



NY Goodwill Provides Consolidated Services

Bringing agencies together created painless referral process

In 2004, the vocational services staff of Goodwill Industries of Western New York realized that clients who were receiving employment instruction onsite often had to interrupt their training to participate in other services. As part of a holistic approach to getting on track, many clients had to go somewhere else in the city to address school issues, take care of childcare problems, or participate in other services, such as alcohol or drug dependency treatment programs or mental health counseling sessions. This often required taking two or three buses from the Goodwill site to other locations, which reduced the effectiveness of each service the clients received.

Goodwill realized that it could make life easier for the clients by consolidating some of these services under one roof. Management and vocational services staff started discussions about organizations that could collaborate to provide consolidated services. Four agencies were identified that could offer the most to Goodwill's population at the time, Alcohol and Drug Dependency Services, Kaleida Mental Health Counseling, Literacy Volunteers, and a general equivalency diploma (GED) program run by the Buffalo Board of Education. In addition to bringing these services under one roof, Goodwill decided to add a play room to help parents whose daycare options fell through on any given day.

Goodwill approached several foundations and companies to find funding for the project. Several came forward with the support necessary to create the Family Enrichment Center (FEC). Goodwill staff, board members, and representatives from the collaborating agencies helped design the FEC, which opened early in 2005.

The collaborating agencies worked out a painless referral process. A

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Volume 3, Issue 3
November 2008

Putting Out the Good Word: Some Information about the Promising Practices Series

We are offering a series of short articles on a variety of promising practices that CARF surveyors have observed during surveys from 2004 to the present. There is no particular order that we will follow in presenting this series of short reports. The purpose is not to rate one organization over another, but to encourage U.S. and Canadian community providers to dialogue with one another and to encourage creative solutions to individual service designs and organizational business practices and thereby achieve effective and positive results in each organization's community.

Although there are indeed a number of ways to approach

person entering into programs at Goodwill could simultaneously be referred to programs that were sometimes just down the hall, eliminating the need for travel time between services and reducing the amount of time clients had to miss programming in order to receive comprehensive services.



NY Goodwill GED instructor and students.

The services provided by the original collaborating agencies are still essential to Goodwill's population, and Goodwill is always exploring other services or agencies that could be invited to partner in this venture. For example, a retired lawyer provides some pro bono legal counseling on an as-needed basis. The Department of Social Services, which would have been a perfect fit, was approached to open an office in FEC but declined due to financial restrictions.

Currently, the main barrier to service expansion at FEC is additional space. Adding any new agencies would require capital improvements to the building, which would be a costly venture. The idea of approaching a local company to fund an expansion for naming rights to the center has recently been discussed.

To date, more than 1,000 Goodwill clients have received some type of benefit from FEC. It is hoped that FEC will eventually be able to offer additional services to its clients as financial resources and the needs of the community dictate.

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conformance to a standard, what makes organizations given an exemplary rating stand out is their professional and strategic response to an observed service or business need, always designed with input from their stakeholders and based on those individuals' quality expectations.

We hope you enjoy the series. We encourage you to contact the identified representative in the article to get more information about their services.

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