



Harry and Jeanette Weinberg Kukui Center

A gathering place for those who serve vulnerable children and families

Volume 4 Number 2

Summer 2014

“M” for Mitten? Think Musubi or Muumuu!

Hawaii, the most culturally diverse state in the country, is at the forefront of providing services that are sensitive to the values and practices of the many people who live here. We are proud that the Kukui Center provides a range of services to address that need. Multi-lingual staff speak Japanese, Tagalog, Ilocano, Mandarin, Cantonese, Persian, Spanish, Vietnamese, Chuukese, and Marshallese.

Knowing that familiarity and connection are very important for learning, **Hawaii Literacy** ensures that the books in their libraries and book-mobiles represent the ethnicities of their users. Similarly, they have adapted learning materials such as flashcards and enrichment stories using local places and people’s names the families can relate to: how about musubi or muumuu instead of mitten! Promoting reading in any language is important and they translate various materials into at least 6 languages.

Federal law requires, and research shows, that services that incorporate the language and cultural values of the client are most likely to be successful in addressing their problems. This is particularly true in cases of domestic violence. Understanding the role of shame in Asian cultures, the **Hawaii Immigrant Justice Center at Legal Aid** developed an indirect approach to case finding through a children’s art project around “family harmony” to help identify families in the Chinese community who may need help. Similarly, they have recipe cards which also provide information on how to access services in several languages, which are available on request. “Lien Apinam” is a new publication featuring a traditional Chuukese story of women’s value and strength in preventing and ending family violence. This brochure, written for children and young teenagers, offers them the unique opportunity to read in English about a Chuukese heroine in a story passed down through generations of oral “talk stories”.



Photo from HIJC’s “Lien Apinam” publication.

The **Joyful Heart Foundation** conducts Namelehuapono, an innovative Hawaiian cultural group for adult survivors of child abuse, domestic violence and sexual assault. Integrating Hawaiian cultural beliefs, traditions and practices with trauma informed therapeutic approaches, Dr. Kalei Kanuha is further developing the curriculum to adapt it to children. Referrals are being accepted.

Kids Hurt Too teaches aloha through their programs. They have a lesson on aloha at the beginning of every group and mentoring activities that incorporate Hawaiian values through experiential programs such as Poi for the Soul, Surf for the Soul, and Seeds of Love.

Family Promise, which serves mainly Hawaiian and Micronesian families, uses case managers who are trained in cultural values particularly around family and finances. Similarly, all volunteer mediators at the **Mediation Center of the Pacific** receive training in mediation and culture.

LDAH tailors its school readiness project for preschoolers to the needs of their Waianae families. Strong community connections help “get the word out”, staff lives in the community, outreach at community events helps to attract clients for services, and condensed and after hour services are offered to accommodate the families’ schedules. And, of course, there’s always food.

All of these programs are open to the public.

Volunteer Translators Needed

Please contact Lorraine

808-387-9284

lgershun@kukuicenter.org

Mediation Center helps divorcing couples focus on children's needs



Volunteer mediators attended a workshop on effective communication.

Falling in love and getting married are the highlights of most people's lives. Falling out of love and going through a divorce on the other hand, are the worst and most stressful of times. On Oahu alone, over 4,000 divorces are filed at Family Court annually. Despite these grim statistics, finalizing the terms of a divorce doesn't have to be a fight.

Separation and divorce have a profound impact on families. The stress can be overwhelming as parents struggle to take care of their children and themselves. Equally significant is the fact that the children of divorcing couples become very upset if they see their parents arguing. Therefore, it is essential for the children's well-being that divorcing couples not argue in front of the children and make the transition as easy as possible.

It is possible for couples to work through their issues without

fighting. Mediation provides a less stressful approach to talking and working through the terms of a divorce. Divorcing couples are encouraged to focus on the needs of their children and create customized parenting plans. According to a University of Virginia study, couples who decide to mediate their divorce are more likely to talk regularly about their children's needs, to participate in special events, daily activities, holidays and vacations.

At the Mediation Center of the Pacific, over 300 divorcing couples are assisted annually. Working with impartial mediators, divorcing couples are able to talk and negotiate agreements about where the children will live, how time-sharing will work, and the details of a co-parenting plan to support the needs of the children. As a result, fighting decreases and the couples learn a new way of communicating with one another which ultimately helps their children cope more effectively with the transition to their new lives.

Comments from couples who have mediated the terms of their divorce at the Mediation Center include:

"The mediators provided great insight on multiple solutions. I owe the mediation the ability to make my son a part of my life."

"Our mediators were amazing. We never talked so much and agreed on something in 8 months!"

Mediation isn't magic, but it can help ease the stress of going through a divorce. Through mediation, couples find new ways of talking so as to continue being the best parents they can be to their children, even though they are no longer able to be a couple.

Computers needed for foster youth drop-in center

The Hawaii Foster Youth Coalition (HFYC) is a youth-led project through which current and former foster youth ages 14-26 provide a voice within the community and state. They have youth boards on Maui, in Hilo and on Oahu.

They speak out on issues affecting foster youth and make recommendations for positive change. At the Hawaii State Legislature, HFYC provided feedback on pregnancy prevention and other curriculum used for educating foster youth. They gave oral and written testimony for bills that improved the foster care system. Their stories make them experts on the child welfare system that cares for them.

At the Kukui Center, HFYC has a drop-in center for current and former foster youth. It is like a home to them, just as they are like family/ohana to each other. There is a computer lab for youth to do online career assessments, write resumes and personal statements, complete online scholarships and applications and to connect with friends. Despite the fact that the computers are quite old and tend to be very slow or shut down at inconvenient times, these young people



Youth attend weekly mentoring sessions at the drop-in center.

help each other make the process easier for those who are confused or don't know what resources are available to them. They hold youth board meetings, planning meetings, and trainings at the Center.

The Center also provides a safe space for youth to participate in the mentoring group "You are in charge!" Eight sessions, two or three times a year, bring youth together to set goals and learn steps for achieving goals. The facilitator,

Seymour Kazimirski of Global Consulting Inc. connects participants with resources and opportunities to achieve more success than they ever imagined.

Currently, HFYC is working to establish a peer group for creatively healing trauma. HFYC youth are natural born leaders whose childhoods are marked by pain from abuse, poverty, and loss of both parents and often other extended family members. They are driven to help other youth so "other children don't have to go through what they went through." They work to help youth to overcome the stigma of poverty, limited opportunities and loneliness.

Myths and Facts about foster youth from Hale Kipa

Myth: Most children enter foster care due to abuse.

Fact: Recent studies show that 82 % enter care due to neglect and other reasons.

Myth: Children who enter foster care will never return to their families.

Fact: Over half of all children placed in foster care will eventually be returned to their parents/caregivers. Others may be placed with family members, be adopted, or taken under legal guardianship. Only about 10% will eventually age out of the system at age 18.

Myth: Siblings in foster care are usually separated from each other.

Fact: Efforts are usually made to keep siblings in placement together whenever possible. In addition, Hawaii law requires that siblings in separate placements are provided regular visitation with their siblings.

Myth: The Federal Government spends more on preventing youth from entering foster care than to maintain them in care.

Fact: The Federal Government spends \$4.3 billion dollars to maintain youth in care and \$703 million to prevent at risk youth from entering care.

Myth: Once youth in foster care turn 18, they are completely on their own with no additional support.

Fact: The State of Hawaii currently allows for youth to continue to receive financial assistance for up to 60 months if they attend college after aging out of care. As of July 1, 2014 Hawaii will join 20 other states in allowing youth who turn 18 in the foster care system to remain in care voluntarily until their 21st birthday. Youth who choose to participate can continue to receiving financial support by being involved in an activity that includes work, school or training programs.

Family Promise helps homeless families save money and secure housing



Family Promise staff pose with children from the program.

- ⊕ There are 610,042 people experiencing homelessness on any given night in the United States and of that number, 222,197 are people in families, making up 36% of all homeless people counted.
- ⊕ Families made up nearly 50% of the total sheltered homeless population in the U.S. (2013 Annual Homeless Assessment Report).
- ⊕ Honolulu has the largest number of homeless people in families among smaller cities (2013 Annual Homeless Assessment Report)
- ⊕ While circumstances vary, the main reason people experience homelessness is because they cannot find housing they can afford.
- ⊕ The cost of an average two bedroom rental in Honolulu is \$1,200 - \$1,400/month.
- ⊕ Families in our program earn an average of \$8.00/hr. and bring home approximately \$1,000 – \$1,200 per month.
- ⊕ Families earning minimum wage need to work close to 120 hrs a week in order to be able to afford their rent, car, insurance, electricity and phone payments, as well as food and gas.
- ⊕ After participating in Family Promise and receiving shelter, three meals/day and toiletries, families are able to save between \$1,500 – \$3,000 in three to four months.
- ⊕ Some of our day program families are able to secure housing before having to come into the overnight program.
- ⊕ Over 80% of the families who complete our program and move into housing never return to homelessness again.

Volunteers needed to help children heal

Kids Hurt Too Hawaii depends on donations and volunteers to operate free peer support and mentoring services to 150 children a month. These children are living without one or both parents due to death or separation. They are Hawaii's most at risk and vulnerable children who are often also plagued by stigma, bullying, poverty, isolation, social problems, emotional pain, and constant reminders that they are missing parents.

Compassionate volunteers commit to the four day “Children’s Grief and Trauma Facilitation and Mentor Training,” along with one or two groups a month. Children learn that there are people who care, who are willing to listen, and who provide them with a safe place for healing. Volunteers often say they get back more than they give because of the joy that comes with seeing children change from acting sad and despondent to laughing and playing.

When children first come to the center, their eyes open in amazement at finding a



Volunteers attend four days of training.

place to meet other kids with the same loss. The kids also adore the caring volunteer facilitators. New parents are also welcomed as others share how much being a part of the program has helped them as a family.

Volunteers must be at least sixteen years old, complete the four day training and pass a background check. The next volunteer training is August 16, 17, 23, & 24, 2014. For more information call 545-5683 or visit our website: kidshurttoo.org.

Donations of Services

- Ace Security and Locksmiths
- After School Art
- Alston Hunt Floyd & Ing
- ALTRES
- American Massage Therapy Association-Hawaii Chapter
- Anthology Marketing Group
- Brasserie du Vin
- Carr, Gouveia, Matsumoto CPA's
- HACBED
- Hagadone Printing
- Hawaii Digi Doc
- Hawaii Self Storage
- Hawaii USA Federal Credit Union
- Law Offices of Neal K. Aoki
- Michael Powell Art
- Nathan J. Richards + Associates
- Seymour Kazimirski
- The Bead Gallery
- YMCA of Honolulu

Donations of Funds

- Aloha United Way
- Evans Fund
- Friends of Hawaii Charities
- Ili Ili Fund of the Hawaii Community Foundation
- Jhamandas Watamull Fund

Winners Camp gives full scholarships to six youth



Keilani with Delorese Gregoire, Founding Director of Winners Camp.

Winners Camp opened their doors to kids from the Kukui Center over Spring Break in a big way. Six youth from Kids Hurt Too Hawaii received full scholarships to attend the one-week program in March. They report it changed their lives for the better. One parent said that before her daughter left, she was worried that the girl might be depressed. Her daughter came home and made a total turn around. "Now she is positive, has goals and is working

towards them," her mother said. One young man shares the wisdom that he learned at camp with his grandmother every day, using it to motivate him to action. According to Winners Camp, participants learn to create a positive sense of self-identity through a safe, supportive environment where they break through self-imposed limitations. This is winning where the opponent is one's own fears and self-doubts.

Altres provides training for KC agencies

When Altres offered space in their human resources training program for Kukui Center agencies, several staff members took advantage of this wonderful opportunity. Jessica Stabile from the Mediation Center of the Pacific really appreciated the unique opportunity to learn new managerial and client services skills that are directly applicable to her job and something that she feels isn't as easy to learn from direct experience. According to Jessica, they are HR experts and the trainers are excellent.

Marge Neilson, the Administrative Assistant at Learning Disabilities Association of Hawaii is another KC agency staff member who likes the opportunity to attend Altres' workshops. Marge said, "The CPR education we received through ALTRES was lively, informative and could very well save the life of someone here at the Kukui Center. It's reassuring to know there are now several CPR certified staff among tenants in our building. I'm looking forward to next



Marge Neilson attended CPR training by Altres.

month's ALTRES Hazard Communications safety training. Again, it could save a life!"

Donations of Goods

- Auntie Sally's
- Big City Diner
- Central Pacific Bank
- Hawaii Association of Legal Administrators
- Honolulu Sign Company
- Pepsi Beverages Company
- Soderholm Bus Sales and Leasing
- Vim and Vigor

Volunteers, Service Clubs and Non-Profit Organizations

- Arcadia Retirement Residence
- Bruce McEwan
- Habilitat, Inc.
- Hands in Helping Out
- Hawaii Association of Legal Administrators
- Junior League Sustainers
- Kappa Kappa Gamma Sorority
- Luke Center for Public Service at Punahou School
- Rotary Club of Downtown Honolulu
- Trees of Hawaii
- Waianae HS Searider Productions Skills USA Club
- Winners Camp Foundation

Aunty Sally's fulfills individual wishlists



Aunty Sally attended a tenant potluck with the agencies' staff.

New to the Community Partners Program, Sally Lampson Kanehe opened up her home workshop, "Aunty Sally's" and her heart to embrace our programs and the clients that they serve. Aunty Sally fulfills the individual wish lists of clients and provides things such as linen and kitchen items for new apartments, professional clothing for job interviews and personal grooming items which are often difficult for them to purchase due to their limited budgets. Former foster youth and homeless families are

getting many of the personal and household items that they need as they move into new housing, go to college and find jobs, thanks to Aunty Sally's. She finds out their sizes or even their color preferences to come as close to meeting their exact needs as possible. She gave a pinstripe sports jacket to a young man who was going to the Hawaii State Legislature to testify on behalf of foster youth in Hawaii. He also wore the jacket at the Real World event in May, making an impression on the other youth with his sharp professional look. Aunty Sally's has found a practical way to help make things a little easier for these youth as they move towards independence. She has also fulfilled the Wish Lists for clients from Kids Hurt Too and the Learning Disabilities Association of Hawaii as well as provided books for Hawaii Literacy.

Evans Family broadens support



HFYC staff receives grant for salary.

Dr. Stephanie Evans' interest in helping vulnerable children led her to specialize in helping foster children as a clinical psychologist. A former Hawaii resident who has supported programs here in the past, she appreciates that the Community Partners Program is so cost effective in sharing resources among our 10 small programs. She and her brother, Charles, have been strong supporters for several years. When they came last summer from their homes on the mainland to visit the KC for the first time, they couldn't help but be impressed by how much our agencies help those in the community who need it most. This resulted in each of the programs receiving a direct gift as well as the Hawaii Foster Youth Coalition receiving a special grant to help cover the cost of their staff. What a wonderful vote of confidence!

Mahalo to the following businesses and organizations who have donated gift cards to the Kukui Center to help our clients:

- Ben Franklins Crafts**
- Big City Diner**
- Hawaii Association of Legal Administrators**
- Jr. League**
- Jr. League Sustainers**
- Law Office of Wagner Choi & Verbrugge**
- Zippy's Restaurant**



Children build literacy skills at Family Libraries



Hawaii Literacy helps children and adults develop literacy skills at Family Libraries, the Book Mobile and the Kukui Center.

As I enter one of Hawaii Literacy's Family Literacy Libraries, I'm greeted by staff and a rush of cold air that the kids also enjoy after racing here from school on a hot afternoon. This free community Library, located within Mayor Wright Homes (there is another at Kuhio Park) is modest, but feels like a sanctuary. It's colorful and welcoming, and the children come when the Library opens in the afternoon to get help with homework, use technology, enjoy fun literacy-building activities, and choose from a vast selection of books that line the walls.

Keiki each sign in and run to wash their hands. Without being asked, they take out their homework and start working. Hawaii Literacy staff and volunteers circle to offer encouragement and help. "They always help me with things that I don't understand and will always be nice to me no matter what," Benjalin says. "I do my homework and Miss Jeanette comes and helps me every time," Tonianne says.

After homework time, group activities start. Today's game "Popcorn Words" has keiki jumping up and down, but also building phonics skills. Later, the children are given a healthy snack and settle onto mats around Miss Marissa to listen to a story. She stops along the way to ask questions and increase comprehension.

"I always like the teachers because they make us do lots of reading so we can tell what the story's about," says Mersalin.

The afternoon ends with a choice of activities. Older youth head up to the computer room, while younger ones stay for a craft related to the book they just heard. A few children ask if they can read another book on their own.

"I love the teachers because they teach us new things. They let us read here and reading is fun," Tonianne says.

"What do you like best about the Library?" I ask Angel. She smiles and says, "The thing that I like about the Family Library is everything."

-- Written by Emily Ishikawa, Intern from UH Manoa

LDAH invites you to "Adopt a Cause"

As a non-profit agency facing financially lean times, Learning Disabilities Association of Hawaii can always use a helping hand. Individuals and organizations are welcome to Adopt-a-Cause!

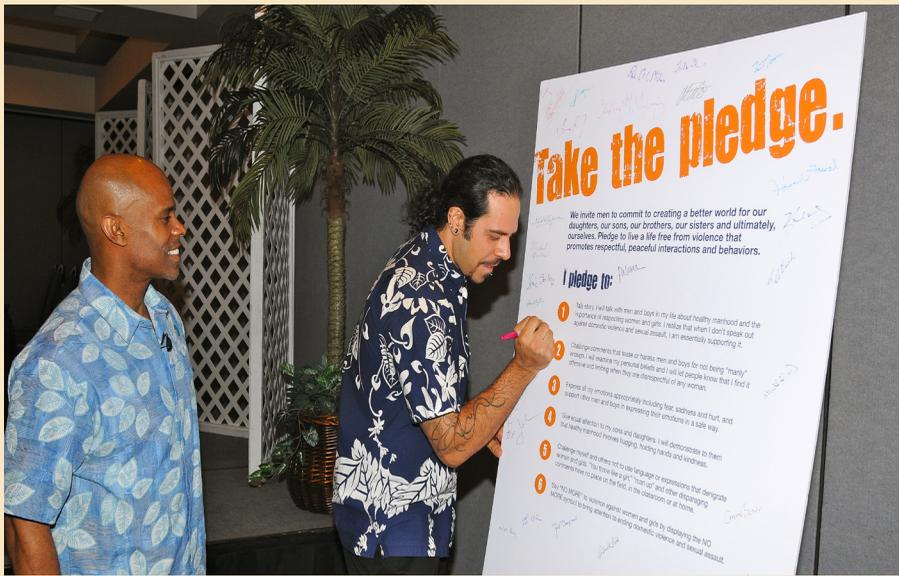
Call Marge today at (808) 536-9684 for more details.

- \$60 Procure a DSM-5 Manual for our Parent Resource Center library
- \$100 Cover the Cost of a Comb Binding Machine for Parent Resource Materials
- \$150 Pick up the Tab for a Commercial Paper Cutter
- \$150 Chip in for a Tank of Gas for our Mobile Screening Services Van
- \$200 Host a Mother's Day Event in Waianae for Moms and their Toddlers
- \$200 Host a Father's Day Event in Waianae for Dads and their Little Keiki
- \$200 Support a "Summer Keiki Kick Off" Event in Waianae for Pre-Kindergarteners
- \$250 Sponsor a "Blitz Week" of Workshops for Parent of Children with Disabilities
- \$500 Send our Team to a Neighbor Island for a Day of Developmental, Hearing & Vision Screening and Workshops for 2-5 year old Keiki and their Families
- \$600 Foot the Bill to professionally clean our Office Suite Carpet soiled by High Traffic
- \$5,000 Finance a Brand Decal for our new Mobile Screening Services Van



LDAH staff head out to the outer islands for annual mini conferences.

Men "talk story" about domestic violence and sexual assault



Men take the pledge at a recent event about "Men Working to End Violence Against Women."

An important part of our work at Joyful Heart is to raise visibility, encourage conversation, deepen understanding, inspire action and help break the social stigma surrounding child abuse, domestic violence and sexual assault. We seek to "turn up the volume" on these issues by engaging the community in breaking the silence – to encourage all of us to talk story.

According to new research conducted by the Avon Foundation for Women, while 60% of Americans say they know a victim of sexual assault or domestic violence, 57% have never actually discussed either issue with their friends. When it comes to parents, a staggering 73% said they had never had a conversation about domestic violence or sexual assault with their children under the age of 18.

We want to change this. We want to TALK STORY and we invite you to join us because when we all talk about this, we help to reduce the stigma around these issues. In so doing, we create a community that challenges violence and promotes peace.

All of us, men and women, can help to create change in our community. At Joyful Heart we are inviting everyone to take a pledge. We can all model healthy relationships for the young people in our lives, never blame someone who is a victim, and support survivors. We know sometimes these are hard topics to talk about – but we have to talk about them. Talking story makes a difference.

To take the pledge, go to: #talkstory on Twitter or go to our website and share it with your friends through: <http://bit.ly/talk-story>.

HIJC helps victims of human trafficking

Human trafficking is the illegal movement of people, typically for the purposes of forced labor or commercial sexual exploitation. It is more common in the U.S. than we think.

Victims of human trafficking in the U.S. may not be legal residents. This gives the upper hand to their "employers". Many were "recruited" from developing countries with unfulfilled promises of making a better living for themselves and their families back home. Here are some signs of a possible human trafficking victim:

Poor Working and Living Conditions: not free to leave or come and go; is unpaid, paid very little; works excessively long and/or unusual hours; suffers under unusual restrictions at work; owes a large debt and is unable to pay it off; high security measures exist in the work and/or living conditions (bars on windows, boarded up or opaque windows, barbed wire, etc.)

Poor Mental Health or Abnormal Behavior: is fearful, anxious, depressed, submissive, nervous/paranoid; shows unusually anxious behavior after bringing up law enforcement

Poor Physical Health: lacks health care, appears malnourished, shows signs of physical and/or sexual abuse, physical restraint, confinement or torture

Lack of Control: has few or no personal possessions, is not in control of his/her own money, has no bank account, is not in control or possession of his/her own identification documents, is not allowed to speak for themselves (third party insists on being present and/or translating)

Other: claims of just visiting, inability to clarify where he/she is staying/address, loss of sense of time, has numerous inconsistencies in his/her story

Some situations in the U.S. that may not appear to be a human trafficking are: teenagers living on the streets, able-bodied men working on a farm, domestic workers in the home of established and respected professionals, restaurant workers, and younger relatives sent to live and work for other family members.

This information was adapted from the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime and the Polaris Project. If you know of someone in a trafficking situation, you can contact Hawai'i Immigrant Justice Center at Legal Aid (HIJC at Legal Aid) at 536-8826 for more information. Last year, HIJC at Legal Aid helped more than 275 adults and children who were victims of domestic violence, sexual assault and human trafficking.

Kukui Children's Foundation
245 North Kukui Street
Honolulu, Hawaii 96817

Summer 2014



Harry and Jeanette Weinberg
Kukui Center

Our Family Of Social Services

Board of Directors

John R. Dwyer, Jr.
President

Clyde Namu'o
Vice President

Pat Kay
Secretary

John Garibaldi
Treasurer

Suzanne Chun Oakland
Sue Landon
Geri Marullo
Jim Reinhardt
Vicky Schneider

Karen K. White
Board Member Emeritus

Judy Lind
Executive Director

Kukuchildrensfoun@hawaii.rr.com

Family Promise of Hawaii

*Resources for homeless
families with children*
(808) 548-7478
www.familypromiseshawaii.org

Hale Kipa
*Outreach services for
child abuse victims in, or
transitioning out of,
foster care to become
independent*
(808) 853-4660
www.halekipa.org

Hawaii Foster Youth
Coalition
*Advocacy and indepen-
dent living skills training
for foster youth*
(808) 545-5683
www.grievingyouth.org

Hawaii Immigrant
Justice Center at
LASH
*Legal services for
immigrant victims of
abuse and domestic
violence*
(808) 536-4302
www.hijcenter.org

Hawaii Literacy
*Literacy and lifelong
learning services*
(808) 537-6706
www.hawaiiliteracy.org

Joyful Heart
Foundation
*Helping victims of child
abuse, domestic violence
and sexual assault*
(808) 532-3520
www.joyfulheartfoundation.org

Kids Hurt Too
*Support for grieving
children who have
lost a parent*
(808) 545-5683
or (808) 256-3176
www.kidshurttoo.org

Learning
Disabilities
Association of
Hawaii
*Training center for
parents of
children with disabilities*
(808) 536-9684
www.LDAHawaii.org

Mediation Center
of the Pacific
*Conflict resolution
for cases
involving children
and others*
(808) 521-6767
www.mediatehawaii.org

www.kukuicenter.org

If you would like to receive this newsletter electronically, please send your email address to lgershun@kukuicenter.org.