



sunny hills services annual report 2009

# Meet our new Chief Executive Officer

Dear Friends and Supporters,

I am pleased to share with you the Sunny Hills Services 2009 Annual Report. This Annual Report commemorates the contributions that each of you has made to the health and vitality of children and families in our community. Inside, you can read about the comprehensive array of services Sunny Hills offers vulnerable children and families living in the San Francisco Bay Area.

I am privileged to serve as Sunny Hills' new Chief Executive Officer. I joined the agency in 2000 as Chief Financial Officer, and subsequently consulted with former CEO Joe Costa in the agency's strategic and business planning. In 2008, I was appointed Chief Finance and Administration Officer, a key member of the executive team overseeing all aspects of the agency's finances and operations. As I begin this new stage of my tenure, I am extremely excited to take on leadership of Sunny Hills at this important time in our development.

Over the last decade, Sunny Hills has expanded our geographic reach and launched new programs in response to the evolving needs of vulnerable children, youth and their families. As we enter 2010, we are poised to embark on a new path, one that holds promise for broadening the reach and scope of our services while also honoring and deepening our work in the communities that have sustained us for the last 115 years.

I want to thank former CEO Joe Costa for his collegueship and for guiding Sunny Hills so capably over the last eight years. The agency has established a strong reputation and a springboard from which it can continue to evolve and deepen its impact.

To our community of donors, volunteers, and public servants, your past and ongoing commitment to Sunny Hills is important to me, and I am grateful for the opportunity to work with you to help young people realize better and brighter futures.

On behalf of the Board of Directors, staff and the children and families we serve, thank you for your generous and loyal support of Sunny Hills Services.

Sincerely,



Mary Denton  
Chief Executive Officer



Sunny Hills Services is a private, non-profit organization serving vulnerable youth and their families. What was originally founded in 1895 as the San Francisco Presbyterian Orphanage and Farm in Marin County, California is now a regional child welfare organization dedicated to protecting, serving, nurturing and healing at-risk children and adolescents.

The mission of Sunny Hills Services is to transform young lives by giving hope and by teaching skills that enable our clients to face their challenges, develop their strengths and lead productive and satisfying lives.



“WE BELIEVE THAT DEVELOPING A CHILD’S POTENTIAL REQUIRES THE IDENTIFICATION AND NURTURING OF PERSONAL PASSIONS, RESTORING HOPE, IMPROVING SELF-ESTEEM, ENCOURAGING PERSONAL AND INTERPERSONAL RESPONSIBILITY, AND PROVIDING THE TOOLS TO MEET LIFE’S CHALLENGES.”

For more than a century, the agency has remained at the forefront of best practices in child welfare.

Today, Sunny Hills is a nationally recognized agency operating 15 distinct programs throughout the greater San Francisco Bay Area. This year, Sunny Hills will serve more than 700 young people through an array of programs focused on the educational, mental health, housing and developmental needs of vulnerable youth.



**Cassie**  
BAYC Supported Housing  
Program Participant

# Dear Friends

Sunny Hills has undergone significant changes over the last several years which have made it possible for the agency to serve more children, youth and families in more places.

Today, Sunny Hills has an expanded footprint that includes Sonoma and Alameda counties, in addition to our historic home in Marin. The successful integration of BAYC as the East Bay division of Sunny Hills was a key accomplishment of the 2008-09 fiscal year. Further, we have continued to enhance our programming in Sonoma County and have now become the provider of choice for emotionally disturbed youth with involvement in the juvenile probation system. Our San Anselmo campus in Marin has been transformed and is now home to our nonpublic school, the Marin Academic Center, and also serves as administrative hub for the array of community and school-based programs we offer in partnership with the Marin County Office of Education and Community Mental Health.

One of our primary goals is to further solidify this regional structure and secure a foundation for continued growth. Our enthusiasm for the future is tempered only by an understandable concern about the financial challenges that may still lie ahead. We recognize that this uncertain climate requires time, planning, and rigor in our approach.

We are now poised to open a new chapter in the history of this organization, one that holds promise for new ideas, ambitious growth and community outreach all in the service of kids and families who need our help. On behalf of the board, I want to express our gratitude to Joe Costa, former chief executive officer, for leading us to this point and for carefully guiding transformative change during his tenure.

I have tremendous gratitude for all of the support that we continue to receive. It is in times like these that one realizes the roots we have in our community are well over 100 years strong and that, despite the challenges, we continue to help so many kids build better and brighter futures.

Thank you, as always, for your continued support of Sunny Hills.

Sincerely,



Lydia Cameron  
President, Board of Directors



**Roberto**  
2nd Grader at the  
Marin Academic Center

#### **Marin Academic Center**

MAC provides a nurturing therapeutic educational program for vulnerable children ages 5-14 whose educational and/or behavioral problems are too severe to be handled in public schools. Known for its strong academic focus, MAC serves children from throughout the Bay Area. MAC aims to move clients, when ready, into less restrictive academic environments in local public schools.

#### **Grant Grover Day Treatment**

Grant Grover provides individualized education and therapeutic day treatment services to 25 elementary and middle school children. A special education school, Grant Grover specializes in psycho-therapeutic treatment, helping children who cannot complete academic and social activities in public schools because of acute mental disorders ranging from depression to bipolar and post traumatic stress disorders. This program is operated in collaboration with the Marin County Office of Education and Community Mental Health.

#### **Braun Day Treatment**

Braun Day Treatment serves up to 25 youth ages 14 to 18 whose emotional and behavioral problems prevent them from being successful in public school. A special education school focusing on youth with severe emotional and behavioral mental health conditions, Braun crafts individual treatment plans for each client that are enacted by a coordinated team of milieu counselors,

teachers, and certified therapists. The hope is that students will mainstream to less restrictive local public schools or complete the credits necessary to graduate from Braun. Braun is operated in conjunction with the Marin County Office of Education and Community Mental Health.

#### **Blended Classrooms**

The Blended Classroom program provides intensive one-on-one counseling in separate classrooms in seven Marin County public elementary, middle and high schools. Based on a wrap-around philosophy, these blended classrooms are designed to prevent placement in a more restrictive educational or residential setting and allow students to maintain a connection to their public school. Marin County Office of Education and Community Mental Health are partners with Sunny Hills.

#### **Therapeutic Behavior Services**

TBS is a short-term, intensive, home-based intervention serving youth up to age 21 who are at-risk for placement in foster care or residential treatment facility or have recently been released from such a facility. Our intervention is individualized, based on the specific needs and strengths of each family. Our goal is to provide coping strategies to families and clients, ensuring smooth transitions across life domains and empowering families in their efforts to remain intact and function more effectively.

*“Our focus isn’t on what’s wrong with Clarissa. Now it’s about what’s right with our family. Thank you for helping us get this back.”*

*Kathie  
Parent of Clarissa  
TBS client family*

**Kiki and Theresa**  
Sonoma Kinship Family Center

### **Sonoma Kinship Family Center**

The Kinship Center provides resources and supportive services to relative caregivers and the children in their care. Community workers, many of whom are themselves kinship caregivers, provide a range of individualized support including case management, counseling and emergency financial assistance. From helping to navigate the guardianship process to offering respite care, the Kinship Center is a vital community resource that helps prevent children from falling into foster care and staying with those they love. Based in Santa Rosa, the Kinship Center provides services throughout Sonoma County.

### **Assertive Community Treatment**

ACT is a community-based program designed to address the mental health needs of juvenile offenders and their families. ACT utilizes a collaborative, wraparound approach to treatment that operates across the mental health, juvenile justice, child welfare and education systems. ACT is a partnership with Sonoma County Juvenile Probation and Court, and The Sonoma County Department of Mental Health.

### **FASST**

The FASST program provides stabilization for up to 40 youth ages six to 14 who are experiencing serious psychiatric difficulties in home, school or other community settings. FASST utilizes a strengths-based approach to treatment to assist clients in their

efforts to build upon existing family and community support. FASST is a collaboration with the Sonoma County Department of Mental Health.

### **CEYD**

The CEYD program is designed to meet the growing need for gang prevention and intervention services in Sonoma County, helping youth ages 13 to 18 to develop the assets and competencies that have been demonstrated to reduce risk for delinquency and promote engagement as productive members of family, school and community. Youth have the opportunity to participate in cultural and recreational outings and overnight wilderness trips to practice and apply lessons learned in a real life setting. Training and educational forums are also offered to parents and other community members to learn about what they can do to prevent the impact of gangs in their community and the resources available to them.

*“I want to thank my family for being so supportive of me. We have all made good changes.”*

*Ramon*  
*ACT Program Graduate*

### **Project PRIDE**

Modeled after Sunny Hills’ ACT program, Project PRIDE works specifically with Santa Rosa juveniles on probation with gang affiliations and who also struggle with mental health issues. PRIDE delivers highly individualized services in a range of community-based settings, as opposed to a more traditional office environment. PRIDE is a partnership with the City of Santa Rosa and the Sonoma County departments of Juvenile Probation and Mental Health.



Jane and her daughter, Bethany  
BAYC Parenting Teens Program

**BAYC**

BAYC operates as the East Bay division of Sunny Hills and works with youth ages 15-24 who are emancipating from the foster care system. BAYC provides housing assistance, integrated mental health services and a healthy dose of adult encouragement to ensure these youth have the opportunity they deserve to reach their full potential.

**Group Home Program**

BAYC offers safe housing in a group home environment for 15 foster youth ages 14-18 each year. The group home program is emancipation focused, meaning youth and staff are working together to develop a sound plan to prepare the youth for independent living when they reach 18. The group home program model originates from growing research that points to the lack of preparation foster youth have upon emancipating from the child welfare system of care, and methods proven to be effective in supporting their successful transition to independence.

**Transitional Housing Program**

BAYC operates a transitional housing program known as RAFA, or Real Alternatives For Adolescents, which offers safe, independent housing for approximately 20 foster youth ages 16-19 each year. RAFA also serves foster youth who have children or who are 6 to 9 months pregnant. Youth have the opportunity to practice independent living in a safe environment while receiving the

support they need to prepare them for long-term economic and social stability. Youth receive stipends to cover basic living expenses in addition to intensive supportive services: case management, mental health services, life skills training, educational counseling, and vocational training. As youth demonstrate increased capacity to support themselves, support services are decreased offering a gradual transition to independence.

**Supported Housing Program**

BAYC provides supported apartment living for former foster youth ages 18-24 who are either homeless or at risk of becoming homeless. A 100% rental subsidy is provided initially, and then gradually decreased over a period of two years until youth are able to pay their rent. BAYC also provides food vouchers and emergency financial assistance to provide for the youths' basic needs until they are able to achieve self sufficiency. Educational counseling and tutoring are provided to all residents, in addition to life skills training to teach youth how to make informed decisions with regard to housing, money management, education, and employment.

**Mental Health Services**

BAYC is a certified Medi-Cal mental health services provider and currently provides assessment, treatment and support services for over 60 youth and their families each year through contracts with Alameda, Contra Costa and Mendocino counties.

*“I’ve faced a lot of challenges in my life. But with BAYC, I’m looking forward to a better rest of my life.”*

*Brianna  
BAYC Youth*



Derek and James  
ACT Program

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**SERVICES**<sup>SM</sup>

*Better and Brighter Futures*

[www.sunnyhillsservices.org](http://www.sunnyhillsservices.org)