

The Child and Family Guidance Center

Brief History of the Agency

The agency has a long history dating back to 1924 when the “Better Bridgeport” newspaper reported that the Bridgeport Society for Mental Hygiene voted to open a free psychiatric clinic. On September 1, 1925 the Bridgeport Mental Hygiene Clinic was opened to the public at 991 Broad Street in Bridgeport a few days a week with one day for psychiatric examinations by Dr. Daniel P. Griffin, psychiatrist. The clinic was staffed by a part-time psychologist and a full-time social worker. On October 6, 1928, Dr. Griffin resigned as medical director and Dr. Everett S. Rademacher assumed the position on January 1, 1929. Twenty years later, Dr. Gerald J. Taylor became the medical director and the first full-time psychiatrist who provided free care to the public. Taylor reported that during February, March and April in 1949, the clinic significantly treated more individuals than the entire admissions for 1946. Just a few years later in January, 1951, Dr. Elwyn Smolen became the new medical director. Five years later the clinic received a state grant of \$4,000 to expand its services and in 1957, the Bridgeport Society for Mental Hygiene changed its name to the Child Guidance Clinic of Greater Bridgeport. In 1974 Dr. Smolen resigned and Patrick D. Bologna was named executive director of the agency. Bologna established the Parent Enrichment Program in 1977 with funding from the United Way and the Greater Bridgeport Bar Association. That same year the agency expanded and opened a clinic on the East Side of Bridgeport at 540 Pembroke Street. The clinic later moved to 932 East Main Street two years later, but had to close permanently in 1991 due to a fire at that site. After 18 years with the Child Guidance Center of Greater Bridgeport, Pat Bologna resigned and Dr. L. Philip Guzmán, a clinical psychologist, assumed directorship of the agency. To date, the agency, located at 180 Fairfield Avenue, has 100 staff members and 20 programs and services geared to serve children with mental health, behavioral and substance abuse problems as well as providing supportive services to parents with a special focus on families as a unit. The agency has expanded its services beyond the Greater Bridgeport area to Fairfield County via its Emergency Mobile Crisis Services and In-home Functional Family Treatment. The agency currently provides treatment to over 2,000 families annually, offers parenting education and pairs seniors as mentors with children in schools and community centers.