



Northern California

# Youth & Family Programs

Serving kids and families in Butte & Shasta County



Eric James, with his daughters Lucia and Stella

## Looking back, looking forward

Assistant Director Eric James discusses the state of the agency

**Looking back what were our greatest challenges and successes for the 2007 year?** One of the greatest challenges of the year was to maintain the quality of our services to families while the agency grew. The new Family Center site and contract in Redding, the ILP Store in Chico, and the completion of our film series about the agency, added new staff, needs for program support, and budget considerations. These challenges also represent significant successes in getting more assistance to more families in Butte and Shasta Counties. Overall staff, foster parents, and volunteers worked collaboratively to assist hundreds of vulnerable families and children in 2007.

**What ways did our foster parents surprise or impress you this year?** Our foster parents impressed me in their usual miraculous fashion. All of the seemingly small things they do to care for and nurture children as well as their tireless, genuine efforts to connect with the children's birth parents deserve our collective applause. On a daily basis, I see our foster parents bring birth parents recent photos of their children to take home when a visit ends, give a child's parent a tooth that came loose, inform birth parents of an upcoming doctor visit or school meeting concerning their child so they can attend along with the foster parent, or simply spend time with birth parents before or after visits discussing the children and getting to know the child's birth parents.

**What are some of the innovative ways we serve children and their families?** The ILP store gives work experience and school credit to foster youth, channels needed items to our families, and serves a collaborative benefit to other local partner agencies. The Relative Locator Program is branching out beyond its previous work targeting Butte County foster youth to strengthen and create new supportive family systems for vulnerable people throughout Butte and Shasta Counties. In Shasta County, we have transformed the Family Center into a more family friendly environment to improve the visitation experience of families.

**How have you seen the generosity of the public impact the children and families we serve?** This has been truly humbling to see. Many individuals and organizations have volunteered their time as they have tutored foster youth, assisted in the running of agency events, and given their time and goodwill freely to Youth & Family Programs. Nearly every day members of our community come forward to donate household or special items to the agency to be passed on to our clients. Community businesses and organizations such as Safeway, Sierra Nevada Brewery, The Discovery Shoppe, Annie Star Quilt Guild, In-N-Out Burger, and many more. Please refer to the next page for list of our major donors.

**Anything else you'd like to add on looking back and looking ahead as an agency?** I would like to express my gratitude to the communities in which we offer our programs. Your support makes a tremendous difference in the lives of the hundreds of families Youth & Family Programs serves every year.



For more information on all our programs visit our website: [www.youthandfamily.info](http://www.youthandfamily.info)

## Our Programs

- ◆ Butte County Family Centered Team Foster Care
- ◆ Shasta County Family Centered Team Foster Care
- ◆ Group Home Care & Transitional Housing
- ◆ Butte & Shasta Independent Living Programs
- ◆ Butte County Emergency Shelter Care
- ◆ Butte County Relative Locator Program
- ◆ Shasta County Family Center and FTM Program
- ◆ Butte County SOFT Program

# Butte ILP Store Moves

New location provides more space to fill a community need



The Butte ILP Store started as just an idea a year ago and has blossomed into a much needed community resource. The store serves as a distribution center for our donations at Youth & Family, as well as, provides valuable work experience to teens. Teens can gain both job experience and school credit through our Independent Living Program.

One teen employee said his favorite parts are greeting customers and getting more experience. We recently moved to a new location to expand. The small shop we had on Mangrove was not enough space for the overwhelming generosity from the community. The store has expanded to serve more than clients at Youth & Family we also serve our community partners such as, Youth for Change, The Torres Shelter, and more. These community partnerships allow the store to serve many underprivileged populations in Chico. Everything from the store is free. Clients can redeem vouchers at the store for clothes, household items, furniture, and much more. Josie Hall, ILP Store Facilitator, said she loves the new location because of all the space and the accessible parking. "We couldn't ask for more," she said "We needed more room to separate the sorting area from the walk-in traffic of clients. Now I can really enjoy merchandising and have more room to show the kids how to display."

### New Location:

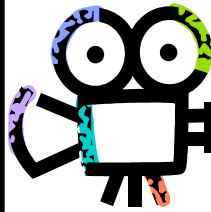
3860 Morrow Lane,  
Suite B  
Chico, CA

### Store Hours:

Mondays 12-6:00pm  
Tuesdays 11-6:00pm  
Thursdays 11-6:00pm

# Agency comes into focus

New video spotlights our families, employees and programs



What do you get when you combine a great idea, a meager budget and a group of film makers from Live Motion Media? The results were surprising. The goal was to develop training tools tailored specifically for our foster parents and employees. "Many of the staff were very nervous in front of the camera,"

said Cooie Grey-Lavin our Recruitment and Donation Coordinator. "Then someone would relax and start talking and we knew we were getting great stuff." When filming had finished and hours of editing were complete we were all impressed with the quality. We knew this was going to be an effective tool but there was a level of professionalism we had not expected. A variety of themes naturally emerged. They weaved all the interviews together to convey our programs and captured the pulse of the agency. We now have a long video for trainings and a short version for community presentations. The idea for a Youth & Family film evolved out of a conversation with a reporter over a year ago in our Anderson office. He wanted to do a TV spotlight on the agency but we knew it was not a good fit because of the sensitive and confidential work we do with families. Then Cooie said "I thought if we do this ourselves it could be sensitive and effective." We all liked the film so much our director decided to develop some parent education films. The parenting film series is still in progress but will be used at all our locations, including at our Redding Visitation Center parenting classes. "The videos will allow participants to have more of a tailored class experience," said Crystal Adams, Family Center Program Manager.

## Thank you to all our donors!

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Anderson Exchange Club  
Anderson Rotary Club



You can do it. We can help.™



Your contributions make our mission possible and we appreciate all you do!

# Fostering Creative Families

Our birth parents and foster parents work together to create lasting bonds for kids



Over the years Youth & Family has practiced a family centered approach to foster care. We have encouraged our foster parents to develop relationships with birth parents. Sometimes these relationships evolve into a co-parenting situation or even mentoring relationship while the children are in care. It is truly fabulous when these bonds last beyond the placement. We

have witnessed over and over again the benefit to a foster parent, birth parent collaboration. Darcie Adams, has been a foster parent for over two years. During that time she bonded with an adorable little girl and her young mom. The girl returned to her mom and will be turning three this month. Darcie is making her a Disney Princess cake for her party and celebrating with the family. Debra Simpson, a seasoned foster parent in Butte County, with three boys from the same family decided that the boys needed to see their grandparents and aunt who lived in Biggs. She initiated contact, gathered together a dinner, the kids and headed to Biggs. What resulted was pretty amazing. She also took the boys dad and step-mom. The older boys had not seen their family since they were toddlers, and the 12 year old had never seen them. They now have regular visits with this arm of the family. Debra realized the importance of the boys being connected to their extended family and having a sense that they were part of a larger family group. Recently a Shasta foster parent related a story about a child who was once placed in her care. She said that the child reunified with her family. After some time the family moved very near to the foster parent. Both sets of parents were elated to learn that they would be living so close. The child knows that he is loved by all the parents in his life. He has been able to spend some time with the foster parent lately. One day while at her house he innocently said, "Remember when I used to be your kid?" The foster parent smiled and said, "Of course I do."

## Donations pave the way for trips

A few dollars can go a long way in expanding an individuals worldview

Every year our programs benefit from the generous donations from our community. Charitable gifts translate into direct ways to help children and their families. The donation fund is set aside to meet special needs of children placed with Youth and Family Programs. Any staff member can request funds for where they identify a need. The fun part is being able to see the funds help with dance lessons, football registration fees and Boy Scout uniforms. These unique experiences help normalize the lives of children in foster care and helps inspire more well-rounded individuals. This year the donation fund has helped make some very special trips happen for teens in our care. These experiences expose kids to new possibilities and expand their view of the world. In Anderson, our social worker, Jerry Gilmer, took a group of teen boys to the Bay Area. They visited the San Francisco Theological Seminary which is over 100 years old. They criss-crossed San Francisco on the Cable Cars and learned how to say "Thank you and have nice night" in Mandarin as they ate in a hidden Chinese Restaurant and had traditional foods like Jellyfish, and Frog Legs. They also visited the Exploratorium, the Golden Gate Bridge, the De Young Museum of Art, the Aquarium of the Bay, and took a trip around the Bay on the Blue and Gold Fleet. Our group home program also works hard every year to expose kids to new experiences from concerts to trips. The teens work at farmers market selling stepping stones to fund some of their summer activities. The donation fund is there to help fill in the gaps and make sure those goals come to fruition. This year they rented a houseboat on Lake Oroville, went to the coast, the Bay Area, skiing, and took a Disneyland trip. "It's so important that kids see what's out there," said Susie Patton, our Group Home Program Manager. "If we want them to reach beyond what they know, we have to show them what's possible."



# Q&A

Lisa Goza

Shasta ILP Program Coordinator

*Shasta ILP's Budding Idea Blossoms*

### How did you develop the garden concept for SILP teens?

I noticed that many of our youth who were emancipating were not able to purchase fresh food due to the cost.

### Where is the garden and how big is it?

The garden is located in Palo Cedro. We are currently gardening on about an acre but we have land donated up to 5 acres.

### What are the benefits to ILP teens?

The youth in care learn about growing their own food and contributing it to youth who have emancipated. They had so much success last year that after they took home fresh vegetables there was enough left to donate to the homeless shelter and the senior emergency food bank. This year the youth will be selling the extra vegetables at the farmer's market which will help them learn job skills.

### What are the most popular items to plant and why?

One of the nice things about the garden is that the youth have expanded their taste in vegetables by working in the garden. Some of the favorites are melons, tomatoes, and peppers. However, through our weekly cooking classes the youth have seemed to learn to enjoy a wide variety of fresh vegetables in herbs from the garden.

### What are your plans long-term for the garden project?

We hope to continue the day to day running of the garden done by our after-care youth. We would also like to expand the area to include a pumpkin patch and chicken coop. We are currently rebuilding our greenhouse that was destroyed in the big storms that hit this winter.

For more info contact:  
lgoza@youthandfamily.info

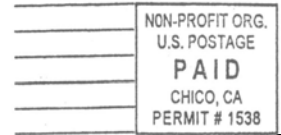
Northern California

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Chico, CA 95928  
Phone: 530-893-1614



**Youth &  
Family**  
Programs

**RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED**



Please notify us by phone, mail, or  
E-mail if you want to be added,  
changed, or taken off our mailing list.

## Kid's Art Prints



We are proud of the art that hangs on our walls. Our kids art has become a signature piece at all Youth & Family sites. Now you can frame it for your own house. Our kids prints are now available for a donation at all Youth and Family locations. Come check out the selection in our art portfolio. All proceeds from our children's original artwork goes to benefit the Youth & Family children. For more information on our kids art please contact Cooie at 530-893-2316 x201 or look for us at the Thursday night Farmers Market in Chico.

### Ways To Help Kids & Families

- Donate funds for dinners and/or parties for foster families
- Gift Packs (hygiene & bedding items)
- Holiday Gifts (birthdays, Christmas, etc.)
- Donate movie tickets or fast food coupons
- Sponsor sporting Events (bowling, skating, etc.)
- Provide tutoring or mentoring
- Donate cultural event tickets

### Ways To Help with Foster Parent Recruitment

- Advertising space on menus, newspapers, newsletters, etc.
- Billboard Space
- Funds to support our activities
- Giveaways featuring our logo spread the word about foster care to your friends and associates

### Ways To Help the Butte ILP Store

- Donate used clothes and shoes
- Donate Household items
- Donate Toys, Books, and more

Yes, I would like to help make a difference!

Enclosed is my tax-deductible donation for:

- \$25    \$50    \$75  
 \$100    \$150    \$200    Other \_\_\_\_\_

If you would like to specify how you would like your donation  
\$\$ to be spent please do so \_\_\_\_\_

Please cut out and remit to:

**Attn:** Donations  
Youth & Family Programs  
2577 California Park Drive

**Tax ID# 68-0027507**

**Questions Call: 530-893-1614**