

COMPASSION IN ACTION

FALL/WINTER 2013

Thanksgiving & Holiday Help

Last year 47/112 Schools participated in Thanksgiving food drives to benefit the Center for Family Resources partnership with the DFCS.

Please consider joining the effort; let your ssw know!

Thousands of families struggle to keep food on the table. Thanksgiving week can be even more financially stressful when students are home from school for more than just the holiday meal. Through participation in the annual **Thanks for Giving food drive**, CCSD and Marietta City Schools capture the true spirit of Thanksgiving! Let's build great citizens!

Registration Dates for

Families: Oct. 1st & Oct. 2nd
Cobb Civic Center: 9am-4pm

2012 School Winners

High School:
Harrison High
(4000 items)

Middle School:
Campbell Middle
(2850 items)

Elementary:
Kemp Elementary
(3412 items)

Honorable Mention: Marietta Sixth Grade Academy
(1371 items, with one grade!)

Saturday
December 14, 2013
Marietta Square

Come on down to the Square and join Santa for a fun filled event starting at



5K Run/Walk
1K and Tot Trot

A Peachtree Qualifying Race.

Register at:



All proceeds go to the Cobb County Bar Children's Emergency Fund.

A year round resource for families in need right here in our community. CCSD Social Workers have identified and accessed assistance for over **60 families in crisis** in 2012 through this fund! Get out those running shoes, put some jingles on, and support a great cause! All runners and phantom runners will receive a long sleeve "Sleighbells on the Square" t-shirt and free pictures of racers from TrueSpeedPhoto.com!

Awards to schools with the most participants.

DEPUTY ON STAFF TO HELP WITH TRUANCY

During the 2013-2014 school-year the Cobb County School Social Work Department has two truancy coordinators to provide extensive truancy intervention efforts. The coordinators provide an array of support services to school social workers and personnel throughout the district. Coordinators can often be found at truancy intervention panel meetings, presenting evidence in truancy court cases, participating in truancy sweeps, implementing truancy intervention strategies as well as working with parents and students.

One of the department's coordinators, Sabra Kofa Dunn, has an extensive background working at various levels of juvenile justice within the State of Georgia. Ms. Dunn has served the Georgia Department of Juvenile Justice as a juvenile probation and parole specialist. She has worked for the Juvenile Court of Cobb County where she was a supervisor working the Adolescent Substance Abuse Program. Ms. Dunn's familiarity with Cobb County's justice infrastructure and vast experience working with children and families in an array of settings is an asset to the department. Ms. Dunn holds a Master of Public Administration. She supports Cobb School District's Areas 1, 2 and several schools in Area 5. Mr. Paul Pursell has been a coordinator with the department since 2006. Mr. Pursell has worked in and around the courts in Cobb County since 1992 holding positions such as probation officer and court administrator. Prior to his employment with the Cobb County School District he was the district director for District 3-A of the Georgia Department of Juvenile Justice. Mr. Pursell holds a Master of Public Administration and Master of Social Work degrees. He supports Cobb School District's Areas 3, 4 and several schools in 5.

An addition this year is Deputy Latusa Sims. Deputy Sims is employed by the Cobb County Sheriff's Office. She previously worked with the Cobb School District's Success for All Students Program. Deputy Sims holds a Master of Public Administration degree. She will assist the School Social Work Department with home visits, drug and alcohol prevention efforts, and intensive truancy interventions.

New this year is the School Social Work Department's Truancy Prevention Website. It can be located at <http://riseupcobb.org>. "We are proud of this website", said the development team. The aim of this website is actually four-fold: provide parents with relevant information that hopefully will highlight the importance of school attendance and education, provide an interactive tool for students to access information about career options, school policy, and attendance related topics, provide a resource for school personnel and celebrate the accomplishments of students, parents, schools and others involved with promoting student achievement and attendance.





LET'S WRAP OUR STUDENTS IN THREADS OF KINDNESS!

CCSD School Social Workers have adopted the former DFCS Project PANTS clothing assistance program. The name has changed, but not the mission... **Threads of Kindness** provides appropriate school clothing for students in need.

Threads of Kindness teams with generous partners around the county who purchase or contribute gift cards to meet specific clothing needs. Something as basic as a new outfit can significantly impact a student's self-esteem. It is easier to focus on learning when kids don't have to think about not "fitting in" because of the clothes on their backs.

Threads of Kindness is always looking for more partners... individuals, businesses, civic clubs, and faith based groups are all welcomed to participate!

Want more information on how to become a partner?

Contact Lara.Fain@cobbk12.org

678-594-8645.

School-based Mental Health Services

Each year, school-based mental health services continue to expand as more and more schools recognize how social, emotional and behavioral issues affect the academic achievement of students. We are very fortunate to have mental health service providers in our area who provide both school-based and home-based services. These services support the local school, parents and students. In January of 2012, the Board of Education approved Cobb County School District Administrative Rule MLR allowing school partnerships with outside therapeutic organizations. Most notably Northside Psychological Services and the Cobb County Community Services Board has made mental health resources available to children of all socio-economic backgrounds.

School-based mental health services have been around for decades. School social workers and counselors routinely work with students and families regarding a host of emotional, social, and behavioral issues that hinder student success. With the introduction of external mental health providers like Northside Psychological and the Community Services Board, the offering of services has become exponentially expansive. One shining example is the provision of intensive family intervention services. Students and families qualifying for IFI can receive these services in-home AND at school, thus truly completing the idea of continuity of care. Additionally, the bridging of school personnel, students, parents and mental health providers ensure possible relevant treatment plans are constructed. It also promotes the flow of information; therefore, increasing accountability.

The results truly speak for themselves. Traditionally, families and students requesting mental health resources might solicit this information from the school social worker, school counselor, court personnel, etc. Families were then left to navigate the mental health system alone, unless the consulted further with their point of contact. With the existing school-based mental health this no longer is true. In fact, many initial contacts between the family and provider occur while the provider is at the school.

If you have any questions or want to begin receiving services, please contact your School Social Worker.

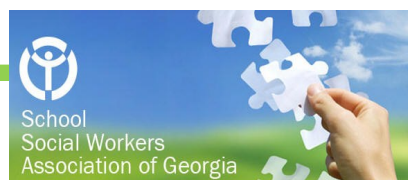
District 5 Hosting the Annual School Social Worker Association of Georgia's Fall 2013 Conference

The School Social Workers Association of Georgia exists to improve the quality of services to students so as to enhance their individual and educational potential.

District 5 (Cobb, Douglas, Cherokee, Paulding, & Marietta City) is excited to host the upcoming conference themed:

Providing Quality Social Work Services in an Ever Changing School Climate.

Join us October 24-25, 2013 at the Wyndham Atlanta Galleria.
For more information please contact Lara Fain, Lara.Fain@cobbk12.org





100 Days of School Campaign kicks off October 1st!

Alive Ministries launched the Save It Forward Initiative in 2010, partnering with local schools to provide food & toiletries to students & families in need in the Cobb County School System. They are currently partnered with & serve students in need at *Birney Elementary & Osborne High School in Marietta; Harmony Leland Elementary, Clay Elementary & Pebblebrook High School in Mableton; Sanders Elementary in Austell; Griffin Middle School & Norton Park Elementary in Smyrna; & Lassiter High School in Marietta.*

In 2011, Alive Ministries launched the 100 Days of School Campaign to enable more service to children in need in Cobb County. The campaign has been a huge success & over the last two years has allowed the collection of over 58,500 pieces of food which were given out to students in need in Cobb County. **The 100 Days of School Campaign challenges homerooms to collect 100 cans or boxes of food by the 100th day of school.** The annual kick off the Campaign will again be on October 1st & are inviting you to participate in the campaign with us. Whether your school already celebrates 100 days of school or not, this is a great way to teach students about helping others while allowing them to see the full circle of what you can accomplish when you work together.

The campaign is tailored to best fit the needs of your school, and can be as big or small as you like. It is recommend that you start promoting the campaign at your school in October & run it up to the 100th day of school which is January 23rd this year in Cobb County. An incentive package for the homeroom & teacher that collects the most in Cobb County is currently being assembled.

Alive Ministries supplies all of the items needed to run the campaign. They provide bins for every homeroom that participates, custom parent letters for your student body and reminders. They will schedule pick up of all the food collected with a local transportation company. **This is a no cost, no strings attached way for your school to help other students in need right here in the Cobb County School System.**

Please consider partnering with Alive Ministries and your school social worker for the campaign this year.

www.aliveministriesinc.org



It's Easy to be Green & Make \$ome Green!

Did you know that by recycling used electronics, you can help raise emergency student funds for the school social work department? We collect cell phones, laser and ink cartridges, iPods, video games & consoles, scientific and graphing calculators, DVDs and GPS devices, PDAs, digital cameras and laptops to raise money for students whose utilities have been shut off or are experiencing other emergencies that would impact their ability to attend and succeed in school.

As the holidays approach and folks are upgrading their technology, its a great time to put out a box for family, neighbors, co-workers and community partners to dispose of their old tech toys and help support students in need! Alert your school social worker know where a box can be on display.