



Caring Compass

Newsletter from Teton Youth & Family Services



Teton
Youth & Family
Services

Our Mission is to help children and families find their way to fulfilling and constructive lives.

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Martina Hansen, Director of Operations and Finance
Kilee Amborski, Assistant Director of Operations and Finance

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Cheyenne Syvertson-Hagestuen, Family Advocate/Therapist
Dan Oas, Juvenile Diversion Program Coordinator, Circuit Court Liason
Cassidy Creel, Juvenile Diversion Officer and Family Advocate

VAN VLECK HOUSE

Jeremy Silcox, Director of Van Vleck House
Arty Polo, Group Home Manager
Matia Wilson, Therapist

RED TOP MEADOWS

Tom Concannon, Director of Red Top Meadows
Kyle Knudson, Director of Education
Ted Nichols, Wilderness Program Director

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Stay Connected:



Time and Talent Rich at TYFS

A message from Sarah Cavallaro, Executive Director

In June, Teton Youth and Family Services (TYFS) bid farewell to three dedicated Board Members Ruth Ann Petroff, Andy Schwartz, and April Norton each of which has dedicated six years of time and talent to TYFS. Through work at the state level to increase support and funding options, growing fundraising capacity and securing a reserve fund, and helping the organization transition through Bruce Burkland's retirement of 40-years these Members have left TYFS more robust than ever.

Thanks to our Board's Nominating and Governance Committee we are delighted to add three new Board Members to the roster to continue this work. We welcome the following three individuals to the TYFS Board:

- Bill Campbell, a former corporate litigator, joins us to help ensure we mitigate any possible risk within our programs and helps us plan and strategize how to best use and maintain our facilities.
- Martha Bancroft, former non-profit executive and current Relationship Manager, brings a wealth of non-profit experience and connections to the organization.
- Ben Brettell, recently leaving his post as Hirschfield Center Director and becoming a school counselor in the TCSD #1, brings his clinical and former staff perspective to the Board.

The past four months have been trying for me personally as I joined the millions of other women in the world who have confronted a breast cancer diagnosis, treatment, and recovery. While challenging, I was equally as uplifted from the support and leadership of the staff and Board at TYFS along with our wonderful supporters in the community.

Working at Teton Youth and Family Services has always been a joy to me as I am able to work with individuals who have dedicated their lives to helping others heal. I want to personally thank the staff and board for their outstanding leadership and teamwork to keep TYFS resilient and continuing to provide excellent programs for children and families who are struggling to find their way. I am looking forward to being back in the office full time and working with these extraordinary individuals on a daily basis again.

Sincerely,

Sarah Cavallaro
Executive Director



Executive Director, Sarah Cavallaro with her family



Helping Children and Families Find Their Way

Staff Highlight: Teddy Nichols

Director of the Wilderness Program at Red Top Meadows

Teddy Nichols grew up near Cleveland, Ohio where he gained early experience working with kids as a camp counselor. He attended St. Lawrence University, where upon graduation, moved to Jackson. Teddy started as a Direct Care staff at Red Top in 2013 and became a supervisor in 2015. In 2016, Teddy to became the Wilderness Director/Program Manager for Red Top Meadows.



Teddy Nichols, Wilderness Program Director

Teddy is a natural for the work as he has always enjoyed and been good at working with kids, and is a natural at developing relationships and having meaningful conversations in a non-threatening way. He is a master of organizing wilderness trips and understands how to navigate backcountry permitting and accreditation. Teddy is a true problem solver and helps Direct Care Staff develop their skills with through providing constructive feedback and training. With his positive attitude, thoughtfulness, and care for detail he ensures that Red Top runs the highest quality wilderness trips for the students at Red Top. In his off time Teddy enjoys mountain biking and skiing as much as possible.

Make a Difference for a Child



Three Reasons to Give:

1. We never turn a child away — we're open 365 days per year to help children and families in crisis.
2. We're contracted by state and local governments for services but government funding does not cover our basic costs.
3. It's FUN to join the TYFS team and help children and families in our community find their way.

Visit tyfs.org/support

OUR WISH LIST

Red Top Meadows

- Washer/ Dryer
- Wheelbarrow
- Ipods/Mp3 Players
- Boccie Ball Set
- Vacuum
- Tele Ski boots Sizes 8-11
- Board Games
- Rec Room Games

Hirschfield Center

- Day or Annual Activity Passes
- Gift Cards for Gas
- Gift Cards for "Take a Kid to Lunch" (Quiznos, Pearl St. etc.)
- Floor Lamps
- Small rug
- Like-new living room furniture
- Legos
- Craft kits
- Board games for smaller kids
- Dominoes
- Tempura Paints

Red Top Meadows

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Items donated to Teton Youth & Family Services are tax deductible

Gratitude

A heartfelt thank you to:

Anna and Stephen Sullivan for a doll house and furniture

Noa and Ted Staryk for multiple pairs of hiking socks, boys outdoor clothing, and hiking back packs

Margot Snowden and Yves Desgouttes for running shoes, backpacks, hiking packs. and running shorts

Nancy and Dick Riddle for three backpacks

Susan and Peter Ordway for a freezer

Carole and Jack Nunn for one beef from the 4H auction

Margaret Brady and Jeff Moll for Shoes and Clothing

Nicki and Bendan McDermott for shoes and outdoor apparel

Carole and Ed Liezeit for backpacks, suitcases, canned food, toiletries, school binders, and sleeping bags

Nancy and Corbin Lang for multiple pairs of new hiking socks

Jean and Pete Jorgensen for socks, backpack and coat

Jodi and Brian Siegfried for shoes

Ann Dwan for a sofa, two chairs, and multiple hiking packs

Two Grey Hills - Scott Matthies and Jean Staer for one lamb from the 4H auction

Owen's Orthodontics for two Swine from the 4H auction

Nancy Hoffman for one Swine from the 4H auction

Bank of Jackson Hole for a beef and swine from the 4H auction

Anne Ramsay for one beef and one lamb from the 4H auction

Susan Ramsay for sleds, a kite, and legos

Nicole and Aaron Ackley for running shoes and socks

Verde Brand Communications for rain gear, head lamps, flashlights, day packs, shoe lights and hats

Yellow Iron Excavation and Waste Removal for month-of-May trash removal

Nancy Seaton for jackets and ski socks

Johnny Tozzi for shoes and backpacks

Nancy and Corbin Lang for hiking socks

Teton Village Sports for ski rentals

Watsabaugh Excavation Inc. for the motograder

Judy and Dick Agee for the kids cloths and snow gear

Shannon White Designs for four rugs

Mark Muheim and Ann Lurie for backpacks

2019 Golf Tournament Sponsors



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Mountain Khakis

Teton Mountain Lodge and Spa

The Pilates Place

Gun Barrel Steak House

Karen Oatey Hole-in-1 Sponsor

Teton Motors

Van Vleck Group Home and Crisis Shelter



Hear Your Kids

Reducing Stress in Children's Daily Lives

Back-to-School season- we all know it well. And even though children and parents are often thankful for the familiar routine of the school day, the transition from summer back to school can create stress. Kids are just as susceptible to this stress as parents, but sometimes it's harder to see in our children.

Children display stress much differently than an adult does as their communication skills are less developed and their coping mechanisms not established. Recognizing specific behaviors can help parents support their children through the stressful time and increase the child's confidence in future stressful situations. The following are potential reactions children may have to stress:

- An increase in oppositional behavior
- Loss of interest in things the child normally enjoys
- Changes in eating patterns
- Regression in behaviors like clinginess or frequent crying
- An increase or decrease in energy levels not due to an illness

It is normal for children to go through phases where life may seem more difficult, providing some simple structure and guidance can assist the child in moving through the phase. Teaching your child stress management techniques can build self-esteem.

Communicate. Try to generate an open environment and create opportunities for your kids to express themselves. Parents can facilitate these openings by asking straightforward, non-threatening questions about school, friends, classmates, and teachers. It can even be as simple as, "How are you feeling?"

Eat Healthy. We're all on the run and once school starts, it is harder to keep track of everything our kids are eating. But a healthy body is one that is better equipped to withstand stress.

Encourage Physical Activity. They don't have to be flying down the slopes or getting in aggressive activity, but regular exercise can help with health and, especially, with mental health. A daily walk or bike ride can help them sort out their thoughts- and feel better about themselves.

Establishing a Bedtime Routine. Work on getting your child in the routine of going to bed at 'school time' and waking up accordingly. The Mayo Clinic states that school-aged children need 10-11 hours of sleep, in comparison to adults who need 7-9 hours. A sleep deprived child will be a child who has less energy for school and activities and will need time to make-up for their sleep deprivation.

Listen. Learning to listen to your child and their needs is a skill developed throughout parenthood and is unique to each child. As a parent it is easy to give advice and not hear what your child may be saying about their perspective on what is happening in their daily life. Taking moments to hear your child's perspective is a great way to understand what the sources of the stress may be and how you as a parent can best support and show your love for your child.

There are great resources available to parents and children all over town. All of the Human Service Council organizations can provide tools and activities to help meet your specific need. If you stop in to the Children's Learning Center, the Hirschfield Center for Children, the Jackson Community Counseling Center, or the Teton Literacy Center you will be able to find materials or individuals to help problem-solve how to best meet your child's needs. Your child's teacher or school counselors are also wonderful resources to help get a more school-based approach to figuring out what may be causing your child's stress.

Hirschfield Center for Children

From Hell to Healing at Hirschfield Center

One child's experience from forensic interview to graduating therapy.

Eight-year-old Alex first came to the Hirschfield Center for Children (HCC) for a forensic interview. He arrived feeling nervous and unsure of what might happen. Earlier that week, Alex disclosed to his parents that a family friend had been touching him. Alex disclosed that it had happened on a recent family trip. Alex came to the Hirschfield Center thinking that he might be in trouble, despite reassurance from his parents that he had done the right thing by telling an adult what had happened.

Upon arrival, Alex and his mother met the interviewer and a therapist with the Hirschfield Center. The interviewer—a police officer in plain clothes—met with Alex's mother while the therapist sat with Alex to establish rapport, working on puzzles while engaging in conversation about their family, Alex's interests, and why they were meeting that day. After some time, Alex went with the interviewer to the interview room—a relaxed space equipped with audio and video recording devices.

He had a difficult time sharing what had been happening to him. He reported some of his experiences of being sexually abused, visibly upset while detailing difficult memories. The interviewer remained calm and focused, following special protocol while maintaining a neutral and nonjudgmental stance. Under these conditions, Alex could feel comfortable and safe enough to describe what he had been through.

At the time of the interview, Alex's family had had their world turned upside down. His parents were shocked and heartbroken to learn that someone close to them had been harming their son for several years. The Hirschfield Center supports many families every year who find themselves in this agonizing position. By hosting forensic interviews, Hirschfield staff can collaborate with law enforcement and other agencies to provide an opportunity for children to tell their stories in a warm, welcoming environment and begin their healing process. For



"Hirschfield staff can collaborate with law enforcement and other agencies to provide an opportunity for children to tell their stories in a warm, welcoming environment and begin their healing process."

Alex, his healing journey began in that first story telling with the interviewer at the Hirschfield Center.

Following the interview, Alex's parents were eager to get him the support he needed to move forward. He began therapy with the therapist he had met the day of his interview. He presented with severe symptoms of post-traumatic stress, including hyper arousal or being on high-alert, difficulty focusing in school, isolation, nightmares, anxiety, and depression.

Alex attended therapy weekly for 6 months, with his parents attending to support his hard work and learn how to best help their son. Using trauma-focused psychotherapies, Alex slowly processed his experiences and grew his sense of safety and worth. Through writing, art, and play, he shared what had happened while exploring thoughts, feelings, and perceptions of himself. Gradually, Alex regained a sense of control and security. His symptoms resolved and he reported feeling confident about his future. Alex—and his family—graduated therapy with pride in his work and hope for the future.

--By Cheyenne Syvertson, Hirschfield Therapist

Red Top Meadows

116 MILES OF WILDERNESS

Red Top's Longest therapeutic wilderness trip of the year boosts confidence.

The Red Top Meadows longest trip of the year, Summer Wilderness, covers 116 miles in 24 days. The trip begins at the Coyote Meadows Trailhead (north of Teton) and hikes the students south to the back door of Red Top Meadows. The theme of this summer's trip was "moving from dependence to interdependence." While all of the Red Top wilderness trips help accelerate the therapeutic process of our students, this is most evident in our summer program due to the physical and emotional challenge that a trip of this duration presents.

There are a million teachable moments in the wilderness and students have the opportunity to learn from their environment by facing both natural and logical consequences. This year's trip pushed our students beyond their perceived limits and, upon completion, they began to see themselves and the world around them through a new lens. Living and working together in a small group facilitates the development of interpersonal relationship and social skills. Self-confidence, internal locus of control, and coping skills are developed with every trudging step forward. Students are able to rely more on themselves and become more comfortable with seeking out appropriate help from peers and adults.

There is plenty of research to back up these claims. In 2003, Keith Russell and the Outdoor Behavioral Healthcare Research Cooperative conducted one of the first comprehensive empirical studies on the effectiveness of wilderness therapy, using a large sample of adolescents who were enrolled in multiple wilderness therapy programs. Participants not only



demonstrated significant emotional and psychological improvements, but maintained decreased levels of anxiety and depression over a 12-month period. Since this study, there have been numerous others that have backed these findings.

If you are interested in learning more about this research please visit <https://obhcouncil.com>.

Watching the morning dew evaporate from the warmth of a sleeping bag, helping a struggling peer reach a summit, quickly taking cover from a sudden afternoon hail storm, enjoying the alpenglow while sipping a well-earned hot chocolate, jokes and camaraderie both on the trail and around a campfire; our students make lasting memories. Over the years thousands of miles have been hiked by hundreds of students, each leaving Red Top with new skills, goals for their future, and a hope for a better tomorrow.

Wilderness therapy programs have been proven to produce significant emotional and psychological improvements as well as decreased levels of anxiety and depression.





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Save the Date

Film Showing and Discussion with Director Michelle Esrick

**October 3rd
Center for the Arts
Jackson Hole, Wyoming**

Teton Youth & Family Services and Teton County School District #1 are teaming up to bring you a film screening and discussion with Director Michelle Esrick of *Cracked Up*. Witness the effects Adverse Childhood Experiences can have across a lifetime through the incredible story of actor, comedian, master impressionist and Saturday Night Live veteran, Darrell Hammond.

**tickets and more info at
www.tyfs.org**

