



## *Your Support Reaches Further Than You Realize*

*When you support the mission of the Bridge Family Center, you impact local, state, and national issues in ways you may not even realize. There are serious stresses on our communities, and our unique position in the region enables us to keep our fingers on the pulse of emerging issues affecting the well-being of families and informs how we can help. Focusing on prevention and intervention allows us to be effective in doing our part along with our community colleagues. In this edition, we offer you three examples of community issues your support allows us to address.*



### DOMESTIC MINOR SEX TRAFFICKING

Young girls and boys are being preyed upon and sold for sex in communities around the globe, and few communities are immune to this heartbreaking and disturbing reality. Due to our location between New York City and Boston, this is of particular concern for us here in Connecticut.

Sadly, Domestic Minor Sex Trafficking is an issue that affects children in our local communities, and the teens we support in our shelters are particularly vulnerable. Our staff work closely with the Department of Children and Families to stay current on trends, risks, and best practices for support. We are trained to recognize when a child is being groomed for, or is already a part of, "the life," and we are practiced in our response strategies. Our residential clinicians provide significant therapy to support children as they manage the circumstances in which they find themselves. They help children see a path to a new future, or a way out of "the life."

Separate from our residential work, our in-school counselors, mentors, and outpatient therapists work tirelessly on prevention and intervention. They work closely with local law enforcement and with schools to identify children at risk, and they involve them in programs that can offer support before they become susceptible to "grooming" or engage in risky behavior that places them in harm's way.

### REFUGEE SUPPORT

Our Family Resource Center offers many levels of assistance to children and families. This year, we continued our collaboration with West Hartford Continuing Education and offered an English for Families class. While parents learned English in our classroom, their children played and learned nearby. Several of the families were newly arrived refugees from war-torn areas, and they received language assistance as well as support with their parenting, basic needs, and feelings of safety.

### LGBT COUNSELING

We have a talented team of therapists at our outpatient mental health clinics in West Hartford, Avon, and Rockville. While all of our staff offer support to any client seeking to understand identity issues, some members of our team have specialized training in more expansive areas of LGBT-related counseling. Often, it is the parents of LGBT children and teens who need the most support as they try to understand and support their children.

Our residential staff also receive specialized training from True Colors, Inc. in Hartford to enable them to meet the needs of children who are seeking to articulate and manage their understanding of their own identity. This is of particular concern for residential staff, because of their important role in helping children in our shelters interact with other residents, as well as the medical professionals they meet with in the community.

Please visit our website and read the current edition of *Every Family School Edition*. The spring topic was Co-Parenting During and After Divorce.



# ANNUAL MEETING & BRIDGE BUSINESS AWARD



On June 7, 2017, we hosted our Annual Meeting at the Pond House in West Hartford. In addition to confirming returning board members and welcoming our newest, Judy Bierly, we recognized Allstate Insurance Company with the Bridge Business Award. Thank you to everyone who joined us to celebrate another successful year supporting children and families.

## Upcoming Events

### BREAKFAST ON THE BRIDGE

9/12/17 at 7:30 a.m.

Who will be the next recipient of the Build No Fences Award? At this beloved annual event designed to celebrate and nurture the collaboration among school personnel and others who support children and families in our community, we will find out!

### FALL VIEWS OF THE BRIDGE

9/20/17 West Hartford Counseling Center  
8:30 – 9:30 a.m.

10/10/17 West Hartford Counseling Center  
PTO Focus 9:00 – 10:00 a.m.

11/15/17 West Hartford Counseling Center  
8:30 – 9:30 a.m.



Top: Members of the Bridge Leadership Circle. Center Left: Margaret Hann, Executive Director, and Matt Winter, President of Allstate Insurance Company. Center Right: Attendees enjoying dinner. Bottom Left: Board Members Susan Hamilton and Jason Goddard. Bottom Center: Jessica Capone and Lori O'Connor. Bottom Right: Martha Rennie, Director of Development; Nancy DePalma, Board Member.



MAKE A LASTING DIFFERENCE. *LEAVE A LEGACY.*

## BUILDING FOR THE FUTURE

Did you know there's a simple way you can make the gift of a lifetime and leave a legacy in the community for generations to come?

It is never too early to think, dream, and plan for the impact and legacy you want to make with your life. After providing for your loved ones, you can:

- Include the Bridge Family Center in your Will
- Name the Bridge as a beneficiary of your life insurance policy, IRA, or other retirement plan
- Remember loved ones with a charitable bequest in their honor

When you make a gift to support our future, you will become a member of **Builders for the Future**, our planned giving society. No gift is too small. And the impact will be deep and long-lasting.

You can also make an online gift today to our Endowment Fund at the Hartford Foundation for Public Giving at [hfpg.org/donate](http://hfpg.org/donate) and search for The Bridge.



Martha Rennie recognizes new **Builders for the Future** Bob and Barbara Burke and Amanda and Scott Aronson.

To learn how you can make a difference for children and families far into the future, contact Martha Rennie, Director of Development, at 860.521.8035 ext. 1105 or [martha@bridgefamilycenter.org](mailto:martha@bridgefamilycenter.org). For more information, visit [www.bridgefamilycenter.org](http://www.bridgefamilycenter.org)

**PLEASE INCLUDE US IN YOUR GIVING BY MAILING A GIFT IN THE ENCLOSED ENVELOPE, OR BE IN TOUCH TO LEARN ABOUT THE ADDITIONAL GIVING AND ENGAGEMENT OPPORTUNITIES THAT FEEL RIGHT FOR YOU.**

EVERY FAMILY is a newsletter of the Bridge Family Center | 1022 Farmington Avenue, West Hartford, CT 06107-2105 | 860.521.8035  
[info@bridgefamilycenter.org](mailto:info@bridgefamilycenter.org) | [www.bridgefamilycenter.org](http://www.bridgefamilycenter.org) | [facebook.com/BridgeFamilyCenter](https://facebook.com/BridgeFamilyCenter) | Executive Director: Margaret A. Hann | Editor: Amanda Aronson.  
The Bridge is a private, nonprofit youth and family service agency offering a broad range of services to children, youth, families, and adults. Our counseling centers are in West Hartford, Avon, and Rockville, and our Family Resource Center is located within the Charter Oak International Academy in West Hartford.