



# Caring Compass

Newsletter from Teton Youth & Family Services



Celebrating 45 years helping children and families find their way to fulfilling and constructive lives





## Board of Directors

Jim Hesser, President  
Martha Bancroft, Vice President  
Lucy Rankin, Secretary  
Anna-Lisette Davis, Treasurer  
Mitch Dann, Director/Past President  
Ben Brettell, Director  
Steve White, Director  
Lisa Carlin, Director  
Ann Dwan, Director  
Betty Andrikopoulos, Director  
Alex Freeburg, Director  
Faye Campbell, Director  
Matt Carr, Director

## TYFS Staff

### ADMINISTRATION

Sarah Cavallaro, Executive Director  
Chris Moll, Director of Licensing  
and Accreditation  
Martina Hansen, Director of  
Operations and Finance  
Kilee Amborski, Assistant Director  
of Operations and Finance  
Dan Oas, Development Associate

### HIRSCHFIELD CENTER

Chris Moll, Director  
Cassidy Creel, Juvenile Diversion Officer  
Jen McNaughton, Family  
Advocate/Therapist  
Margaret Brigham, Family  
Advocate/Therapist

### VAN VLECK HOUSE

Jeremy Silcox, Director of Van Vleck House  
Arty Polo, Group Home Manager  
Matia Wilson, Therapist  
Olive Byrne, JH Leadership  
Program Coordinator

### RED TOP MEADOWS

Tom Concannon, Director  
Wes Gabel, Director of Education  
Ted Nichols, Wilderness Program Director

## Contact us

307.733.6440  
info@tyfs.org  
www.tyfs.org  
Mailing: P.O. Box 2631  
Physical: 510 South Cache  
Jackson, WY. 83001

## Stay Connected:



## A Letter from Sarah

Dear Friend,

Happy Summer! The sun has finally brought out the flowers and leaves and all the visitors who want to see the magnificent Valley we call home.

At TYFS, we have a lot going on with our Summer Jackson Hole Leadership Program kicking off on June 13th to a celebration of TYFS' 45th Birthday on June 30th. For the historical buffs out there, this newsletter will give you some history about TYFS and how we began. Many people have contributed to our success over the years. My heart was full when choosing some of the pictures in this newsletter as years later they are still people who have been impactful in delivering services and who now continue to serve our community in different capacities.

We truly would not be available for children and families who are often struggling with very difficult traumas or crisis if we did not have our community's support. You have made thousands of people's struggle turn towards a journey of healing and hope. THANK YOU in whatever capacity you have come to be part of our family.

I would invite you to celebrate with us this year at a birthday party after our Annual Golf Benefit on June 30th at Jackson Hole Golf and Tennis. At 6:00pm we will be hosting a gathering of those who support us now and those who have supported us over the past 45 years. We hope that you can join in this celebration of where we have been and where we are heading for the next 45 years. Feel free to contact me at [scavallaro@tyfs.org](mailto:scavallaro@tyfs.org) if you have any questions or would like to let us know you are joining us.

Thank you again for your care and support for TYFS and the children and families we are honored to serve.

Sincerely,

Sarah Cavallaro  
Executive Director, Teton Youth & Family Services



Executive Director, Sarah Cavallaro with her daughter.



# Serving Children & Families Since 1977



# WE ARE HIRING!

## POSITION: YOUTH COUNSELOR

Are you looking for a job that will positively impact your life? Teton Youth & Family Services is seeking a dynamic individual to join our Youth Counselor Staff. This position provides the opportunity to work in an active and challenging environment while helping youth to find their way to more fulfilling and constructive lives.

Position responsibilities: Youth Counselors are responsible for the daily care and supervision of our residents, building therapeutic relationships with our clients and creating a safe and predictable environment. Creating this environment requires establishing healthy boundaries, reinforcing choices and behaviors through the use of natural and logical consequences, helping residents develop internal self-control by highlighting new growth and change as well as engaging in enriching activities. Youth Counselors work in shifts up to 16 hours, including overnights. Could include leading wilderness trips.

Qualifications: High School Diploma, preferably Bachelor's Degree, patient, a good listener, energetic, and self-assured.

To apply: Please email resume to [mhansen@tyfs.org](mailto:mhansen@tyfs.org) or call 307-733-6440

# OUR WISH LIST

## Van Vleck House

- Propane Grill
- Art Supplies
- New Water bottles
- New basketball
- Large Picnic Table
- Snow King summer activity passes

## Hirschfield Center

- Gift Cards for Gas
- Gift Cards for "Take a Kid to Lunch" (Quiznos, Whole Foods etc.)
- Day or Annual Activity Passes

## Red Top Meadows

- Acoustic guitars
- Propane Grill
- New soccer and basketball
- Used or new hiking boots

## Little Food Pantry

- basic toiletries
- socks
- pasta/rice
- one box meals
- spices
- Other shelf-stable food

# Make a Difference for a Child

Items donated to TYFS are tax deductible



# Gratitude



## GROWING STRONGER *Together*

Joining Forces, Giving Hope  
to Families in Crisis

### So Much to be Grateful For

In the face of exponentially-expanding need for services, Community Safety Network and Teton Youth & Family Services launched the second year of Growing Stronger Together this last May. As Jackson Hole emerges from years burdened by the pandemic, it's clear that the community is relying on the resources provided by Teton Youth & Family Services and Community Safety Network at record-breaking levels.

As the pressure of COVID inflicted new levels of strain on individuals, families, and resources, more community members were at elevated risk for violence, exploitation, and trauma.

Proactive connections and education for youth can prevent a wide spectrum of issues in their futures and set them up for unlimited success. "Whether we connect with a child and help avert exploitation before it starts, empower a teen to nourish their own self-esteem, or offer a safe haven in the aftermath of a life-shaking crisis, our services are the stone in someone's pond," says Cavallaro. "85% of youth who are involved with our residential programs never need to seek a higher level of care. That's the very definition of prevention. But we also need to help kids and families before residential care might be necessary — through leadership camps, counseling, there are so many ways that lives can be changed for the better."

A special thanks to our Campaign sponsors and community of supporters for joining forces and giving hope to families in crisis.

### Lead Sponsors:

Ted and Noa Staryk

The Trifecta Fund: Carrie, Lyla and Carly Kirkpatrick

NEWTON  
FOUNDATION



SINGLETON | PEERY  
FINANCIAL

### Community Sponsors:

Lisa Carlin

Margot Snowdon and Yves Desgouttes

Community Safety Network Board of Directors

Teton Youth and Family Services Board of Directors

# Red Top Meadows

## Announcing a CARF Three-Year Accreditation

We are pleased to report to you that Teton Youth & Family Services has been accredited for a period of three years for its Residential Treatment [Red Top Meadows] program. This is the first accreditation that the international accrediting body, CARF, has given to Teton Youth & Family Services.

By pursuing and achieving accreditation, Teton Youth & Family Services has demonstrated that it meets international standards for quality and is committed to pursuing excellence.

This accreditation decision represents the highest level of accreditation that can be given to an organization and shows our organization's substantial conformance to the CARF standards. An organization receiving a Three-Year Accreditation has put itself through a rigorous peer review process. By demonstrating to a team of surveyors during an on-site visit its commitment to offering programs and services that are measurable, accountable, and of the highest quality.

As quoted in the CARF Accreditation Decision: "The organization's many strengths include a strong governing board; effective leadership; and staff members who are hardworking, innovative, and enthusiastic. The board, leadership, and personnel maintain an unwavering commitment to deliver person-centered services that optimize the quality of life of the residents and their families."

CARF is an independent, nonprofit accrediting body whose mission is to promote the quality, value, and optimal outcomes of services through a consultative accreditation process and continuous improvement services that center on enhancing the lives of persons served. Founded in 1966 as the Commission

on Accreditation of Rehabilitation Facilities, and now known as CARF International, the accrediting body establishes consumer-focused standards to help organizations measure and improve the quality of their programs and services. For more information about the accreditation process, please visit the CARF website at [www.carf.org](http://www.carf.org).



Red Top Meadows is a 14-bed residential treatment and therapeutic wilderness program established in 1980 to serving adolescent males. The facility is located on 20 acres bordering the Bridger-Teton National Forest.





# Celebrating 45 Years

## Teton Youth and Family Services – the early years

People often wonder about the history of Teton Youth and Family Services (TYFS), and after 45 years, it is hard to imagine our community without children and family services intact. That's why, over the next year, we want to tell you our story - and really dig into how the organization has grown and evolved into what you see today.

As a community, we often take for granted services that are already intact. We forget about all the collective work and energy others have given to ensure certain amenities are readily available. The current Human Service framework of Jackson is largely built around the needs of its population; it is an intricate web that ensures community members receive the right kind of care and support when they need it - and it's largely unseen. When we talk about building a healthy community, we have to address two important components: prevention and intervention. You can't have one without the other. You have to build a safety net where no one falls through the cracks - a safety net where multiple organizations are constantly checking and fixing the weak points. But back in the 1970s, Jackson was still a young town in terms of formulating systems of support.

However in 1976, Claire Smith came across a federal grant for substance abuse prevention money to support programming. From a national perspective, the rising use of drugs became a focal point in legislation, concerned that wide-spread, pervasive drug use would inevitably impede educational attainment and a bustling workforce. In an effort to combat illegal drug use, Congress passed the Comprehensive Drug Abuse Prevention and Control Act of 1970. While the main purpose of the act was to establish the Controlled Substances Act (CSA) and create the legal framework around the government's "war on drugs", other more preventative measures were tied in to help states design and construct programming that would curb drug use at the local level.

Professionally trained as a Masters in Social Work, Claire worked as a counselor at the Community Counseling Center who aspired to work more with children in the community. With



the federal legislation supporting local programming, an idea began to take shape. Claire spearheaded the early foundations of Teton Youth and Family Services as she crafted the grant to focus on the needs of children and families, not as individual components, but rather as a system that needs support. She believed therapeutic programming should acknowledge the impacts of early childhood/traumatic experiences that would disconnect children from healthy relationships, schooling and communities.

Clair spent the next year writing a federal grant focusing on substance abuse prevention as a means to springboard her vision. And in 1977, with the federal grant, local government funding, and donationos TYFS was born. Claire starting by

opening the Van Vleck House (currently Cafe Genevieve) as a teen drop-in center. Kids could come and visit, play games, get information about drugs and alcohol, access counseling if they needed it or just come to hang out. The starting stages were very informal but pure and genuinely benevolent in spirit.

In case you're unfamiliar with Jackson history, the Van Vleck House has been synonymous as a safe place to go well before Claire Smith and Teton Youth and Family Services arrived. Historically, the Van Vleck House was nothing more than a private residence in town owned by the Van Vleck family. The ranching community was a way of life and Jackson served as the center to gather supplies and information, get a warm meal, attend events and connect with other family members and friends. However, when the snow started falling, getting back to the ranch could be a life-threatening affair. The Van Vleck family opened their home to ranchers who would head there because it was a safe place to go in such circumstances. Ranchers could get a warm meal, a bed, and shelter for the night without any expectation of payment. The Van Vleck house played a vital role because it served to care for community members in need. That philosophy of community responsibility and duty continued in spirit when Claire began programming at the Van Vleck House.

In the first year of operation, the Van Vleck House offered summer programming that included either a three (3) day camping trip or days trip hiking, canoeing and swimming on neighboring scenes like Goodwin and Leigh Lake. Parents were provided a list of gear the kids would need, including food. It wasn't surprising to see some kids show up with TV dinners in their packs! Other initiatives were tried that didn't stick, like babysitting classes, mowing yards, raking leaves, shoveling snow.

Claire sought to do more and connected with Mary Baker from the Department of Family Services and Steve Olmstead from Probation and Parole to start a Youth Council. With the Honorable Judge Ranck's blessing, these pioneers of Juvenile Justice were made officers of the court to share information and coordinate services for kids at-risk and collectively support kids from entering the court system.

Within a year of the Youth Council forming, the Van Vleck House contracted with the Teton County School District



to provide psychological services for the Special Education Department. This was largely attributed to the establishment of the Board of Cooperative Educational Services (BOCES) in Wyoming.

Claire hired John Thorn to fulfill the Special Education School Psychologist contract. With the Van Vleck House further invested within the community, Claire started on her next phase: opening a residential treatment program that will serve the regional needs of Teton, Lincoln and Sublette counties. At the time, there were only two residential facilities in all of Wyoming: St. Joseph's in Torrington and Cathedral Hall in Laramie - both respectively six (6) hours away. As a basic need, the north west parts of Wyoming needed a residential treatment center that





# Celebrating 45 Years

was more practical to access and commute to.

Red Top Meadows opened for operation in 1980 as the first residential unit for the region. The residential unit started as a coed facility with the three (3) bedrooms. The original building, which still stands, if not hidden with all the additions, is commonly known as the milieu building. Nestled along the Forest Service, Don and Janet Moyer had purchased the land to create a summer dude ranch, but the idea never took off. Teton Youth and Family Services leased the land from the Moyers and applied for a Conditional Use Permit to run the residential facility. The application was originally denied. After an appeal, the courts found the County didn't follow proper procedure and Red Top Meadow remained open for use.

As the layers of Teton Youth and Family Services started to form, Bruce Burkland was hired in 1979 to provide Family Counseling for the Special Education contract with the School District. He was also brought in to help develop the family therapy program at Red Top Meadows conducting parenting classes and developing the wilderness experiences for summer programming. Liz Hickman was hired in 1980 as the child psychologist for the school contract. With Marion Butcher privately practicing in Jackson, this provided Jackson with two (2) working child psychologists. With John and Liz overlooking psychological needs and Bruce developing family therapy, Van Vleck House joined the Youth Council and the Child Protection Team (CPT).

Child Protection Team, or commonly known as CPT, is a multidisciplinary team of community professionals who work directly with children and families. Members of the Child Protection Team are specifically positioned in the community and led by the elected Prosecuting Attorney to provide expertise in evaluating alleged child abuse and neglect, assessing risk and protective factors, and providing recommendations for interventions to protect children and help the parents/guardian's capacity to provide a safer environment when possible. For Teton Youth and Family Services, an

organization built on providing care and support for early childhood/traumatic experiences, this was an intricate role to help establish legitimacy within the community of Jackson.

**Stay tuned for our next newsletter to learn more TYFS history!**





# Van Vleck House

## CASEY LIFE SKILLS

by Matia Wilson, Van Vleck Therapist

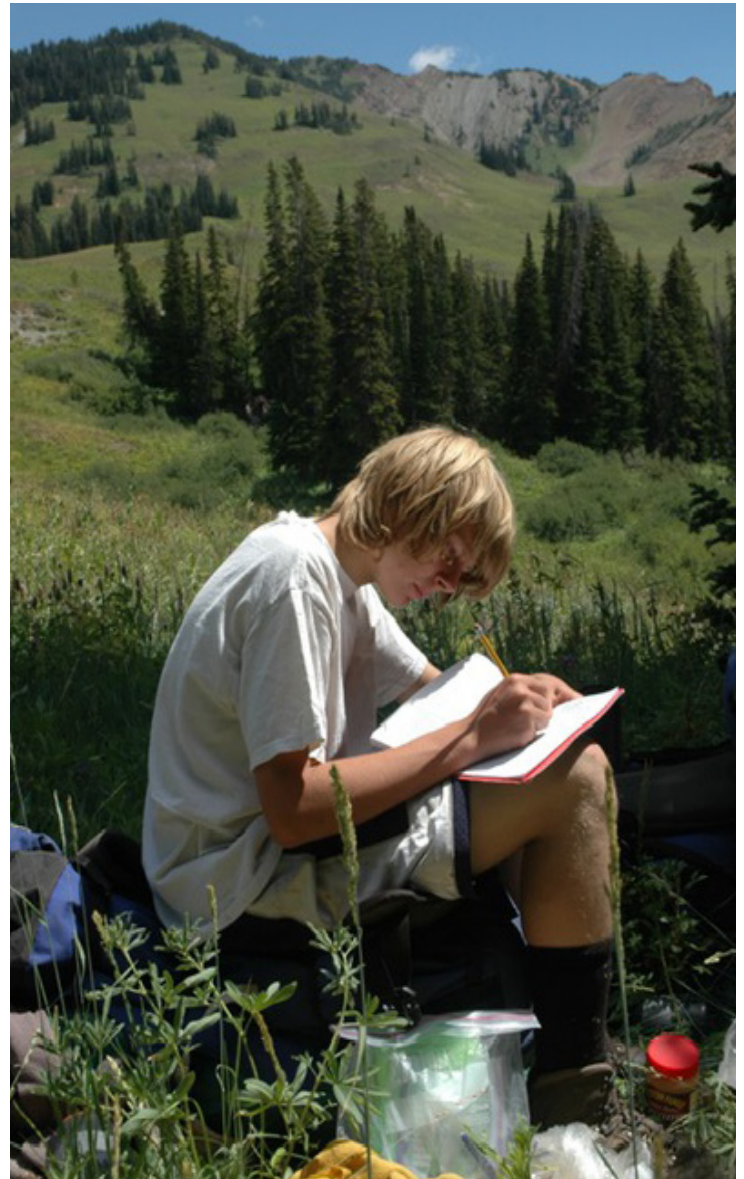
Life skills are an essential part of our growth as teenagers and young adults, however it is often something that is overlooked, or expected to be learned at home. Not every child has that luxury or opportunity.

At the Van Vleck House, we have implemented a new therapy group session for our long-term and crisis residents centered around the Casey Life Skills curriculum. Casey Life Skills focuses on multiple independent skill sets that benefit youth in achieving their long term goals. The Casey Life Skills Assessment process evaluates skills in multiple categories including, but not limited to - daily living and self-care routines; maintaining healthy relationships; study habits; using community resources; money management; and goal setting. Casey Life Skills provides a platform for parents, educators, therapists, and other service providers to have conversations with youth regarding plans for their future and how they can achieve success. Our residents actively participate in these conversations to learn what skills they wish to grow, which ones they have a good foundation in and those that they need to learn from the ground up.

Learning about and practicing independent life skills are important especially during these developmental years. Each of the skill sets touched upon by Casey Life Skills are key factors to help empower youth to set attainable goals, whether it's in their personal lives, their relationships, and even future-oriented goals. It also encourages independence and confidence in real world type settings. Since implementing Casey Life Skills groups at VVH, residents have started to engage in many healthy and empowering discussions. Part of the curriculum opens the door for teens to really discuss what a healthy relationship looks like and how to establish clear boundaries. Other topics include online safety and creating vision boards with goals they can work towards on a daily basis. Many residents start to look forward to actively building on skills they discuss in therapy through Casey Life Skills Group discussions and applying what they learn in very practical situations. Conversations between staff and residents during these times are productive in assessing how they can continue using these skills and

working on each skill set. Casey Life Skills allows our residents to develop and strengthen independent skills, which they consistently use to make empowering decisions and achieve their goals.

**This program was made possible by a generous grant from the Community Foundation of Jackson Hole Youth Philanthropy Program.**





P.O. Box 2631  
Jackson, WY. 83001  
[www.tyfs.org](http://www.tyfs.org)



**Helping Children and Families Find Thier Way**

Your gift will help a child by ensuring trauma-informed care is available to help children and families when they need it most. please visit **[tyfs.org](http://tyfs.org)** to learn more.

[tyfs.org](http://tyfs.org) | [info@tyfs.org](mailto:info@tyfs.org) | 307.733.6440 | Donate at [tyfs.org/support](http://tyfs.org/support)