

# Mental Health Connection: A Community Strategy for Transformation

## 1999

Mental health providers accepted the challenge when Fort Worth Mayor Kenneth Barr asked them to create a plan for improving access to quality mental health services in Tarrant County for citizens of all ages.

### Catalyst for Change

In September 1999, an armed man entered a youth service at Wedgwood Baptist Church. He killed seven youth and adults and injured numerous others before committing suicide. As City of Fort Worth officials investigated the case, they found that this man suffered from mental illness and had not received the services he needed through the existing mental health care system. Then Mayor Kenneth Barr turned to a group of mental health providers who had been meeting on ways to improve children's mental health care, and asked them to include adults in the initiative as well. He requested a plan to improve the mental health care system in Tarrant County so others would not fall between the cracks of the system in the future.



Cook Children's Medical Center, MHMR of Tarrant County, Lena Pope Home, the City of Fort Worth, Fort Worth ISD and the Child Study Center provided

leadership and financial resources to accept Mayor Barr's challenge. The group developed a fee structure based on agency annual budgets to support the infrastructure of the collaboration. This initial group also determined parameters for the collaborative planning and work, created committees to begin gathering information, and.

## 2000

### Monthly membership meetings begin

Tarrant County Juvenile Services hosted these meetings to provide a forum for information sharing, improving communication, networking, education, identifying issues, problem solving and planning. Ten years later, and average of more than 40 individuals continue to attend the monthly meetings.

### 16 adolescent psychiatric beds re-open at JPS

Attendees at an MHC monthly membership meeting learned about the overcrowding and potential dangers of older children with behavioral health issues presenting in the emergency department of Cook Children's Medical Center. Armed with that information, MHC successfully advocated with the Tarrant County Hospital District to reopen 16 adolescent beds in the Trinity Springs Pavilion. In line with what was to become its custom, MHC brought resources to the negotiations. Cook Children's agreed to continue serving children up to age 12 in its Emergency Department and in-patient unit if JPS would serve children and youth ages 13 and older. Lena Pope Home offered to provide in-home services for youth and their families after release from the hospital, and MHMR agreed to provide medication management. Ten years later, JPS is planning for the expansion of its in-patient adolescent unit.

## 2001

### Texas Integrated Funding Initiative (TIFI) grant of \$203,000 awarded to the collaboration

The Texas Department of Health and Human Services awarded a \$203,000 grant to the MHC collaboration for provision of wraparound services. The funds also supported the development of a community plan for mental health. Lena Pope Home administered the grant.

### Strategic planning begins

Task forces were organized for Programs and Services, Technology, Funding, Advocacy/Education/Prevention, Connectedness, Addictions, and Legislative Initiatives.

## 2002

### Six-year \$9.5 million System of Care Grant (Community Solutions) awarded

Mayor Barr worked closely with MHC leaders to advocate for a System of Care cooperative agreement with the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA), U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. The City of Fort Worth agreed to provide fiscal management and staffing through the Public Health Department, and MHC agreed to provide support services and secure the required local match. Ultimately, Fort Worth was awarded over \$9.5 million to support transformation of its mental health system of care. A portion of the funds was used to provide wraparound services for 400 children ages 6-18 with Serious Emotional Disturbance. In addition, the grant provided support for technology, training, social marketing, research and evaluation, and other infrastructure needs. Community Solutions ranks among the top 25 percent most successful SOC programs in the country. The evaluation team and social marketing campaigns have won numerous awards. Because of incredible in-kind support from the community, the City of Fort Worth was able to extend the funding for seven years and drew down a total of \$9,555,136. The community exceeded its requirement of providing an equal local match by \$1,146,244 through its total in-kind contributions of \$10,701,380. In short, the cumulative resources invested in the community from Community Solutions was \$20,256,517 over the seven-year period ending September 29, 2009.

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### Community Advisory Board (CAB) formed

To ensure inclusion of the family voice in strategic planning, monthly meetings were held with family members and providers to discuss issues and create solutions. Cook Children's Medical Center hosted the dinner meetings.

### Report card to the community

In December 2002, more than 400 people gathered at the Fort Worth Convention Center to learn about the community's mental health care system for children. Elected officials, service providers and parents of children with mental illness discussed the status of mental health care in Tarrant County, workforce needs, deficiencies in funding, policy issues and solutions.

## 2003

### Community Evaluation Team formed

MHMR Research Division recruited and trained family members, who then conducted interviews with families as part of the Community Solutions evaluation strategy.

### No Wrong Door training presented

MHC, with leadership from staff at The Bridge, United Way 211, The Women's Center, MHMR and others created a curriculum for training front-line staff (first point of contact) in No Wrong Door. The goal was to ensure a "warm hand-off" to individuals calling for connection to services and resources. More than 300 staff members from MHC agencies have been trained.

### Community Solutions Management Information System (CSMIS) begins planning

The Parenting Center, Santa Fe Youth Services, Catholic Charities, Lena Pope Home and ACH Child and Family Services agreed to become "pioneer" agencies in creating a web-based client information-sharing database. CSMIS was to become the community's virtual No Wrong Door to facilitate a family's journey through the mental health system. Goals included decreasing the number of times families had to tell their stories while increasing the speed of access to services through the web-based referral system. Each agency committed the time of its technology staff and others who met regularly to determine data fields to be included as well as policies and procedures for utilization.

## 2004

### Public Attitudes Survey conducted

MHC contracted with the University of North Texas to conduct a telephone survey of 1,100 households, with a goal of determining community attitudes about mental health and mental illness. The study served as a baseline from which to create and evaluate a social marketing strategy for reducing stigma and educating the public about mental illness.

### Standards of Care adopted

The MHC membership adopted standards for services to be: strength-based, effective, family-focused, culturally Competent, and safe. Services will

support for facilities, and MHC agencies relocated staff to provide campus-based services in the FRC. FWISD also relocated existing student support personnel to the FRC. While the primary mission of FWISD is educating children, the forward-thinking district recognized the need for insuring its students' readiness for learning. Evaluation studies show that children served through FRCs have had improved attendance, grades and behaviors.

### Strategic planning continues

Goals for the next three-year period were: to develop public and private resources sufficient to meet the current and future demand for mental health services in Tarrant County; to develop accountability systems on all levels; to map existing resources by gathering comprehensive information; to develop and implement an interactive, comprehensive, web-based database system for all mental health services in Tarrant County; to enhance and improve internal communications and relationships; to ensure the availability of mental health services for all citizens of Tarrant County; and to change public opinion about mental health in Tarrant County.

include: education, prevention and early intervention, consumer empowerment, recovery, integrated service delivery system, and adequate capacity. The boards of about 50 percent of the MHC member agencies passed resolutions in support of these standards.

### Funding Maximization Report

The Public Consulting Group (PCG) conducted a study on mental health funding streams into Tarrant County. The final "Maximization Report" recommended investigating a Title 4E waiver, which would divert some Child Protective Services funding into a pilot program for wraparound services in Tarrant County. The Texas Department of Health and Human Services Commissioner Albert E. Hawkins supported the concept, but the proposal stalled in state bureaucratic channels.

### Patrick Canary sets the stage for work in evidence-based practices

In 2004, Patrick Canary, director of the Center for Innovative Practices in Canton, Ohio, addressed MHC members about "Building Systems of Care on Evidence-Based Practice." This presentation began MHC's work in evidence-based practices.

### Kenneth Barr Awards established.

In honor of Kenneth Barr, MHC established an award to recognize exemplary collaborative efforts and extraordinary contributions to improving mental health services in Tarrant County. The first award was given to Kenneth Barr.

FWISD was given the award to recognize its work in establishing Family Resource Centers.

### Mental Health Parity examined

Fort Worth Mayor Kenneth Barr and Arlington Mayor Dr. Robert Cluck hosted meetings with business leaders and insurance company executives in an effort to impact policy on mental health coverage.

### National Policy Academy invitation

Tarrant County was selected to participate in a National Policy Academy on Improving Services for Youth with Mental Health and Co-Occurring Substance Use Disorders Involved With the Juvenile Justice System in Washington, D.C. The Academy was sponsored by SAMHSA, the National Institute on Drug Abuse, the National Institute of Health and the U.S. Department of Justice. Attending were Tarrant County Juvenile Judge Jean Boyd, Assistant FWISD Superintendent Chuck Hoffman, Tarrant County Juvenile Services Director Carey Cockrell, MHMR Children's Mental Health Director Kirstin Painter, Lena Pope Home Executive Director Ted Blevins, Tarrant County Challenge Executive Director Jennifer Gilley and Patsy Thomas.

### Robert Brooks, Ph.D., continues the dialogue on the application of research to practice

Robert Brooks, Ph.D., addressed the provider community on building resilience in children. He also gave a presentation to interested members of the public on building resiliency in children. Dr. Brooks served as assistant clinical professor of psychology at Harvard Medical School, and as director of McLean Hospital Department of Psychology.

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### Fine Line: Mental Health/Mental Illness

From September to December, MHC and the Fort Worth Museum of Science and History presented "Fine Line: Mental Health/Mental Illness." This exhibit by photographer Michael Nye featured exquisite portraits of individuals with mental illnesses accompanied by the voice of the individual in the photo. More than 75,000 people visited the exhibit. Area therapists provided Therapeutic

## 2007

### MHC adopts a strategic plan for sustaining a System of Care.

Strategic Plan goals for sustainability include: maximizing the use of technology, advocacy, increasing the use of evidence-based practices, making evaluation and outcomes a priority in all we do, developing knowledge and leadership within a mental health workforce, including families and consumers as equal partners in all we do, utilizing social marketing to educate targeted markets and reduce stigma and securing resources to sustain the mental health system of care.



### "Open Minds Open Doors" anti-stigma campaign launched

Community Solutions funded the creation and production of "Open Minds Open Doors," an anti-stigma campaign targeting adolescents through posters, bookmarks, billboards, bus ads and public service announcements. A newspaper supplement was published five times in the Fort Worth Star-Telegram. A five-day curriculum with Teacher's Guide was created with guidance from the Fort Worth ISD, and has been presented to hundreds of students. Awards for the campaign included the Texas Public Relations Association Silver Spur Award and four Excellence in Community Communications and Outreach (ECCO) Awards.

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MHMR adds crisis services with state and county support

Thursdays, addressing a different mental health issue each week. The Tarrant County Psychiatric Association presented weekly Brown Bag lunch sessions on Depression at the exhibit. The Fort Worth Museum of Science and History contributed the exhibit space and waived the costs for installing the exhibit as well as exhibit fees, an estimated \$54,000 contribution to the public.

### Wrightslaw training held for parents

Community Solutions supported families in planning and presenting the Wrightslaw Special Education Kaw and Advocacy Boot Camp. More than 300 attended this two-day training.

### "We Need to Talk" policy luncheon and roundtable

Senator Jane Nelson, Representative Vicki Truitt, County Judge Glen Whitley, Arlington Mayor Robert Cluck and Fort Worth Mayor Mike Moncrief hosted a luncheon meeting for business executives and decision makers about mental health in the workplace and the need for mental health parity. The Blue Ribbon Committee on Mental Health was formed.

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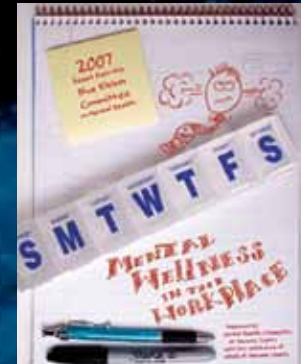
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### Texas Mental Health Transformation Grant from DSHS awarded

MHC was selected as one of seven community collaboratives to participate in Texas' mental health transformation grant.



### Blue Ribbon Committee

At the behest of state and local elected officials, business leaders agreed to meet quarterly for one year as a Blue Ribbon Committee. Their charge was to suggest strategies for improving mental health in the workplace and addressing mental health workforce issues. A report was presented to the community in December 2007.



### First Bridging the Gap Symposium held

In June 2007, MHC collaborated with Texas Christian University to plan a five-year series of symposia for the purpose of "Bridging the Gap between Research, Practice and Policy." The overall goal was to shorten the average 17 years between the time research is published and the knowledge is actually applied at the practice level. Reviewing policy as a barrier or support to achieving the goal was a significant consideration in the process. Several months were spent building consensus among MHC members about the scope of work and its potential impact on services and outcomes for children and their families. Approximately 200 mental health care agency administrators, practitioners and family members heard nationally renowned experts address the latest research in adolescent mental health care, ways to advocate effectively for public policy and methods to transform a community mental health system. Faculty included: Carlo DiClemente, Ph.D., University of Maryland at Baltimore, expert on theory of change; Sandra Tannebaum, Ph.D., University of Ohio, expert in policy; John Weitz, Ph.D., Harvard Medical School; and Dean Fixsen, Ph.D., University of South Florida.

Following the first symposium, MHC created Learning Communities as part of its consideration of adult learning styles. These groups met monthly to review the research in six areas: at risk/prevention, autism, addictions, externalizing disorders, internalizing disorders and trauma. Each Learning Community created a report explaining the evidence-based practices they had studied, including relevance for Tarrant County and policy issues to be considered in an advocacy agenda. Each group proposed a pilot program to implement an evidence-based practice in the community. More than 125 individuals representing practitioners, health professionals, faith leaders, researchers, policy makers and family members participated in the Learning Communities, which were led by volunteer champions from MHC member agencies. Professional facilitators were provided to each group to assist with group dynamics and achievement of the goals. Over 4,000 volunteer hours were contributed to this community learning experience.

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Collaboration is named Mental Health Connection of Tarrant County (MHC)

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Vision is determined: No Wrong Door to the Right Mental Health Resources

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(Graphic? Invitation)

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## 2009

FWISD Family Resource Center (FRC) opens at Riverside Middle School

New three-year strategic plan approved

Community Evaluation Team formed

No Wrong Door training presented

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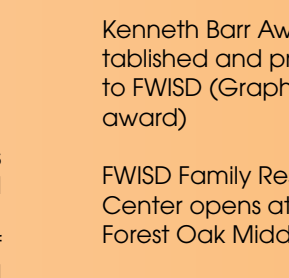
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(Graphic - pic of award)

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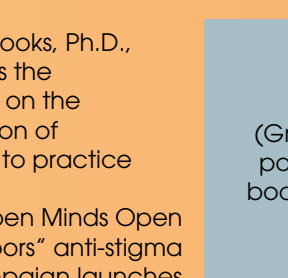
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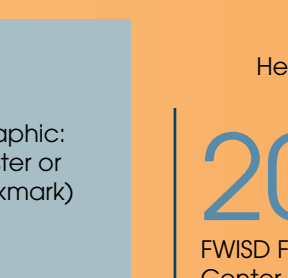
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## 2007

Texas Mental Health Transformation Grant from DSHS awarded Blue Ribbon

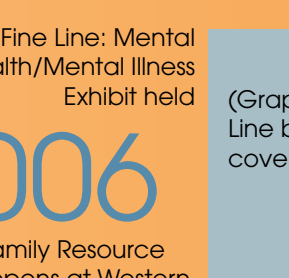
Committee launches and presents report



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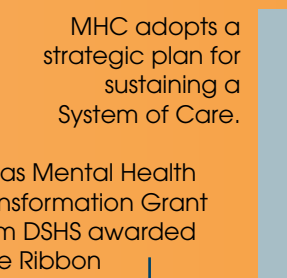
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## 2011

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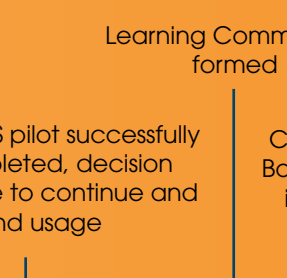
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## 2012

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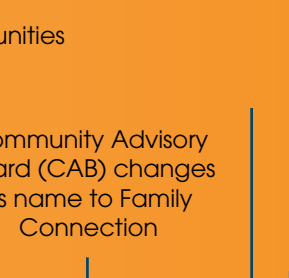
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## 2013

FWISD Family Resource Center (FRC) opens at Riverside Middle School

New three-year strategic plan approved



## 2014

FWISD Family Resource Center (FRC) opens at Riverside Middle School

New three-year strategic plan approved



## 2015

FWISD Family Resource Center (FRC) opens at Riverside Middle School

New three-year strategic plan approved

# 2008

## Second System of Care grant (Hand in Hand) awarded in the amount of \$8.3 million

After months of planning and collaborative writing by the MHC Grants Committee, a proposal was submitted to SAMHSA for a second SOC grant. MHMR was selected as the fiscal agent and administrator of the grant which targets children 0-6 in Hood, Johnson, Parker, Palo Pinto, and Tarrant Counties with the exclusion of Fort Worth as required by SAMHSA since Fort Worth was the target area for the first SOC grant. Hand in Hand contracted with five agencies to hire wraparound facilitators in the five counties. During the first year, the community provided \$415,535 in in-kind cash and services.

## MHMR adds crisis services with state and county support

Through broad-based community planning and advocacy with MHMR, Tarrant County was successful in implementing new services in response to needs identified by the community. The services included Mobile Crisis Outreach Team, Competency Restoration, Crisis Stabilization, Crisis Residential Services and Crisis Respite Services. With state crisis funds and a cash match from the county, \$4,876,651 was invested in crisis services in FY 2008-2009.

## Open Society Institute (OSI) of Baltimore, Maryland, awards \$600,000 to Tarrant County Challenge, Inc., to Expand Treatment for Drug and Alcohol Addiction

The grant is one of eight demonstration grants totaling \$4.8 million to organizations across the country. The grants are

part of a \$10 million initiative supported by OSI to close the treatment gap, expand comprehensive treatment systems and improve the quality of treatment. The initiative aims to mobilize public support for expanded treatment by increasing public funding, broadening insurance coverage and achieving greater program efficiency. The Tarrant County Challenge project seeks to expand Texas' Medicaid plan to cover outpatient addiction treatment. The project also seeks a \$30 million annual increase in state appropriations to provide treatment for Texans not covered by public or private insurance. Key partners for the OSI Closing the Addiction Gap initiative include MHC, Lena Pope Home, Recovery Resource Council and the local treatment community.

## CSMIS Goes Live

The FWISD Family Resource Centers joined the five pioneer agencies as CSMIS began sharing client information and making referrals to services. Some user agencies realize the system will not meet all their data needs, and plans begin to explore a federated approach of sharing information across systems in an attempt to minimize double entry.

## Second Bridging the Gap Symposium held

Faculty included Carlo DiClemente, Ph.D., on the theory of change; Bruce Chorpita, Ph.D., UCLA, on implementing evidence-based practices statewide in Hawaii; Steven Lopez, Ph.D., USC, on cultural competence; Steve Aos, Washington State Public Policy Institute, on cost benefit analysis; and Delbert Elliott, Ph.D., University of Colorado at Boulder, on implementation.

## Implementation Teams formed

After the Learning Communities completed their reports and made their recommendations, Implementation Teams were formed to develop a

plan for implementing the suggested pilots in Tarrant County. Each team was asked to select an expert trainer in their evidence-based practice, plan for on-going consultation, develop social marketing strategies to support the pilot, make suggestions for individuals to be trained in the practice, recommend an evaluator to determine outcomes of the one-year pilot and create a budget. MHC's commitment was to find the resources to implement the plans. Final plans were due in December 2008.

## "Friendships Count" anti-stigma campaign for adolescents launched

The "Friendships Count" campaign for adolescents included posters, book-marks, a Web site, a YouTube video and an original song created by local youth.

## Evaluation Team Receives National Award

The Community Solutions Evaluation Team received a Gold Award for Evaluation Operations and a Silver Award for Involving Family Members and Youth in Evaluation from SAMHSA.

## Families Design and Conduct Wraparound Evaluation

Family members who received services through Community Solutions designed and conducted a qualitative study with the goal of determining what worked and what did not work. The family evaluators interviewed 40 randomly selected families.

## Kenneth Barr Awards presented to Ted Blevins and the City of Fort Worth

Ted Blevins, founding board chair of MHC, was presented the Kenneth Barr Award upon his retirement from Lena Pope Home. Another Kenneth Barr Award was presented to Fort Worth City Council in recognition of its willingness to administer the Community Solutions grant and its continued sponsorship and support of MHC's work.

# 2009

## Pilot Trauma-Focused Cognitive Behavioral Therapy Training launches

In January, Susana Rivera, Ph.D., provided training in Trauma-Focused Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (TF-CBT) for 54 providers from 13 agencies, two hospitals and one private practitioner in Tarrant County. Funded by the Texas Mental Health Transformation grant, the training included nine months of bi-weekly consultations. By the end of the year, more than 80 children and adolescents were under treatment by therapists trained in this evidence-based program. In addition, the University of Texas at Austin asked Mental Health Connection to participate in a national study on the effectiveness of TF-CBT training when followed by ongoing consultation. These opportunities were a direct result of MHC's participation in the Texas Mental Health Transformation Project and the Bridging the Gap Symposium, which was attended by key DSHS staff members. In March, Anthony Mannarino, Ph.D., Allegheny General Hospital, co-developer of TF-CBT, traveled to Fort Worth to meet with practitioners and executives about implementation of the practice. The lack of a centralized intake and referral system within and among agencies was recognized as a barrier to getting children to services, as well as an excellent opportunity for implementing strategies for systemic change.

## Research Roundtables held

Research Council members conducted four research roundtables throughout the year to present local research findings. These included: February 24 "Family Stories as Research Tools: Collecting and Using Stories as Evaluation Data" Working with the Community Solutions Evaluation Team, family members who received services through Community Solutions designed and carried out their own qualitative study in 2008. Their goal was to help determine what worked and what didn't during the six-year cooperative agreement with SAMHSA. The family members involved in the project interviewed 40 other randomly selected families. The results, which include the individual stories of many families surveyed, are intriguing and eye-opening. Presenters: Kirstin Painter, Ph.D., Assistant Professor, School of Social Work and Sociology, Texas Women's University, and Director of Evaluation and Outcomes, MHMR of Tarrant County; Barbara Perry, Family Evaluation Specialist, MHMR of Tarrant County; and Sean Allen, Ph.D., Assistant Director, Evaluation and Outcomes Division, MHMR of Tarrant County

## MHMR Crisis Services Expand

In addition to the original services, transitional services and intensive on-going services were added in FY 2009-2010 for a total investment of \$7,757,614.

## Research Council forms

In an effort to more closely align the research and mental health provider communities, MHC created Research

Council. The group met quarterly to discuss shared interests, potential research needed and possible venues for local research to be presented to the community. UT Arlington, UNT Health Science Center, Texas Wesleyan University, Texas Christian University, Cook Children's Medical Center, UT Southwestern, UT Austin and the MHMR Research Division joined the council.

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## Stay on TRAC in Keller ISD planned

Stay on TRAC (Treatment, Responsibility and Accountability on Campus), an alcohol diversion program, will be piloted at four Keller ISD high schools. Based on the alcohol court model, the program allows students to choose between alternative school and Stay on TRAC for alcohol rules infractions. True to the collaborative nature of MHC, four members are offering their services pro bono for the initial year of the pilot:

- o ACH Child and Family Services
- o Lana Pope Home
- o Santa Fe Youth Services
- o MHMR of Tarrant County Youth Recovery Campus

## CSMIS becomes DataLink, and DataLink expands

New users were added to DataLink, including the Arlington Police Department Victims Assistance, Hand in Hand, MHMR, the Fort Worth Police Department Victims Assistance, The Women's Center, Dispute Resolution Services, First Baptist Church of Burleson, Ruth's Place of Granbury and Safe Haven of Tarrant County. Enhancements and reporting capabilities have been added to the system.

## Cultural Competency Training presented

During October and November, 37 practitioners and 36 executives from MHC member agencies attended retreats at Garrett Creek Ranch. They received training in the California Brief Multicultural Competency Scale (CBMCS) from Gloria Morrow, Ph.D. Ten individuals will be selected to complete additional training as trainers. Agencies are currently in the process of creating their own cultural competence plans for their agencies.

## Autism Pilot progresses

Cook Children's Physician Network agreed to reimburse its 250+ physicians for autism screenings at 18 or 24 months.

## Third Annual Bridging the Gap Symposium held

Once again, approximately 200 people attended the Symposium. This year, the program focused on the evidence for children from birth through age 11, trauma and the science of implementation. Faculty included Bruce Perry, M.D., Ph.D., The ChildTrauma Academy, on the effects on trauma on brain development; Peter Jensen, M.D., the REACH Institute, on the effects of psychotropic medications on children; Allison Metz, Ph.D., National Implementation Research Network, on the science of implementation; Janice Cooper, Ph.D., National Center for Children in Poverty, on breaking the pipeline from cradle to prison; and Kelli King Jackson, Children's Defense Fund, on trends in children's mental health.

## Funding: MHC members started by investing in ourselves.

- o Because of our success and accomplishments, others have invested in our work: private foundations, social service agencies, local, state and federal government, businesses and corporations, and individuals.

How have we come this far?

- o Political support
- o Political will
- o Outcome-driven goals
- o Broad group of stakeholders
- o Strategic plans
- o Building on our successes
- o Sharing the burden (manpower, resources, support)

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Once again, approximately 200 people attended the Symposium. This year, the program focused on the evidence for children from birth through age 11, trauma and the science of implementation. Faculty included Bruce Perry, M.D., Ph.D., The ChildTrauma Academy, on the effects on trauma on brain development; Peter Jensen, M.D., the REACH Institute, on the effects of psychotropic medications on children; Allison Metz, Ph.D., National Implementation Research Network, on the science of implementation; Janice Cooper, Ph.D., National Center for Children in Poverty, on breaking the pipeline from cradle to prison; and Kelli King Jackson, Children's Defense Fund, on trends in children's mental health.

## Funding: MHC members started by investing in ourselves.

- o Because of our success and accomplishments, others have invested in our work: private foundations, social service agencies, local, state and federal government, businesses and corporations, and individuals.

## How have we come this far?

- o Political support
- o Political will
- o Outcome-driven goals
- o Broad group of stakeholders
- o Strategic plans
- o Building on our successes
- o Sharing the burden (manpower, resources, support)

## Autism Pilot progresses

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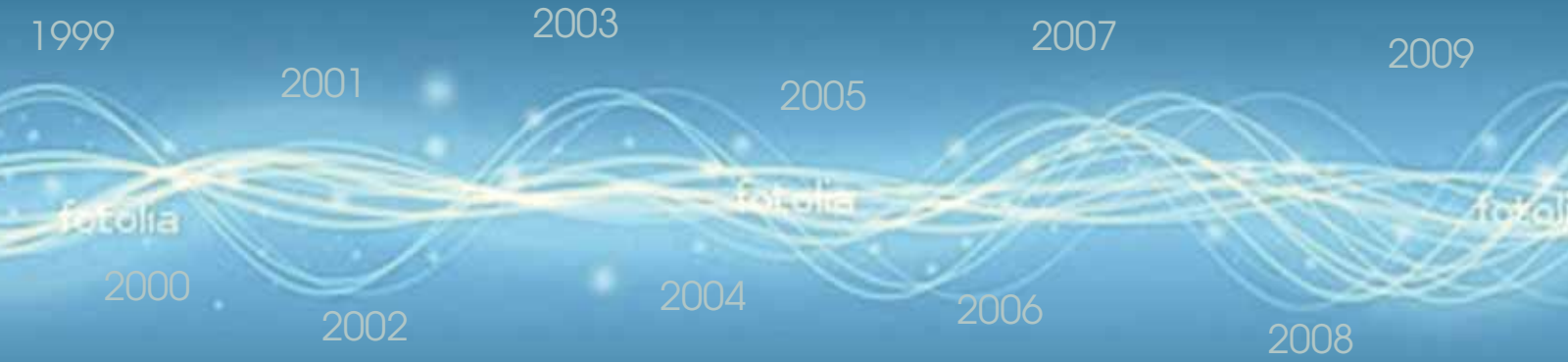
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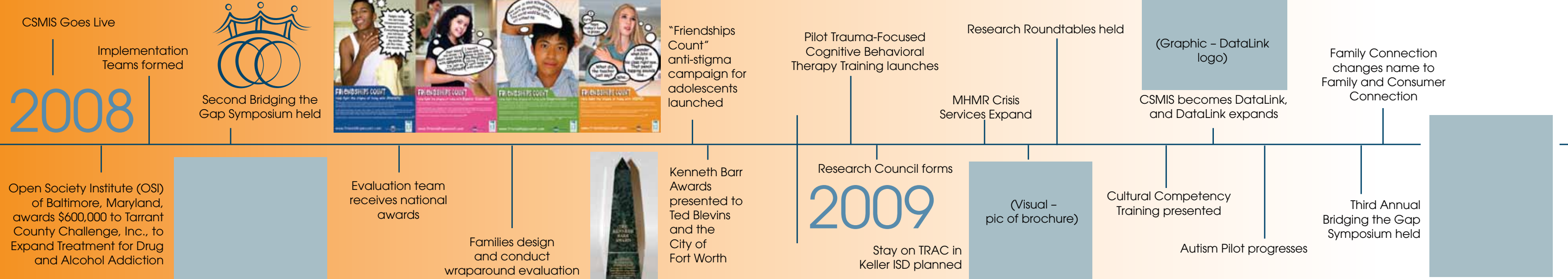
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# SYSTEM OF CARE



# A Community Strategy for Transformation



Mental Health Connection is a collaboration of public and private agencies, as well as individuals who need mental health care services and their caregivers. The organization works to revolutionize the mental health delivery system, with a vision of creating No Wrong Door to the Right Mental Health Resources.

For more information about Mental Health Connection, go to [www.mentalhealthconnection.org](http://www.mentalhealthconnection.org) or call

