

## Resources for Your Family

NFSD Article for November, 2013

By Radha Selvester, Community Outreach/Safe Place Specialist for CDS Family & Behavioral Health Services

**CDS Family & Behavioral Health Services** is a nonprofit that was established more than 40 years ago. CDS serves families in 11 counties of North Central Florida with a mission of “Strengthening Communities by Building Strong Families.” Programs offered by CDS have varied and the name was changed in 2007 from Corner Drug Store, but the mission is constant. The services offered are life-changing and even life-saving for those who utilize them. And the best part – there is no charge to participants!

**CDS Interface Youth Shelters** – CDS is most well-known for their shelters in Gainesville, Palatka, and Lake City. About 500 youth age 10-17 who are homeless, runaway, truant, or ungovernable stay in these shelters for a night, a month, or even longer. Most fit the “ungovernable” category – meaning they are breaking rules, disrespecting or threatening parents, etc. While staying at Interface, youth participate in a social skills development curriculum as well as daily counseling sessions when not in school. Most are able to return home after their stay and are successful in their relationships with family members and at school. The Gainesville shelter number: (352) 244-0618.

**CDS Family Action Counseling** – For youth age 6-17 that do not need the residential component of Interface Youth Shelters, Family Action counseling is a great service. Family Action offers individual counseling in a variety of locations to help children and teens improve themselves and reach positive goals. To inquire about counseling: (352) 244-0628 x3822.

**Spotlight on Youth** – Now is the time to have your high school students apply to audition for the April 6, 2014 teen talent show, Spotlight on Youth. This will be the 15<sup>th</sup> annual event and includes music and dancing as well as a visual art show and an opportunity to see your child’s poetry in print. Applications and sponsorship information are available at [www.cdsfl.org](http://www.cdsfl.org).

**Prevention Programs** – CDS has expanded its prevention programs to include full-time staff at three schools in Gainesville (Bishop, Lincoln, & Horizon) and several schools in Levy County. In the Gainesville middle schools, CDS staff uses the curriculum “Project SUCCESS” and works with small groups of students to help them stay off drugs and make good life choices. (352) 244-0628 x3831

**Independent Living** – For youth age 13-23 aging out of foster care, CDS offers Independent Living support so youth can stay in school, become employed, find housing, and become self-sufficient and contributing young adults in society. (352) 244-0628 x3827

**National Safe Place & National Runaway Safeline Affiliates** – CDS is the local partner for these two national organizations that help displaced youth. There are shelters all over the USA that are similar to CDS Interface Youth Shelters. By contacting the National Safe Place organization via text message (Txt 4 Help), youth in trouble will receive a message with information about the closest Safe Place site/shelter. (By texting the word “SAFE” to 69866 with current location, youth instantly receive help.) The National Runaway Safeline maintains a toll-free number (1-800-RUNAWAY) that youth can call if they are having a hard time, thinking about running away, or are on the streets. Parents can also call for support. They have well-trained crisis counselors to help and can also arrange for a “Home-Free” bus ticket through Greyhound for a runaway youth to return home.

If CDS does not offer the help you need, they will refer you to one of their 70+ partners who do. Office: (352) 244-0628 or Shelter: (352) 244-0618 (24/7). [www.cdsfl.org](http://www.cdsfl.org)



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