

Courier

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www.concern4kids.org



CONCERN Values Internships - Students are a Part of Tomorrow's Success!

Jenna Robinson is a current intern at CONCERN in the foster care department. She has spent her internship working alongside of Janice Johnson, Foster Care Recruiter, who has been with CONCERN for 17 years. Jenna is a senior at Kutztown University, and in addition to her internship works full time as a preschool teacher.

Jenna said her top three take aways of being an intern at CONCERN are: learning more about foster care and adoption, the process of becoming a foster parent, and more about the history of CONCERN and the agency.

Jenna said, "What stands out about CONCERN are all the different programs that are available to help families and individuals and the supportive staff who help those families."

If she could wave a magic wand on CONCERN, she would use it to have more loving and supportive foster families available to foster the children in need!

<https://www.concern4kids.org/foster-parenting>

Intake Intern Abby Thorius valued being a part of a professional team, feeling valued, respected, and mentored. She enjoyed being exposed to the inner workings of a Social Services organization and seeing how CONCERN utilizes the skills she is learning in school.

Abby said, "Stepping out of your comfort zone is only temporary and she was given the ability to do this and still feel supported and encouraged." She felt comfortable asking questions for the benefit of CONCERN and her own knowledge.

When asked what stood out the most during her time with

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New Director Hired

Crystal Boggs-Jennings has been hired as the new Director of Residential Services at CTUB - Coatesville Campus. She is honored to be selected for this role and looks forward to the challenge.



A little about Crystal. She holds a bachelor's degree in criminal justice from St. Leo University. She also spent a couple of years at West Chester University where she majored in Criminal Justice and minored in Sociology. It was a dream of hers to go into law enforcement right after college, but in 2001 she made the ultimate sacrifice for her oldest brother and donated her kidney to him. Crystal chose another path after this decision, and began her career with Devereux where she stayed until 2011. While at Devereux she was a direct care staff, Intensive Case Manager and Program Supervisor. During her time there she worked with both Juveniles and adults with Intellectual Disabilities. After moving on from Devereux Crystal worked with several non-profit organizations, which included roles as a Program Manager, Program Specialist, Associate Clinical Director, and lastly District Manager. Her passion is people and doing all she can to help individuals into being their best self.

Lastly, her Why... Crystal states, "I do this all for my two children who are now adults and of course my fur baby, Java (The mini Goldendoodle). I enjoy spending time with my kids and Dog, especially at sporting events. I'm a huge football fan, GO EAGLES. I love baseball, especially live games at Citizens Bank Park (Go Phillies) and pretty much any other sport you put in front of me. I look forward to meeting everyone and I'm so proud to be part of the CONCERN team."

CONCERN's Annual Report is Now Available

Highlights of 2021-2022



CONCERN is Now Accredited!

In June 2022, CONCERN became officially accredited by Council on Accreditation (COA).



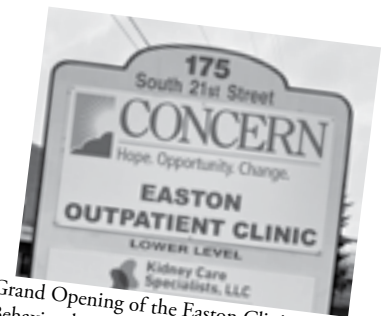
Number of people served

7,560

Residential	31
Community Based	316
Foster Care/Adoption	388
Behavioral Health	6,825



CONCERN hired 120 new staff and worked with 41 student interns from a variety of colleges and universities.



Grand Opening of the Easton Clinic Providing Behavioral Health Services via telehealth and in-person. The clinic is within walking distance to local schools and provides another option for school-based clients and their families to receive service when school is not in session. Services provided through the Easton Clinic include psychiatric evaluation, medication management, and individual, group, and family psychotherapy.



CONCERN Values Internships . . .

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CONCERN Abby stated, “how incredibly organized everyone appears. From this experience, CONCERN is on top of everything. My Field Instructor and Task Supervisor have been fantastic with assisting me in this endeavor. Having knowledge of Kutztown’s due dates, overall general requirements and helping me navigate this crucial last step as I near my graduation. It has been a two-way street as well where I have been accountable for my assignments and duties as an intern in the role”.

If Abby could wave a magic wand, she would ask for more funding so CONCERN could continue to hire more staff and continue to grow.

Abby stated, “Her internship has been a wonderful experience and she has been lucky to be part of such an outstanding organization. She is looking forward to the final months of her internship and continuing to learn more about the professional environment.”

Family Unification Program

The FUP Intensive Case Management program offers youth the opportunity to develop skills needed in the “adult world”. As youth gain skills and resources, they increase their capacity to be responsive and responsible for their own needs. We are so excited to provide youth with direction and guidance that can potentially change the trajectory of their lives.



For more information on the FUP Intensive Case Management Program visit: <https://www.concern4kids.org/post/the-fup-intensive-case-management-program-offers-youth-the-opportunity-to-develop-skills>

Thoughts from the President/ CEO



Gordon H. May, MSW

“The future belongs to those who believe in the beauty of their dreams.” - Eleanor Roosevelt

CONCERN focuses on Shaping the Future

As an organization, CONCERN continues to focus on the future through program and site growth, mentoring student interns, applying for funding for new programs, training and empowering staff, and a constant eye on the future so we can continue to serve children, youth, and families.

Over the past year, CONCERN hired and trained 120 new staff, including a new director for our CTUB Residential Program. We have worked with 41 student interns from a variety of colleges and universities. Some of their experiences are highlighted in this newsletter. We value all our interns as they help to Shape the Future. CONCERN opened a new and bigger office in Towanda to serve more clients and we are in the process of opening an office in Tannersville and Coudersport. We believed in the “beauty of the dream” to provide more behavioral health services, especially in the rural areas of PA, where the service is great needed. Their dream coming to fruition.

45 years ago, a group of dedicated social workers chose to Shape the Future of children by founding CONCERN. This year, we celebrate their dedication and the success over the past 45 years as we prepare for a 45th anniversary celebration on November 10, 2023. We all have the power to shape the future of children, youth, and families- we just need to believe in the dream.

An Internship Experience

My name is Marley Reedy, and I am currently working on my bachelor's of social work degree at Kutztown University, and I am interning at CONCERN. I am passionate about making a difference in the lives of children and adolescents and a firm believer that sometimes it only takes one positive adult role model in a child's life to provide them with guidance to overcome any obstacle. I am interning under the supervision of Cheryl Reeling who is the Director of Quality Assurance, which has given me much insight into what goes on behind the scenes of an agency in order for it to properly perform and provide services for their community.

While I am not studying, interning, or working, I enjoy spending time with family, friends, and my cats. I love going to concerts, snowboarding, playing volleyball, painting, and hiking. Throughout my internship experience, I learned a lot about what components go into an agency for it to properly function. The most important takeaway from this experience at CONCERN is the need for communication. In every aspect of my internship, whether it was working in Quality Assurance, Adoption, or Foster Care, communication was the biggest factor for success. When learning new tasks, asking questions, and communicating for a complete understanding of the task assigned, has been important in my experience.

Another important takeaway that I gathered was the significance of confidentiality, especially when working with children and adolescents. I gained this knowledge through online training and experience explained by my supervisor. Another key point I learned at this agency was the importance of teamwork, while getting to know some children in Foster Care I realized how many different workers are involved in one child's case and if they are not able to work together it can drastically interfere with a child, and result in them not receiving the proper services they may need.

Teamwork contributes to much of the success that I saw while interning at CONCERN, and was one of the many aspects that I admired about the agency. While being an intern, I never felt that my role was any less important than anyone else's and I always felt like I could rely on any other member of the agency to assist me with any questions I had. I also observed how much of an effect communicating with one another positively affected the agencies' outputs. Any concerns by an employee are always considered and discussed with the board of directors, to fulfill a positive working condition and a productive work environment.

During my internship I felt as though the agency focuses on the care of the workers, which results in the workers taking pride in the agency and putting out positive energy towards their clients. If there was one thing, I would do to make the agency just that much better, it would be to provide more funding, as a non-profit social service agency more funding is always helpful to help the agency to be able to provide more services to the community that they support.

Follow us on social media




CONCERN Thanks the Wentzel Family

The Wentzel Family, one of CONCERN's former foster families and adoptive families continues to support CONCERN's mission, not just during the holiday season, but all year long. This year, during the holidays, they went above and beyond.

First, Nicole, wrote a "Letter to Santa" as part of Ephrata National Bank's Letters to Santa competition. CONCERN promoted this competition to all of our networks, friends, and families. We won third place and were presented a check for \$3,000, which will benefit children in foster care.

Additionally, the Wentzel's hosted a holiday party and asked each person to bring a toy to donate to CONCERN for children in foster care. Thank you to the Wentzel's for their generosity and continuing to give to children in foster care!



Enclosed is my gift to CONCERN 

in the amount of: \$ _____

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

e-mail _____

Please charge to my credit card: MasterCard VISA

Cardholder signature (required) 3 Digit Code

Card number Exp. date (month/year)

Visit www.concern4kids.org for secure online donations.

Contributions are tax deductible to the fullest extent of the law.

Please mail coupon to: CONCERN • Development & Marketing Dept.
One West Main Street • Fleetwood, PA 19522

The official registration and financial information of CONCERN - Professional Services for Children, Youth, and Families may be obtained from the Pennsylvania Department of State by calling toll free, within Pennsylvania, (800) 732-0999. Registration does not imply endorsement.

A copy of the current financial statement of CONCERN – Professional Services for Children, Youth, and Families is available by writing One West Main Street, Fleetwood, PA 19522 or by calling (610) 944-0445. Documents and information submitted under the Maryland Solicitations Act are also available, for the cost of postage and copies, from the Maryland Secretary of State, State House, Annapolis, MD 21401, (410) 974-5534.

New Program Begins

NEW PROGRAM: School Engagement Program, CONCERN's newest Community-Based Program began in February 2023 in Carbon County, PA.

The School Engagement Program is designed to provide services to children and families impacted by truancy, with the aim of increasing consistent school attendance. These services can last between two to six months and focus on addressing school attendance barriers, accessing and receiving community resources, and collaborating with service providers such as the school, county caseworkers, juvenile probation and district magistrate offices. School and home visits are provided and are targeted at engaging children and youth in improving success rates with schooling. The program's goal is to improve

youth's daily school attendance independent of any program assistance. This is accomplished with a team-oriented approach that introduces new behavioral strategies that are individualized to each youth, that works together to help clients establish consistent routines, and connects the youth and caregiver(s) to relevant community resources. The work done in the program is aimed to build skills and supports around the youth to help them be free of any other program assistance following their involvement in the program.

CONCERN's implementation of the School Engagement Program in Carbon County is one step closer to decreasing school truancy across PA.



Give them a reason to smile!

Become a foster or adoptive parent

CONCERN
Hope. Opportunity. Change.
www.concern4kids.org

Focus on Our Families - Roberta Austin-Thomas

Ms. Austin-Thomas, affectionately called Ms. Peaches, has provided a safe haven for several mother/ baby and teenage youth during her 10+ years of being a CONCERN certified foster parent. Her approach to connecting with youth is very gentle and empathetic to their circumstances, while at the same time allowing youth to gain and develop much needed independent living skills such as money management and cooking and preparing balanced meals. She has forged relationships with the zoned high school nearby and has gone above and beyond to assist youth in getting back on track in order to graduate on time.

One notable case in which she made a pivotal difference was with providing stability to a young mom who transitioned to adulthood last summer. After having experienced much upheaval and having a history of running away, that young lady found stability with Ms. Peaches for five years. Ms. Peaches patiently addressed her multifaceted needs and promoted transformational growth. Ms. Peaches knew her best and was a lifeline in not only advocating for her needs herself but teaching her to advocate for herself. Ms. Peaches also provided the entire team with the needed information to advocate for her and connect her with the programs necessary to meet her needs as she moved into adulthood. Ms. Peaches was always there to support the client's development as a young person and also to support her in parenting her children. Ms. Peaches continues to be an on-going support and listening ear for this mom and her children who are now living on their own.

Ms. Peaches is an amazing advocate for all three girls currently placed in her home and makes it a priority to attend all school meetings on their behalf. Her advocating ensured that the oldest

youth can graduate on time this year, as Ms. Peaches played a pivotal role in getting the youth enrolled in credit recovery classes.

Over the years, Ms. Peaches has refined her skills to engage with and support teen girls as they work to transition toward independence. For many youths, she is a supportive role model, a mentor, a confidante, and a lifelong connection. With a deep understanding of the realities of aging out of foster care,

Ms. Peaches has prioritized pushing her youths to graduate high school, providing the tools to succeed in their future goals, and helping them become self-sufficient. Ms. Peaches has shown dedication in taking the journey with all of her youths, allowing the teens to have control of their choices while mentoring and providing reassurance when needed. In this way, Ms. Peaches' style has allowed her youths to progress based on their learning and development styles. Her observations and feedback are always sought after in team meetings, and she is a welcome voice in court. CONCERN and the youth are lucky to have her and appreciate all she does!



Mission Statement

CONCERN brings hope,
offers opportunity,
and inspires change.

Vision Statement

To encourage growth and
promote positive healthy
lives!

Board of Directors

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CONCERN Service Sites

Foster Care/Adoption Services/

Community Based Services

Greater Berks Regional Office
Fleetwood • (610) 944-0445

Lehigh Valley Regional Office
Bethlehem • (610) 691-8401

Northeast Regional Office
Wilkes Barre • (570) 800-2332

Southeast Regional Office
Willow Grove • (800) 562-1427

Susquehanna Valley Regional Office
Lewisburg • (570) 523-1297
Wellsboro • (570) 724-7142
Towanda • (570) 268-3073

Maryland Regional Office
Lanham • (301) 429-2370

Behavioral Health Services

Eastern Region
Bethlehem • (610) 691-8401
Easton • (484) 497-9699
Fleetwood • (610) 541-2309
Wyomissing • (610) 541-2309

North Central Region
Lewisburg • (570) 523-1297
Mansfield • (570) 662-7600
Towanda • (570) 268-3073
Wellsboro • (570) 724-7142

Residential Services

Treatment Units for Boys
Coatesville Campus • (610) 384-8733

Gordon H. May, MSW, President/CEO

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Your comments and suggestions are always welcome by mail, phone,
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Upcoming Events

April 20 - CONCERN Charity Bingo will be held at the Fleetwood Grange at 6:30 PM and will feature trendy purses, totes, and accessories from Thirty-One and also items from Coach, Kate Spade, and Michael Kors. Admission of \$25 includes twenty games of bingo, a hot dog, beverage, and door prize.

June 1 - Virtual Education Series titled Challenging Youth Behavior: Exploring the Sources on a Pathway to Solution.

June 3 - Highmark Walk for a Healthy Community will be held at DeSales University in Center Valley, PA, beginning at 9:00 AM. Register to walk, form a team or join an established team, or support a team or individual.

September 16 - Foster Family and Staff Appreciation Picnic at Knoebels Amusement Resort in Elysburg, PA.

November 10 - CONCERN 45th Anniversary Celebration to be held at the Double Tree in Reading, PA. More details to follow.

Contact Jane Zettlemyer at 610-215-9569 for tickets/registration or for more information. You can also visit our website at: www.concern4kids.org/news-events.