Manville School Shines

The start of the academic year saw exciting changes at Judge Baker Children’s Center’s Manville School. Principal Hanna Savransky noted record enrollment at 96 students and 13 classrooms as the school year began. Along with robust enrollment, Manville announced promotions of two veteran staff members to new positions.

Bobby Hermesch has been named Milieu Director. In this role, he oversees the daily behavior management of the students, ensuring that their individual needs are being met. With a Master of Social Work degree, Hermesch has spent seven years at Judge Baker as a milieu counselor and mental health clinician. “Bobby is the ideal choice for this position as he knows how to navigate the Manville system and is extremely skilled in both the clinical and behavioral aspects of the job,” says Savransky.

Dave Creedon, after six years as Manville Upper School Coordinator, has been named to the new position of Board Certified Behavioral Analyst (BCBA). In his new post, Creedon creates individual behavior plans and strategies with teachers, clinicians and parents on detailed behavior management strategies. “Our students need structured skill development, coaching and practice to better regulate and manage their behavior in a more expected and conventional way. Having a school-based BCBA will support staff and parents in the development and implementation of behavioral treatment plans to improve the student’s behavior both in school and at home. Parents find it very effective to have someone working with them in developing more successful strategies for managing their child’s behavioral difficulties,” says Savransky.

The Manville community is also excited about the expansion of the specialized sensory gym. The enlarged space features state-of-the-art suspension equipment and can accommodate 3-4 students simultaneously while providing adequate space for the therapists working with each child. These specially trained therapists are helping the students to learn sensory regulation strategies which will help them manage their behavior in the classroom.

“Manville has developed a positive reputation among school systems and parents as a place where students are successful and families feel supported. We have a sophisticated program that centers around a team approach where educational, counseling and clinical staff work together with students and their families,” notes Savransky.

Judge Baker Children’s Center is proud of the standard of program and we congratulate them as they celebrate their 56th year in operation.

For more information and updates on the Manville School, please visit www.jbcc.harvard.edu/manville.
President’s Corner

Stephen Schaffer
Interim President and Chief Operating Officer

After eight years as President of Judge Baker Children’s Center, Dr. John R. Weisz has stepped down to focus on his research and teaching at Harvard University. Dr. Weisz will continue to collaborate closely with Judge Baker in a research capacity.

During his tenure here, Dr. Weisz expanded direct services and significantly broadened the research portfolio. A major focus of research at Judge Baker is evidence-based treatments (EBT) - children’s mental health treatments that have been proven effective. Dr. Weisz played a crucial role in expanding EBT work at Judge Baker. It has been an honor to work with Dr. Weisz and I know he will continue to be important in the development of improved mental health practice.

Ed Mullen, Chairman of the Board of Trustees, commented that “Judge Baker remains committed to its mission during this transition. We will continue to support children and families struggling with mental health issues through our research, training, education, and mental health services.”

A search committee for the President position has been formed, chaired by recent past Chairperson of the Board Kathy Cade. The committee will begin its work in December.

We anticipate an exciting year ahead with several newly elected Trustees; a new website scheduled to launch the last week in January, 2013; expanded services in Manville School (see accompanying article); new specialized services in Clinical Care for children with Asperger’s Syndrome; a growing Summer Treatment Program for children with Attention Deficit/Hyperactivity and related behaviors; and both new and continuing research in children’s mental health.

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