

## Partners in Service (PINS)

*PINS brings together faith communities with human service agencies. We promote the resiliency and success of children and youth who have been the victims of abuse and neglect, ranging in age from infant to adult.*

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# pin this up!



## summer 2009

### What's happening at Family Services?

#### New practices

Changes in our laws have meant changes in social work and legal practices for Family Services. Law now prioritizes custody of children who need out of home care. The courts seek first to transfer custody to family members or "fictive kin" – people with prior relationship to the child. These kin are screened for appropriateness and safety; children may not even need to come into custody of the state. Services can be offered to help with such transitions. Children fare better when not placed with strangers, according to studies. Foster care is still necessary, in many cases, but we hope that our children-in-custody numbers will be lower.

We are also trying to intervene positively with families before it becomes necessary to remove a child from their biological families. When reports are accepted regarding abuse or neglect, they may be assigned to an assessment track, in which social work and other supportive services are provided to keep the child safe in his/her home. Some reports will still be assigned to a substantiation track because of safety concerns, and removal of the child from the home will become a possibility.

These practices have come about because of good research about how children respond best. Congregations will find that PINS requests may include food and gasoline cards for basic needs and transportation for some families. Donated space is also needed, and toys and art supplies for Family Time Coaching – instructional parent-child visits.

#### New reporting for PINS program

The PINS Coordinator position is being funded in a slightly different way in the last couple of years. The contract position requires reports about outcomes of the program – that is, what does this program actually do to help children and families being served by Family Services? Both your congregation and the State of Vermont will do well knowing what a difference PINS makes! When requested, please respond with what your partnership has been donating; feel free to keep me in the loop with your emails ([PINS@ahs.state.vt.us](mailto:PINS@ahs.state.vt.us)), or drop me a note. Many thanks!

Becky Strader, State PINS Coordinator

## St. Albans

The Champlain Islands parish of the United Methodist Church is collecting school supplies.

## Burlington

Charlotte Congregational Church again assisted their partner, Lund Family Center by participating in a 7000-piece mailing and by collecting "Pamper Yourself" items for Mother's Day baskets for the Lund Moms. Here are the directions, in case your congregation would like to do something similar: start with a nice hand towel or face cloth and then finish filling it up with some of the following: *lotion, bath gels, shower scrubbie, face pack, lip gloss, powder, nail clippers, nail polish, emery boards, soaps, shampoo, conditioner, back brush, comb & brush, small magnifying mirror.*

## Hartford

PINS partners are collecting school supplies over the summer.

Sharon Congregational Church is collecting school supplies.

## St. Johnsbury

Congratulations to Tori Oliver, new mom of a baby boy, who will be returning this fall to her work as a Social Worker!

## Brattleboro

From Centre Congregational Church: plans are brewing for a PINS Sunday in November to support and promote our partnership. Becky Strader will be preaching, and Karen LaMorder will talk about Family Services in Brattleboro.

—Julie Ball

My PINS partner, St. Michael's Episcopal in Brattleboro, helped

one of my youth to pay for his cap and gown for Graduation from High School this month. They were very pleased to be helping out and added a hug to the donation.

--Don Tretler

Youth Development Coordinator

## Barre

Are you a good space organizer? Do you have a few hours to spare? Please call Resource Coordinator Joan Rock at 479-4260 to offer your services for organizing the Barre District Office supply closet!

Sandra Clougher retired at the end of July after many years as the District Director. Thank you and congratulations, Sandy! The new Director, Catherine Harris, has come on board, and we hope to have a PINS welcoming event for her in the fall, inviting all the Barre PINS partners.

Waterbury Community Church again contributed flowering plants to O.U.R.House's garden, as well as art and activity supplies that they collect year round in their "goodie box." Ginny Martin writes: Waterbury Center Community Church is still active with OUR House. In June I delivered the "goodie box", \$45.00, and flowers for the children's flower garden. We get the "goodie box" filled and delivered about every four months. We furnish flowers every spring and try to do as much financially as possible. I keep in touch with Kerrie and she lets me know if there are special needs.

The Barre Universalist Church made the following contributions to the PINS Program:

15 Easter baskets  
Many contributions of clothing, bedding, cash and gift cards for an 11-year-old girl in need.  
Baby items, clothing and cash donations for a Spring Baby

drive.

Ongoing donations of quality used children's clothing, gas cards and grocery store cards. I have been in touch via email with Joan Rock and Hilary Denton at DCF. Members and friends of our church have been very responsive to requests.

-Jeanette Hurdle  
Faith in Action Trustee  
Barre Universalist Church

Easter baskets were also provided by the Bethany and Berlin Congregational Churches, and Williamstown Federated. Now they're working on school supplies.

Baby showers for infant items were held in Waitsfield and Warren Congregational Churches. (See photo in the Warren report.)



Christ Church Episcopal in Montpelier has supplied several crocheted and knitted baby blankets as well as a half-dozen handmade quilts donated by a friend of the parish. We anticipate doing a back-to-school collection in late August.

All the congregations were involved in holiday giving.

First Presbyterian Church in Barre gave a donation for camps. First Presbyterian Church in Graniteville continues to provide funds for

needed items at the New Leaf Child Care Center.

The Universalist Church in Barre also donated a gift card for needs for an elementary-aged girl.

The Warren United Church tries to think ahead when planning stewardship and mission projects. The PINS Program is a very popular mission within our congregation. We always do at least four major activities during the year which include the following: A "Baby Shower" during our annual Mother's Day brunch; school supplies collection in late July; a diaper drive in October; and our holiday gift-giving in December. The Warren Church is very generous in all activities, but the favorite appears to be the gift-giving at Christmas. I love delivering the beautifully wrapped gifts to our PINS liaison, Joan Rock, in Barre. The security guards (at the district office building which also houses the County Court) even make comments like "Warren's 'Santa Claus' is back again," as four or five people quickly help unload the vehicle and take the presents up to the office for holiday distribution. The Warren United Church congregation looks forward each year to our PINS involvement and mission commitment.

– Gail Hietzker



## Newport

We hold quarterly brown bag lunches to discuss upcoming needs. The group listed needed

camping supplies for the summer.

## Rutland

The new, younger Tinmouth Women's Circle has yet to settle on its mission, though a couple of its (very busy) leaders have told me they would like to keep the PINS connection. –Susan Lloyd

From Deb Malette, Resource Coordinator: We are having a great summer here in RDO. We were the recipients of our usual Camp Scholarship Monies from Grace Congregational Church who were extra generous this year. We also needed twin beds for some sisters and PINS partners came through for them to move in with relatives.

## Springfield

Robbie Wierzbicki, Resource Coordinator, writes: A very special thank you to our PINS partners at St. Luke's Church in Chester, VT. They have been extremely generous to our office. They donated money to purchase two Easter dinners for two families in need. They raised \$300.00, yes, \$300 dollars, and gave the money to one of our foster families who has three graduating (foster and or adopted) children this year. The money helped this family with graduation expenses and class rings.

They recently delivered duffel bags filled with camp supplies for our kiddos. Supplies included sun block, bug spray, flashlights, notebooks, personal hygiene items etc.

Anthony Whittemore, Desi LaPine and other members of the youth group at Precision Valley Baptist Church raised money to purchase hats, mittens and scarves for children in need. You all are

AWESOME!!!!

All of our PINS Partners will be invited to our annual summer picnic at Plymouth State Park on August 29th, 2009 starting at 10 AM.

– Robbie (and Marcia Clinton, one of St. Luke's liaisons)

The United Church of Bellows Falls continues our mutually beneficial relationship with Mountainside Teen Shelter in Ludlow, VT. We delivered 14 hand-made Christmas stockings filled with stocking stuffers appropriate for teenagers just before Christmas. We also delivered a giant Easter Basket full of Easter treats in April. We gathered and delivered gardening supplies for their summer vegetable garden. The students helped serve tables at our annual "Sugar-On-Snow" supper in March and they also got to experience this Vermont tradition. They will also help us at our Pig Roast on July 31.

--Tim Johnson

Andover Community Church bought a bike for a teenage boy for his birthday. They also sponsored a teen girl to attend a school trip to NYC for a long weekend. They also put money towards a laptop for a teen girl who is attending college in the fall.

Savannah Gordon  
Social Worker

## Bennington

George Keen from longtime PINS Partner, Shaftsbury Methodist Church, writes that despite the transition between ministers in their congregation, their mission projects are still going strong. "Bennington DCF has received several shipments of items ranging from car seats to food for children who spend a great deal of time at DCF. A discretionary fund was left at the office for any unforeseen need or emergency use." George is very committed to

PINS, and hopes to “make this the most effective PINS in Bennington.”

### School Supplies

- 🍏 Pencils
- 🍏 Pens
- 🍏 Binders
- 🍏 Notebooks
- 🍏 Loose-leaf paper
- 🍏 Erasers
- 🍏 Glue
- 🍏 Crayons
- 🍏 Backpacks
- 🍏 Rulers
- 🍏 Colored Pencils
- 🍏 Markers



## Morrisville

Stowe Community Church provided campers with duffle bags, healthy snacks, toothbrushes, shampoo, water bottles and other assorted camper needs. The Women's Mission also donated \$100.00 for admission to camp. We would like to thank Julie Kowslowski for all of her hard work in helping those children on a daily basis and being our connection to them. She is a hard working young woman.

--Diane Lee

The Morrisville First Congregational Church is participating in gathering camping gear for summer campers, especially for Camp Agape, the camp for children who have incarcerated parents.

- Dot Reeve



## Middlebury

We are moving ahead with helping Bobbie Godin (new partner) on some items such as a bike and helmet. We met in early August with Kara Griswold, our church's liaison, and Becky, to plan our next promotion.

--Kim Hornung-Marcy, pastor of N. Ferrisburgh United Methodist Church.

DCFS 10

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