



Message from our CEO

As we head into fall, we look forward to a healthy season. In September, ACTS joined several other provider agencies adopting a mandatory vaccination policy to safeguard the health of our employees and their families, our customers and visitors, and the community at large. All eligible ACTS employees must be fully vaccinated no later than November 3, 2021. Our priority is the safety of both our workforce and the people we serve, and we feel that vaccination is the best protection against the COVID-19 virus.

In other news, ACTS held our first in-person board meeting since March 2020 with our annual board meeting on October 4. We were happy to celebrate the great work of our board of directors, management team, administrative and frontline staff. The annual board meeting gave us the opportunity to recognize outstanding performances by board and team members. We are grateful to the ACTS Board of Directors for their continued support and guidance. On a final note, we would like to take a moment to recognize and thank Dr. Catherine Batsche for her 30+ years of service to ACTS. As a member of the board, she has played a key role in the success of the agency over the years. We wish her a wonderful retirement and safe travels as a USA Gymnastics Brevet judge.



Asha Terminello
ACTS CEO

Check out the article below for more details and to see our annual report highlighting accomplishments from Fiscal Year 2020-2021.

ACTS Holds Annual Meeting

On October 4, ACTS Board of Directors met for its annual meeting where the financial audit and [the annual report](#) were presented, and the ratification of the 2021 board officers occurred. After the meeting, a special dinner was held where both board members and staff were thanked for their dedication to ACTS. Board Secretary Cindy Parsons received the Distinguished Board Award for her role, and Board President Patrick Mazza was surprised with a special Board Leadership Award for his work on the board. ACTS QI Director Janice Zengotita also received recognition for her work during the pandemic. Janice oversaw the Pandemic Alert and implemented many protocols during the pandemic to keep both staff and clients safe. "I am so glad we were able to meet in person to go over all of the achievements from a year we never could imagine," said Asha Terminello, ACTS CEO.



Meet Lisa Crespo

Lisa Crespo oversees the Juvenile Assessment Center located in Bartow, which is for Polk, Hardee and Highlands Counties. She has worked for ACTS for 6 years but has been at the Polk JAC since it opened in February 1996 and worked her way up to the director position. “Youth are brought to the JAC by law enforcement – our goal is to have them booked, processed and released to their parents or the place they are going within 6 hours from arrival.” Before the pandemic, the JAC would see more than 250 cases a month – now it has slowed down some. The youth range typically from ages 14-17, but Lisa said they have had kids as young as 8 brought in. Charges typically range from battery and domestic violence all the way to murder. In September, the team at the Polk JAC worked together, when 15 youth were brought in from an incident at a local school. “It was all hands-on deck,” said Lisa. “We worked closely together to make sure that all of the youth received services in a timely manner.”



The Polk JAC is unique because it has its own Domestic Violence Program (DIP) which is designed to provide intervention services to identified families with a higher risk for development of substance use as a result of domestic violence occurring within the home. Youth who are eligible and agree to participate in the program are then referred by the Juvenile Probation Officer and court ordered to complete the program. A case worker is assigned and meets with youth weekly both at home and at school. “With our DIP program, our case workers involve the entire family in the program and provide both substance use prevention and violence intervention services coupled with approximately 12 weeks of counseling focusing on communication techniques and anger management skills. The staff work to get to the root of the problem and make appropriate community referrals. We are the only one in the state offering this program,” Lisa said. The program began accepting community referrals in May for youth who qualify. To learn more about the Domestic Violence Program, [click here](#). To learn more about the Polk JAC, [watch this video](#).

Red Ribbon Week Coming October 23 - 31.

DID YOU KNOW? Children of parents who talk to their teens regularly about drugs are 42% less likely to use drugs than those who don't; yet, only a quarter of teens report having these conversations. Red Ribbon Week® (October 23-31), the oldest and largest drug prevention campaign in the nation, is your opportunity to get the ongoing conversation started. This year's theme is Drug Free Looks Like Me.

Visit www.redribbon.org to learn more about Red Ribbon Week® and get tips for talking to your kids about drugs. The life you save may be that of your own child or a dear friend. ACTS is here to help locally with youth with substance use issues – call us at 813.246.4899 to schedule an assessment for your loved one.



For More Information

ACTS, Agency for Community Treatment Services, Inc., is a non-profit serving the Tampa Bay area since 1978. As a comprehensive, community-based behavioral health organization, ACTS mission is to apply the best of contemporary physical and behavioral health interventions and social support services available to assist individuals and families to engage and succeed in recovery. Call us today to find out how we can help you - 813.246.4899 or visit us online at www.actsfl.org.

