HOPE & GUIDANCE
for a better future
mission
Applewood Centers fosters solutions for children, youth and families.

vision
Applewood Centers is a leader in improving the lives of children in Ohio by providing high quality behavioral healthcare and out-of-home services for children and their families.

Our commitment is to:

- Deliver high quality, results focused programs and services
- Ensure the agency’s long-term economic viability
- Develop a diverse team of skilled professionals
- Build on over 175 years of excellence in service
- Serve a diverse population reflective of our community
- Monitor and ensure desired outcomes for children
- Employ training and technology to best support excellent service
- Embrace our core values in all we do.
Dear friends:

Despite the continued economic challenges of the past year, Applewood saw positive changes that we believe strengthen our ability to serve those most at-risk in our community. The reality is that there continues to be dwindling resources to further our mission – but we can either allow this fact to limit what we do, or we can work smarter, make the difficult changes, become more innovative, and strive harder than ever to develop and implement programs that truly help children and families. We are committed to doing the latter.

Over the past year Applewood renovated its residential cottages on the Jones Campus and successfully relocated its most fragile client population from an outdated living environment on the Children’s Aid Society Campus to a modern, new, safe home. Dynamic clinical leadership revamped the services, and energetic community outreach staff spread the word, resulting in more children being served, and allowing us to expand services to youth up to age 18.

Building on the success of Applewood’s Eleanor Gerson High School, the agency launched the Gerson West Middle School to serve a younger population with mental health issues in need of an alternative educational program. At the same time, therapeutic after school and weekend programs were developed to serve those children that need intensive group treatment in order to learn new ways of behaving and relating to the world. These groups will continue into the summer to provide uninterrupted care for children with serious issues.

And, in these difficult times, Applewood’s generous supporters came through in a mighty way. The 2009 Fore Kids Golf Classic and the year-end annual fund drive brought needed dollars to the agency. Grants from funders such as the Cleveland Foundation and the Fred A. Lennon Charitable Trust allowed for improved technology and computer equipment. The generosity of many individuals and companies helped make the annual Holiday Lights gift drive one of the best ever by providing toys, clothes and supplies to children in Applewood’s care.

Everything tells us that the journey is going to be difficult for some time. Applewood will continue, however, to build on its successes to ensure that it will be here for a community that has grown to depend on it – for over 175 years.

Thank you for your continued support of Applewood Centers and the children and families we serve. Now, more than ever, that support truly makes a difference.

Very truly yours,

Dan A. Bragg
Chair, Board of Directors

Melanie K. Falls, LISW-S, LICDC
Executive Director
We’ve been thrilled with the success and joy that our child has found at his new school, Gerson West. After years of school anxiety and falling further behind academically, he comes home every day excited about the new skills he is learning.

Justin’s behavior and energy levels vary – the staff at Gerson understand the importance of meeting the emotional needs of the children at any given time. Because his needs are being met, he is able to focus on learning, and is progressing in every subject. Even more importantly, we’ve seen a new confidence and self-esteem that we know is a direct result of the success and support that he is experiencing. So often we as parents ask our children, “How was school today?” After years of hearing “Okay, I guess” or “Terrible,” what a joy it is to hear him say daily, “It was GREAT!”

Gerson Schools are fully accredited programs that are unique in their focus on the individual emotional needs of each student. The high school population is made up of teens who are at risk of dropping out of traditional schools because of internal struggles such as depression, anxiety, suicidal tendencies or extreme stress. Over the years the school has successfully graduated hundreds of youth who may not otherwise have completed high school. Over 95% of Gerson attendees graduate from high school, and 50% go on to higher education.

In talking with parents and teachers about the Gerson High School, the topic of a similar resource for middle school aged children was often raised. It became clear that many of these youth were also struggling in traditional schools because of their emotional and behavioral issues. In the summer of 2009, Applewood responded with the creation of the Gerson West Middle School in space that had become available at Applewood’s Children’s Aid Society Campus on Cleveland’s west side. Middle school enrollees, like the high school population, may also display signs of depression, but more often they are inattentive, highly anxious or hyperactive and act out in ways that prevent them from functioning in a standard school setting. The school addresses these issues through staff trained in special education, and through small class size, individual programming, and therapeutic interventions.

The Gerson School programs operate with the philosophy that each student comes to us with individual needs, therefore the program must be flexible to address many special students and families. Unique components such as community service opportunities for students at both schools and a horticulture program and a sensory room at the middle school, illustrate the commitment to develop creative ways to reach out through a variety of channels to engage and educate youth with diverse challenges.
Students come to the Gerson Schools from any school district in Cuyahoga or Lorain counties, and beyond. Enrollees are accepted throughout the school year.

APPLEWOOD’S NEW THERAPEUTIC AFTER-SCHOOL PROGRAM
Schools like the Gerson Schools do a great deal to help children with significant emotional and behavioral issues during the context of the school day. But the problems of these youth do not end at 3:00 p.m. Monday through Friday. Many of these children continue to need help after school, on the weekends, and during the summer. And support is necessary for parents and caregivers, too. Recognizing this huge need, in 2009 Applewood developed a Therapeutic After-School Program that offers children intensive group treatment that picks up where the school day ends.

Through peer support, the program assists children with skill development in anger management, impulse control, problem solving, coping, conflict resolution, and goal setting. Led by therapists and counselors, the group process provides children with opportunities to share their thoughts and feelings, and to learn skills that will enable them to be more successful.

Transportation is provided from school or home, and children receive a healthy, nutritious meal each day.

The After School Program is just another way that Applewood Centers is striving to be responsive to the needs of young clients and their families, especially during difficult economic times when stressors are increased, resources are scarce, and transportation is difficult for so many.

THE ELEANOR GERSON HIGH SCHOOL
A MESSAGE FROM A STUDENT
My name is Josh and I’ve been attending Gerson for almost one year.

I started regular high school like everyone else, and after three full years of failure and depression I was reluctantly allowed to begin a new life at Gerson.

My initial years of high school were, for lack of a better term, “garbage.” I was expelled freshman year for pulling the fire alarm and suspended numerous times. I failed at least a dozen classes and never really got into the swing of things. Classes weren’t adapted or at all changed to adapt to my needs. I just could not succeed.

Throughout the entire time that I was at my standard school I was visiting a therapist regularly, and he continually mentioned a great school called Eleanor Gerson. I was afraid of losing friends and afraid I would be rejected at the new school, so I told my parents to keep me where I was, but they both knew that Gerson was the place for me. My mom fought hard for me to be able to attend this school, and she never gave up on me. Same with my father who never stopped supporting me in life. I was finally persuaded by my therapist and my parents to try out this new school.

The first day I shadowed, I was following Sam around and from the moment I met him I knew he was a great kid. He showed me the ropes and introduced me to new people. I came to realize that this school is more than just a school, it’s my savior. I went from all Fs and detentions to As and pats on the back.

Being here has shown me that regardless of how low you feel, a few smiling faces and some support can change your life. I’m so thankful towards Thea and the rest of the fantastic staff here and I hope you know that it’s because of you that I’m the happiest I’ve ever been.

Name and image have been changed to protect privacy.
The Eleanor Gerson High School is located at 1320 Sumner Avenue, Cleveland 44115.
For more information call (216) 861-6015.
Services

Behavioral Health Services
- Counseling
- Psychiatry Services
- After School Programs
- School Based Services
- Early Childhood Mental Health
- Special Needs Child Care Consultation
- Community Psychiatric Supportive Treatment
- Multisystemic Therapy

Residential Treatment
- Children’s Aid Society Latency Treatment Unit – for children ages 6 to 12
- Apple Blossom For Girls – a secure unit for adolescent females, ages 11 to 18
- Orchard For Boys – a secure unit for adolescent males, ages 11 to 18
- Alcohol and Drug Treatment
- Partial Hospitalization

Foster Care & Adoption

Gerson School Programs
- Eleanor Gerson High School
- Gerson West Middle School

Bilingual Services

Affiliations
Alcohol, Drug Addiction and Mental Health Services Board of Cuyahoga County
Alliance of Child Caring Service Providers
American Psychological Association
Child Welfare League of America
Council on Accreditation
Lorain County Board of Mental Health
National Alliance on Mental Illness
Ohio Council of Behavioral Health & Family Service Providers
Ohio Departments of Education, Mental Health, and Job and Family Services
United Way Services of Greater Cleveland
Voices for Ohio’s Children
Wingspan Care Group

The Year in Review

2009 accomplishments

- Successfully completed Applewood’s affiliation with Wingspan Care Group. All administrative support functions were integrated with Wingspan allowing Applewood to focus on its mission of direct service delivery. In the first complete year of the affiliation, Applewood’s administrative costs were reduced by 4%, a savings of approximately $700,000.

- Applewood’s residential treatment program was relocated from outdated cottages on the Children’s Aid Society Campus to newly renovated cottages on the Jones Campus. Three residential treatment programs: Orchard for Boys; Apple Blossom for Girls; and the Children’s Aid Society Latency Treatment Unit were revised and have a total capacity to serve 30 at-risk children.

- Applewood has significantly increased its presence in Lorain County schools by 50%, growing from 26 to 39 schools. In addition, the agency has therapists providing services in 37 schools in Cuyahoga County.

- The Gerson West Middle School was launched at the Children’s Aid Society Campus to serve a middle school aged population. Students served have behavioral and emotional issues that make it difficult for them to learn and succeed in a traditional school setting. The new school builds on the success of Applewood’s Eleanor Gerson High School.

- A new Therapeutic After-School program was developed to serve the needs of children with significant emotional and behavioral problems after school, on weekends, and over the summer. Services are offered in both Cuyahoga and Lorain counties.

- The agency welcomed new Board Members Jamie Cole, Peter Bolbach, and William Persell.

- Through the generosity of the Cleveland Foundation, Wingspan received a $200,000 grant to provide technology updates, a large portion of which benefited Applewood Centers.

- The Eleanor Gerson High School was awarded a generous challenge grant from the Fred A. Lennon Charitable Trust. Applewood was able to raise dollars to match the $10,000 grant, resulting in a total of $20,000 in new computers for the school.

- The 21st Annual Fore Kids Golf Classic was held on June 15, 2009, and raised over $80,000 for the agency.

- Through the generosity of many individuals and organizations in the community, Applewood’s Holiday Lights project brought in gifts and essentials for children and youth in the agency’s residential treatment and foster care programs.
APPLEWOOD CENTERS financials

OPERATING FUND FISCAL YEAR 2009
JULY 1, 2008 – JUNE 30, 2009

EXPENSES BY TYPE
- Salary / Benefits 59.00%
- Depreciation / Equipment 6.00%
- Development 2.00%
- Occupancy 9.00%
- Professional Fees 24.00%

EXPENSES BY PROGRAM
- General / Administrative / Fundraising 16.21%
- Education / Prevention 3.87%
- Foster Care / Adoption 6.04%
- Residential / Group Services 23.52%
- Community Services 50.36%
The following individuals, corporations and foundations contributed to Applewood Centers between July 1, 2008, and June 30, 2009. Thank you for your support and trust as we help children, youth and families manage life's challenges. We make every effort to ensure that donors' names and contributions are reported accurately. If you believe we have made an error, please accept our apology and call the Development Office at (216) 320-8512 and we will be happy to make a correction in our records.

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