



Assuring children with serious emotional and behavioral issues a chance for success at home, at school and in the community.

# Catholic Community Services

A Forever Home for Everyone

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## What is Family Lifelines?

Family Lifelines is an integrated system of care designed to offer children and youth with serious emotional and behavioral issues a chance to succeed at home, at school and in the community.

## Who will it help?

Family Lifelines will support children and youth from Marion, Polk and Yamhill Counties who, due to severe emotional and behavioral problems, are struggling to be successful at home, at school and in the community.

Research shows that these children's mental and behavioral health would improve and their self-harm, anti-social, aggressive, and law-violating behaviors would diminish, if provided with a stable nurturing home; healthy family member connections; school engagement support; and the right professional behavioral and psychiatric support.

## The Dream

The Family Lifelines dream is to transform foster care for children, particularly those with serious emotional and behavioral problems.

If our dream comes true, this program will reduce the number of places a foster child must live before they find a "Forever Home." Foster children will be reconnected with healthy family members. Family Lifelines youth will be supported to engage in and complete school.

Ultimately, fewer children will need foster care. We will help biological parents keep their children who are at risk for going into foster care, and support foster children to become healthy adults able to contribute their gifts to society.

## Who will be served?

Over the first three-year period, this program is intended to serve 100 children:

- 50 children in long-term foster care who live in CCS Community Homes for Children
- 10 children who live in DHS long-term foster care
- 25 children who live in out-of-county residential programs
- 15 children who live in their biological homes but are at risk of being placed in foster care due to their family's inability to cope with their behavior problems

Youth and families will access Family Lifelines services through referral by DHS, WESD, Salem-Keizer Schools, or CCS programs.



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### Lead Partner, Fiscal Agent & Program Administrator

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### Funding Partners:

The Robert Wood Johnson  
Foundation  
Local Funding Partnerships  
Catholic Charities of Oregon  
Catholic Community Services  
Foundation  
Meyer Memorial Trust  
The Tokarski Family  
United Way  
of the Mid-Willamette Valley

### Collaborative Partners

Catholic Community Services  
Foundation  
Chehalem Youth &  
Family Services  
Marion County  
Children & Families Commission  
Mid-Valley Behavioral  
Care Network  
Oregon Commission  
on Children & Families  
Oregon Department  
of Human Services  
Salem-Keizer School District  
24-J  
United Way of the  
Mid-Willamette Valley  
Willamette Education  
Service District  
Yamhill County  
Children & Families Commission

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## The Urgent Need for Family Lifelines

The repeated disruption in the lives and relationships of children in foster care and in out-of-county residential placements leads to lifelong issues. Studies show that children who spend their early years in foster care are more likely to drop out of school, become parents at a young age, enter the juvenile justice system, become homeless or incarcerated as an adult and/or become addicted to drugs. A single change in caseworkers reduced the likelihood of permanency by 52 percent. In 2006, nearly 64 percent of the children who lived in foster care for over two years had lived in more than two foster homes.

**Children in Foster Care and Long-Term Foster Care:** More than 1,300 children are in foster care in Marion, Polk and Yamhill Counties. The Oregon Department of Human Services (DHS) estimates that 230 of them can never go home again and need long-term foster care. Currently, only 50 have a long-term placement, including 20 who live in CCS Community Homes for Children.

**Children in Residential Treatment.** An estimated 100 Marion, Polk and Yamhill County children live in residential treatment facilities outside of their home counties. Many of these children have already experienced multiple placements, often leaving them feeling abandoned, lonely and desperate for stability and family connections.

**Children at risk of entering Foster Care.** Up to 15% of children entering foster care are “voluntarily” placed by parents who want to keep their children at home but have become exhausted and overwhelmed by their children’s emotional and behavioral problems. These fragile families desperately need support to stay together.



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Recently, a young girl in Polk County foster care bounced 13 times between residential facilities and foster homes - within a matter of months.

At certain points, this child did not even have the time to unpack her clothing, although all of her possessions fit inside a single garbage bag.

The Family Lifelines dream is to transform the life experience for children such as this.

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## The difference Family Lifelines will make

Family Lifelines organizes services to support the family, so that they are primary in the children's lives, rather than the service system. Our philosophy of service includes an emphasis on self-determination and family-based programs. Therefore, we support families and the people who are part of them to gain control over the selection and management of services that meet their needs. Children and their families served are offered four coordinated care components:

*Family Consultants* helps both foster and biological families to maintain stable, nurturing homes using research-based strategies of the "Girls and Boys Town Family Home Model". Specific services:

- In-home observation & parenting skills training
- Research-based parenting curriculum
- 24/7 on-call parenting support
- Multi-faceted wrap-around services

*Family Finders* is for foster children who have lost contact with their families. Their goal is to locate caring, healthy family members who will form a life-long, supportive family relationship with the child. Premises:

- Every child has healthy family members. It's our job to find them
- Children need to experience permanent and loving family relationships
- Relationships with family members are critical, regardless of where children live
- Case planning for foster children is only complete when children have permanent homes

*Check and Connect* is a long-term intervention to promote school engagement and completion. The model continuously assesses levels of engagement and offers timely, individualized intervention focused on supporting a student's educational progress. Objectives & Services:

- Identification with school
- Attendance & classroom participation
- Self-regulated learning
- Academic engagement
- Basic interventions such as weekly mentoring and goal setting
- Facilitate relationships with school and family
- Additional tutoring or intensive services

*Family Behavioral Support Team* includes a child psychiatrist, family consultant, behavior support specialist, skill-building mentors, and a crisis respite home with skilled foster parents, all working together to assist caregivers with the supports they need to reduce and manage difficult behavior and assist the child to thrive.

- Functional behavioral assessments
- Behavioral support services
- 24/7 crisis respite care
- Psychiatric evaluation and medication management
- Skills training and support to maintain youth and home stability



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## Lead Partner & Program Administrator:

**Catholic Community Services** provides 14 COA-accredited programs to help foster and fragile biological families raise their children well, and vulnerable adults to live and thrive as independently as possible. Founded in Salem in 1938, CCS serves 4,000 people annually and employs 250 members of our community. [www.ccsww.org](http://www.ccsww.org)

## Funding Partners:

**Robert Wood Johnson Foundation** awarded \$500,000 in matching funds through its Local Initiative Funding Partnerships program. As the nation's largest philanthropy devoted exclusively to improving the health and health care of all Americans, the Foundation works with a diverse group of organizations and individuals to identify solutions and achieve comprehensive, meaningful and timely change. [www.RWJF.org](http://www.RWJF.org)

The LFP program is one of the most competitive annual grant making programs of the RWJF. The LFP office received 138 very strong applications for the 2008 awards and only 12 projects (nine percent) were selected.

**Meyer Memorial Trust** awarded \$25,000 for a two-year program evaluation of the CCS Community Homes for Children program. The second year of this evaluation will support the evaluation of the first year of the Family Lifelines program. MMT recommended this CCS program to RWJF. [www.mmt.org](http://www.mmt.org)

**Catholic Charities of Oregon:** As a member agency, CCS receives a portion of the funds raised annually through the Catholic Charities Annual Campaign in the CCS seven-county service area. Those funds are ear-marked to support Family Lifelines throughout the first three-years of the program. The expected contribution is \$50,000 per year for a total of \$150,000. [www.CatholicCharitiesOregon.org](http://www.CatholicCharitiesOregon.org)

**Catholic Community Services Foundation** will contribute \$25,000 per year toward funding of the Family Finders component. [www.ccsww.org](http://www.ccsww.org)

**The Tokarski Family** has made a long-term commitment of \$120,000 per year to help support the Family Consultants component. They have demonstrated a long-term interest in improving systems serving children in foster care.

**United Way of the Mid-Willamette Valley** has awarded \$12,500 to support paid mentors for providing behavioral and school support, including Check and Connect, to foster and biological families. [www.uwmwv.org](http://www.uwmwv.org)



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is considered  
a promising model  
by the  
Robert Wood Johnson  
Foundation.

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## Collaborative Partners:

**Business and Community Leaders** - several involved business and community leaders have worked on this program, including providing financial and pro bono support.

**Chehalem Youth and Family Services (CYFS)**—provides COA-accredited Residential Treatment Services to adolescent youth throughout the state of Oregon and has served this population for 37 years. CYFS employs an OIS trainer who will provide training and support to staff and foster families in the Family Lifelines program. [www.cyfs.org](http://www.cyfs.org)

**County Children and Family Commissions**—Yamhill County's Commission funds a Community Support Service operated by CCS in that county. Marion County's Commission has collaborated with CCS in developing the Family Finders program. [www.co.marion.or.us/CFC](http://www.co.marion.or.us/CFC) and [www.co.yamhill.or.us/CCF](http://www.co.yamhill.or.us/CCF)

**Oregon Commission on Children and Families (OCCF)**—promotes positive outcomes for children and families through statewide planning, standards setting and policy development, and dissemination of research-based best practices. CCS collaborates with the state commission on Family Finders. [www.oregon.gov/OCCF](http://www.oregon.gov/OCCF)

**Oregon Department of Human Services Region 3 (DHS)**--the agency responsible for Child Welfare in Oregon. CCS has worked for several years with DHS to develop the Community Homes for Children and funding for the homes' foster parents. [www.oregon.gov/DHS](http://www.oregon.gov/DHS)

**Mid-Valley Behavioral Care Network (MVBCN)**—the regional managed care organization for behavioral health services— funds mental health and addictions services to children in CCS Treatment Foster Care programs and contracts with CCS to provide certain services for children from Marion, Polk and Yamhill counties who are returning to the community following placement in residential treatment programs. [www.mvbcn.org](http://www.mvbcn.org)

**Salem-Keizer School District 24-J** —provides education in elementary, middle and high schools. 24-J collaborates with CCS to offer an in-program school for youth moving back to the school district from out of county placements to help stabilize foster children. [www.salkeiz.k12.or.us](http://www.salkeiz.k12.or.us)

**Willamette Education Service District (WESD)**—provides educational programs and services to rural school districts in Polk, Marion, and Yamhill counties. CCS works with WESD to provide school services for youth during transition from out-of-county residential treatment programs to permanent or treatment foster care settings. [www.wesd.org](http://www.wesd.org)



**Family Lifelines**

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**Contacts:**

Diane Brandsma  
*Program Director*

503-390-2600

dbrandsma@ccswv.org

Wendy Jamerson  
*Grants Coordinator*

503-485-5981

wjamerson@ccswv.org

Mary Marshall  
*Director of*

*Communications*

503-485-5964

mmarshall@ccswv.org

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*location* | 3737 Portland Rd., Salem, OR

*post* | P.O. Box 20400, Salem, OR 97307-0400

*phone* | 503.390.2600 *web* | [www.ccsww.org](http://www.ccsww.org)

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Children and Family Services & Behavioral Health Services

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