

THE PROVIDER

FAMILY CONTINUITY, INC.

Agency provides unique blend of vital services

During the 1970s and 80s, Massachusetts became one of the first states to deinstitutionalize its juvenile justice, mental health, mental retardation and other human service systems. But the lack of effective community alternatives soon became apparent with the increase of homeless people with mental illness and judges shifting youth cases lingering in juvenile court into the adult system. Clearly a new system of care had to emerge. Family Continuity has attempted to answer this need. Today it provides a full range of community-based services that include:

Outpatient Mental Health Services — The agency operates mental health outreach clinics providing a range of mental health treatment and assessment services throughout eastern Massachusetts and a range of services for children, adolescents and adults.

Specialty services include ADD/ADHD, anger management, anxiety, behavioral problems, depression, eating disorders, loss and grief counseling, marital conflict, physical, emotional and sexual abuse, and trauma.

Home-based Services — A team of family support specialists use a client-centered approach in its home-based services. They evaluate the home situation and provide stabilization, crisis intervention and community-based case management out of all of the agency's site offices. These services, tailored to each individual's or family's unique needs, vary in intensity and emphasis and are available 24 hours-a-day, 7 days-a-week, with attention to bilingual and bicultural



Family Continuity team members share success stories and discuss new options to help families during one of the agency's team days.

needs.

Community-based and Wraparound Services — Family Continuity offers community-based and wraparound services to families and children with significant emotional issues. A team of experienced and knowledgeable professionals develop these services in a family-driven process and partner effectively with other community groups and agencies to provide access to flexible funding and innovative services. It also works with community partners to connect families to transportation and childcare so they can access more traditional services.

Residential Services — Family Continuity offers the most appropriate and least restrictive community residential services for mentally disabled adults at Larry Doughty House in Hyannis and Caris in Hamilton and Wenham. It tailors the services to meet the client's goals and objectives in order to promote the integration of the individual within their

family and community. The agency's residential care system incorporates creative programming, a team concept, respect for consumer integrity and a focus on the client's strengths. It also works with youth transitioning to independence through its SAIL program in Beverly.

Acute and Emergency Services — Family Continuity provides a full range of acute emergency services through its Crisis Response Team and Crisis Stabilization Unit in Plymouth to assist individuals in managing life crises. Staff members help clients work through the crises and develop a new coping strategy to manage his or her current stress. The agency utilizes these acute services as a unique treatment opportunity to effect lasting therapeutic change in an individual and not simply as an effort to manage symptoms and behaviors until the next crisis in the cycle.

Executive Director

Earl "Skip" Stuck, LICSW, has served as the executive director of Family Continuity, Inc. since June 2006. Nationally-known for his passion and commitment to vulnerable children, youths and families, Stuck brought more than 40 years of experience to his job.



Stuck undertook the reorganization of the agency's finance and operating procedures, cutting budgets, resizing programs and implementing administrative, personnel and budgeting standards. These early decisions helped the agency affirm its leadership position, gain recognition for program excellence, build morale, recruit and retain the finest staff and support families with more creative and effective services.

"Deeper, not Wider" came to mean not only providing family support services under a single contract with the Department of Social Services, but also developing and modifying services to support families with disabled and elderly members as well. It offered its support services in schools, Department of Youth Services' facilities, church basements, wherever they were needed in the community.

A licensed clinical social worker, Stuck received his bachelor's of arts degree from the University of Massachusetts, Amherst and earned his master's of arts degree in psychology and counseling from Assumption College, Worcester. Before joining Family Continuity, he worked for the Child Welfare League of America.

About the Agency

Family Continuity, Inc., founded in 1982 and incorporated in 1985, works to create a culture where working in partnership with families is the rule, not the exception.

Family is at the center of everything the agency does, and staff members "support family success in every community" where they work. The

agency's first state contract was with the Department of Social Services, and it was the first of state and federal "family preservation" contracts that came to be known as "family continuity" programs, after this agency.

Family Continuity has made its reputation working with "difficult to serve" families through a combina-

tion of outreach and individualized family-focused services. The agency flourished, creating new models and initiatives, each time bringing its family-centered approach into the program design. It added wrap-around and flexible supports, crisis intervention, transitional housing and mental health services. It now offers a broad array of

services through contracts with Departments Mental Health, Mental Retardation and Social Services, as well as third-party payers.

Over the last 18 months, Family Continuity has undergone a restructuring, and it currently is focusing on providing more in-depth services to meet family needs more creatively and effectively.

Today, the agency has an operating budget of around \$14 million, employs 300 people and serves over 5000 families in 19 programs throughout the state with "hub" offices in Lawrence, Beverly, Whitinsville, Plymouth and Hyannis.