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Ashley was just 1½ months old when she was referred by Bright Beginnings to CBE’s Infant Toddler Program. Natalie, her mother was a “graduate” from the Infant Toddler Program herself. As a young adult she received Supported Living Services and excelled to the extent she no longer needed services. An early intervention provider supported Natalie with information on parenting and monitored Ashley’s development.

Ashley’s baby brother was added to the family and he too was enrolled in the Infant Toddler Program. CBE staff loved working with Ashley and her family. Natalie’s enjoyment of being a mother was evident; she never complained or tried to get a break from the demands of motherhood.

Ashley stayed on track developmentally until she neared her second birthday. At that time the ITP provider noticed she was having difficulty understanding Ashley’s speech even though mom and grandma had no such problem. With Natalie’s consent a referral was again made to CBE, this time for Early Intervention Colorado (EI CO) services, a program under Part C of the federal IDEA Act. Children under the age of three must have a 25% or greater delay in one or more areas of development to be eligible for this program. Ashley’s service coordinator, the family, and Pueblo City Schools’ Child Find participated in a multidisciplinary evaluation; it was determined Ashley was eligible for EI CO services and the family began receiving EI speech therapy services. We state the family receives the services because the EI CO system is designed to maximize family involvement and empower parents to help their child meet their outcomes. Through EI CO services, Ashley’s family also received assistance with understanding their options and planning for future services. This “transition planning” included participation from the EI speech therapy provider, service coordinator, and Child Find. An evaluation was completed close to Ashley’s third birthday determining Ashley qualified for Part B Preschool Services. Ashley began attending a typical preschool in January shortly after she turned three.

- *Consumer Success Story*
 - *Exciting Changes at CBE*
 - *Partnership for a Delightful Christmas*
- In This Issue...***

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IN TOUCH

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Spring 2011

SOLID PARTNERSHIP

La Vista and San Carlos Correctional Facilities

By Caroline Rosales and Carol Espinoza



Picture in your mind...it’s early July – while outside temperatures are heating up, the temperatures in our partners’ brainwaves are scorching hot! Most folks are visualizing what their summer vacation destination will be: camping trips, BBQs with family and friends, what greenery their yards will produce, and the perfect tan...ahhhhh!

Most folks are not La Vista or San Carlos staff – they are on a whole different wave-length! Dagger eyes shoot across a roll call meeting – “I want to talk to you Carol” is mouthed across the room. She must have done something bad for the lieutenant to be focused on her. Nope, the lieutenant is ensuring she will be notified in advance when the Colorado Bluesky infant/toddler names are in. Christmas is just around the corner and no staff member wants to be left out.

One hundred and fifty-six infant/toddler names were submitted to La Vista and San Carlos in 2010. As usual, all the names were snapped up immediately. Staff member Michelle spoke about how important it is to have her own children involved in the selection of their gift. *It is a gift from the heart - with so many less fortunate children in our own back yard, we have an opportunity to make a difference.*

When staff members Gladys and Tony request their names they both ensure that if any names are not claimed they are willing to take those along with their own. Charmaine, Dana and George all say the same when they select their names. From year to year, there are never names not claimed, yet the offers are always genuine.

Gruff speaking Lance has a gentler side to his nature. He’s not going toy shopping...but he knows how to delegate like a commanding major. He dispatches a willing Joe or Carol to shop for him. *Did we do a good job? Did I give you enough money? Did we get a good present?* His gruff exterior melts and you can see a twinkle in his eyes. You know Angel Tree is important to him.

Each year the same issue comes to light by staff who were on days off when the infant/toddler list was posted. Upon their return to duty, they find there are no names left for them and foul play is called! *You got five names and I didn’t get any – please give me a couple! P-L-E-A-S-E!* If I’m telling works to get a name, I’m telling is used to get a name – we have no idea who Scott was going to tell.

Staff energy makes the partnership between the facilities and Colorado Bluesky a success. Staff truly wants to make a positive difference in the life of a child. They seize the opportunity to instill in their own children the meaning of giving, sharing and caring. Some of the infant/toddler names are selected because they are the shared names of staff family. A connection is made and carried to next years’ event.

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Colorado Bluesky Enterprises, Inc.

115 West 2nd Street
Pueblo, Colorado 81003
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www.coloradobluesky.org

Mission Statement

We believe all persons have the right to live, learn, and work in the community with the hope, dignity, choices, opportunities and responsibilities accorded all citizens.



Executive Directors Report

By

Michael F. Atlas-Acuña

This issue of the In Touch will highlight our Early Intervention Program because of all the changes that are occurring.

The first major change was Jeff Dunn's retirement in February 2011. There is no question we lost a valued individual who built the foundation for the EI Program. Because of Jeff's contribution we are now positioned to move the program into the future.

With that said, I would like to introduce Kristie Phillips CBE's new EI Director who started at the end of February 2011. Kristie holds a Bachelor Degree in Psychology, a Masters Degree in Social Work, and is a Licensed Clinical Social Worker. Prior to coming to CBE Mrs. Phillips worked for Spanish Peaks Mental Health Center for ten years. As part of her tenure with Spanish Peaks she worked with families and young children. Kristie has a varied background in early intervention, mental health, and, as an added bonus, has experience as a trainer, fundraiser, and grant writer. In the short time she has worked for the CBE she has already made some major contributions and has laid out her Strategic Plan for the future of EI. We are so excited to have Kristie because of her knowledge, experience, enthusiasm, and creativity. I am confident that families will be happy with the changes Kristie is projecting because they are focused on improving accessibility to services and securing qualified providers.

Another major change was appointing Sue Litton as the Part C Coordinator. Many of you already know Sue as a Service Coordinator, but with Jeff leaving we had to rethink how the Part C Coordinator position could be most effective for families. After many discussions, it became obvious that Sue was the person for the job as she brings many years of experience working with families and children. Please welcome Sue to her new position. Sue and Kristie bring great experience and expertise to the program and look forward to working together on many future projects. More information will be made available as we continue to build the EI Program.

Enjoy this issue of the In Touch.

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For staff member Joe, involvement in Angel Tree is part of his heart and soul - he loves kids. For Carol, it's a solid guarantee that she will receive infant/toddler names. In 2010, both Joe and Carol had life experiences that impacted their hands-on involvement in Angel Tree. Without skipping a beat, Philene jumped in to take over and insured all gifts were accounted for and that they reached their designated delivery time frame.

Two plaques (one for La Vista and one for San Carlos) were presented to staff during the April 21, 2009 administrative roll call meeting. Jeff Dunn, Director of Children's/Family Services for Colorado Bluesky Enterprises, presented the plaques in staff appreciation of all the contributions to the 2008 Angel Tree program.

In January 2011, another award was received. Staff cheered for the finest artwork and personality the award displayed...a homemade construction paper Christmas tree lit up with ornaments of thanks from some of our infants and toddlers. Facility staff - correctional officers, nurses, administrators, administrative staff, maintenance department, business office, programs and more...they all come together as a solid team of professionals who continue to make a difference right in their own back yard. It's not a one-time event for correctional staff - this is a partnership that will continue for years to come.

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