June 9th marked our 10th Annual Charity Golf Invitational and we are happy to announce it was a huge success. Thanks to our generous sponsors and participants, we raised over $88,000!

Kicking off the day, Rene Rancourt, singer at the Boston Bruins’ games, greeted the golfers as they arrived and taking pictures with them wearing his Stanley Cup ring. Rene also gave his very powerful and unique rendition of the National Anthem prior to tee time.

Special guests from our Big Brothers Big Sisters program included Big Brother Jack and his “Little”, Nigel, as well as Big Sister Michaela and her “Little”, Leann. Jack shared his experience as a mentor and encouraged everyone to become a mentor and Nigel expressed his gratefulness for Jack. Child & Family’s Board President Anthony Cordeiro and CEO Anne Sampaio presented the “Bigs” and “Littles” with a check in the amount of $20,000 to help children in Greater New Bedford find mentors.

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Parent Cafés

Parent Cafés is an ongoing program run by Child & Family Services in partnership with the United Neighbors Community Resource Center.

Parent Cafés are evening meetings that are held in the Fall River Public Schools to bring parents and children in the community together to establish a safe place where the parents can communicate their feelings about parenting. “The goal is to bridge the gap between the schools right now,” said Wendy Botelho, Clinical Team Leader at Child & Family Services Fall River and facilitator of the Parent Cafés. The participants are parents from the community as well as teachers and principals of the school that come to the meetings as parents rather than an authority figure.

“These groups are fun and interactive and it’s great to listen to the parents speak so freely about the struggles of parenting,” said Ms. Botelho. “I am re-invigorated to be a parent after Parent Cafés.”

In the meetings, dinner is served and children are brought into a separate area so the parents can communicate. The program aims to provide a basic understanding of the 5 protective factors which are: parent resilience, knowledge of parenting and child development, social emotional competence of children, social connections, and concrete support in times of need. By bringing families in the community together, parents are able to explore the challenges of parenting and learn from each other’s strengths.

On average, about 40-60 people attend a session. “We find that a group of about 60-70 parents is usually a great working number and that the groups work well,” said Ms. Botelho. “Currently this is our largest forum for outreach with facilitators from all of our Fall River programs. Our relationship with the schools have strengthened and flourished with our outreach and engagement with district activities. We’re hoping to have extra funding to have a larger impact.”

Big Brother For Life

Governor Charlie Baker receives “Excellence in Mentoring” Award.

Charlie Baker, the Governor of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, speaks from experience.

Accepting the 2015 “Excellence in Mentoring” Award at the Big Brothers Big Sisters of Massachusetts Bay annual “Big of the Year” gala on Thursday, May 14, Baker delightfully recalls the impact mentoring has had on his life, highlighting the many rewards of the program that he’s shared with his now not so Little Brother John.

“If I had to pick the single biggest thing I think Big Brothers Big Sisters does for kids, is that it gives them a sense there’s somebody out there, who is not a blood relative, who is totally invested in them, who will be there for them, who will root for them, and who will help them succeed.”

-Big Brothers Big Sisters of Massachusetts Bay
Gail Perry Above & Beyond Award

In the spring of 2013, we lost a valuable and irreplaceable member of the CFS family. Gail Perry worked at the agency for over 25 years and truly exemplified our mission statement throughout her time with us. She came to work every day wanting to make a positive difference in not only the lives of her own clients but in everyone she came in contact with.

For those of us who had the honor of working closely with Gail, we were always humbled by her generosity and positive outlook on life.

This award is given annually in her memory to a CFS employee nominated by his/her co-workers.

This year we’d like to congratulate Bonnie Sickorez on being the recipient of the 2015 Gail Perry Award.

watch the video of the nominees...
If you are unable to attend an event or volunteer your time but would still like to make a contribution, please call Susan Remy at 508-742-1032.