

Family Preservation System Provides School-based Services

Saturday, December 1, 2007

This article appeared in the Summer 2006 Issue of Samaritan Magazine

CCS Family Preservation Services (FPS) in Vancouver has begun to provide school-based services for high school students, with a home-based component for parents and families.

According to Don Koenig, director of the FPS Vancouver office, the school-based services, provided through a "wraparound" approach, are a first for FPS, Camas School District 150, and the Camas Alternative Program (CAP), an alternative high school where the services will begin.

Earlier this year, Clark County invited FPS to develop the services, which include traditional school-based counseling and therapy. FPS will add home-based family therapy and an array of community and strengths-based therapeutic activities. Three therapists will work closely with students, teachers and families to personalize services to create a service package currently unavailable in Clark County. A "family partner" will have a special role on this treatment team in supporting parents and connecting families to community resources.

The intent of the services is to reach out to students who are struggling with social, cognitive, and/or emotional difficulties through a combination of counseling, coaching and therapeutic activities. The services are designed to help students improve and to enhance academic performance, along with overall social and emotional well-being.

The primary target population for services are students and families that are Medicaid eligible. This fall, the Camas School District will provide additional funding to serve non-Medicaid students that meet the medical necessity criteria. Students may request the services, and families, teachers and the CAP principal may refer students.

Prior to the providing the services, FPS consulted students and families about the types of services that would be helpful for them. Focus and discussion groups and activities that will raise the program's visibility will continue during the summer.

"This is a great opportunity for CCS to collaborate with the Camas School District to offer these new services to the community," Koenig said. "These services by design are flexible and build on students' strengths and interests to hopefully lead to greater success."

The annual renewable contract that FPS has to provide the services is an important opportunity for CCS and FPS, Koenig said. "We expect this wraparound approach to be successful at the Camas Alternative Program and hope it will lead to opportunities with the rest of the school district."