



For Immediate Release

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Agencies Unite To Streamline Services for Children and Families in Need

December 14, 2009 - Greensboro, N.C. – Children’s Home Society of North Carolina (CHS), Family Life Council (FLC) of Greensboro, and Youth Homes Inc. (YHI) of Charlotte are merging into a single organization. Through the new merged entity, families will be able to access a wealth of child welfare services ranging from parenting education to family preservation to foster care and adoption. Children’s Home Society will be the surviving legal entity, with FLC and YHI operating as divisions of CHS.

“We believe this merger with Youth Homes and Family Life Council holds the most potential in pursuing our shared goals for the benefit of children and families,” said Ken Tutterow, CEO and President of CHS. “Together, the partnership will offer an effective array of services for children, youth, and families through its existing programs, and combine our individual expertise and allow for the development of new, innovative programming.”

Families in search of child welfare services often have to network with multiple private agencies to secure all the services they require. Juggling caseworkers, negotiating appointments, and finding trusted resources can add to the stress overwhelmed families feel on a daily basis, and put them at further risk of negative outcomes. State agencies are also often overwhelmed with navigating the realm of services available from private nonprofit agencies and piecing together services that are not integrated. The merged entity will allow for faster, more efficient navigation of high quality services that will be of benefit to individuals and state agencies alike.

Currently, all three agencies are respected providers of varied, yet complimentary, programs and services reaching over 12,000 clients annually. FLC is highly regarded for its innovative education and prevention programs, providing a wealth of parenting education curriculum and teen pregnancy prevention programs. YHI has a strong record of providing services that promote safety and stability for children and families through foster care and family preservation for at-risk populations. CHS brings expertise in permanency and permanency support through a long history of adoption services, foster care, and extensive family support interventions.

“This partnership is not one born of financial necessity or to eliminate duplication of services,” said Rebecca Starnes, Director of FLC. “Along with expanded services and quality assurance systems, the merger will provide enhanced administrative capabilities, the ability to expand

programs/services geographically, and the chance to create the most effective program structure led by an excellent and experienced staff.”

A major benefit of the merger is the ability for the agencies to have more in-depth quality assurance systems to evaluate services and therapeutic interventions. Most nonprofits do not have available staff resources or monetary support to maintain a continuous improvement system that can consistently produce the desired results. The larger scale of the combined organizations will allow for investment in additional staff and dollars into the quality assurance system, resulting in better outcomes for children and families, expanded use of evidence-based and best practices, and the ability to better meet the needs of state agencies and other community stakeholders.

“At the end of the day, we believe we will have constructed one of the most comprehensive and seamless child welfare continuums in the state. Rather than looking to one agency for prevention, one agency for therapeutic interventions, and another agency for permanency planning, families will be able to receive all of these services from one provider. Families will substantially benefit from this partnership and we are very excited about all the future holds for this partnership,” said Frank Crawford, Executive Director/CEO of YHI.

Diversified services are critical for agencies serving children and families. With growing financial challenges, increased parental stress, and a greater demand for parental support and education, all three agencies will greatly benefit from diversifying existing services to benefit the growing needs of our clients. The merged agency will better leverage existing resources and have an increased ability to meet the needs of the state child welfare system and especially the needs of thousands of children and families seeking services each year.

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Every day, YHI provides help, hope, and healing so children and families can achieve self-sufficiency and a promising future. YHI is a nationally COA-accredited, private nonprofit agency that has been providing supportive social services to children and families in Charlotte and Mecklenburg County since 1975. As part of its mission of “*Building Promising Futures for Children and Their Families*,” YHI provides foster care, in-home family preservation, and delinquency prevention services to children and families in crisis. For more information, please visit www.youthhomesinc.org or contact Mary Ellen Randall at 704-943-9647.

FLC has a strong history in Guilford County of providing prevention-focused services to parents and youth. Begun in 1968 with a focus of providing parenting education, FLC has created and expanded programs to meet more specific family needs. They were the first organization in NC to develop and provide teen parenting programs, the first in NC to develop a divorce education program and one of the first in the nation to create and implement a male responsibility, teen pregnancy prevention program (Wise Guys). For more information, please visit www.flcgo.com or contact Rebecca Starnes at 336-333-6890.

CHS is a statewide, non-profit, non-sectarian private adoption and foster care agency serving children in families in North Carolina for over 100 years. CHS is licensed by the NC Department of Health and Human Services - Division of Social Services. CHS is accredited by the Council on Accreditation of Services for Families and Children. CHS is a member of the Child Welfare League of America, Children and Family Services Association of North Carolina, and Children’s Home Society of America. For more information on CHS, please visit www.chsnc.org or contact Becky Wrisley at 336-274-1538.