



# Psyche Matters

The Newsletter of the Sullivan Center for Children

## Diana Miller Retires after 22 Years...Well, Almost!

*by Kathy Sullivan, Ph.D., ABPP*

She has greeted Sullivan Center patients since the day we opened back in July of 1989. For 10 years she was a one woman show in running the office. She was receptionist, secretary for all of the clinicians, did all the scheduling, billing, and typing, payroll, and served as office manager and personal assistant to me. As we became larger she helped train office staff, served as office manager, was an assistant to me and Psyche, and did everything in her power to make the Sullivan Center what it is today.

Diana was the first employee of the Sullivan Center. For whatever unknown reason she accepted my offer when I, as a young psychologist with a dream of having a mental health center dedicated to children and families, approached her and asked her if she wanted to leave her stable, previous job as

the Assistant to the Clinical Director of Kingsview Hospital in Reedley, and come with me to embark on my very unstable, risky proposition of establishing the Sullivan Center for Children. In no time flat she came to my office and said she was on board. Diana was a very dedicated Kingsview employee for 24 years, and we worked



together at Kingsview for almost 9 years, where during my last three years I developed and was Unit Chief of a 15-bed inpatient children's unit. We both share an amazing respect for the mental health care provided at Kingsview Hospital and our

experiences there, but we both could also see the writing on the wall as Managed Care had descended and was in the process of destroying the concept of long-term inpatient care. In short order it did and Kingsview Hospital had to close its doors only a few years later. Diana and I, and several other clinicians who came from Kingsview including several still practicing at the Sullivan Center today - Dr. Mark Barnes, Dr. Laurie Rabens, and Dr. Susan Napolitano - brought with us the quality of care, and philosophy of dedication and commitment to patients. We brought a never give up attitude, and strategies of using a comprehensive and team approach to training and treatment that was alive at Kingsview, and we worked hard to create a place in which it could continue to flourish at the Sullivan Center.

For the first several months the Sullivan Center was me and Diana - and a

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dream. We barely had furniture, and toys were on the floor of my office. She had a typewriter, a desk, a phone, and a file cabinet. It was bare bones at first but we grew in a flash. Within 2 years Diana was taking care of many patients and seven clinicians. Diana opened the very first medical chart for a

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## Farewell to One of Our Staff: Diana Miller, Office Manager (Cont.)

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patient here and recently created chart # 8880. She was here to help it start and has been a very important part of helping it grow, watching as over 8,880 children and their families got help here.

Diana has the most unique of personalities. She is hilarious without even trying, and when anyone is emotionally down, Diana's heart is huge. It is difficult to believe that 22 years have gone by, and that Diana won't be here every day. But now she will get to step back a bit and get a chance to spend more time with her other interests as well. She has a wonderful family - great children and grandchildren - with whom she will get to spend more time. She is also embarking and volunteering on a mission of devotion with her church that is near and dear to her heart and will keep her busy many hours of the week. We'll miss her daily presence.

BUT..... we aren't letting go of her completely! Thought she could escape - eh - no just kidding. She loves the Sullivan Center and wants to continue to support our work too - so she will be here most every Saturday - still welcoming patients, typing, taking care of Psyche, and doing everything we need, and on some days you may see her here covering for one of our staff if they are ill.

Diana is and has been a truly special employee; she is and will always be part of the very fabric of the Sullivan Center. On behalf of myself and the staff, I thank her for, and truly appreciate, her loyalty and all she has done for the Sullivan Center over the years.

P.S. Psyche thanks her too, but is a tad miffed that she is not around as much.

### Additional Tribute. . .

by Mary Young

Lucky for Diana, she is semi-retiring, as

you'll still see her sweet face around but not as often. I'm sure she'll be enjoying Yoga, bicycle riding and gardening.

Not only has Diana been our Office Manager, she has also been a dear friend and major contributor to our Sullivan Center family. She always has a smile on her face and

is eager to drop what she is doing to jump in and help others out. Speaking for myself, she has been a "Godsend".

Diana has one of the sunniest and oftentimes, silliest personalities you can't help but love. People are usually smiling in her presence.

We love you Diana and are thankful you are still with us even if it's only for a day or two out of the week. May God be with you always.



## Meet the Staff: David Wolter, Licensed Marriage & Family Therapist

by Miriam Fishman, M.A.

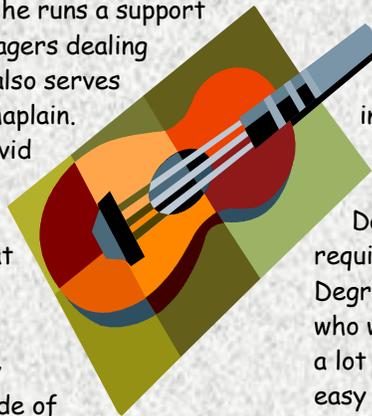
David Wolter, M.A. LMFT received his Bachelor of Arts from San Jose State University in history and then completed his Masters of Divinity at Western Seminary. He then continued his education by completing his Masters of Arts in Marriage and Family Therapy at MB Biblical Seminary. David began working at the Sullivan Center in 2008 as an MFT Intern. This February, after months of preparation, David officially became a licensed marriage and family therapist. Congratulations David!

One of the many hats David wears at the Sullivan Center is facilitator of the parenting classes How To Talk So Kids Will Listen and Siblings Without Rivalry. David also works for Hinds Hospice where he runs a support group for teenagers dealing with grief; he also serves as an on-call Chaplain. In addition, David teaches Introduction to Psychology at Fresno Pacific University.

David has many interests outside of

work. He enjoys outdoor activities such as running, hiking, and cycling. He has also run many half marathons. Another interest David has is in singing, playing, and listening to music.

Anyone who enters David's office can see his love of music. His office is filled with musical instruments including a keyboard, guitars, and bongos to name a few. In fact, the topic of David's senior project, a requirement to complete his Masters Degree, was music therapy. Clinicians who work with David have said he adds a lot of energy to the office and it is easy to see his love for his job.



# Boundaries and Limit-Setting with Your Children

by Courtney Clinton, Psy.D.

Have you ever gone to the grocery store, pharmacy, or department store thinking that it was going to be a quick trip in and out for one or two items, but then turns in to a stress-filled ordeal with your child running off, grabbing things off the shelf, and throwing tantrums?

Unfortunately, this happens more often than we'd like to admit. So what do we do about these overwhelming occurrences? Well here are a few tips to help with setting boundaries and limits for your children while out in public, as well as in your family's daily life. None of these tips are sure things or quick fixes though. Behaviors take time to change, but with a little persistence and perseverance, your public outings may become more enjoyable.

First off, provide clear and succinct expectations for your child before entering the store. When getting ready to get out of the car in the parking lot, sit with your child for a minute and state your expectations of their behaviors while inside the store. For example, "We are only going inside to pick up some apples and bread. We will not be buying anything else today. I expect you to walk next to me, keep your hands to your side, and you will not get upset." If the child begins to go

against these expectations while inside the store, remind them that they agreed to these terms and will continue to follow the rules.



Another idea for making public outings less painful is to put the child in charge of particular tasks. For example, before going to the grocery store, ask the child to help you write out a list of needed items, and assign them to look for particular items on the list, such as oranges, cereal, etc. This way, the child is less likely to feel bored and is not left to their own devices to keep themselves occupied- they have a specific task to focus on and complete.

Finally, you must have realistic expectations for your child's age. A younger child is going to be more likely to

grab things from the shelf, hide in the clothes racks, or cry when they don't get their way. Children's brains, emotions, and behaviors have not yet matured enough to behave as adults do. But in order to help negate these behaviors, you can provide positive verbal reinforcement for appropriate behaviors, no matter how small or insignificant the behavior seems to you. For example, when you get back to the car, tell your child how proud you are of them

for staying next to you the entire time or for not getting upset when you told them no or for coming back when you asked them to. Children enjoy hearing how happy the adults in their lives are with them, and will feel a sense of

accomplishment, pride, and ability... "I'm a big girl; I can help with the shopping!"



## Recommended Reading:

- Crory, E. (1994). Love and Limits: Guidance Tools for Creative Parenting.
- Cloud, H. & Townsend, J. (1992). Boundaries: When to Say YES, When to Say NO, to Take Control of Your Life.
- Cloud, H. & Townsend, J. (2001). Boundaries With Kids: How Healthy Choices Grow Healthy Children.
- Mackenzie, R.J. (1998). Setting Limits: How to Raise Responsible, Independent Children by Providing Clear Boundaries (Revised and Expanded Second Edition).
- Clarke, J.I., Dawson, C. & Bredehoft, D. (2003). How Much is Enough?: Everything You Need to Know to Steer Clear of Overindulgence and Raise Likeable, Responsible and Respectful Children.

## Special Announcements:

**CALENDAR:** The Sullivan Center will be closed for Memorial Day (Sat. 5/28 and Mon. 5/30) and Independence Day (Sat. 7/2 and Mon. 7/4) and Labor Day (Sat. 9/3 and Mon. 9/5). Groups will be cancelled on these holiday Saturdays: 5/28, 7/2, and 9/3. Please check with your therapist to verify appointments for the holidays and to let us know of upcoming vacation dates.

**GROUPS:** We currently offer 7 different groups:  
*Tuesday nights—high schoolers*  
*Tuesday nights—Parental Guidance (see below)*  
*Wednesday nights—6<sup>th</sup>-7<sup>th</sup> boys social skills*  
*Friday afternoons - young adults*  
*Saturday mornings 9am - 4-7 yr. olds*  
*Saturday mornings 10am - 10-14 yr. olds*  
*Saturday mornings 11am - 7-10 yr. olds*

**PARENTING SEMINARS:** The Sullivan Center is proud to offer two seminars this Summer/Fall to help parents succeed. Both are based on the popular books by Elaine Mazlish and Adele Faber and will be led by David Wolter, M.A., LMFT:

### Siblings Without Rivalry

(six 2-hour sessions; cost \$25 each session)

### How to Talk So Kids Will Listen

(six 2-hour sessions; cost \$25 each session)

Watch for flyers in our lobbies (and on our newsletter page of our website) for more details on these important group seminars. You can also sign up now by calling our office at 271-1186 x115.

**PARENTAL GUIDANCE:** The Sullivan Center offers a parenting class for those interested in adding to their skills and those court-mandated to attend. Skills for co-parenting are taught by Dr. Hinmon on Tuesday nights at 7pm. He can be contacted at 271-1186 x124 for more information.

# Resiliency. . .Standing Strong Through Difficult Times

by David Wolter, M.A., LMFT

When difficult times come, why do some fare better than others, maintaining a better outlook on life and still feeling healthy and strong? Why are some overwhelmed while others seem to endure and persevere? The answer, according to several studies by the American Psychological Association (APA) after the 9/11 attacks, is resiliency.

**Resilience** "is the process of adapting well in the face of adversity, trauma, tragedy, threats, or even significant sources of stress - such as family and relationship problems, serious health problems, or workplace and financial stressors. It means 'bouncing back' from difficult experiences" (APA, "The Road to Resilience", retrieved on 11/29/10 from <http://www.apa.org/helpcenter/road-resilience.aspx>). They list six factors that help a person become more resilient when tornados or tsunamis hit, when the stock market takes a dive or when gas prices skyrocket, when you're grieving a loss of a loved one or when you get bullied. . . .

## Factors in Resilience

**Hope** - The APA brochure on building resilience ("The Road to Resilience") speaks of hope when they say that a person can build resilience in their life by maintaining a hopeful outlook based on optimism rather than living by fear and worry. The APA similarly emphasizes staying focused on positive things you can do and maintaining hope about future outcomes.

**Personal Mastery** - Personal Mastery is that internal locus of control and self-efficacy where we feel as if we are in control of our responses even if we can't control external circumstances. The APA states that people who believe that they have the skills necessary to effectively manage or accomplish the task at hand will be more resilient as they will give a more sustained effort and have a greater likelihood of success. It also states that people who can exert positive control over the environment will be more resilient and will show more control over their problems.

**Meaning** - The third quality that builds resilience is meaning. The APA calls it a sense of coherence. It says that people who expect that life's events will make sense and that they'll have the resources to face those events will have increased resilience.

**Hardiness** - The fourth quality that builds resilience is hardiness, the quality of being tough and more sturdy than others.

Hardiness comes when we take care of our bodies through proper sleep, food and exercise. The APA describes hardiness a bit differently as it describes those who are actively engaged believing they can alter the course of events in their lives. It also describes hardiness as that part of people that accepts change as a natural part of life, as a challenge rather than as a threat.

**Active Coping** - The fifth quality that builds resilience is active coping skills. This refers to active problem solving, choosing manageable tasks, working from our strengths, exercising pace and rest and maintaining a sense of perspective. The APA says that "there is no one right way to cope with stressful events" but that "active coping (i.e., doing something to try to address the problem) is typically associated with better psychological and physical outcomes than avoidant coping."

**Social Support** - The sixth and final quality that builds resilience is social support. We all need a sense of community with people that we share life with. The social support system needs to be present, mutual and balanced. We need to have people that we can turn to in times of trouble, people who can offer us solace and support.

*One really great way of improving your communication with your child (and thus building their resilience) is to actually SAY LESS and let them SAY MORE! The purpose of this is to increase your empathy for your child, so they feel cared for and loved more, which will help them settle down (what Dr. Ross Campbell calls "filling their emotional tank" in How to Really Love Your Child). You can do this with a word, "Hmmm", "I See", or you can give their feeling a name, "Tommy, I can see you are really angry." This doesn't mean you don't confront them when they cross the established boundaries. You can still state your feelings without attacking their character and you can state your expectations. But you can do all this with many fewer sentences. Try it.*

## Building Resilience

Develop Caring and Supportive Relationships with Others

Work on Communication and Problem-Solving Skills

Take Care of Yourself: Get Adequate Sleep and Exercise and Eat Nutritional Meals and Snacks

Take Your Thoughts Captive - Work on Perspective, Optimism and Correct Interpretations

Create a Story (a Narrative) That Gives Your Life and Struggles Meaning. . .and Do Something Today!



## The Sullivan Center for Children

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the World Through  
a Child's Eyes."

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