

Inside YCS

A NEWSLETTER
BY AND FOR ALL YCS EMPLOYEES



VOLUME 27 | NOVEMBER 2025

PRESIDENT/CEO
TARA AUGUSTINE

EDITOR-IN-CHIEF
JANIS NICOLOSI-ENDO

ART DIRECTION
BARBARA MAY

INSIDE YCS

IS PRODUCED BY YCS
25 EAST SALEM STREET 3RD FL
HACKENSACK, NJ 07601
YCS.ORG

© 2025 YCS INC.
ALL RIGHTS RESERVED.

MAY NOT BE REPRODUCED
WITHOUT THE WRITTEN
PERMISSION OF YCS.

CONTACT

JANIS NICOLOSI-ENDO
201-678-1312
or jnendo@ycs.org

Cover photo: Pam Pressley and Gianna.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

President's Message	3
Welcome New Employees	4
Employee Scholarship	4
Promotions	5
Work Anniversaries	5
Shoutouts	6-8
Milestones	8
Birthdays	9
Letters of Appreciation	10-11
Highlights	12-18
Agency Updates	19-20
Managers Meeting Bulletin	21-33



President's Message

Dear Colleagues,

It's hard to believe there are only three weeks left until the end of the year. It seems like only yesterday I was sharing our agency's vision for 2025. Now, 11 months later, I am filled with tremendous pride and appreciation for all we have accomplished together.

The way teams across the agency came together to support YCS' unexpected expansion—adding seven new behavioral health residences—speaks to our collective strength. It is a testament to the excellent work happening across all YCS services: schools, treatment homes, community-based programs, and residential care.



Tara Augustine

By the end of the fiscal year, our homes were, and continue to be, operating near full capacity. As a result, the agency is now financially strong. This stability allows us to enhance services and renovate facilities in 2026.

But at the end of the day, what truly matters is the personal victories of our participants and staff. In this issue of Inside YCS, we are introducing a new section called "Letters of Appreciation." I'd like to share two letters of appreciation that were passed to me by program directors—one from a youth preparing to return home, and another from a licensing inspector following a surprise visit to one of our PCH/IDD homes. (Please see pages 10-11.)

This new section will become a regular feature of Inside YCS, so we can continue acknowledging employees across all divisions. As a member of our YCS family, I hope you feel, as I do, that a victory for one of our colleagues is a victory for us all as we dedicate ourselves to this hard-won, transformative work. As the year comes to a close, I hope you are able to spend restorative time with friends and family during the holidays.

I also ask that you continue to be patient, thoughtful, and empathetic with those in your direct care. The holidays can be a stressful and painful time for families facing challenges or for participants who are separated from loved ones.

Thank you for your commitment to YCS and to those we serve.
With warm holiday wishes,

Tara

Welcome New Employees

New Employees and Interns who completed 90 days by November 23, 2025

Allen, Tyrell Residential Assistant DCF-RTC Holley	Brown, Diana A. Shift Supervisor DDD - Davinchi	Gatling, Taylor Personal Assistant DDD-Hilltop	Jones, Annette Shift Supervisor DDD-Blackwood	Mouzakes, Alethea R. Intern DCF-PCH Fisher Hall
Allison, Jennifer Residential Assistant DCF-GH1 IDD Wood Haven	Brown, Makal Residential Assistant DCF-PCH Sicklerville	Giron, Paulina Y. Teacher Aide DOE-George Washington	Jones, Dominique Clinician DCF-PCH BHDD Estell Manor	Preston-Miller, LaMonica Personal Assistant DDD-Pearl
Anthony, Nicholas Teacher Aide DOE-George Washington	Bryant, Latory M. Personal Assistant DDD-EmergCapacity Haledon	Harrigan, Cynthia M. Service Coordinator CBP – Passaic Svc Coord U	Jones, Latia Clinician DCF-PCH Haddon Heights	Starks, Jarvis D. Personal Assistant DDD-Absecon
Bethea, Desjamebre Residential Assistant DCF-PCH Coopers Crossing	DeStefano, Helena Residential Assistant DCF-PCH IDD Camden	Hernandez, Daisy Residential Assistant DCF-PCH Laurie Haven	Lovett, La-Travis Residential Assistant DCF-IRTS Kilbarchan	Sutherland, Tashanna Residential Assistant DCF-PCH Sayre
Bonacci Jr., Edward Per Diem Provider HealthSvc-Behaviorists-S	Dominguez, Andrea Intern DCF-PCH Davis	Hyman, Harry D. Teacher Aide DOE-Sawtelle Learning Ctr	Matthews, Chyanna Clinician DCF-PCH Bright Start	Weaver, Zoe Intern QAPI
Bookman, Rebecca C. Residential Assistant DCF-PCH IDD Camden	Forsythe, Katie L. Teacher of Handicap TOH DOE-Sawtelle Learning Ctr	Jaquez, Valerie Intern DCF-PCH Fisher Hall	Mitchell, Nikusubila Residential Assistant DCF-PCH IDD Lawnridge	White, Shamera T. Personal Assistant DDD-Echohill

Gordon Family Trust Employee Scholarship

There is still time to apply for a scholarship for the spring. Click here.

Promotions

Congratulations!!!

*Your dedication and hard work have truly paid off.
Wishing you all the best in this new chapter of your career at YCG.*



Saunders, Cierra, Shift Supervisor, DCF-PCH Coopers Crossing
Guglielmino, Jordan, Program Director, DCF-PCH Phoenix



Work Anniversaries

Congratulations!!!



20 YEARS

Magarita Perez, Housekeeper, Facilities - N



15 YEARS

Olusola A. Oyefesobi, Personal Assistant, DDD-Pearl



10 YEARS

Kevon Reynolds, Personal Assistant, DDD-Absecon

Michelle Robbins, Clinical Director, Regional Admin - 5502

Alicia S. Brown, Residential Assistant, DCF-PCH Vineland



5 Years

Brianna Concepcion, Personal Assistant, DDD-Echohill

Gabriela Lakhman, Speech CorrectLang SPC, DOE-Sawtelle Learning Ctr

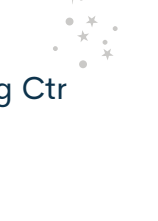
Nigeria Thompson, SRT Behavioral Assist, SRT - N

Cecelia Jones, Residential Assistant, DCF-RTC Holley

Dutrill Reed, Shift Supervisor, DDD-Blackwood

Carmeline Paul, HR Coordinator, Training

Tyanna Wilson, House Manager, DDD-Echohill



Shoutouts

To All Our Amazing Employees!

- ✦ **Anthony Raymond** from our Treatment Homes Program, we are grateful for his outstanding work and dedication. Since July, Anthony has successfully opened three new Treatment Homes, expanding our capacity to support youth with safe, nurturing, and family-based care. His commitment and leadership have played a vital role in strengthening our program and helping us grow.
- ✦ **Bill Waller**, thank you for always being there to provide sound advice, steady guidance, and ongoing encouragement to our team. His leadership helps create a supportive environment where staff feel confident, motivated, and well-equipped to serve our youth. Thank you, Bill, for your continued dedication and the positive impact you bring to our program every day.
- ✦ **Dina Ladolcetta and Dana Tahhan**, Lead Service Coordinators, happy one-year anniversary! You bring our unit joy and guidance, and you are always there when we need you.
- ✦ **Eric, Santos, and Nathaniel** from the Facilities department, thank you for being so quick to respond to our needs at GW school! They built two walls for us, and they look amazing!
- ✦ **Molly Silverman and Karla Santos**, thank you for your creativity, kindness, and dedication to the participants of Parent Linking Program. Your work is not only changing the trajectory of the adolescent parents, but also their babies, who get to experience a more knowledgeable and regulated mami y papi!
- ✦ **Nurse Family Partnership and Parents as Teachers**, our home visiting programs, congratulations on a successful site visit from DCF. Your hard work and commitment to serving our families showed and we are thankful.
- ✦ **Rayletta Garrison**, thank you for your tremendous support in helping us strengthen the Treatment Home Program. Your ongoing guidance, leadership, and encouragement have been invaluable. We deeply appreciate your commitment and the personal care you invest in this program.
- ✦ Safety Month Contest Shoutouts:
 - **CSAP Hammonton** – first to submit a safety poster.
 - **Sawtelle Toledo** – submitted a creative diorama.

Shoutouts

To All Our Amazing Employees!

- ✦ **Dr. Samantha Spencer**, a huge thank you for leading our American Psychological Association site visit. This was the culmination of well over a year of work—from completing the self-study to coordinating every detail of the visit. The site visitors had glowing reviews and no critiques! This is a direct reflection of your leadership, dedication, and attention to detail. A special thank you as well to **Dr. Leslie Lester** for your ongoing hard work in ensuring our training program meets both the program's goals and the personal goals of the trainees who place their trust in us. You have played a pivotal role in training our last five cohorts, and we are so grateful for your commitment.
- ✦ **Seby George**, clinician at Laurie Haven, thank you for filling in and taking on extra responsibilities to keep the program running smoothly while we look to fill the vacancy of case manager.
- ✦ **Sofia Boloix-Alacron**, congratulations on becoming a licensed clinical social worker! You started with us as an intern, and it has been wonderful to see you blossom into the compassionate, dedicated, and knowledgeable clinician that you are.
- ✦ **Sue (Lisa) Nicholas** - She goes ABOVE & BEYOND for all! With a heart full of kindness, she does everything with pure grace. Her dedication is unmatched. Whether it's lending a hand in a challenging moment or offering to help with a simple task, she makes an impact every day. It's a privilege to work alongside someone who makes a difference. Thank you Sue for all you do for everyone 😊
- ✦ ⭐ **SRT NORTH TEAM RECOGNITION** ⭐
A huge thank you to the **SRT North Team** for your exceptional work at the priority sites across the Northern Region. Your dedication, professionalism, and hard work make a real difference every day!
- ✦ ⭐ **Special Shout-Out: SRT Jahne Benthall** ⭐
Thank you for being an incredible team player and always stepping up to support your colleagues in the field. Your teamwork and commitment truly shine!
- ✦ **Tracie Bass and Bill Waller** for working extra hard to make sure that two boys from Fisher Hall and one child from Laurie Haven and Fisher Hall successfully transitioned into treatment homes before the Thanksgiving holiday.

Shoutouts

To All Our Amazing Employees!

- ✦ **Yakima Daniels** our southern region Behaviorist for her continued dedication and professionalism. Her expertise in behavioral support, collaboration with program staff, and commitment to individualized care have made a meaningful impact on both our team and the participants we serve. Her efforts exemplify excellence and greatly contribute to the success of our programs!
- ✦ **Yanira Reyes, Pia Ababon, and Jorge Montanez-Murillo**, thank you for your successful implementation of the Parents as Teachers Medicaid Pilot Program! Your expertise, flexibility, and attention to detail allowed us to be a model implementation site. Yanira, we wish you the best of luck in your career!

Milestones



Professional Accomplishments

Congratulations! **Yanira Reyes**, PAT parent educator, passed her Social Work Licensure test!

Sofia Boloix-Alacron, congratulations on becoming a licensed clinical social worker! You started with us as an intern, and it has been wonderful to see you blossom into the compassionate, dedicated, and knowledgeable clinician that you are.



Marraiges



Steven Martinez and **Erika Mero**, PAT parent Educator, were married November 28, 2025 over the Thanksgiving weekend!



Happy Birthday!!



November Birthdays

Acosta, Bionca	Collins, Bria N.	Harris, Kenja	Murray, Keyon	Simon, Boris
Aderibigbe, Temitope	Comer, Sarita	Headen Ratliff, Demesha	Ojugo, Eromosele S.	Sodeko I, Ibrahim A.
Allen, Simone M.	Cooper, Rashon	Howard, Geraldine	Opoku, George A.	Stephenson, Vanessa N.
Allen, Tyrell	Counts, Shaylah	Hyman, Harry D.	Otero, Mariah	Tierney, Ericka
Alston, Falana	Davis, AsiaQueen	Johnson, Tahjanay	Ouhdou, Driss	Tigner, Whitney
Aponte-Beltran, Kayra	Dean-Bailey, Jahmani K.	Kelly, Lamesha	Polter, Kayla	Tronlone, Catherine
Auriemma, Janine	Disla, Birmania A.	Lastra, Michael J.	Pressley, Pamela C.	Vallario, Julia
Baker, Ayana	Dossous, Naderge	Lawton, Dominique	Prunty, Charlotte	Vandervort, Adaiza
Barrie, Neneh B.	Dubois, Rossini	Leacock, Mary	Quinones, Minerva	Vogt, Mary
Bayne, Tasha	Eaves, Deanna A.	Lighty, Ortisha M.	Rodriguez, Keanah	Wadley, Jeanean
Beauvil, Chantal D.	Eisenhuth, Sara	Loray, Laura E.	Roth, Theresa C.	Waller III, William E.
Bell, Christinia	Enyart, Chitima	Lyde Jr. Jr., Ray	Roussetzki, Solange I.	Walton, Karla
Bhatia, Nirali	Escobar, Santos	Maceia, Felisberto	Ruiz, Yamaira	Wesley, Tyrah
Black, Aquella	Foster, Kayla	Major, Natasha	Russell, Tyronn D.	Williams, Bernard T.
Bockowski Ph.D., Frank C.	Freeman, Hallema	Marquez, Nysha	Ryan, Theresa A.	Wilson, Claude
Bronson, Robert	Garcia, Patricio	Martin, Dawn C.	Sanchez, Sally	Wilson, Dhamiri
Brooks, Lorenza	Garrett, Tiahjhna	McDowell, William	Sanders, Chinita	Wilson, Wendy A.
Bruch, Madison	Garrison, Darick E.	McGann, Paul	Santos, Karla D.	Wise, Raheem R.
Captain, Lissa	Giles, Rasheed	Mckenzie, Edward J.	Severe, Lee	
Casey, Danielle	Goff, Ja'Keia A.	Mcneil Jr., Davis	Shabazz Winston, Izhane	
Castellanos, Edna G.	Goree Jr., Sherman D.	Mico, Sofia Lorainne	Sholaja, Olanrewaju A.	
Cavalcante, Zachary	Guglielmino, Jordan	Montgomery, Erica E.	Silverman, Molly J.	

Letters of Appreciation

11/13/2025

Dear Mr. Khwmere,

There aren't enough words to describe how thankful I am that you helped me get back home. You were the first clinician who truly made a difference — the one who helped me get closer to my family again. You weren't afraid to challenge me, and you stayed consistent with my goals. You may have been the weirdest clinician I've had, but you were also the best. I connected with you more than anyone else, and you always held me accountable.

Thank you for believing in me when I didn't believe in myself, and for never giving up — even when I was being difficult (which, let's be honest, was pretty often). You made therapy feel like a real conversation. You listened. You care. And that made all the difference. Because of you, I'm in a better place now. You helped me see that things can get better, even when it doesn't feel like they will.

You taught me so much — not just about working through the hard stuff, but about who I am and what I'm capable of. Thank you for being yourself, for keeping things real, and for helping me find my way back to myself. I still think about some of the things you said during our sessions; they've stuck with me and continue to help me move forward when life gets tough. I know there will always be challenges, but now I have the tools and confidence to face them.

I hope you know the impact you've had on my life. You didn't just help me get back home — you helped me realize that not everyone is the enemy. That's something I'll carry with me for the rest of my life.

So, thank you for being you — for being real, zesty, weird, and one of the few people who could make me laugh and think at the same time. I'm truly, deeply grateful for that.

Love always, Abigail Kramer



Letters of Appreciation

Letter from Office of Licensing Inspector to
Jennifer Stratton, VP, NR Behavioral Health Program and
Estherline Nicol, Sawtelle Hall Program Director

Good afternoon, ladies,

I wanted to inform you both if you did not know already that I went to Sawtelle Hall unannounced today. I was pleasantly surprised. The home had multiple violations coming into today's re-inspection. Estherline, without knowing I was coming, was able to abate all but one. This is a true testament to how hard she has worked and the systems she has put in place. I have received many plans of corrections over the years from many agencies, and I believe this is the first time I can ever say that the systems put in place to truly remedy the problems were accurate and effective. The nature of my job highlights when people do wrong; as such, I do my best to acknowledge when I see someone doing a really good job as well.

With all of that said, Jennifer, please keep her! I do not think I have ever seen such a turnaround in any home in such a short amount of time by a new manager. Even her team members were testified about how contagious her work ethic is and how it leaves them with little choice but to work at the same level.

Enjoy your weekend.

Jason Smith
Quality Assurance Inspector
Office of Licensing
Youth Residential Licensing



Highlights

Northern Region Managers Potluck Luncheon



In advance of Thanksgiving, the Northern Region Team leaders -Tamika, Korey and Yesenia - organized a potluck luncheon for all the managers in their DD and DCF programs at the Newark headquarters. It was a wonderful chance to unwind and enjoy the company of their colleagues.

Happy B-Day



Happy Birthday to both Korey and Deanna! May God grant you many more.

Highlights



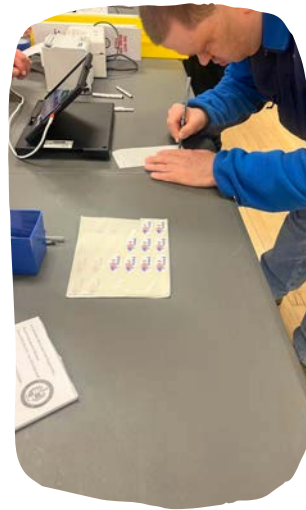
Buffalo House participants focused on cultivating gratitude by personalizing their feelings of appreciation by writing notes that were posted on a wall in the living room to remind everyone of all their blessings.



When **Estell Manor** transitioned to a PCH home for all girls, **Shamyra Ware** gave the home a more feminine look with more soft pink touches and floral patterns. The girls are loving the new look!



Akashi celebrated his 28th birthday with his family and staff at **Davinchi House**!



Russel C from **Pamela** put in his vote!

Highlights

Successful Transition into Our New Treatment Homes



Treatment Home is excited to share a heartwarming moment. One of our youths successfully stepped down from a YCS PCH and joined one of our newly established Treatment Families. Upon her arrival, Treatment Parent Ms. Rios warmly greeted her with a beautiful bouquet of flowers, creating a memorable and welcoming start to this next chapter.

We are incredibly proud of the youth and grateful to all our dedicated treatment home parents like Ms. Rios, whose compassion and commitment make moments like these possible. We look forward to seeing the youth thrive in her new environment.

New Treatment home families attended the Southern Region Thanksgiving celebration.

Highlights

Fun and Games at Bright Start



All the participants at Bright Start had a super fun evening sipping soft drinks, chatting, laughing, and showing what they can do with a little paint and a blank canvas. Special thanks to SRT manager **Jonquea Walker** for organizing the event.

On another evening, the girls had a game night pajama party. It was a great way to release the stress from the day and have some fun before they turned in for the evening.

Friendsgiving at SBYS



Students were excited to decorate their gathering room and set the tables for their Friendsgiving. To make it more special, they posted messages of what thankfulness meant to them and how they are incorporating it into their lives. All the food was prepared by the culinary students at Eastside. It was a feast worthy of royalty!

Highlights

Planting Daffodils



Together, **Sawtelle Learning Center** staff and students planted daffodil bulbs to help beautify their school grounds. The Garden Club of Montclair (Youth Committee) graciously provided the tools and a hands-on demonstration. Montclair generously donated the bulbs in May.

It was such a joyful morning. The students were fully engaged, learning about planting and teamwork while having a great time outdoors.



GW School Thanksgiving Parade



GW School celebrated Thanksgiving with a parade and a feast with all the trimmings.

Highlights

A YCS Foundation Thanksgiving



For the children who were unable to be with family for the Thanksgiving holiday, our Foundation partnered with donors with Hope Worldwide and St. James Episcopal Church in Montclair and all their friends to make the day special for youth from Davis House, Bright Start, Phoenix House, Holley and Malcolm House. The children all had a spectacular time, and each went home with a box of bakery treats.

Thanksgiving at Sawtelle Learning Center



The High School students prepared a Thanksgiving meal with the assistance of our wonderful staff and enjoyed it together for lunch.

Highlights

Southern Region Thanksgiving Celebration



The Southern Region DD Homes team spared no effort to make this year's Friendsgiving celebration one filled with connection and the warmth of family love. The delicious trays of healthy, hearty, home-cooked food prepared and served by the staff had something to satisfy everyone's palette. The tables were decorated in the spirit of the holiday and there was a dessert station filled an eye-popping treats. It was a wonderful evening where Treatment Home families, and participants from all the behavioral health and DD homes gathered reconnect with friends and danced away the evening.

Southern region nurses Casey Burns, Sharon Marshall, and Shameya Drain-Mantez were on hand to celebrate and help wherever needed. Shout out to Sharon and her daughter for setting up a photo station so they could take pictures right on the spot!

Agency Updates

QAPI Update

SERVICE EFFECTIVENESS

- Objective: 20% reduction in average MFQ score from admission to discharge
- First four months of fiscal year: July to October
 - 28 matched pairs
 - Initial average: 8.79
 - Discharge average: 4.79
 - Reduction: 46%



EXPERIENCE OF PERSONS SERVED

- Objective: Increase of 2.35 in average Children's Hope Scale score from admission to discharge
- First four months of fiscal year: July to October
 - 21 matched pairs
 - Initial average: 22.33
 - Discharge average: 26.67
 - Increase: 4.34



Congratulations!

Agency Updates

Promising Pathways to Success

A Shared Journey to Success, where your voice leads the way

Save the Dates! Important upcoming Trainings

Friday, January 16th, 2026

11:00 AM – 12:00 PM

Virtual via Teams: Look for an invite in your calendar. There will be a link to the meeting. *The What and How of Psychiatric Diagnosis in Children and Adolescents: An overview of identifying mental health issues and how to treat symptoms.*

Dr. Mary Jane Askew, DNP, APN, and Medical Director of KB & Muller IRTS

Thursday, February 5, 2026

Child and Adolescent Psychotropic Medication: Understanding Use, Benefits, and Challenges. This workshop takes a more in-depth look at psychotropic medication.

Dr. Mary Jane Askew, DNP, APN, and Medical Director of KB & Muller IRTS

Coming Soon!



In January 2026, YCS will say goodbye to the old “ycseonline” and welcome in the new YCS Intranet.

The intranet is a private, secure computer network that will share information and tools only with employees that will make it much easier for every employee to find resources, manage workflows, and connect, regardless of location. Look for more details to follow in your email in January.

Managers Meeting Bulletin

Here is an overview of department reports & action items from the managers' meeting that is pertinent to all employees. Our goal is to ensure transparency and timely communication of information that will help everyone do their job more efficiently and with less stress. As always thank you for your support in keeping the lines of communication flowing efficiently.

Key points from G&A Meeting November 20, 2025

Finance Department Report

Our latest financial review through September shows a significantly improved organizational position. We are currently reporting a positive outcome of approximately \$700,000, a notable turnaround from the \$1 million loss reported at this time last year.

This progress reflects the collective effort across programs to maintain full occupancy, manage staffing effectively, and control costs. Your commitment, persistence, and hard work—despite the day-to-day challenges—have made a measurable impact on our financial stability.

Please Note: if you have any finance or accounting questions, please feel free to email frank.bockowski@yycs.org If you're struggling with any of our procedures reach out and a member of the accounting staff will assist if not myself.

Thank you for your ongoing dedication. Your efforts are truly appreciated and clearly visible in our results.

Summary for New Managers

For those who are new—or even those who may need a refresher—our organization is essentially made up of two connected entities:

- **Inc.:** This includes all clinical and residential operations, as well as general and administrative functions. Most day-to-day program and operational work falls under this area.
- **Foundation:** The foundation focuses on fundraising to support added benefits for our participants. For example, they coordinate holiday gift drives and other initiatives that enhance the experience of those we serve.

Managers Meeting Bulletin

Human Resources Report

Performance Management Overview

Here's a quick refresher on our performance management process, especially helpful for new managers:

- **Performance Management System:** We use the UKG performance module, now in its fourth year.
- **Two Types of Reviews:**
- **90-Day Introductory Review:** All new employees receive a competency- based review after their first 90 days.
- **Annual Review:** Conducted each year and based on both goals and competencies.
- **Goals:**
- **Standard Goals:** Assigned automatically for direct care positions.
- **Manager-Set Goals:** Required for all other roles. Goals should be created at the start of the performance year (July).
- For newly transitioned programs:
- Direct care staff already have standard goals.
- PDS, Program Coordinators, and other specialty roles will require managers (typically VPs) to set individualized goals.
- **Action Needed:**
- **For the YCS programs that are not new:** 32 employees have not entered goals. You should have received an email list identifying them. If staff from your program appear on that list, please make sure their goals are input. If you're unsure how to do this or need clarification, reach out through your leadership chain to get support.
- **For new programs:** managers have two key responsibilities regarding goals for their direct reports:
- **Standard Goals:** The organization provides default "canned" goals that can be applied to all staff, ensuring consistency.

Managers Meeting Bulletin

- **Personalized Goals:** Managers can create individualized goals for staff, especially if there are specific areas for improvement or behaviors that need attention.
- Using goals effectively gives employees a clear target and allows managers to evaluate progress accurately during performance appraisals. Training will cover how to add personalized goals for your staff.

Please Note: Employees who started before the end of December must have annual goals entered for their June performance review. These staff will complete **both** the annual goal-based review and the separate **90-day competency-based review**. Managers should ensure all required goals are set in the system.

Employee Survey: We are in our third year using the *Great Place to Work* employee engagement survey. Here's a high-level overview for new managers:

- **Who Participates:** All employees hired before **July 1** were invited to complete the survey this year. New program employees who started after that date will participate next year.
- **Confidentiality:** Responses are completely confidential. The survey includes scaled questions and two open-ended questions.
- **Purpose is Benchmarking:** Survey results help us understand organizational performance and employee experience. We can compare results with similar organizations and review data by program when response numbers allow.
- **Action Planning:** Results are reviewed with VPs and managers and used to guide action planning for areas needing improvement.

The survey reflects the past year—what's working, what's not, and where improvements are needed. The survey is now closed.

Managers Meeting Bulletin

Time Off for New Programs

For employees transitioning from the new programs:

- **Vacation Payout Seniority:** Prior employers paid out accrued but unused vacation. YCS allowed employees to carry over their seniority for time-off accruals.
- **Time-Off Eligibility:** Unlike typical new hires who wait 90 days, these employees can **use accrued time off immediately** as they earn it.

This adjustment ensures a smooth transition and respects the employees' previous service.

Training

New Program Director Training

New Program Directors will receive training on key HR and management topics, including:

- **Performance Management & Goal Setting:**
- **Hiring & Onboarding:** Guidance on interviewing and onboarding new staff.
- **HR Processes:** Leaves of absence and other essential policies.
- **Management Skills:** Additional sessions to strengthen leadership capabilities.

The training will take place over **two sessions**, totaling a few hours, and is part of the overall onboarding process provided by the administrative team.

Training Compliance

This month's training compliance report provides an overview of where each department and program stands in completing required trainings for the fiscal year.

- **Key Trainings:** All staff are assigned essential trainings, including corporate compliance, workplace safety, and preventing, identifying, and responding to abuse and neglect. Other trainings are assigned to specific programs or departments based on their role.
- **Progress:** Overall, the organization has made significant progress since the last update, showing strong engagement in completing required trainings.

Managers Meeting Bulletin

- **Program Highlights:** Some programs have already achieved high compliance, demonstrating excellent attention to training requirements, while others are still working toward full completion.

Managers are encouraged to ensure their teams stay on track, as training compliance is essential for both staff readiness and licensing preparedness.

Any questions about specific information regarding the agency programs' rate of compliance, contact Mike Baguidy at PBaguidy@ycs.org.

DDD Program Training

The DDD programs have shown strong engagement in completing required trainings. After reviewing previous results, the department held a focused meeting that clearly had a positive impact on staff participation.

- **Highlights:** Several programs have achieved full completion of their trainings, with many others showing excellent progress.
- **Support Tools:** DDD programs are also responsible for College of Direct Support (CDS) trainings. A checklist has been provided to help staff track and confirm completion alongside the training department.

Great work to the DDD programs for their dedication, and continued support to help all teams reach full compliance.

Department Training Updates

- **Regional Administration:** Strong participation—good progress overall.
- **Behaviorists:** South team is fully compliant. Reminder: small teams can see numbers drop quickly, so support each other to stay on track.
- **Nursing:** Moderate completion; improvement is possible.
- **SRT:** Both North and South teams have shown excellent improvement, with South making a significant jump in recent months.
- **Treatment Homes:** Consistently completing all trainings—great work.

Upcoming Trainings:

- **November:** Clinical Treatments of Behavioral Disorders (in-person).

Managers Meeting Bulletin

Important Reminder: Compliance requires staff to regularly log into Office 365—this includes accessing email or any Office 365 application. **Please note:** Single sign-on activity for UKG or Oracle does **not** count toward this requirement.

If you notice any discrepancies in your report—such as employees who have been terminated but are still listed as active—please notify **IT or HR** so the records can be updated. The data is matched against UKG, so all names shown are currently listed as active employees.

From the Helpdesk

Why Is This Important? Staying compliant with Office 365 usage is essential to maintain our free Microsoft licenses, which are supported by a \$10,000/month grant. Falling out of compliance puts this funding at risk.

- Regular use of Office 365—including logging into email, Teams, and other apps— supports organizational communication and helps keep us compliant.
- **New programs can access helpful tutorials on the YCSEOnline.org website (center section), including:**
- How to log into Office 365, How to install and log into the UKG mobile app, How to log into UKG, how to access Evolve correctly (including choosing the correct organization in the dropdown), how to reset passwords during initial setup

All tutorials link to **YCS's YouTube page**, allowing staff to view them without needing to log into email first, preventing access issues.

Moving Offices?

If you're moving to Newark or West Orange, IT will tag and move your monitors, external displays, and desk phones to your new location (Newark or West Orange).

- If you will be out of the office—due to vacation, extended leave, or transitioning to full remote— please notify IT in advance.
- This helps IT pick up your equipment early and avoid delays or confusion about where items are located.

Managers Meeting Bulletin

- IT will keep you informed about when your equipment is collected and where it is delivered to ensure a smooth transition.

ATTENTION: New Programs Access & Login Support

- Any issues with logging in, accessing programs, or changing passwords must go through the IT Helpdesk.
- Staff experiencing login or access problems should email helpdesk@yca.org for assistance.
- **IT Helpdesk remains the primary support contact for anything related to entering or accessing systems.**

Practice Integration

Training & Care Rounds Updates

- Successful first in-person training at the DCF Training Center in New Brunswick; featured polyvagal theory with 46 clinicians attending.
- Care Rounds Committee thanks all departments for their support.
- **No Care Rounds in December**; sessions resume in January and February as virtual trainings.
- Upcoming trainings:
 - **TFCBT refresher** with a family therapy focus
 - **Psychopharmacology training** in February
- Trainings are open to all agency staff; flyers will be distributed and details posted on the YCS website.
- Next in-person training at the DCF site is scheduled for **March**, featuring a dynamic case presentation by Dr. Leslie Lester from the Institute.
- Ongoing project with Lorenzo Brown to update intern training, including a new syllabus using existing recordings and materials.
- Updated intern training and supervision structure planned for rollout in the new year; information will be posted on SharePoint.

Managers Meeting Bulletin

Quality Assurance and Program Integrity (QAPI)

The **Performance Measurement and Management Plan (PMMP)** is the agency's quality improvement and assurance plan, required by CARF. Please refer to Agency Updates pages for PMP report.

- **Notes/Reminders:** Some discharge data was missing; clinicians should ensure both admission and discharge assessments are completed within 30 days of discharges. Completion of these measures is essential to accurately track outcomes and maintain high-quality service.

Safety Officer Update:

Purpose of Safety Officers:

Provides support to program managers in managing fire drills, evacuation plans, and other safety responsibilities. Safety Officer bonuses are given to encourage accountability and shared responsibility.

- Third Quarter Stipend: Paid October 24th; 37 of 44 officers received the bonus.
- Fourth Quarter Stipend: Scheduled for January (covers October–December).

New Program Safety Officer Identification:

- Out of 7 new programs, 5 have identified their safety officers.
- Still need safety officers for Pinewood Valley and Townsbury.

If your program has a safety officer, email their information to be added to meetings or follow-ups.

• **Submission Details:**

- All entries were **due by November 30th**.
- **Questions:** Contact Zoe Weaver at zoe.weaver@ycs.org.

Managers Meeting Bulletin

Safety Officer Training

- **Topics Covered:**
- **Safety Officers:** Overview of tasks, job description, and introduction of new safety officers for seven new programs.
- **Corporate Environment of Care Committee (CEOCC):**
- 2026 meeting dates
- Summary of November meeting minutes
- Programs scheduled to present in January, March (including new programs in March)
- **Attendance:**
- Optional – you can join for the full training or just the sections on safety officers or CEOCC.
- **Email to register** and be added to the session.

*** Note: Upcoming Inspection Dates

- **March:** PCH/IDD inspections
- **April:** CARF and DDD Adult
- **May:** New program inspections
- **June:** Start of the **every-other-year PCH cycle**
- **December Focus:**
- Address **outstanding citations** from Office of Licensing (OOL).
- Programs will be contacted to review **status, plans, and resolutions** to ensure no citations carry over into 2026.
- **Reminders for Programs:**
- Notify leadership if **OOL visits your program** (EOC or program-specific).
- Provide **feedback or findings** from inspections, even if no response is required.
- If missing the **most recent visit summary**, contact leadership to obtain it.

Managers Meeting Bulletin

Safety Officer Training

- **Topics Covered:**
- **Safety Officers:** Overview of tasks, job description, and introduction of new safety officers for seven new programs.
- **Corporate Environment of Care Committee (CEOCC):**
- 2026 meeting dates
- Summary of November meeting minutes
- Programs scheduled to present in January, March (including new programs in March)
- **Attendance:**
- Optional – you can join for the full training or just the sections on safety officers or CEOCC.
- **Email to register** and be added to the session.

*** Note: Upcoming Inspection Dates

- **March:** PCH/IDD inspections
- **April:** CARF and DDD Adult
- **May:** New program inspections
- **June:** Start of the **every-other-year PCH cycle**
- **December Focus:**
- Address **outstanding citations** from Office of Licensing (OOL).
- Programs will be contacted to review **status, plans, and resolutions** to ensure no citations carry over into 2026.
- **Reminders for Programs:**
- Notify leadership if **OOL visits your program** (EOC or program-specific).
- Provide **feedback or findings** from inspections, even if no response is required.
- If missing the **most recent visit summary**, contact leadership to obtain it.

Managers Meeting Bulletin

ABA Trainings

2026 ABA Training Dates: All dates are set, including **four virtual sessions** (two evenings, two Saturdays).

- **Registration:** look for email reminders so staff can RSVP and register.
- **Thank You** to program directors for encouraging staff to RSVP, helping ensure adequate attendance.
- **Staff Updates:**
 - **Estelle Manor:** New BCBA hired and currently in orientation.
 - **Sawtelle Lawnridge:** Part-time BCBA position is available and posted.
 - **CSAP Winslow:** Full-time BCBA position available and posted.

Allied Services and Foundation

New Homes & Allied Deliverables

- **New Homes Support:**
 - Review **activity schedules** to ensure programs offer **fun, enriching activities**.
 - Support programs to meet **allied deliverables** consistently.
 - Plan meetings with program leadership and new program directors to discuss YCS approach to Allied Services.
- **Deliverable Reports Compliance:**
 - Monthly reports are generated to track program compliance.
 - Programs not compliant for 5+ months are reviewed to understand root causes.
 - Non-compliance is often linked to:
 - Youth being at school, home, hospitalized, or eloped
 - Documentation gaps in Evolve (activities done but not recorded)
 - Participant no-shows contribute to lower scores

Managers Meeting Bulletin

- **Next Steps Support:**

- Programs with ongoing non-compliance will receive follow-up emails to VPs and program leadership.
- Caitlin Yerves will work with programs to ensure activity schedules are full and accurately reflected in **Evolv**.
- Every DCF-funded program will be contacted to set up meetings for guidance and support.

Please email Caitlyn Scaglione if you have any questions at caitlyn.yerves@ycs.org .

- **Holiday Fundraising:**

- Funds raised support holiday parties and special outings in your homes, which count toward allied deliverables.
- Staff can use allocated funds via agency credit card, separate from regional VP-organized events.

- **Donor Engagement:**

- Pictures, thank-you letters, and feedback from programs help sustain ongoing donor support. Please continue to forward to the Foundation at heart@ycs.org

- **Program Enhancements:**

- Foundation raises funds to renovate programs, e.g., creating Zen Dens and the updating of the Holley Center basement.
- If something in the home needs to be fixed, contact repair@ycs.org first; if further support is needed, email heart@ycs.org.
- Foundation also applies for external grant funding to enhance programs and activities. If you come across any grant opportunities that you think will be a fit for your program email heart@ycs.org.

- **Employee Scholarships:**

- **Gordon Family Trust Employee Scholarship** awarded 24 scholarships this fall.
- Rolling applications for certifications or professional development training are available; staff is encouraged to apply anytime.

Managers Meeting Bulletin

- **Allied Deliverables Recognition:**
 - Shoutout to programs excelling in activities: Fisher Hall, Cooper's Crossing,
 - Laurie Haven, Bright Start, Sawtelle Wood Haven – all exceeded expectations with over 40 hours of scheduled activities in October.
 - Note: Exceeding deliverables helps balance program requirements across the year.
- **Contact Information:**
 - Foundation support and grant inquiries: heart@yycs.org.
- **Agency Chaplain – Dr. Bill Waller**
- **Chaplain Support:**
 - Available to assist with challenges involving youth or employees that may require spiritual guidance.
 - Contact via chaplain@yycs.org to discuss situations and develop strategies.
- **Spirituality Groups:**
 - Currently held at Kilbarchan RTC, Bright Start, Lori Haven, and Malcolm House. Email chaplain@yycs.org for more information.
- **Agency Prayer Line:**
 - Conducted **Tuesdays at 12 PM**.
 - Prayer Line: 605-313-4162 Passcode: 853485
 - Submit prayer requests chaplain@yycs.org to have them included in the **corporate prayer**.

