

# “Care Connection”

## Coordinated Family Care

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## Meet A Board of Trustee

### Bill Schnitzerling

A Scientist, Outdoors Fanatic, Husband, Father and a CFC Board Member - Bill Schnitzerling wears many hats in his life and candidly shares some insight into one aspect, his experience as a parent of a youth involved with Coordinated Family Care (CFC). Through struggles and overcoming difficult times, parenting proves to be one of the most challenging yet gratifying roles of all.

Bill first became involved with CFC when his son, Mike, was referred to the agency in 2006. After his son was discharged, Bill was inspired to continue working with CFC in a different capacity. He believed in the agency that had helped his family through a very difficult period and now wished to contribute in any way he could towards helping others in similar situations. Bill has been a member of the CFC Board of Trustees since May of 2009. His input and participation on the Board is truly invaluable, as his voice echoes the thoughts and concerns of many other CFC families.

As a scientist of 27 years, Bill was accustomed to rigid and concise formulas for problem solving. However, family dynamics were a bit more complex. Bill and his wife, found themselves living in a very tense household. Conflicts and disagreements became a regular occurrence. Their relationship with their son started deteriorating quickly as he started exhibiting violent behavior towards them. Feeling helpless and at a loss, they started working with Melissa B. (CFC Care Manager).

Bill recalls feeling as though he was floating in the sea by himself; his mind kept racing throughout the initial processes. Aspirations of having the perfect child, like many parents, were quickly replaced with the reality they were facing. Their child had a mental health diagnosis. The Care Manager took ample time to explain to the family all the options that were available to them. She reasserted that they were not the only ones going through this. Her calming influence and ability to be a liaison between Mike and his parents provided the dialogue they desperately needed to start communicating in a positive manner. The care manager was able to gain the youth's trust and became his sounding board. She was sympathetic and patient with all parties. The Care Manager, family and other team members put a plan in place to address all concerns and issues. She held all members of the family team accountable, embedding the idea that everyone had to be invested in order for the plan to work.

### Bill's Advice Corner

#### To Youth

- You can trust your Care Manager. If you can't talk to your parents/caregivers, talk to your Care Manager
- You have tremendous potential, believe in yourself.

#### To Parents/Caretakers

- Don't take things personally.
- Don't be embarrassed if your child has a mental health diagnosis, love them as they are and seek the services they need.
- Focus on the end gain.
- You will get through it... trust in that truth!

#### To Care Managers

- Have patience with youth but also with parents / caretakers. They may feel overwhelmed with the entire process
- Reassure the families you serve, that they will work through this and that they are not the only ones experiencing these difficulties.
- Stress the importance of spreading the responsibility among all parties, everyone needs to be accountable.

[Meet A Trustee]  
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## A Story to Celebrate!!!

Written by: Jessica Morello  
Lead Care Manager

CFC would like to take a moment to recognize the Y. family on their accomplishments and continued success in meeting their family vision!! Their story is truly an example of using the wraparound model. As their care manager, I am proud to acknowledge and share their story with the rest of the CFC community.....

Timothy Y. (youth) and his family came to CFC in November 2008 with many providers in the home. Their feelings towards another case manager were not hopeful and they doubted the role of CMO involvement. After exhausting many community resources, Timothy was admitted to an OOH placement; St. Peter's Village in March 2009. Timothy and his clinician worked extremely hard to understand his feelings of anger and developed alternative coping skills. With strong family involvement, Timothy and his family began reconnecting and opening the lines of communication with one another. Family sessions and visits were scheduled and home passes began. Determined to have Tim return home, a great amount of effort was put into family and individual therapy. Once discharged from St Peter's RTC in July 2010; in home therapy began.

The focus of therapy was on adjustment and continued communication within the home. Tim should be commended for his ability to transition from an Out of Home program back home in which there were many changes that occurred. He continues to redefine himself and use the skills he learned while in placement. Tim attended summer school sessions and drastically improved his grades. He returned to his school district and now attends high school with his community and previous friends. Sports continue to serve as a motivator for Tim to attend school and develop relationships with peers. As time progressed, the family was able to utilize their informal supports to obtain a part-time job for Timothy at his aunt's restaurant. Tim enjoys his job and continues to take pride in his work! Through consistent family involvement, this family was able to make the changes needed to reach their vision. Tim and his family have been successfully linked to Catholic Charities for more long term outpatient therapy. We hope that the family continues to utilize their strengths and grow stronger as a family. Congratulations... Y. Family on your success and discharge from the CMO!!

### **A family applauds CFC, as we assist them to reach their vision!**

#### **Tim & Elaine (Successfully transitioned from CFC 2011)**

"Through thick, thin, and everything in between..." Is how Tim and his mom describe the dedication and commitment Jessica Morello has displayed while working with their family for the past 2 years. Tim goes on to say that

"Jessica, my Care Manager, motivated and supported me to do the things I needed to do even though I did not want to do them." The family's sentiment towards Jessica is one of great gratitude for being available when they needed her most. Both Tim and his Mother also credit their Care Manager for listening to them even when they needed to discuss things that were very personal but because of her "a big difference is noticed within their family and for the better." Jessica Morello is a Lead Care Manager with CFC for over 2 ½ years. She has provided intensive care management

services to many families as they are referred to CFC wanting to receive help. A Formal congratulations is in order to Jessica, she plays a critical role in the lives of others in need of assistance, and she is appreciated and applauded by the families she serves. Job well done!

### **Meet A Trustee [cont'd]**

Bill realized that while their son had a mental health diagnosis, there was no reason to feel embarrassed about it. As soon as they got over that hurdle, things started to become easier. Mike started receiving the services he needed and little by little they pushed through; they focused on the end gain and eventually got through it.

Today, Bill and Mike enjoy fishing and camping trips together. Mike has even taken on the task of researching and finding hotels for their stay. This activity has brought them closer together. Bill is very proud of his son and admires his resolve to build himself up. Mike is currently enrolled at Middlesex County College and continues to stay focused. Through good and trying times, they have an unwavering support of each other.

### **C O N T A C T U S !**

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**Remember— to make a referral contact Perform Care at:**  
1-877-652-7624