Families. Changing Lives.

Our Mission

To strengthen family life by providing counseling, education and advocacy.



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2015-2016 At a Glance

7

Evidence-Based Programs offered
across five counties in NW PA

20+

Programs and services available
to families & individuals

211

Individuals volunteered for
Big Brothers Big Sisters

2,347

Individuals received Counseling
and Education Services

12,737

Hours of service provided by volunteers

Community Impact

9,250 lives touched

Dear Friends & Supporters,

Family Services of NW PA has had a robust history of providing high quality services to families in our community. Our very existence is the result of local people recognizing the needs of families and choosing to meet those needs in intentional and organized ways. Without their vision, we would not have such a rich history of service, and we would not have the strong community that we enjoy today.

As we look back at the most recent year of service, we are proud to be part of an organization that has remained committed to strengthening children and families for more than 130 years. By continuing to invest in families, Family Services of NW PA strengthens the very building blocks of our community, and changes the lives of so many.

Strengthening families isn't always easy work, and much credit is due to those who have contributed to our successes.

- To our Board of Directors, a group of accomplished professionals who dedicate so much time and energy to serving this community – we are thankful for the knowledge and experience that you share as you help guide the future of this great agency.
- To our community partners, both formal and informal, who have worked so hard to meet the needs of children and families – we are fortunate to have so many hands working for the better of this community.
- To our volunteers, who have contributed thousands of hours and opened their hearts in order to serve as mentors for at-risk youth - we are inspired by your commitment to create a better future for children in our community.
- To our donors, funders and financial supporters, who make much of the work we do possible – we are grateful for your support and remain committed to maximizing resources to best serve those in need.
- To the extraordinarily trained, highly committed members of our professional staff, who work tirelessly to improve the lives of children and families each and every day – we are humbled by the sacrifices you make and grateful for your continued dedication to Family Services of NW PA.

As we look forward to the new year, we draw strength from the knowledge that Family Services of NW PA will remain committed to serving children and families; that we are part of a supportive community that is willing to help us accomplish these goals; that our professional staff will continue to employ evidence-based programs and utilize all available resources to be their very best; and that we will continue to form new partnerships with others to help overcome challenges that face so many children and families.

It is our hope that we will look back next year and be inspired once again by the sacrifice and service of so many, and by the successes that have occurred as a result of our unwavering commitment to strengthening families and changing lives.

Sincerely,



Gregory A. Loop
President and CEO



George Joseph
Board President



Major Achievements

Independent Living Program Receives National Award

In June, the Erie County Office of Children and Youth, in collaboration with Family Services of NW PA and Bethesda Children's Home, received a 2016 Achievement Award from the National Association of Counties for the "Erie County Collaborative Independent Living Program." The Erie County Independent Living Program is designed to address issues facing youth who are aging out of foster care.

Trauma Focused Therapy Program Expands Access to Services

A grant from the Pennsylvania Commission on Crime and Delinquency (PCCD), aimed at providing easier access to families in urban neighborhoods, has allowed the Trauma-Focused Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (TF-CBT) program at Family Services of NW PA to expand to several locations in the community. Satellite offices are now located at the Booker T. Washington Center, the Martin Luther King Center, the Erie Family Center for Child Development, and Pfeiffer Burleigh Elementary School. All sites are currently in operation and taking referrals.

As part of the expansion, two licensed therapists were hired and trained in the TF-CBT model. Family Services of NW PA was the first provider in Erie County to offer certified TF-CBT therapists. The grant also allowed Family Services of NW PA to offer a two-part training on Trauma-Informed Care and Vicarious Trauma. The interactive trainings were offered to professionals working with families and youth in the community. Nearly 50 individuals attended.

Time Limited Family Reunification Program Starts Support Group

Time Limited Family Reunification (TLFR), an intensive in-home program at Family Services of NW PA, helps families that have had children removed from the home achieve safe reunification. As an added support, TLFR recently started facilitating a support group for people working toward reunification with their children.

Family Group Decision Making Offers Family Team Meetings

Family Group Decision Making (FGDM) is a child welfare program that helps families plan and make positive decisions. As part of a recent contract expansion, FGDM is now able to offer Family Team Meetings, an abbreviated approach available to families who may not have sufficient supports to benefit from a full family conference. As a result, every family referred through the Erie County Office of Children and Youth now has the opportunity to have a Family Service Plan or Child Permanency Plan written collaboratively in a professional setting.

Big Brothers Big Sisters Expands to Western Crawford County

Family Services of NW PA was awarded a grant from the Pennsylvania Commission on Crime and Delinquency (PCCD) to expand the Big Brothers Big Sisters program into Western Crawford County. The grant will allow Family Services of NW PA to offer the evidence-based mentoring program to youth in Meadville and the surrounding area. Big Brothers Big Sisters has been available in Erie County for more than 30 years.

Big Brothers Big Sisters Receives National Gold Standard Award

As a result of timely and consistent match support over a period of three years, Big Brothers Big Sisters of America recognized Big Brothers Big Sisters of Family Services of NW PA in Erie County with a Gold Standard Award. The purpose of the award is to recognize the hard work of agency leadership and staff in providing high-quality programming for the children and families served. Big Brothers Big Sisters of Family Services of NW PA is one of only 16 programs across the United States to have achieved this elite distinction.



Functional Family Therapy Recognized at National Level

The Functional Family Therapy (FFT) program at Family Services of NW PA has been recognized at the FFT national level for excellence in exceeding program expectations. Last year, 84% of the families participating in FFT demonstrated success in reducing family conflict and improving family relationships. Of those families successfully completing the program, 98% of the youth were able to avoid out of home placement, 98% were enrolled in an educational or vocational program, and 95% remain violation free.

Office Locations

Family Services of NW PA has offices located throughout Northwest Pennsylvania to meet the needs of our clients.

Erie County:

Main Office
5100 Peach Street
Erie, PA 16509
814.866.4500

Union City Office
38 North Main Street
Union City, PA 16438
814.438.7341

Crawford County:

Meadville Office
18360 Technology Drive
Suite 200
Meadville, PA 16335
814.724.4800

Venango County:

Oil City Office
206 Seneca Street
Suite 43, Fourth Floor
Oil City, PA 16301
814.670.0524

Mercer County:

Sharon Office
7 West State Street
Second Floor, Suite 202
Sharon, PA 16146
724.704.7227



Empowering Families



Strengthening Families. Changing Lives.

GOAL: Empower families to make life-long positive changes

Family Based Mental Health/Specialized FBMH (*Erie, Crawford, Venango & Mercer*)

Family Based Mental Health (FBMH) is an intensive in-home therapy, case management and crisis intervention program that serves parents with children who are seriously mentally ill or emotionally disturbed. Specialized FBMH helps parents care for their children who have been victims of sexual abuse or demonstrate sexually reactive behaviors.

- **97%** of clients in Erie County reported that services made things better

Family Behavioral Health/Enhanced Mobile Therapy (*Crawford*)

Behavioral health rehabilitative program that provides mobile therapy, with an emphasis on working with the parents to treat the entire family.

- **93%** of families with parenting concerns made an improvement

Family Behavior Therapy (*Crawford*)

Family therapy treatment program that helps treat substance abuse, conduct disorders, mood disorders, family dysfunction, and other problem behaviors

- **100%** of families had no new instances of abuse and/or neglect

Family Group Decision Making (*Erie & Mercer*)

Child welfare program that invites families and others to come together to plan and make decisions for family members.

- **100%** of clients in Mercer County reported satisfaction with services

Functional Family Therapy (*Erie*)

Evidence-based in-home therapy program that helps families with at-risk youth change problem family and relational patterns.

- **98%** of youth were enrolled in an educational/vocational school program or working

Intensive Family Services (*Crawford*)

Child welfare program that provides crisis intervention and family treatment to keep children and families safe, prevent out of home placement, assist in reunification of families, and prevent unnecessary changes in placement.

- **100%** of families had no new instances of abuse and/or neglect

**DID
YOU
KNOW ?**

Our Family Based Mental Health program has been in existence since **1988**.
Since then, we have provided services to more than **3,000 families!**



Promoting Achievement

 Strengthening Families. Changing Lives.

GOAL: Help at-risk children avoid destructive behavior and reach their full potential

Independent Living Program (*Erie*)

Child welfare program that helps youth ages 14 to 21 in out-of-home placement make the transition to become independent, self-sufficient and productive adults.

- **199** youth received services
- **97%** of youth were happy with the services they received

Multisystemic Therapy/MST Problem Sexual Behavior (*Erie, Crawford & Mercer*)

Multisystemic Therapy (MST) is an evidence-based intensive in-home therapy program that helps families of youth ages 12 to 17 who exhibit delinquent behaviors. MST for Problem Sexual Behavior helps families of youth ages 10 to 17 who exhibit inappropriate sexual behaviors.

- **97%** of clients in Mercer County remained in school or worked

Project ROAR/SOAR (*Crawford*)

School-based behavioral health services that help children with emotional and/or behavioral difficulties. Services are available at Cambridge Springs Elementary School, Cambridge Springs Junior High School, and Maplewood Elementary School.

- **35** students received services
- **97%** of families felt the program had a positive impact on their child

Big Brothers Big Sisters (*Erie & Crawford*)

Evidence-based mentoring program that helps meet basic developmental needs of youth ages 6 to 14 by providing caring, non-judgmental adult mentors.

- **211** children received services
- Volunteers provided **12,737 service hours** (\$298,045 value)

Big Brothers Big Sisters of Family Services of NW PA receives significant financial support from the Pennsylvania Commission on Crime and Delinquency (PCCD), Highmark Blue Cross Blue Shield, the LocalEdge, and the United Way of Erie County.

Big Brothers Big Sisters Signature Event Sets New Record in 2015

This year's Bowl For Kids' Sake event raised a record-breaking \$90,000 to support Big Brothers Big Sisters in Erie County. Bowl For Kids' Sake is the signature fundraising event of Big Brothers Big Sisters of Family Services of NW PA. All money raised stays in Erie County to help match children with volunteer mentors and provide professional match support.

BOWL FOR KIDS' SAKE

Independent Living Program Hosts Graduation Dinner To Honor Students

The Independent Living Program (ILP) at Family Services of NW PA held a graduation dinner in June to celebrate ILP youth who graduated from high school or obtained their GED. The graduation dinner was co-hosted by Bethesda Children's Home. Graduates were joined by families and caseworkers to celebrate this occasion. The honorable Judge J. Trucilla provided an encouraging keynote speech and two program participants shared their inspiring stories about life after graduation.

Mentors Needed

More than **150 children** are waiting to be matched with a Big Brother or Big Sister. Sign up to volunteer at **BeABigErie.org**.





Promoting Achievement

 **Strengthening Families. Changing Lives.**

Meet Da'zhae

When Da'zhae first joined the Independent Living Program (ILP), she thought it was just like many of the other programs she had been involved with since becoming a foster kid. At that time, she was preparing for high school graduation while living in the back seat of her car. She had very little family support and constantly worried about how she would survive on her own.

Around the same time, Shannon Grazier, a caseworker with the ILP program, was assigned to work with Da'zhae. Suddenly, Da'zhae started to see the bigger picture. "The best support system I did have in my life was Shannon," said Da'zhae. "Every time I got doubtful, she reminded me that I didn't have to do everything on my own. With the support of Shannon and ILP in my corner, my options went from absolutely nothing to a wide open door with many options and alternatives."

Da'zhae's first attempt at furthering her education began at Cleveland State University. The ILP program gave Da'zhae a shot at bettering herself by helping her pay for textbooks, a meal plan, and supplies she needed to start college. After two semesters, Da'zhae decided to move back home and transfer to Mercyhurst North East. Shannon and the ILP program continued to offer the support Da'zhae needed to accomplish this transition.

During the summer after her first year of college, as Da'zhae prepared to age out of the ILP program, she once again started to worry about her future. "Upon aging out of the system, I became extremely worried because I know that I had these next few semesters of books to pay for and I wasn't absolutely sure how I'd pull this all together to ensure I graduated on time," said Da'zhae. "Somebody else already had a plan for what I'd be doing before May hit."

As summer was coming to an end, Shannon reached out to Da'zhae to see if there was anything else she could help with before school started again. Shannon and ILP once again helped Da'zhae purchase her textbooks and made sure she had everything she needed to start the year off right. "I just couldn't believe that there are people out there every day who go to these sorts of extremes to help teens like myself," recalled Da'zhae. "Shannon is the face I see when I think of ILP because she's my fighting chance at the end of the day, and I am so incredibly appreciative of the hard work she's done for me."



Top: Da'zhae speaking at the ILP graduation dinner in June. Bottom: Da'zhae and Shannon at the ILP graduation dinner.

“ Thank you ILP. You’ve done more for me than you’ll ever know. You’ve changed my entire life, one day, month, and step at a time. ”

- Da'zhae



Finding Forever Families

 **Strengthening Families. Changing Lives.**

GOAL: Provide the permanent home and loving family every child deserves

Adoption and Kinship Services (*Erie, Crawford, Mercer, Venango, McKean & Warren*)

Variety of child placement services for both children and families, including adoption searches, kinship care services, child profiles, child preparation, post permanency services, and home study services. Children in need of a permanent family will receive child specific recruitment services.

48

children received
permanent homes

282

children received
kinship services

590

adoption services
were completed

192

kinship families
received services

Cross-County Teamwork Leads to Program Success

The adoption and kinship department employees at Family Services of NW PA know a lot about teamwork. With adoption and kinship services offered across six counties, this group of dedicated workers really knows how to work together to bring families and waiting children together.

Under the direction of Michele Lombard, the department spans across six counties - Erie, Crawford, Mercer, Venango, McKean and Warren. Despite the distance between offices, the employees come together regularly to brainstorm and plan, allowing them to bring the highest quality services to our families and match children in need with the right family resource.

By providing high quality services, employees in the adoption and kinship department are able to provide permanency to children who otherwise wouldn't have a permanent home.

As a result, the adoption and kinship department has seen a growth of 33% in services provided to families and a 50% increase in adoption finalizations over the last year.

Every Kid deserves a Family



There are **100s** of children in Pennsylvania who still dream of finding their forever family. Consider opening your heart and home to a child. Call **814.866.4500** or visit **AdoptNWPAKids.org** to learn more.



Finding Forever Families

 Strengthening Families. Changing Lives.

Meet The Lineberry's

For Jackie and Don, the possibility of adopting a child was always in the back of their minds. Don was brought up in a children's home, and has always understood the impact a loving family can have on a foster child.

Jackie and Don were introduced to Andrew at an annual event hosted by their church to celebrate National Adoption Month. After the service, Jackie and Don were approached by Janet, a caseworker from Family Services of NW PA. Janet had brought only Andrew's information to the matching event, and approached Jackie and Don after the service to show them Andrew's picture. Almost simultaneously, Jackie and Don felt in their hearts that Andrew was meant to be a part of their family. They made the decision that day to begin the process of becoming a permanent family for Andrew.

Jackie believes it was fate that brought Andrew to them that day. "When you look at it all, you can tell that God's hands were in it," said Jackie. "At the time, we weren't even looking to adopt, but someone else had a different plan for us." Ironically, Don's personal story of living in foster care was featured at the service that same afternoon.

Shortly after the matching event, Jackie and Don met Andrew for the first time. "We knew right away that he was meant to be a part of our family," said Don. "Jackie and I both felt that he was just supposed to be there with us."

The only regret Jackie had was having to complete the adoption process before Andrew could move into their home and become a member of their family. "Having Andrew come into our home took too long," said Jackie. "We immediately felt like our home was his home and felt like we waited forever to get him here permanently."

Prior to meeting Jackie and Don, Andrew lived in various boys homes for nearly six years. Although it took him a little while to get adjusted to his new life, Andrew knew that he had finally found his forever family. "Meeting them changed my life," said Andrew. "I have my own room and lots of support from my parents."

Looking back, neither Jackie nor Don has any regrets about making such a quick decision to bring Andrew into their home. "Andrew is part of the family," said Jackie. "Don and I felt it from the very beginning. We hope this experience has made him a better and stronger person."

Andrew continues to enjoy life with his new family and urges anyone considering adoption to go for it. According to Andrew, "all children need a chance."

To learn more about adopting a child, contact Family Services of NW PA at 814-866-4500.

"We knew right away that he was meant to be part of our family."

- Don Lineberry



Don, Andrew and Jackie at the Riverside Inn last June.



Preserving Relationships

 **Strengthening Families. Changing Lives.**

GOAL: Provide guidance and expertise to help solve family-related issues

Brief Services Program (*Crawford, Venango & Mercer*)

Child welfare program that helps at-risk families cope with problems and improve childcare practices.

- **100%** of families in Venango County had no new instances of abuse and/or neglect

Children Cope With Divorce (*Erie*)

Four-hour court-ordered custody and visitation seminar that helps parents support children during difficult family transitions.

- **97%** of participants reported they will change behaviors as a direct result of what they learned

Family Preservation Services (*Erie, Crawford & Mercer*)

Child welfare program that helps strengthen the families of children at risk of placement by improving family functioning and preventing unnecessary placement of children.

- **96%** of families in Mercer County maintained and/or increased their overall parenting abilities

Office-Based Counseling (*Erie*)

Individual, family and couples counseling that helps with relationship concerns, parenting challenges, adjustment issues, depression, anxiety, and anger management.

- **83%** of clients reported improving 'as well as or better than' the average participant in treatment using a standardized Outcome Rating Scale (ORS)

Time Limited Family Reunification (*Erie*)

Child Welfare program that helps families that have had children removed from the home achieve safe reunification.

- **70%** of families showed improvement in parenting skills as a direct result of services

Trauma-Focused Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (*Erie*)

Evidence-based treatment intervention that helps children ages 4 to 18 years old, and their caregivers, overcome the negative effects of traumatic life events.

- **90%** of clients reported a decrease in symptoms of traumatic stress from pre and post assessment

Office-Based Therapists Receive Advanced Training

In response to a need for counseling services aimed at families with co-parenting needs, Janey Morell, Supervisor of Office-Based Counseling services and the Trauma-Focused Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (TF-CBT) Program at Family Services of NW PA, and Tara Durkin, Certified TF-CBT Therapist, received advanced training in Couple's Counseling. The Office-Based Counseling program also developed a standardized method of assessment and treatment for families with co-parenting needs.

Trauma Therapists Speak at Annual Event

In April, therapists in the Trauma-Focused Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (TF-CBT) program spoke at the 2016 Crime Victims' Rights Conference hosted by the Crime Victim Center. Angela Chambers and Tara Durkin, both certified TF-CBT counselors, accompanied Vice President Steve Minick to present "Recognizing the Impact of Trauma: Creating a Path to Resiliency."

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Perdue Family

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Ye Ole Sweet Shoppe

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Kristin Weaver
Phillip Weaver
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Tina White
Jaden Williams
Kalea Williams
Mara Williams
Phyllis Williams
Lisa Wofford
Earl Woodard

*Any omission from these lists
is purely accidental. If you
should have been included
and were not, please accept
our sincere apology.*

Financials

Revenue by Source

Children and Youth	43%
Managed Care Organizations	32%
Statewide Adoption Network	13%
MH/ID (Erie & Crawford Counties)	3%
Donated Services	3%
United Way	3%
Client Service Fees	1%
Investment & Miscellaneous Income	1%
Special Events & Contributions	1%

Total Expenses

Counseling/Education	66.00%
Adoption	27.97%
Volunteer Support	6.03%

