

Looking back on 2007

2007 was a busy year at Foundations Counseling Center. In looking back I am happy to say we met the goals we set for the agency this year.

As usual there were lots of changes, and around here change has a tendency to snowball off one another. Here is an example of what I mean. In January we added a new county contract which meant new referrals, which meant we needed to add a new team. So we promoted one staff to a Primary Therapist, which meant we had to hire a new Secondary Therapist. Whew. And that was just January!

In February we focused on growing our internship program. Tera Reichelt took on the challenge. She met with several of the area colleges. Her pitch must have been quite successful since we have more than doubled our internship program from 2006! In fact, the program got so big we made Tera our Internship Program Supervisor.

Foundations Counseling Center celebrated its third anniversary on April 5th. One of the things we had vowed was to keep waiting lists and wait time to a minimum, so after some anxiety about a growing waiting list we decided to add 2 new teams over April and May. We also received some sad news in May, Jennifer Schmudlach (our very first employee) was going to be moving back home to Iowa so we would have to say goodbye, which was very hard for all of us. It also meant we would have to hire someone to replace Jen.

Because of all the staff additions, we thought it would be a good time to review things and we decided to make some team assignments and territories changes in June. That left us short one Secondary therapist, so once again we added to our group.

All this aside, June, July and August were quiet, except for the addition of our four interns. Ok maybe it wasn't all that quiet after all. That wasn't all for interns either, you can read about our newest intern inside.

We celebrated not only our new staff additions but the accomplishments of all our staff. Amanda Crabtree celebrated her third year anniversary with Foundations and she will be graduating from her Master's degree program in December.

Through all this we added to our service area to include Juneau and Crawford counties, we revised all our forms, reviewed and streamlined paperwork flow, reviewed our policies and passed two audits. I have to say there is no way we could have done it all without the dedication of Katie Letcher our Office Manager, not to mention all our wonderful staff.

I wonder what 2008 will hold. Maybe some breathing time? Somehow, I think not. In fact I'm guessing there is more change coming in the near future...

Take a minute to look over the rest of the newsletter, check out some statistics on our growth over the years, met our latest staff addition and get some suggestions on how to stay energized (and sane) at work but especially during the holiday season.

Cristie Harbour

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New Years Resolution: A Self Care Plan

Oh! The joys of winter! In addition to the frenzy of getting ready for the holidays and taking care of your clients many of us are taking physical precautions to prevent accidents and illnesses like winterizing your car, getting flu shots, and taking Vitamin C. These are all great things to do to keep yourself healthy and protected. However, especially during this time of the year there is one aspect of our health that unfortunately often gets overlooked. People in helping professions are often so busy taking care of others that they are unaware that they may be putting their own mental health at risk.

Recently, there seems to be a lot of talk about **Compassion Fatigue** in our field. Anyone in a helping profession who is exposed to traumatic stories or events, such as a Social Worker, Counselor, Doctor, Police Person, or Humans Services Advocate, are at risk for Compassion Fatigue. Compassion Fatigue or Secondary Traumatic Stress can be different and more serious than

“burnout.” Compassion Fatigue is a lessening of empathy over time, in addition to an increase in physical, mental and spiritual exhaustion. Sometimes, you may not even be aware of what is happening. According to Charles R. Figley, Ph.D., “When caregivers focus on others without practicing authentic, ongoing self-care, destructive behaviors can surface.” Symptoms of Compassion Fatigue can vary, but some signs are: decreased empathy and objectivity with clients, anger, blaming, depression, diminished sense of personal accomplishment, difficulty concentrating, exhaustion (physical or emotional), chronic physical ailments such as frequent headaches or gastrointestinal complaints, high self-expectations, increased irritability, sleep disturbances, workaholism, or abusing drugs, alcohol or food. It is important to identify these symptoms early before they impact the ability to provide appropriate care to clients, and especially before they affect your health.

In order to combat Compassion Fatigue start by developing your own Self Care Plan for the New Year, and routinely evaluating it. Here are some suggestions:

1. Spend plenty of quiet time

alone. Yoga and meditation are excel-



lent ways to ground yourself in the moment and keep your thoughts from pulling you in different directions. It can take as little as a few minutes a day

2. Take “time outs” each day:

Instead of grabbing lunch on the go, set time aside to put work away (not answering phone calls, checking emails) to eat a healthy lunch.

3. Turn off the TV: Traumatic events in the media only add to our already over stimulated minds.

4. Exercise your mind and body:



reading a funny book or going for a walk daily to take your mind off your work is always helpful.

5. Say “No”: Set boundaries not only with clients, but with everyone in your life (this can be especially difficult for those of us in the helping professions).

6. Sleep: Getting enough sleep each night will greatly improve your outlook each morning

7. Use vacation time: Taking time off rejuvenates both your body and mind.



Here are some resources on Compassion Fatigue

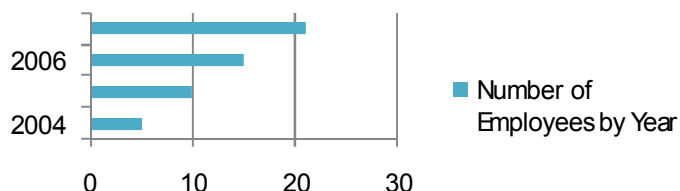
*[Compassion fatigue: Coping with secondary traumatic stress disorder in those who treat the traumatized](#). Figley, C. R. (Ed.) NY: Brunner/Mazel.

* Help for the helper: the psychophysiology of compassion fatigue and vicarious trauma. Babette Rothschild with Marjorie Rand. W.W. Norton and Company, New York, London,

To take a Self Test to see if you may be suffering from Compassion Fatigue go to: www.ace-network.com/cftest.htm OR www.traumatologyacademy.org/Training/2004/Blackmountain/CFTWorkbook_v2.pdf :check out foundationscc.com for an easy link to these sites!

Remember When? Oh, how we've grown!

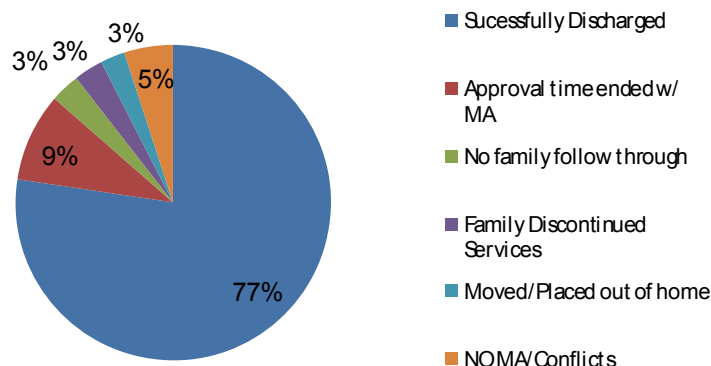
Number of Employees by Year



At the end of Foundations' first year in 2004 there were 5 people on staff—3 of them are still with us: Alisa, Cristie and Amanda! At the end of the second year the number jumped to 10. At the end of 2006 we had tripled our original number to 15! This year is coming to a close and our final count is 21 (not including our 5 interns!). We are so thankful for every single one of our employees. Without them we wouldn't be here! They do such a wonderful job with anything that we challenge them with! Thank you all for helping us grow to serve more clients and families in need!

Since 2004 Foundations' has served approximately 240 clients and families. This doesn't include any current open cases. 77% of the clients we have served have been successfully discharged with a decrease in CAFAS scores. The other 23% is broken down into various groups.

Discharged clients since 2004



Foundationscc.com has gotten a makeover!

- We have added all new staff pictures (ever wonder what we all look like?!)
- All of the newsletters are now available online! Just click and there they are!
- You can now take our satisfaction survey online! No need to hand write them and mail or fax them back. Just click and we will have it! It takes very little time and your feedback is always appreciated!
- You can now download a service request form (referral form) and even email it to us!
- Both the elementary health check and the teenager health check link are also available (these are a great thing to get completed early on for any referral!)
- When there is a position opening it will also be posted on the website. Check often!



Introducing Gina Nauertz!



Gina started with us at the end of October as our newest intern. She is going to UW Platteville for her Bachelors in Criminal Justice. She is part of our Coordinated Services Team (CST) with Lafayette County.



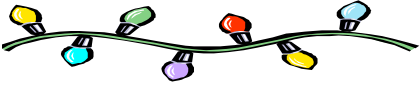
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From All Of Us At Foundations Counseling Center We
Wish A Joyous Holiday Season To You And Yours!

