

Fraser In Focus

A Newsletter for Friends of Fraser



Winter 2017

Mental Health in Our Schools

Mental health disorders are the most common health issues faced by school-aged children. One in five students suffer from a mental health or learning disorder and 80% of chronic mental health disorders begin in childhood, according to the 2016 Child Mind Institute Children's Mental Health Report.

Mental health is a vital part of a child's overall wellness and learning. All children experience periods of anger, frustration and sadness. However, for some children, these normal stresses can be overwhelming to the point that they interfere with everyday life. Which is what happened with Ace.

The calls and reports home from child care were the same every day. "Ace was angry, throwing things and fighting other kids," said Tameka, Ace's mom. "I knew this behavior couldn't continue, and he needed to get help." Ace began getting treatment through Fraser Mental Health, and his mom noticed a significant change in his ability to be part of class and learn.

The Minnesota Department of Human Services (DHS) recognizes that many children in need of mental health services do not have access to them.

"He is doing amazing and showing a passion to learn!"
– Ace's Mom

The overwhelming majority of children with mental health needs fail to be identified.

Through partnerships with mental health providers like Fraser, schools and other community organizations can support the mental health needs of children. This partnership helps families access mental health services by incorporating support into the child's day, breaking down the barriers of time, transportation and other resources for families who need services.

Ace's family has benefited from a partnership with Fraser and CAPRW Head Start in St. Paul. "Ace is able to relate to his peers

in ways he never did before," said Tameka. "He has learned strategies for handling his emotions that have helped him succeed in his first year at school."

Providing mental health services in the schools is working for more kids like Ace in more schools across the state as DHS increases funding. This fall, Fraser began working with Edina Public Schools as well.

"This partnership opens up access to mental health services to many families who need it," said Aric Jensen, MBA, PhD, LP, Director of Fraser Mental Health. "We see great value in this partnership and model for families, including better communication and collaboration with school staff, improved access to these services for children and their families and reduced stigma in receiving mental health care."

When individuals with mental health issues receive treatment, the outcomes are encouraging. According to the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Administration, behavioral and emotional problems decreased among 31 percent of youth with mental health needs after six months of receiving mental health services. Within one year of entering a mental health program, the school attendance rates of youth and their grades increased significantly. In addition, the number of students involved in violent incidents decreased by 15 percent within three years of a school implementing a mental health program.

"Ace's school conferences were completely different than the daily reports I used to get from child care," said Tameka. "He is doing amazing and showing a passion to learn!"



The Fraser mission is to make a meaningful and lasting difference in the lives of children, adults and families with special needs. We accomplish this by providing education, healthcare and housing services.

★ Healthy Lifestyle



Diane Cross

Gym memberships are at their yearly highs. Thousands are starting new diets. Resolutions abound as people refocus and channel their energy into a healthier lifestyle. Yet often we find that in their quest for a healthy lifestyle, people address only their physical health. At Fraser, we know that a big part of being healthy is mental health.

We are constantly reminded about the interplay between mental and physical health through insightful programs like Fraser Integrated Health. This new program at Fraser offers experienced and dedicated experts who help families navigate the complex world of medical, mental health and community resources. It is through careful management of these facets of life that our clients find bright futures.

Just as we resolve to tend to our physical health, we must see to our mental well-being. There is no separating the two. At Fraser we have always known this. When people's mental and physical health is supported, they become active and involved. That activity and involvement further supports their mental and physical health. And this truly benefits us all.

It is not always easy to access mental health services, even if you are resolved to do so. That is why Fraser is excited to be working within the Department of Human Services's Expanded Mental Health in the Schools project.

This program brings mental health clinicians into the schools so those who need services can get them. Often families don't have the resources to get their child the services they need to be successful. This program breaks down those barriers, directly serving those who need mental health therapy the most.

As 2017 ages, we hope that your resolutions for a healthier life stay strong. It is through our individual strength that our families, our communities and our futures stay healthy. As always, Fraser is committed to helping your family with special needs achieve all your health goals.

Warm regards,

Diane S. Cross, President and CEO

CREATE BRIGHT FUTURES

JOIN OUR TEAM



FRASER.ORG/EMPLOYMENT



MEET OUR STAFF

Jessica Enneking



Jessica Enneking, LMFT, sees so many possibilities for Fraser clients. She began her work with Fraser 12 years ago overseeing the before and after school care program at Fraser Academy (now SPERO Academy). She is also a mother of two boys who both

attended Fraser School, and it is her time as a Fraser parent that sparked the focus of her work today.

"Fraser School was awesome for my kids," said Enneking. "It also allowed me to see another area of Fraser I didn't know much about. Getting to know the teachers and what they do allowed me to see areas for collaboration."

This connection inspired collaboration between Fraser programs. Soon, the Connect for Rec program started operating out of Fraser School. This respite program brings individuals with special needs out into the community and gives them access to recreational activities that may not be open to them otherwise.

As Enneking moved through different programs at Fraser she always kept her eye toward connections and wrap around care for Fraser families. Today she is a clinical supervisor for Fraser Adult Rehabilitative Mental Health Services and oversees the In-Home Waiver and Connect for Rec programs. In addition, she works closely with Fraser service areas like Supervised and Supportive Living and other Home and Community Supports programs. Her main focus every day is bridging gaps between clinical and non-clinical service areas.

"It's a passion for me," said Enneking. "Clients think we are all in one room and know each other, but we don't." Enneking wants all Fraser staff to know what's possible for their clients. "A client is missing out when Fraser offers something but their therapist doesn't know that we do it." Enneking is making sure that they do.

Legislative Update

The 2017 legislative session began on January 3. While attention in the 2016 election was focused around the presidential race, in Minnesota every seat was up for election. The results are in and the Minnesota House of Representatives continues to be controlled by the Republican Party, which increased their total number of seats from 73 to 76. A special election is scheduled for February 14 for House District 32B after the Minnesota Supreme Court determined that Representative Bob Barrett did not actually live within the district boundaries. On the Senate side, the Democratic Party now has 33 seats having lost six seats and its majority control.

Despite who fills the seats, Fraser continues its work at the legislature ensuring that Fraser clients and families have a voice and a strong advocate. Of particular importance to many Fraser families and the disability community is the Best Life Alliance.

The Best Life Alliance is a broad coalition of advocates, caregivers, family members,

providers and individuals who are working together to ensure the highest quality of care for Minnesotans who receive home and community based services. The coalition was successful in 2014 in passing a bill that increased funding for home and community based service staff by five percent. That win for our families was a direct result of the hard work that advocates, caregivers and family members did informing your legislators that disability services are important to you.

The Best Life Alliance continues to push for incremental change through the MN legislature. In 2016, the active Best Life Alliance Bill advocated again for an increase in direct care staff wages. It did not pass. However important progress was made in making legislators aware of the staffing crisis, and that the Best Life Alliance bill is an important step in addressing those staffing shortages.

Fraser will be back in the 2017 legislative session advocating for quality care. The specific proposal is still being finalized

through the Best Life Alliance, but improving quality of care for all Minnesotans through wage increases for our hard working direct-care staff is our top priority.

Just like in 2014, the Best Life Alliance Bill will only be successful with your support.

Just like in 2014, the Best Life Alliance bill will only be successful with your support. **Your legislators need to hear from you. Tell them via phone, email or letter: "I am a constituent, I believe that disability services are important, and Minnesota needs to pass the Best Life Alliance bill."**

If you would like to get more involved this upcoming legislative session please contact Ben.Gustafson@fraser.org or call 612-767-7568.

Thank you for the support you give helping Fraser create bright futures.

Fraser Integrated Health

Fraser Integrated Health is a new program available to eligible Fraser families. It is a unique approach to health care, which integrates mental health with medical health services; developing partnerships between families, care teams and the community.

Fraser is one of the first 13 certified behavioral health homes in Minnesota. Fraser Integrated Health officially launched on July 1, 2016, and we have enjoyed meeting with and supporting families in need.

The Fraser Integrated Health team currently includes a Systems Navigator and an Integration Specialist (RN) who help families coordinate their medical and mental health needs.

As of December, more than 35 families have met with our Systems Navigator and have enrolled in Integrated Health.

Families:

- Meet with Systems Navigator
- Communicate needs, concerns, barriers, strengths and goals for their physical and mental health care
- Complete health and wellness review
- Develop their Health Action Plan
- Enjoy monthly check-ins via phone, email or in person

Families have responded positively to Fraser Integrated Health since many of the children enrolled have medical specialists, a primary care provider, multiple mental health providers and are receiving school special education services plus community services. Some of the medical issues include feeding/nutrition, sleeping and seizure disorders.

Being able to support and coordinate all the health needs of families is critical to improving their quality of life. Fraser is excited to be providing the support these families need to lead healthy lives.

Fraser Annual Benefit 2016



There's no place like Fraser

Thank you for joining us at the Fraser Annual Benefit, presented by POPP Communications. Your generous support provides life-changing services to individuals with special needs at all stages of life - from the first steps of infancy, to navigating teen years, to maintaining independence in later years of life. With such a wide array of services, there is truly no place like Fraser.

In total, more than \$446,000 was raised at the Fraser Annual Benefit. Your generosity creates bright futures for children and adults with special needs.

The success of this event would not be possible without our sponsors. We'd especially like to thank our presenting sponsors, Bill and Teri Popp from POPP Communications.

And we couldn't do this event without the generous volunteers who help before, during and after the event. A very special thank you to Marilyn Blanchard and Mickey O'Kane for making the event beautiful.



Photos from the event are on our Flickr page.

See you next year at Hilton Minneapolis on November 18, 2017!

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Upcoming Events

FRASER 2017 Walk for autism



Get your team ready for the 2017 Walk for Autism!

This family event held at Mall of America allows individuals, families and groups to form teams and raise money for Fraser Autism Center of Excellence. The first floor is filled with games, sensory stations, therapy animals and fun.

Join us on **Saturday, April 8, 2017** at 7:00 a.m. at the Mall of America Rotunda.

Fraser.org/walk



Fraser Bowling with Celebrities

Sunday, February 26

2:00-6:00 p.m. at Pinstripes, Edina

Fraser Bowling with Celebrities matches up participants with local luminaries to bowl, drink, eat and raise awareness for Fraser. A sampling of celebrities: Kat Perkins (The Voice), Chef Vincent Francoual, Christopher Straub (Project Runway) and more.

Purchase a spot to bowl with your favorite celebrity and see who's the better bowler. Don't want to play? Limited meet and greet tickets are available.

Fraser.org/bowling



Pulling Together A Partnership with WCCO



Fraser is delighted to announce a new fundraising event, in partnership with WCCO: Pulling Together.

The Pulling Together event will feature 20 tug-of-war teams from across the Twin Cities battling it out for bragging rights on the Mississippi River. Ten teams will represent Minneapolis and ten teams will represent St. Paul, playing up the sibling rivalry between the two cities.

Each team has a \$10,000 fundraising goal to benefit Fraser. Once the goal is met, the team will qualify to pull. All proceeds from this unique event will benefit Fraser and the families we serve.

The new Pulling Together event is part of WCCO's Accomplish MN initiatives, which benefit local nonprofit organizations. Fraser is delighted to be involved with WCCO, an organization that cares so deeply about our community. We believe this new partnership will bring significant awareness to the

issues experienced by families with special needs, as well as raise money for critical Fraser programs and services throughout the Twin Cities.

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Pulling Together will take place on Saturday, June 10, 2017.

Spectators will be able to enjoy the event festivities at Hidden Falls Regional Park in Saint Paul, including live music and refreshments, while watching the losing teams literally pulled into the mighty Mississippi.

Join us at this fun event that builds up community and team work. Contact Anna Stier at Anna.Stier@fraser.org or 612-798-8328 to learn how you can pull together for Fraser.





Randy Pattee shares his story at the Fraser Annual Benefit

A Home for Emmett

Emmett seemed to develop normally for his first year and a half. He was talking and even a little precocious. He knew his numbers, colors and some letters. He was starting to string together two and three-word phrases.

But at 22 months, things started to change. The first thing we noticed was the sleeping. The kid just could not sleep through the night anymore. Then there was the hand-banging. He seemed to always want to hit things with his open palm over and over again. He stopped responding to his name. He talked less. He acted as if he didn't hear us.

We took Emmett to his regular doctor, who suggested that he was PDD-NOS: pervasive developmental disorder, not otherwise specified. Whatever the hell that was, it wasn't something we wanted for our son. We had to do something. Dozens of tests later and the diagnosis was autism.

We tried the fad cures of the day. None of them worked. Emmett was what he was, and we were going to have to get used to it. It's hard to tell two "fixers" that the most important thing in their lives can't be fixed.

Both of us were working full-time, and there were the normal parts of life—school activities, birthday parties, homework—and then we had some parts that were less normal. Emmett would sometimes slap the windows with his palms so hard that the glass would break, and he'd cut himself. Emmett loved to swim, so he'd run into the water wherever he saw it—the pond near our house, a closed pool, Lake Harriett.

We started noticing that there were fewer and fewer activities going on at our house. Our other sons simply didn't want to expose their friends to the strangeness that was happening.

Our boys were wonderful, but they weren't getting the kind of childhood they deserved; none of them were. Doctors suggested that Emmett needed a different place to live. How do you decide that your child can't live with you anymore? Isn't it the obligation of a family to be there for everyone, no matter the trouble? This was harder than anything.

Fortunately for us, Fraser was there. We learned that Fraser had a group home for children. There was a space available. The house had everything we wanted for him: good reputation, safe, understanding people, close to home, freedom to visit almost any time, activities, the opportunity to bring him home. It was agonizing, but we made the choice to send our seven-year-old to live elsewhere.

I first knew we made the right choice when Emmett was visiting us. I asked him if he was getting tired, and he got up, grabbed my hand and took me to the garage. **He was tired. But he didn't want to sleep in his old bed, he wanted to go home. Home to Fraser.**

Emmett will never be able to live on his own. He won't be able to cook for himself. He'll never get married. He won't have a job. He won't talk. We're still holding out hope that one day he will be potty-trained, but that may no longer be reasonable either. His autism will never be "cured." He will never be able to have what we would think of as a normal life.

But as long as Emmett has Fraser, he'll have what he needs, a safe and happy home.

— Randy Pattee, Emmet's Dad



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Fraser Mental Health

Supporting the whole family in the pursuit of a healthy life.

Get started with Fraser

Call 612-767-7222

