The Sun Shines on...
Our Social Work Department

This month we shine a light on our Social Work Department. Jill Biskup and Samantha Pelinger are our social workers and Sara Tolomer is our Healthcare Coordinator. Jill, Sam, and Sara all began working at Sunshine this past spring and are so happy to have joined the Sunshine family. In a short time, they have been able to establish themselves as a unified team, working together to ensure that the children’s needs are met as they continue to establish the strong link between families and our interdisciplinary team.

In her role as Healthcare Coordinator, Sara provides critical support to the department. She values opportunities to interact with families, whether its coordinating care plan scheduling or conducting Family Satisfaction interviews. She also writes our monthly newsletter, is a member of the admissions team and assists with insurance submissions.

Newly licensed social workers, Samantha and Jill both had the advantage of developing their clinical skill sets as graduate school interns here at Sunshine. They are most excited to work directly with the families — providing updates on their children, accessing important resources, problem-solving and providing emotional and social support. Samantha and Jill have enjoyed building relationships with the families and consider this to be essential to their role as social workers. Samantha explains, “I enjoy the close connections we develop with our Sunshine families. As social workers, we need to understand what each family values and what their specific wishes are for their child in order to best help each individual family. We are here for the children and their families and consider every one of their concerns, questions and requests to be extremely important. I always want to know that families feel that they are being heard.”

The social work team values any opportunity to share in all of the family’s life moments. Says Jill, “To gain the respect and confidence of the families that we serve is a privilege. As much as we enjoy celebrating the joyous moments with families, such as the birth of a new family member or a wedding of a child’s sibling, we want families to know that we are here for them when times are challenging as well. We are here for any additional support that families may want or need.”

Jill, Samantha and Sara understand the importance of working with the families as a unified team to guarantee that our remarkable children continue to thrive and live their best lives. They are always reachable and as Samantha says, “We are only a phone call away!”

Jill Biskup: 914-333-7089; Samantha Pelinger: 914-333-7082; and Sara Tolomer: 914-333-7075.
We Appreciate Our QOL Team!

Sunshine gives a huge “Thank You” to our amazing Quality of Life Team – Chaya Rochel and Tamar -- for their hard work and dedication to the children and their families each and every day. Each member of this team balances multiple responsibilities, including supervising cuddles club playtime, managing and maintaining personal possessions, honoring family requests, coordinating the Faithful Journeys Program and visiting children in the hospital. They all keep our children happy and smiling all day long! Thank you Chaya Rochel and Tamar for your devotion to Sunshine and our incredible children!

Our Feature of the Month is... the Thanksgiving Parade!

For the month of November, Sunshine followed the theme of gratitude and togetherness. What better way to wrap up the month than with a Thanksgiving Parade! The parade marched through the Sunshine hallways with joyful staff and children. The festivities concluded with a turkey craft and a delicious Thanksgiving meal provided by Sam Ward and her talented team. We are grateful for the children, families and staff that make Sunshine the wonderful home that it is!

Winter Safety Tips

Winter is cold, but for children it’s a fun time to play outside. Here are some tips to help keep them safe:

- Keep children indoors if the temperature falls below -25°C, or if the wind chill is -28°C or greater.
- Tell children not to put their tongues on cold metal. It may sound silly, but some kids still do it.
- Advise children to stay away from snowplows and snow blowers.
- Advise children to play in an area away from roads, fences and water.
- Apply sunscreen to exposed skin, even when it’s cloudy.
- Dress children in several layers of clothing. If they get too warm, they can remove one layer at a time.
- Always remove children’s wet clothing and boots immediately.

- Make sure children wear a hat because most body heat is lost through the head.
- Have children keep their ears covered at all times to prevent frostbite.
- Have children wear mittens instead of gloves.
- Dress children in warm, waterproof boots that are roomy enough to wiggle their toes around.
- Remove all drawstrings from children’s clothing to prevent strangulation. Use Velcro or other fasteners instead and use a neck warmer instead of a scarf.
- Children should always wear a helmet when sledding, skating, snowboarding or snowmobiling.

Risk for the Flu

The flu (influenza) is a respiratory illness caused by a virus. Flu infections are highly contagious. They spread easily when children are in a group with other children.

Flu is more dangerous than the common cold for children and can lead to serious health conditions like pneumonia or bacterial infections. Each year many children are hospitalized and some die from the flu.

The flu vaccine is approved for use in children 6 months and older, including both healthy children and those with chronic health problems. Because children with chronic health conditions are at a higher risk of getting flu-related complications, it is especially important that they get a flu shot.

How can I protect my child against the flu?

- Flu Vaccines: The most important thing is for your child to get a flu vaccine every year. People who care for them should be vaccinated as well.
- Distance: Your child should avoid close contact with people who are sick.

*Hand washing: Wash hands often with soap and running water (for as long as it takes to sing the “Happy Birthday” song). If soap and water are not available, use an alcohol-based hand rub. Make sure all family members are also doing it.

U.S. Dept. of Health & Human Services Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

Wishing you a happy and healthy holiday season!

SUNSHINE CHILDREN’S HOME & REHAB CENTER
15 Spring Valley Road, Ossining, NY 10562• 914.333.7000
sunshinechildrenshome.org • info@sunshinechildrenshome.org