



# Outreach

A PUBLICATION OF DELAWARE GUIDANCE SERVICES FOR CHILDREN AND YOUTH, INC.

## Featured Program: Outpatient Counseling is at the Core of Care

The Outpatient Counseling Program has always been and will always be at the core of all of the services DGS provides. All DGS programs—including Day Treatment, Intensive Outpatient, and Child Priority Response Services—work in tandem with this important component of mental health treatment to meet families' needs.

### The Basics

Outpatient counseling takes place in an office setting and is available at each of our five clinics, which are located in Wilmington, Newark, Dover, Seaford, and Lewes. Sessions are usually 45 to 60 minutes in duration and the course of treatment varies tremendously based on the extent of the client's problems; however, on average a client will visit DGS for about 16 sessions.

Each child is treated within the context of his or her family and the family within the context of its community and cultural heritage. Treatment might involve any of the following modalities: family therapy, individual psychotherapy, play or group therapy, behavior management, parent education, couples therapy, psychiatric evaluation, and medication as an adjunct to the therapy.

### The Need

Why do people call on DGS for help? The reasons typically fall into one of these major problem types:

1. Problems with attention
2. Difficulties in adjusting to changes in their lives, for example divorce, or death in the family, etc.

3. Depression
4. Anxiety
5. Impacts of trauma
6. Difficulty in controlling impulses
7. Behavioral problems such as not complying with parents' expectations, breaking rules, laws, etc.

Children's mental health issues such as these are treatable and they occur with much greater frequency than most people realize. According to the U. S. Department of Health and Human Services, mental health problems affect one in every five young people at any given time and an estimated two-thirds of all young people with mental health problems are not receiving the help they need.

### The Importance of Early Intervention

These children won't just magically get better and time is of the essence when it comes to treatment. For those with mental health problems that go undetected or untreated, the consequences are dire. Without appropriate care and services, these children face school failure, juvenile justice involvement, hospitalization, and even death. Delayed treatment also means children will suffer as their problems become more complex, difficult, and expensive to treat.

Regardless of the issue, the earlier a child or adolescent begins treatment, the less disability he/she will have later in life. Early intervention means improved outcomes and long-lasting effects in the form of well-functioning, healthy children who grow up to be productive adults who

contribute and keep communities strong and thriving.

These are the long-lasting results DGS strives to achieve.

### The Challenges

The path to overcoming a mental health issue is more often rough than smooth, although certainly not impossible. There are frequently barriers to treatment. Many children endure lengthy waiting periods for the services they so desperately need. The demand for outpatient counseling at DGS has long been far greater than the resources we have to provide this service. In 2013, the DGS Outpatient Program served 2,767 clients for a total of 33,574 treatment sessions while at times 300 potential clients were on statewide waiting lists.

Another major hurdle for families comes as insurance plans increasingly move to a high deductible system. There are families in need of our services who don't qualify for Medicaid but can't afford their high-deductible or maximum out-of-pocket plans. For them, healthcare costs are hitting home like never before. Our clinicians report that children with mental health needs are going without treatment because their families must now choose between seeing mental health care providers, seeing the doctor, filling their tank, or paying rent.

While sometimes it is difficult for families to get proper, sustained, and appropriate mental health treatment, sometimes it is difficult to provide it as

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## Featured Program *(Continued from page 1)*

well. Due to the unique population we treat, clinicians experience a high rate of no shows and cancellations. For clients, this impedes treatment gains. For DGS, this increases the costs of the outpatient program.

### **Recent Developments Bring New Opportunities in Outpatient**

DGS recently developed an Advanced Clinical Training Program (ACTP) for mental health professionals. Thanks to a \$200,000 grant from the Highmark Blue Cross Blue Shield Delaware's Blueprints for the Community grant program, our fundamental service is even better positioned to help children in need of our care.

Now, with the ACTP up and running, this fundamental service is even better positioned to help the children in need of our care. The program, the only one of its kind in Delaware, provides training for mental health professionals while simultaneously adding clinicians to the state's workforce. As a result, we now have increased the number of our clinical staff members and are making great progress on reducing waiting lists. Along with the ACTP, our outpatient services are also bolstered by our now fully-

staffed psychiatry services. This is no small feat—given the nationwide shortage of child psychiatrists—and this component of outpatient is critical for monitoring the more than 35 percent of our clients who are on medication to treat their issues in conjunction with counseling.

It is, however, the face-to-face counseling that provides the most pivotal part of the treatment. Each one of these meetings brings with it the chance for a breakthrough, a turning point, or an “aha moment” in a child's life. Just imagine a young person bogged down by depression, plagued with anxiety, or tormented by addiction, suddenly realizing the possibility for a happy, healthy, productive future. Through treatment children and youth acquire the skills needed to free them from the consequences of untreated mental health problems.

No one becomes a mature, competent, secure adult without the help and kindness of others. Many of Delaware Guidance Services' clients will grow up to reach their potential because of time spent in outpatient counseling.

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## DGS Awarded Top Workplaces Honor

Delaware Guidance Services was recently selected as one of *The News Journal's* Top Workplaces in Delaware.

The Top Workplaces are determined based solely on employee feedback. The employee survey is conducted by WorkplaceDynamics, LLP, a leading research firm on organizational health and employee engagement. Over the past year, more than 5,000 organizations and 1 in every 88 employees in the U.S. have turned to WorkplaceDynamics to better understand what's on the minds of their employees.

“The dedication and professionalism of our employees is what makes DGS stand out as an exceptional not-for-profit agency in Delaware,” explains DGS Chief Administrative Officer Jim Weischedel. “They have a unique understanding of our mission and a commitment to serve our clients with integrity, compassion and excellence.”

DGS has served Delaware's families for over 60 years, and is the largest provider of non-residential mental health services for children and youth in the state, serving 18,000 children and their families each year. Our mission is to provide quality mental health services to children, youth and their families. We believe that all children have a right to good mental health and should have access to quality therapeutic care, regardless of their ability to pay.

Comprised of child psychiatrists and psychologists, clinical social workers, master's level therapists and advanced nurse practitioners, our clinical staff and critical support staff maintains the highest standards of professional conduct and is well-known for keeping abreast of emerging new theories and practices.

As one of the first ten outpatient mental health agencies in the country to be accredited by the Joint Commission on the Accreditation of Healthcare Organizations (JCAHO) back in 1976, DGS has remained in full compliance ever since. DGS is a provider for Delaware's Division of Prevention and Behavioral Health Services and is a Partner Agency of the United Way of Delaware.

For more information about the Top Workplaces lists and WorkplaceDynamics, please visit [www.topworkplaces.com](http://www.topworkplaces.com) and [www.workplacedynamics.com](http://www.workplacedynamics.com). For more information about DGS programs and employment opportunities, please visit [www.delawareguidance.org](http://www.delawareguidance.org).



## DGS News

### Highmark Walk for a Healthy Community

Saturday, September 13, turned out to be a perfect morning for the inaugural Highmark Walk for a Health Community in Delaware. Thanks to an amazing effort from DGS staff members, Board members, family, and friends in support of the walk, it was a triumph for Delaware's children, too.

"We are very thankful for such a positive response and enthusiasm for this community effort," said DGS Chief Advancement Officer Christy Pennington.

The total amount raised on behalf of DGS was \$6,616, which equates to an additional 221 treatment sessions we are able to provide for children and youth in need of our services.



*DGS Team Leader in Lewes Maria Bini (left) and Maria Cruz-Darby, DGS CPRS Crisis Counselor, on the day of the Highmark Walk.*

DGS came in first place out of 17 organizations with the most participants in the walk—a total of 170 walkers/virtual walkers registered between all ten of our teams! DGS also raised the second highest amount of money among all of the participating teams.

Next year's Highmark Walk for a Healthy Community will be here sooner than you think! Mark your calendar for Saturday, June 6, 2015, at Bellevue State Park in Wilmington.

### Annual Fund Drive

Please consider a contribution to the 2014 Annual Fund Drive. Your support will help a struggling child.

DGS is dedicated to providing assistance to children at crucial moments in their lives and we're committed to those with few financial resources. Through our continuum of mental health programs and services we helped more than 18,000 children in 2013, which is a 20% increase over the previous year. It is also important to note that 85% of our clients are Medicaid dependent with annual household incomes under \$30,000 per year.

Your gift will matter! Whether you give \$5 or \$500, 100% of your donation will go toward helping Delaware's children.

Please help today's children make their journey. We'll all realize a brighter future. Thank you in advance for your support.

### New Psychiatrist Joins DGS

Tasneem Ali, M.D., joined our Wilmington staff as a full time Child and Adolescent Psychiatrist this spring. Dr. Ali comes to us from Rockford Center and before that Holcomb Behavioral Health. She was educated at Liaquat Medical College and Nazareth College in her native Pakistan.



*Tasneem Ali, M.D.*

### Share the Holiday Spirit 5K Run/Walk In Memory of Laura Gondeck

Mark your calendar for the Share the Holiday Spirit 5K Run/Walk on Saturday, December 13, 2014, in Dover, Delaware.

This event was initiated in 2011 in memory of Laura Gondeck who was an avid runner and advocate for children, youth, and DGS. Laura passed away on October 3, 2010, while participating in an event like this one. Laura's family believes in the DGS mission and has designated DGS as the beneficiary of the event, which has become a community and family tradition.



Participants are encouraged to bring non-perishable food items to be donated to local food banks and shelters. In addition, bring your best and most creative holiday cookies for the annual holiday cookie contest. There will also be prizes for the most festive outfit!

The course for the run/walk is through Silver Lake Park and Dover's Historic District. Registration begins at 9:00 a.m., Kiddie K Run is scheduled for 9:50 a.m., and the 5K will begin at 10:00 a.m. For more information, including entry fee and form, log on to [www.trisportsevents.com](http://www.trisportsevents.com). To make a donation toward the event, visit our web site at [www.delawareguidance.org](http://www.delawareguidance.org).

## Delaware Community Foundation Grant Funds ACTP Capital Project

When Delaware Guidance Services began to tackle the state's significant need for more mental health services and qualified professionals with the implementation of the Advanced Clinical Training Program (ACTP) this year, there was just one brick-and-mortar hurdle – office space for the trainees in the Wilmington facility. Thanks to a generous \$12,000 grant from the Delaware Community Foundation (DCF), we were able to convert an existing office into two furnished offices appropriate for clinical mental health work.

The ACTP is a two-year clinical training program for clinicians who have earned a graduate degree in one of the behavioral health disciplines and are preparing for licensure. The program aims to prepare trainees for licensure and highly competent practice in the field. The program began this year and is the only one of its kind in Delaware. Trainees were recruited in the spring and began work in August.

Each trainee carries a caseload of outpatient counseling clients that is approximately  $\frac{3}{4}$  the size of a full-time clinician at DGS.

In order to provide outpatient counseling therapy services, each clinical trainee needs suitable office space. Space was sufficient in four of our sites, but in short supply in Wilmington. As a result, and with support from the DCF, we transformed one office into two by adding a wall and a door.

Both offices were sound proofed. Wiring for phones and computers was put in so clinicians can complete all aspects of their work including scheduling, writing progress notes and treatment plans, and advocating on their clients' behalf. The design and renovations of the offices are compliant with Joint Commission on the Accreditation of Healthcare Organizations and Health Insurance Privacy and Portability Act regulations to insure confidentiality for DGS clients and their families. The finished product is a welcoming and comfortable environment conducive to the needs of both clients and staff in order to optimize each therapy session.

We remain grateful to the DCF for helping us to help make sure that every child in Delaware has a chance for a brighter future.

## Annual Meeting

The Delaware Guidance Services Annual Meeting was held June 25 at the Buena Vista conference center in New Castle, Delaware. Executive Director Bruce Kelsey gave an overview of the year's opportunities and challenges. He noted that DGS served 18,000 of Delaware's most vulnerable children—the most DGS has ever served in a year. The luncheon meeting also included a presentation on postvention by DGS Child Priority Response Services staff members Malia Boone and Joan Bourne, the presentation of the DGS Civility Award, and staff and Board service recognitions.



*Brooke Bashore (left) received a President's Plaque from DGS Executive Director Bruce Kelsey for her three years of service as Board President.*



*Pictured (left to right): Carl Chenkin, PhD, New Castle County Clinical Director; Dr. Saleem Khan; Brooke Bashore; Sabira Khan; and Sylvia Todd, DGS Evening Front Desk Coordinator, Wilmington.*



*Among those staff members receiving service awards were (left to right) Sylvia Todd; Howard Sims, Director of Compliance; and Rhonda Quinn, Clinical Director for Kent and Sussex Counties. Bruce Kelsey (right), presented the awards.*



*Board Member Trey Kraus (left) pictured here with Chief Advancement Officer Christy Pennington, also received an award for his five years of service to DGS.*

## Vision:

*To have quality mental health services available to every child in Delaware; to reduce the incidence of emotional problems in children.*

## Mission:

*Delaware Guidance Services for Children & Youth, Inc. exists to provide quality mental health services for children, youth, and their families.*

*We believe that all children have a right to good mental health and should have access to quality therapeutic care, regardless of their ability to pay.*



## 2014 Civility Award Winner

Phyllis Jerman, DGS Team Leader for the clinic in Seaford is the 2014 DGS Civility Award winner!

PCIT Behavior Specialist Coordinator and PNC provider Cristina Machin, who nominated Phyllis for the award, said, “when Phyllis is not there [in the office], we all feel a little bit lost.” Cristina said the Seaford staff thinks of Phyllis as their “go to” person for medical record questions, lost items, found items, silly questions, difficult questions, and anything in between!

“She puts on hold her own responsibilities so she can attend to the requests of others. I don’t know how she does all she does and remains graceful about it,” continued Cristina. She also noted Phyllis’ ability to balance professionalism and reliability with some comic relief.

“She sets the tone for respect and support for others in the office. She has a good sense of humor and contributes to make Seaford a fun place to be. She has a presence and you know you can count on her,” said Cristina.

Recently retired DGS Chief of Psychiatry Dr. Saleem Khan is the founder and benefactor of the award. According to Dr. Khan’s wishes, the \$1,000 award will be given annually to a DGS staff member who is a role model of civility in his/her interactions with co-workers, clients, and the community.



*DGS 2014 Civility Award Winner Phyllis Jerman with Dr. Saleem Khan.*

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## Potter Charity Trust Grant Supports Therapy for Children in Kent County

Thanks to a recent \$30,000 grant from the Potter Charity Trust Fund at the CenDel Foundation DGS clients in Kent County will be able to receive additional outpatient counseling services.



*From left to right, pictured here are Delaware Community Foundation Senior Vice President for Central Delaware Donna Stone, DGS Executive Director Bruce Kelsey, and DGS Chief Advancement Officer Christy Pennington.*

“We are grateful for the incredibly generous support of the Potter Charity Trust,” said DGS Executive Director Bruce Kelsey. “Our missions dovetail nicely. DGS is one of the only organizations in the state safeguarding the mental health of children in the lower income demographic and the Potter Charity Trust was created to provide assistance to the poor in Kent County.”

DGS was fortunate to be one of the nonprofit organizations in Kent County chosen to receive a grant from the Potter Trust. The funding will provide at least 1,110 therapy sessions and serve as many as 69 at-risk children and adolescents utilizing services in Kent County.

The CenDel Foundation, which is a fund of the Delaware Community Foundation, provides a lasting source of charitable funding to benefit Central Delaware. The foundation was established to provide a vehicle for charitable giving to the community and to work for the betterment of Central Delaware and its residents. The Potter Trust at CenDel was created in 1843 to carry out the wishes of Mr. Benjamin Potter to support the poor in Kent County as directed in his will.

### Support DGS through GoodShop

Don’t forget to use GoodShop.com and designate DGS so that we may receive a portion of each sale!



# Save the Date for the 2015 Champagne Gala

Mark your calendars for Friday, March 6, 2015, for the annual DGS Champagne Gala.

The evening's delicious menu items will be prepared by Harry's Savoy Grill's renowned chefs and carefully paired with selected wines and champagnes.

Silent auction items will once again be available for pre-event bids online early in 2015. Check [www.delawareguidance.org](http://www.delawareguidance.org) for more details in the coming months.



*Harry's owner Xavier Teixido (left) and DGS Executive Director Bruce Kelsey toast at last year's Champagne Gala.*



To get updates on DGS happenings as well as relevant community events, find us on Facebook and "Like" us, or follow us on Twitter @DEGuidance.

If you wish to unsubscribe from this mailing or receive this via e-mail, please contact [srogers@delawareguidance.org](mailto:srogers@delawareguidance.org).

## Please Designate DGS

Please designate your United Way pledge to DGS. Your continued support is what helps us help Delaware's children and teens grow up to become happy, healthy, contributing members of our community. To designate DGS, simply select our agency code, #0265, on your pledge form. It's that easy and greatly appreciated.

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