



# CONNECTIONS

**CHILD & FAMILY SERVICES OF SOUTHWESTERN MICHIGAN, INC.**

## CELEBRATING 120 YEARS OF SERVICE

Much can be said about any organization who has managed to stay in business for 120 years. The mere fact the agency has survived through two major recessions, several wars and thousands of technological advances, as well as occasionally having to change directions to meet the ever-changing needs of an evolving society says much more about an agency than words can ever describe. But a few come to mind... Tenacity, courage, determination, resolve, heart, strength of purpose, and love for community.

Founded in 1891 as the Children's Aid Society, we were originally a home for homeless infants and children. Children were often placed with families in the community and this was an early precursor to our foster home care.

In 1916, we had an office built at 2000 S. State Street. Charles Chapin, a Niles resident, helped pay for the site by donating \$20,000.00 ... a huge amount of money in those days. The previous building had a fire which resulted in the specs for this building to be virtually fireproof. It had cement floors and staircases, and a vault to hold adoption records.

In 1926, we were called the Girls Cottage because we had become a center for teenage girls with varying problems. Thirty years



Celebrating all ages

later, the building was renamed Chapin Hill, after Charles Chapin, our benefactor.

In 1962, our Homecare program began, and remains our largest program in the agency even today. Over 200 workers are employed by the Homecare program to provide care to the elderly. Services include light meal preparation, light house cleaning, medication reminding, assisting with personal hygiene, running errands and, most importantly, companionship. We have nurses on staff who provide support to our workers and to the clients they care for.

In 1963, residential services were discontinued until 10 years later when the Link rented space in our building to again work with, and house, troubled teens. In 1971, the Berrien County Family Counseling and the Children's Aid Society merged to become Child & Family Services of Southwestern Michigan, Inc.

### VOLUME 1, ISSUE 1

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### NEWSLETTER DATE

#### Special points of interest:

- \* History of CFSSWMI
- \* Donations are always needed
- \* Executive Director Reports
- \* Places to Find Us

**CHILD & FAMILY  
SERVICES OF  
SOUTHWESTERN  
MICHIGAN, INC.**

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PO Box 8789  
Benton Harbor, MI 49023

269-925-1725  
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[www.cfsswmi.org](http://www.cfsswmi.org)



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of Southwestern Michigan, Inc.

**A non-governmental,  
non-profit  
501(c)3 agency.**

We are on the web!

[www.cfsswmi.org](http://www.cfsswmi.org)



Celebrating All Lives



Funded in part by United Way!

## CONTINUATION OF CELEBRATION

In 1991, Day Services for Seniors began at the 1<sup>st</sup> Congregational Church on Niles Avenue in Saint Joseph, providing day services for seniors twice a week. By 1997, we had expanded to a 5-day per week program and in 2002, we acquired another Day Services program located in Paw Paw. Our Day Services program serves those individuals with Alzheimer's and other dementia, as well as physically impaired and socially isolated seniors. Certified with the Eden Registry, we show we are a standard of excellence in care to seniors. Our centers help alleviate the plague of loneliness, boredom and helplessness that seniors often experience, while at the same time giving caregivers much needed respite during the day.

In 2003 our expanding services and antiquated conditions at the old Child & Family Services building necessitated a move. South Shore Development and the Kershinbaum family were instrumental in providing us with a new modern facility on M-139 in Benton Harbor. All of our programs, with the exception of our Day Services for Seniors in Paw Paw are located at this one site.

In March 2004, the Link Crisis Intervention Center merged with Child & Family Services, bringing youth back into our programs. Our youth are housed in a clean and cheerful environment. Youth from the ages of 9 to 17 years of age, who are homeless, runaway or in crisis may seek help from the Link. Youth needing shelter are transported to the Ark (Kalamazoo) which is a partner agency. During their stay, they receive counseling, outreach services, educational services and life skills training.

Our growth spurt continued as we acquired another merger in 2005: the

West Michigan Guardianship. Our guardianship services help elderly and physically and mentally incapacitated individuals by acting as their guardians, conservators, trustees, POA's and Rep Payees to manage their funds and other areas of their lives that become difficult for them to do on their own.

As of December, 2008 the Safe Shelter for domestic violence victims and their families merged with Child & Family Services and our family of programs continued to grow.

Through the years our services have expanded. Programs have come and gone based on the needs of the community and our ability to meet those needs, but our mission has continued to remain constant and strong, "To walk beside children, families and individuals, of all ages, and to support them in maintaining safe, healthy, meaningful lives within our community".

It takes a lot of money to run our programs. Federal and state grants have been cut because of the economic crisis our country has undergone. United Way budgeting has been cut as well, but people still need our services. People like you. People like your parents, grandparents, brothers, sisters, uncles, aunts and children.

If you would like to donate to Child & Family Services of Southwestern Michigan, Inc., we would appreciate your graciousness in doing so. Our promise to you is to be a good steward of your money and to use it to provide services for the most important people of all ... our clients. You may donate easily on line by visiting our website at:

[www.cfsswmi.org](http://www.cfsswmi.org)

Here is to the next 120 years! Thank you!

**CHILD & FAMILY  
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**MISSION  
STATEMENT**

**Our mission statement  
is to walk beside  
children, families and  
individuals of all ages  
and to support them in  
maintaining, safe,  
healthy, meaningful  
lives within the  
community.**

**WAYS TO GIVE**

Give a homeless, runaway, or in-crisis young person, or an abused woman their lives back. Help us help the elderly escape from loneliness. Help keep our senior populations in their own homes to live independently, with help.

Every donation is used to make a difference in the lives of those we serve: from the young in age to the young at heart. We accept: 1) Cash donations; 2) Donations of real estate and personal property, 2) Gift planning and, 3) Bequests.

Donations can be made online at [www.cfsswmi.org](http://www.cfsswmi.org). Checks can be made to CFSSWMI and mailed to PO Box 8789, Benton Harbor, MI 49023. Thank you in advance!

Help us continue to do the work we are trained to do, and to help those who need our help!

**NEWS FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR**



Warren Washington,  
Executive Director

Greetings! As we begin 2011, I wish to thank the many people and businesses who gave so generously to this agency in 2010.

Your help allowed us to fulfill our mission statement to “walk beside children, families and adults of all ages and to support them in maintaining safe, healthy, meaningful lives within the community”. This included the businesses who graciously agreed to partner with the Link to serve as a National Safe Place for youth dealing with crisis situations. National Safe Places help youth in crisis receive help immediately by approaching any public business or location that has a National Safe Place sign posted. There are now 16 National Safe Places in Berrien County.

I am also appreciative of all the businesses and individuals who gave of their time and resources to help make the various special events held throughout last year a tremendous success. This included Pete

and Nancy Racine who were our guest hosts for the 4th Annual Festival of Lights. Businesses and individuals also helped us with a Harvest Party. Plante Moran generously donated a Thanksgiving Dinner for the children and families at the Safe Shelter.

In addition, I recognize the numerous other partnering agencies and businesses giving of their time and resources that allows Child & Family Services of Southwestern Michigan, Inc. the opportunity to continue providing efficient and effective stewardship of community resources to positively impact Southwest Michigan’s most vulnerable populations.

Finally, I am most appreciative of our staff and volunteers who provide the numerous services we offer. They are all truly remarkable people. If you have any idea about the work it takes to provide ongoing care for clients who are vulnerable or in crisis, then you already know that our directors, managers, supervisors and staff do heroic work every day.

We look forward to your continued support as we continue to serve and impact over 1,500 of some of the most vulnerable people within Southwestern Michigan.

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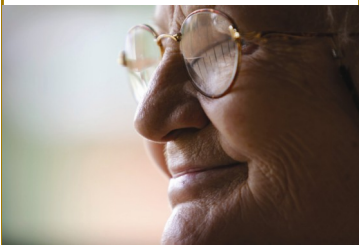


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## EVENTS AND HAPPENINGS

Call 269-925-9500 for information on monthly Domestic Violence Support Groups.

### APRIL

Mattawan Veteran's Expo  
Lakeland Care CME Spring Symposium

### MAY

Safe Shelter Mother's Day Event  
Senior Expo  
Homeless Count for Berrien County

### JUNE

Czar's Fundraiser  
Amazing Road Race

### JULY

Whirlpool Health Fair

### AUGUST

Sensational Senior Day

### SEPTEMBER

Berrien County Health Department at LMC  
DSS Garage Sales

### OCTOBER

Candlelight Vigil and Walk a Mile In Her Shoes

### NOVEMBER

Festival of Lights

## THIS IS WHY WE DO IT!

Client "J" was taken from an abusive environment by the police. He had been chained to a chair, beaten and starved. "J" was 14 years of age. While the Department of Human Services searched for an appropriate relative or foster home for "J" to be placed in, he remained at the Link as a safe haven. "J" was always hungry while he was at the Link. He was given a "pocketful" of food for him to eat at any time he wanted. He was also provided a bedroom, clean clothes, daily showers, and counseling to help him cope with the years of abuse and trauma he had endured. The Link helped "J" to make

the first steps toward a future without violence and abuse.

Another Client relates the following:

"Well, I'll tell you, if it hadn't been for the Link, I am not sure what we would have done. But I reached out somewhere and someone told me to call the Link because they have a crisis center for youth. If it wasn't for getting "P" into the Link and letting him deal with what was going on and starting him off on the right foot, it would have been really, really tough. I don't know how we would have gotten by."