



# The Crossroads Chronicle

CROSSROADS YOUTH & FAMILY SERVICES

JANUARY-MARCH 2016

The Oklahoma State Legislature is currently in session considering laws that will affect everyone, including Crossroads Youth & Family Services. If you would like to contact your local representatives and express your opinions on the recent political climate, you may do so by visiting the [Find My Legislator](#) page on the Oklahoma State Legislature web site. By entering your home address, you will be able to find the contact information of State Senator and House Representative for your district.

Let your voice be heard today!

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## Oklahoma State Budget Cuts: What Does It Mean For Crossroads Youth & Family Services?

Most Oklahomans have watched the news and seen that as a state, we are in the midst of a budget crisis. State agencies including the Department of Corrections, the Department of Mental Health and the Department of Human Services have seen their budgets decreased by four percent in this fiscal year, which means a loss of millions of dollars used to provide services to Oklahoma residents.

Unfortunately, Crossroads Youth & Family Services has been affected by the budget cuts as well.

Our Youth Services program, which includes Counseling Services, the Emergency Youth Shelter and the Juvenile

Intervention Center, received our first 3.5% budget cut for this fiscal year and could receive another 4% cut in June.

Like many other state agencies, we are working hard to minimize the impact of these cuts on the children and families we serve. However, there may be some changes to services as we navigate through this period of transition. Please be aware that these changes may cause longer waiting lists for our Counseling Services, including our group programs such as TAPP and Directions In Divorce. In addition, there might be reduced services in some areas.

We would like to thank you all



for your continued support and ask that you bear with us as we make decisions that will be continually beneficial to our clients, staff and community. Like many others, we remain optimistic and are looking forward to better days.

## Crossroads HS/EHS Has CLASS!

The Crossroads Head Start/Early Head Start recently received the results from their CLASS monitoring. In the categories of Emotional Support, Classroom Organization and Instructional Support, we received a positive result and our scores were high enough to keep us competitively ranked when compared to the national averages.

Thank you to **Terrie Vicknair** (HS/EHS Program Director), **Donna Benson** (Assistant Program Director), **Dorothea Miller** (Assistant Program Director, Comanche County) and the entire HS/EHS team for showing CLASS every single day!





## Save The Date: Youth Services Car Wash!

On **Saturday, April 9** from 10:00 AM—2:00 PM, Youth Services will be hosting a car wash at the Crossroads Administrative Building, located at 1333 W. Main in Norman. This year, our staff will be collaborating with OU students who are participating in The Big Event, an annual day of giving and volunteerism designed to show support to the Norman community.

The money raised at this event will be used to defray the costs of summer activities for the children at the Emergency Youth Shelter. Last year, we raised over \$400 and we are hoping to exceed that goal this year.

How can you help?

- Talk it up! Post about the car wash on your social media and share with people who might be in the area.
- Come get your car washed! Who doesn't love a shiny, clean car?

Check out our Facebook and Twitter pages for more details!

## Extreme Eagle Scout Makeover at the Emergency Youth Shelter



Recently, Bradyn Siharath was looking for a meaningful project while working toward his Eagle Scout rank. After learning about Crossroads Youth & Family Services—in particular, the Emergency Youth Shelter—he decided that he wanted to do something to help the shelter have even more a homey feel than it already does.

Bradyn decided to build a storage unit and bookcases for the gaming systems and many books we have received through donations from Barnes & Noble. In accordance with the rules for an Eagle Scout project, Bradyn completed all of the work by himself. He did an excellent job and, as you can see, there is now plenty of room for books, video games and toys.

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On behalf of Crossroads Youth & Family Services, we would like to thank Bradyn for completing this project. We are grateful for all community support, but it means even more coming from someone in the same age group as the children we serve. We hope you enjoy your new Eagle Scout rank!

## An Excellent Peer Review For Youth Services!

Recently, Youth Services underwent a Peer Review by the Oklahoma Association of Youth Services. The objective of the site visit was to determine the continuation of Crossroads as a Designated Youth Service Agency. In order to continually use this status, the Peer Review Committee must find that the agency meets the standard on 11 mandatory questions and receives a score of 90% or higher on the remaining 37 questions.

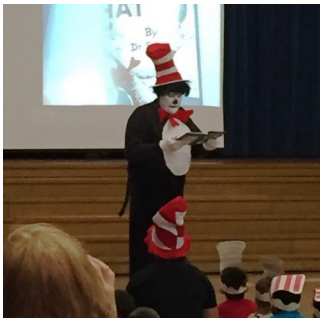
Once again, Youth Services exceeded expectations. No deficiencies were noted and all 11 mandatory questions met the standards needed. In addition, the Peer Review had this to say about our program:

*Crossroads Youth and Family Services, Inc. continues to show a high degree of dedication to the communities it serves. A dedicated and active Board of Directors and Executive Director; qualified, dedicated and personable staff; and community involvement are ongoing agency strengths. The Agency is commended for providing quality behavioral health services to meet service area needs. Congratulations on the excellent services provided by your agency to the children and youth of our state.*

This comes as no surprise to those of us who have worked with the Youth Services staff and seen their passion on a daily basis. Thank you to **Terran Manning, Ursula Walker, Gregg Fryday, Christabel Suthers** and all of the Youth Services staff for continually proving yourselves to be the best of the best!



## Celebrating Dr. Seuss!



*“I like nonsense, it wakes up the brain cells. Fantasy is a necessary ingredient in living.”*

*—Dr. Seuss*

In the world of early childhood education, March 2 is never just an ordinary day. You might walk into a classroom and find children feasting on green eggs and ham. If you venture in another direction, you could hear tales of fishes in many numbers and colors. And if you’re really paying attention, you might bump into a cat wearing a tall, striped hat. That’s how teachers, parents and staff all around the world choose to celebrate the birthday of Theodor Seuss Geisel—also known to his loyal fans as Dr. Seuss.

At Beginnings Academy in Lawton, the children were delighted to see three of their favorite Dr. Seuss characters brought to life: Thing 1 and Thing 2 and, of course, the Cat In The Hat. These willing volunteers are also a part of the Crossroads Youth & Family Services team: “**Mr. Russ**” is a former custodian and **Danny Reeise** and **Darron Weeks** are the current custodians at Beginnings Academy. To these three and all of the staff at our Head Start centers who made this day a delight for the children we serve, thank you. In you, Dr. Seuss’ legacy is alive and well!

## CROSSROADS YOUTH & FAMILY SERVICES



Recently, the staff at the Emergency Youth Shelter did some stealth planning and pulled off a big surprise for their supervisor. **Ursula Walker** (Assistant Director for Shelter Services) celebrated her 50th birthday in January and her staff made her Queen For A Day! The surprise party included matching shirts, a sash and tiara for the fearless leader. It was truly a celebration to remember. As Ursula stated, she has the “BEST staff ever.”

Happy Birthday, Ursula! Thank you for all of your hard work and dedication!

## STAFF NEWS & GRATITUDE

On January 8, Crossroads hosted a seminar on workplace safety. The facilitator was Jim McBride, the Infrastructure Protection Officer from the Oklahoma Office of Homeland Security. The two-hour presentation included real-life examples of tragic workplace events, as well as many useful suggestions to help everyone stay safe while in our various offices and buildings.

One of Mr. McBride’s most important tips was to make sure that the doors in every facility stay locked at all times. In addition, access should only be granted to individuals who employees recognize and can explicitly state the reason they are in the building. These are a few of the safety policies we follow in each one of our facilities, but a lot of the information shared by Mr. McBride was eye-opening for all of the staff members. We look forward to implementing more these safety strategies and hope that these measures will continually ensure the safety of our children and families.



*Danny Reeise, the custodian at Beginnings Academy, truly went above and beyond this month. He brought in his personal power washer and spent several hours cleaning the classroom chairs in preparation for the monitoring visit. The chairs look like new. As always, we are grateful for staff members who give their very best for the children we serve!*

—Submitted by Angie Rodriguez  
(LPS Collaboration Area Supervisor)