




# HOW WE'RE CHANGING LIVES

bi-annual report  
July 1, 2009 to June 30, 2011



*building emotionally healthy lives since 1957*

*Formerly known as  
Intercommunity Child  
Guidance Center*

# together we enrich our community



**The Whole Child is all about making children's lives happy, well-adjusted and successful. Our professional staff, working with hundreds of children and their families, does just that every year. What could be a more rewarding accomplishment?"**

**Robert Quist**

**Vice Chair,**

**The Whole Child**

**Board of Directors**

Dear Community Members:

We are both proud and concerned that we're serving over 9,000 children annually. What are the challenges we face? One in five American children lives in poverty, the highest rate in two decades. What is most alarming is that even though the economy is likely to recover, a generation of disadvantaged children will face many obstacles.

Disadvantaged children are at greater risk of abuse, intergenerational violence, mental health and health issues, academic difficulties, and increased stress in their living situations.

One in five American children experiences a mental health disorder such as depression, anxiety, post-traumatic stress disorder. Mental health problems exist in families of all social classes and backgrounds. However disadvantaged children are at greater risk for more severe problems in the future because they may not have access to the same resources as children in higher income families.

That said, we know from direct experience that children and families in need are receptive and respond well to professional therapeutic services.

By investing financially in mental health services, we can prevent the many harmful situations that can result from emotionally destructive behaviors. By intervening early, we give children HOPE, help children to achieve emotional well-being, and allow them to reach their true potential.

In this report, you will read testimonials from families that welcome us into their lives to share their challenges, personal stories and trust in

our ability to make them “whole.” We thank them for their confidence in The Whole Child. There is no greater affirmation than hearing from our families that the work The Whole Child provides is making a real difference.

*By intervening early, we give children HOPE, help children to achieve emotional well-being, and allow them to reach their true potential.*

We are proud of our ability to change so many lives! We are able to do this because of our many generous supporters, dedicated staff, and board members who remain mission-driven despite the many economic challenges we face.

As a result of the many generous financial contributions from corporations, businesses, foundations and individual donors, you have made it possible to bring HOPE to over 9,000 children. Thank you for your generosity and for being a friend to The Whole Child.



*Charlene Dimas-Peinado*

**Charlene Dimas-Peinado, LCSW, EML**

*Chief Executive Officer*

*Susanna Contreras-Smith*

**Susanna Contreras-Smith, M.Ed**

*Chair, Board of Directors Present*

## **Our Mission**

The mission of The Whole Child is to give children of all ages the skills and support they need to build emotionally healthy lives and become caring, responsible adults. Our commitment to children includes their parents, whom we empower to create nurturing families. Together, we enrich our community and our world.

## **Our Vision**

We envision a society that embraces children as its most precious resource and that is actively committed to their safety, emotional well-being and ability to thrive at home, school and play.

# changed lives

## Chloe's Story

### 16-year-old Beaten and Forced to Mother her Down Syndrome Brother

*16-year old Chloe's mother spent many evenings in the bars, abandoning her at home to tend for her Down Syndrome brother. But, it was the beatings and hair-pulling that left her angry and caused a social worker to refer her to The Whole Child for treatment. Chloe had no coping skills and was grazing (cutting) her arms in frustration. Her grades had plummeted from A's and B's to F's. After seven months working with a therapist, Chloe no longer has suicidal thoughts, her grades have gone back up and she's even joined the school swim team. The therapist also worked separately with the mother to show her the affects of her behaviors on her children. Now both mother and daughter are working to rebuild their relationship.*



The FSP team (left to right) Edward Rosales, MFTI; Sonia Derousse, MSW; Soraya Ortiz-Covarrubias, BA; Adam Grindlinger, LCSW; and Edison Otadoy, BA



## Full Service Partnership for Children and Families

When children are in crisis and traditional counseling isn't working, the entire family needs intensive and immediate help. It is then that the dedicated Full Service Partnership team (FSP) at The Whole Child steps in to provide in-home, intensive treatment services and resources on a 24-hour on-call basis.

This is a remarkable program and the work is rigorous. The program was created to address the complex needs of families whose child (aged 0-15) is

experiencing significant emotional and behavioral disturbances. The initial call can come at any time from the police, a church or a school. Perhaps the child has been suspended, is fighting, run away or there is a parent-child conflict. That's when the FSP team heads over to the home to assess the needs and obtain a solid commitment from the family for full participation in services provided.

A therapist and a case manager then work with the families twice weekly for as much as two to three hours at a time. In addition to counseling services, the family receives referrals to: health care, career counseling, parenting instruction, food and housing, peer support, and help with school personnel. A psychiatric assessment and medication will also be provided as needed.

The program has proven to be very effective for both the child and the family. Usually, after six to 12 months, the family "graduates." Even then, services continue, usually weekly counseling, which provide a safety net for further growth.

### Tommy's Story

## Our Team Mobilizes to Help a Nine-Year-Old's Recovery

*Tommy was only nine and suffering from Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD), when the health of his mother began to deteriorate. This brought on severe anxiety, making school hard for Tommy and causing daily behavioral problems at home. The Whole Child team worked with the entire family. One therapist taught the mother positive parenting skills, while a separate therapist worked with Tommy, allowing him to set his own goals and creating a chart of symptoms that they both tracked. Tommy benefited from seeing proof that his behavioral problems had decreased and that his motivation and positive teacher reports had increased. Today, Tommy's teachers report he is making solid progress at school, behaving well and displaying a positive outlook for the future.*

# professional standards

## Ava's Story

### Suicide Attempt is Symptom of Low Self Esteem

*Ava's family brought her to The Whole Child, after she tried to end her young, 15-year-old life with a handful of pills. The breakup with her boyfriend had caused extreme depression resulting in her dropping out from the cross country team and spending every day crying in her room or arguing with her family.*

*The therapist at The Whole Child helped Ava process her feelings of sadness and loss, and slowly over five months her depression disappeared. She returned to the track team and her grades jumped back up to A's and B's. During Art Therapy and Chess Therapy sessions, the therapist also taught her the cycle of abuse. Before long, Ava recognized for herself that her relationship had been full of jealousy, suspicion and emotional abuse. She's become a true advocate for change, sharing her new knowledge of healthy interactions with her friends and school mates.*

## SETTING PROFESSIONAL STANDARDS

# Children's Mental Health Symposium

Leading the quest for public knowledge and professional training, The Whole Child sponsored the 2009 Children's Mental Health Symposium. The topic, "Trauma, Resiliency and Recovery in Infancy and Early Childhood," served the growing need for knowledge regarding emotional health in early childhood, giving over 450 professionals the unique opportunity to hear presentations by the top experts in the field.

Case studies, treatment strategies and policy statements were made by Barbara T. Bowman, MA, (the Irving B. Harris Professor of Child Development and Co-Founder, Erikson Institute) and Alicia F. Lieberman, PhD, (Irving B. Harris Endowed Chair in Infant Mental Health and Vice Chair at the UCSF Department of Psychiatry). Both professionals provided insightful and well-researched views on best practices for providing treatment and intervention services to traumatized children.

The Symposium was made possible by co-sponsors including the Los Angeles County Department of Children and Family Services, Presbyterian Intercommunity Hospital, Kaiser Permanente, The Atlas Family Foundation, Wells Fargo Bank, the Sky Rose Chapel Foundation of Rose Hills Memorial Park and Mortuaries.



Barbara T. Bowman, MA



Alicia F. Lieberman, PhD



## Scotty's Story

### Six-Year-Old's Anger and Stealing Threatens His Home

*Six-year old Scotty was so angry he was in jeopardy of losing his adoptive home and being expelled from school. He was throwing rocks at cars, threatening his custodial Grandma and disrupting the Kindergarten class. And when his Great-grandma died he lost one of the few attachments he had and became even more out of control. He started stealing toys from the school and other children. Nearly everyone gave up on Scotty, but not The Whole Child. An entire team of therapists stepped in, working not only with Scotty, but also with his teachers, school counselors, and the principal. Recently, the team got Scotty placed in a different, smaller class where Scotty gets more attention and is able to do better. There is more work to be done, but Scotty is on his way to healing, and The Whole Child team is not giving up.*

#### PARTNERING IN SUPPORT OF INFANTS AND FAMILIES: A SUCCESSFUL HOSPITAL-INFANT MENTAL HEALTH COLLABORATION

## Zero to Three National Training Institute

Rosalie Temblador, PhD, CIMI and Marisela Rosales, LCSW, CIMI. (representing The Whole Child) were invited to present at the prestigious Zero to Three Conference in Phoenix, Arizona. This annual Training Institute is the premier conference for professionals dedicated to promoting the health and well-being of infants and toddlers.

The poster presentation highlighted the successful collaboration between The Whole Child's Early Attachments Infant-Toddler Center and Presbyterian Intercommunity Hospital, for the purpose of bringing Infant Mental Health services to high-risk families in the community. This collaboration began in 2004. Dr. Temblador and Ms. Rosales had the opportunity to share their experience and expertise with other professionals who are at the beginning phases of establishing similar collaborations in communities across the country.

The presentation also discussed the impact as a result of this collaboration. Namely that the number of children ages 0-3 receiving mental health services at The Whole Child increased 764 percent and families reported high rates of satisfaction with the services provided. Dr. Temblador and Ms. Rosales emphasized the importance of partnering with medical professionals to meet the mental health needs of young children who have experienced or are at-risk for abuse, since these children are often seen in healthcare settings.

# healing our children

## Alice's Story Three-Year-Old Helped by Parental Training

*When three-year old Alice joined a parent-and-child preschool class, the teachers had high hopes for the pre-schooler. But almost immediately she began aggressive behaviors, hitting other children daily. Soon other parents stopped coming and the teacher was forced to decrease classroom participation from three days a week to two. It was then that Alice was referred to The Whole Child, beginning an intensive therapeutic process. The counselors worked with Alice and her mother for over a year at the center, at the school and in neighborhood parks. They showed the Mom different ways to interact with Alice, coaching her on how to provide appropriate supervision, reading her behavioral cues, intervening when Alice became frustrated, and providing time out. Now Alice is enrolled in Kindergarten and is a completely different child, interacting happily with the other students and thriving in class.*



# Art Therapy

Playing with clay and coloring are common activities for most children, but at The Whole Child, they are also keys to healing, revealing and releasing emotions.

“Each child is prompted to talk about their art piece.” Says Denise Fanelli, ART LMFT, CIMI, therapist, head of the art therapy program, and an accomplished artist herself. “That’s when the magic happens.”

A scribble might be interpreted by the child as a traumatic event, a block of color could be anger. “We utilize many types of medium,” explains Fanelli, “These range from as simple as crayons and paper to collage, oils, pastels and sculptural clay.”

The Art Therapy Program consists of group sessions, offered as an additional program to children already participating in therapy through the agency. For these children, generally ranging from 4-8 years old, the activities are not that different from their grade school art class. Materials are passed around, and a topic is suggested. What sets the therapy apart takes place after the art is completed.

“Art Therapy is a safe way for the children to communicate to themselves and others about their feelings and experiences,” Fanelli says. “They use the art as a form of release, comfort and containment. As a result, acting-out behaviors are reduced.”

Therapists at The Whole Child have documented the results of the program, and found the art created solid progress toward the children’s goals, including an ability to stay focused on task, taking turns without interrupting peers, using “I” statements, providing empathy and support to each other, positive reports from school and home, and an ability to communicate more openly about the feelings expressed in their art.

With the signed approval of the children and their guardians, several of the children’s individual water color paintings were made into notecards to support programs at The Whole Child, including the Art Therapy Program. A packet of 10 cards is available for purchase [see samples at left]. For purchase, contact 562-692-0383 extension 290.



# healing our children



## Pet Therapy

For some, taking their dog to work would be only a dream. But for Amy Sutherland, MS, LMFT a licensed marriage and family therapist, combining her work at The Whole Child with her dog Callie is a reality.

Each therapist at The Whole Child utilizes their own unique strengths. For Amy it happens to be a love of dogs, which led, eight years ago, to Amy becoming a trainer for the Guide Dogs of America. Since exposing the puppies to the public is a required part of their upbringing, it was only natural the dogs would accompany Amy when she joined The Whole Child in 2008. And it was inevitable the puppies would become an important part of her therapy programs.

“Studies have shown that Pet Therapy decreases anxiety, lowers heart rate and blood pressure,” explains Amy. “In puppy process we sit on the floor while we talk about families, friendship and empathy. The dogs help the children calm down and provide an easy outlet for discussing feelings.”

The dogs have been particularly helpful with foster children. “The puppies are raised away from their birth mother. My foster kids get it. They can relate to this special upbringing and normalize it for themselves.”

The puppies not only help the children, they also create a more relaxed interaction with parents. “Callie allows me to establish a quicker rapport and build trust easier,” says Amy. “She’s a conversation starter.” Callie has also served as an ambassador for The Whole Child, attending meetings and helping to spread The Whole Child’s mission to outside groups.

The puppies change the lives of the children, but it hasn’t been one-sided.

“Their interaction has helped the dogs learn their roles as guide dogs much faster,” says Amy.

The children have helped to discipline the dogs, refraining from petting them when they’d “been naughty,” or watching their “puppy push-ups,” the trainer’s way to allow the dogs refocus when they’ve become distracted.

Eventually the dogs move on to their new owners. “One of my dog recipients became a grief counselor, another a music producer,” says Amy. “The children and I were all very proud. These dogs change lives, both outside and here at The Whole Child.”



## Sandy's Story

### Mother of three Uncovers Roots of her own Anxiety

*Sandy wanted to be a good mom, but with three kids under the age of five, it wasn't easy. She contacted The Whole Child when her oldest exhibited extreme anxiety, becoming severely frightened by a curtain blowing in the wind or when asked to climb stairs to her room. The behaviors hit a pinnacle, when Sandy left a stroller outside in the wind and the child clung to it for an hour to prevent it from falling over. During the course of treatment, the therapist discovered that not only was her child anxious, but Sandy had a history of anxiety as well, stemming from being continuously bullied in preschool. After just a few months of counseling both mother and daughter are doing well. As an added bonus, the therapy has served as a preventative treatment for Sandy's younger children.*

# resources utilized



I had an idea for raising funds and helping children. Our slogan is, "help our kids." Our clientele, vendors, friends and family and the distribution industry all have been generous in assisting this cause. There is nothing special about what we do. Lots of people donate to good causes. We just found our niche with our golf tournament. Now we want to make our donations grow even bigger."

John Belsito

The Linda and John Belsito  
Childhood Disease  
Research Foundation

## LIVES TOUCHED: by our services

[Year Ending June 30, 2011]

**2,822**

Children and family members benefited from outpatient therapy and intensive home-based services to achieve emotional well-being utilizing various psychotherapy techniques and evidenced-based practice models: Trauma Focused - Cognitive Behavioral Therapy, Seeking Safety, Triple P Positive Parenting, and Managing and Adapting Practice (MAP).

**1,248**

Parent enrichment classes and child care services designed to promote bonding, positive communication, family interaction increasing healthy parent/child relationships, and appropriate disciplinary techniques utilizing the Parent Project Model.

**3,736**

Infants, preschoolers and parents strengthened their relationship and emotional attachment via Early Attachments Infant-Toddler Center and School Readiness Initiative utilizing evidenced-based practice models and outreach services: Child-Parent Psychotherapy, Infant Massage - Loving Touch, Incredible Years and Parents as Teachers.

**909**

Children and adolescents participated in Crisis Intervention and School-Based Mental Health Services (Individual, Group and Family Therapy) to stabilize crisis, achieve emotional well-being and school success.

**418**

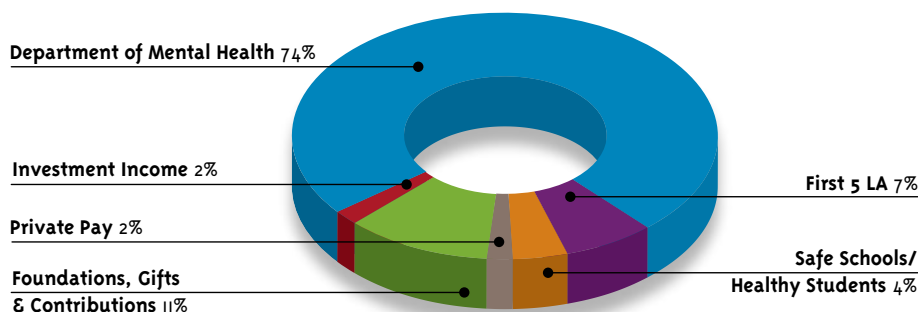
Children at South Whittier School District and Los Nietos School District participated in Child Abuse Prevention & Education Program *Growing Up Safe*. Children learned how to use their common sense skills and intuition to identify common lures used by predators, the confidence to protect themselves from violence, and to "Say NO, Run and Tell."

**9,133**

## Children and Families Served



## The Whole Child: Financial



**\$300,000-\$350,000**  
First 5 LA (SRI)

**\$100,000-\$299,000**  
BCM Foundation  
B.C. McCabe Foundation  
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First 5 LA (COF)  
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City Club of Bunker Hill  
Commerce Crowne Plaza  
DDW Copy Center  
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Golf 'n' Stuff  
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McDonald's  
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Gifts from July 1, 2009  
to June 30, 2010

# the true spirit of giving

## Local Service Clubs support The Whole Child

A big thank you goes out to local service clubs that never hesitate to offer their support to our children. Activities over the past year have included:

In April, 2010, the **Rotary Club of Whittier** donated a generous \$2000 for supplies used in elementary and middle school groups, created by master-level interns in the student services department. The groups explored such issues as bullying, self-esteem and attention deficit disorder.

In November, 2010, **The Whittier Host Lion's Club** made play time safer at The Whole Child by donating \$7,350 to refurbish the ground cover surrounding the outside play area at the Colima Ave-located center. Every day, the play area is utilized by dozens of children waiting to attend their program, or siblings during a counseling session.

At the December 2010 Holiday Sharing of Gifts, **The Kiwanis Club of Whittier** was on hand to serve barbequed hot dogs to nearly 500 children and their families.

On Memorial Weekend 2011, **The Kiwanis Club of Santa Fe Springs Heritage and Uptown Realty** provided a day of fun for children and their siblings from The Whole Child, with tickets from Golf N' Stuff. The day included a complimentary round of miniature golf, live music and a delicious lunch provided by Pleasantly Surprised Catering.

## PHILANTHROPY AT ITS BEST

## the Heart of a Child gala

## Special Evening makes a Difference for Local Children

More than 400 contributors danced, bid and dined at The Heart of a Child, a California black-tie Gala, raising over \$100,000 for abused and at-risk children. The generous participation of the community was inspiring.

During the evening, the Children's Champion Awards, in recognition of our locally-respected and beloved child advocates, were presented to Mary Jones and John and Linda Belsito. The evening was hosted by news anchor Gabriela Teissier of Univision, a friend and supporter of the agency.

Attending dignitaries included: City of Whittier Mayor Cathy Warner, City of Pico Rivera Mayor David Armenta, City Council Member Greg Nordbak, City of Pico Rivera Mayor Pro Tem Bob Archuleta, City of Pico Rivera Council Member Barbara Contreras-Rapisarda, City of Commerce Council Member Lela Leon and Andrea Avila representing LA County Supervisor Don Knabe. Early in the evening, nearly every hand in the room raised in a sea of support to "Fund a Need." Led by auctioneer Dawn Marie Kotsonis, the enthusiastic crowd pledged thousands of dollars to restore children's emotional health.

## PDSI & Belsito Foundation Charity Golf Tournament Benefited The Whole Child

In June 2011, for the 12th year in a row, The Linda & John Belsito Research Foundation & PDSI Charities drew together business sponsors, family and friends to create a golf event worth attending. Proceeds benefited local children's charities including The Whole Child.

The day began at the beautiful California Country Club in Whittier, as golfers arrived for lunch, anxious to support the mission. Later that afternoon, at the 19th hole, golfers and friends gathered for a cocktail reception. The day ended with a dinner, silent auction, raffle, 50/50 drawing, and award presentation.





Mary Jones happily offers the winning bid for two rounds of golf and three nights at the Palm Desert condo, donated by Board Member Jeanette Fasone.



(from left to right)

Pam Kennedy, Board of Directors; Charlene Dimas-Peinado, CEO, City of Whittier Mayor Cathy Warner; Linda and John Belsito, Mary Jones, and City of Whittier Councilman Greg Nordbak.

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**Save the Date!**

*the Heart  
of a Child  
luncheon*

**Friday, November 4, 2011**  
**Los Coyotes Country Club**  
**Buena Park, California**