

Catholic Community Services

A Forever Home for Everyone

NEWS RELEASE

For Immediate Release
Contact: Mary Marshall
503-485-5964
mmarshall@ccswv.org

CATHOLIC COMMUNITY SERVICES RECEIVES NATIONAL GRANT AWARD FOR FAMILY LIFELINES

September 12, 2008, Salem, Oregon: Catholic Community Services of the Mid-Willamette Valley and Central Coast (CCS) announced today the award of a matching grant from the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation (RWJF) to support *Family Lifelines*, an innovative program designed to address the multiple needs of highly vulnerable children and their families. “Our dream for this project is to significantly improve the foster care experience, particularly for those children with serious emotional and behavioral problems. Success will mean that fewer children will enter the foster care system, and foster children will be better supported to become healthy adults, able to contribute their gifts to society,” stated Jim Seymour, Executive Director of CCS.

“*Family Lifelines* will provide a coordinated system of services and supports for entire families,” stated Rene DuBoise, Region 3 Manager at Oregon Department of Human Services (DHS), “because behavioral and emotional problems that children have are seldom solely their own, but rather are a part of larger family systems.”

“We nominated Catholic Community Services for this RWJF award because *Family Lifelines* represents extraordinary community collaboration,” said Doug Stamm, CEO of Meyer Memorial Trust, a Family Lifelines funding partner. “A wide range of community interests in Marion County – from businesses to law enforcement to human service agencies and more – all made it a top priority to provide stable homes to some of the most vulnerable children in the county. This project has the potential to transform both lives and systems.” Local funding partners for Family Lifelines also include the Tokarski Family, United Way of the Mid-Willamette Valley, Catholic Charities of Oregon, and Catholic Community Services Foundation.

The Robert Wood Johnson Foundation awarded the \$500,000 matching grant through its Local Funding Partnerships (LFP), one of RWJF’s most competitive annual grantmaking programs. The LFP office received 138 very strong applications for the 2008 awards and only 12 projects (nine percent) were selected.

“We were impressed with the outpouring of passion and energy from the community partners coming together with CCS to create *Family Lifelines*,” stated Pauline M. Seitz, director of Robert Wood Johnson Foundation Local Funding Partnerships. “There is a clear commitment to developing more local homes, so that children who may be separated from family members may remain connected to their schools, friends and neighborhoods in their own county.”

Family Lifelines will serve children in Marion, Polk and Yamhill Counties who struggle with issues such as profound neglect, abuse, out-of-home placements in residential care facilities, juvenile detention and multiple foster care placements. Collaborative Partners include the Oregon

September 12, 2008—Page 1 of 2

James T. Seymour, Executive Director

post | P.O. Box 20400, Salem, Oregon 97307-0400

main office | 3737 Portland Rd., Salem, Oregon

phone | 503.390.2600

web | www.ccsww.org



Catholic Community Services

A Forever Home for Everyone

Department of Human Services Region 3, the Mid-Valley Behavioral Care Network, Willamette Education Service District, Salem-Keizer School District 24J, the Oregon Commission on Children and Families, Chehalem Youth and Family Services, Marion, Polk and Yamhill County Commissions on Children and Families, and a number of involved business and community leaders.

Family Lifelines offers four components of care: *Family Consultants* to help both foster and biological families maintain stable, nurturing homes; *Family Finders* which seeks to locate caring, responsible family members who will form a healthy life-long relationship with their relative children in foster care; *Check and Connect* to engage youth in their studies and school relationships, thereby enhancing their chances of school completion; and, *Family Behavioral Support* which includes a child psychiatrist, behavior support specialist, skill-building mentors, and access to a crisis respite home with skilled foster parents who assist parents and foster parents to reduce and manage difficult behavior and help troubled children thrive.

According to Diane Brandsma, *Family Lifelines* program director, “Research shows that these children’s mental and behavioral health would improve and their self-harm, anti-social, aggressive and law-violating behaviors would diminish, if provided with a secure nurturing home; healthy family member connections; natural supports; school engagement support; and, when needed, the right professional behavioral and psychiatric support.”

Catholic Community Services is well known for its innovative *Forever Home* concept “Community Homes for Children,” which assures children in long-term foster care a permanent family-style home for as long as they need it. CCS provides fourteen nationally accredited programs to strengthen families; facilitate independent living for adults with developmental disabilities and youth aging out of foster care; and, family-like homes for those needing long term care, including eight homes for adults with developmental disabilities, and four homes for children in long-term foster care. For more information, visit www.ccsww.org.

The Robert Wood Johnson Foundation focuses on the pressing health and health care issues facing our country. As the nation's largest philanthropy devoted exclusively to improving the health and health care of all Americans, the Foundation works with a diverse group of organizations and individuals to identify solutions and achieve comprehensive, meaningful and timely change. For more than 35 years the Foundation has brought experience, commitment, and a rigorous, balanced approach to the problems that affect the health and health care of those it serves. When it comes to helping Americans lead healthier lives and get the care they need, the Foundation expects to make a difference in your lifetime. For more information, visit www.rwjf.org.

For information about *Family Lifelines* or other programs at Catholic Community Services, please contact Wendy Jamerson at 503-485-5981 or wjamerson@ccsww.org.

September 12, 2008—Page 2 of 2

James T. Seymour, Executive Director

post | P.O. Box 20400, Salem, Oregon 97307-0400

main office | 3737 Portland Rd., Salem, Oregon

phone | 503.390.2600

web | www.ccsww.org

