Thinking about youth services one youth at a time.

HALE KIPA Annual Report 2003

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In youth services, it is often hard to do. Certain statistics can indicate trends. For foster children, success may mean shorter numbers of bed-days before returning to the home. For the community, success may be inferred from lower crime rates among juveniles and lower percentages of recidivism.

But the truth is, much of our work is not so easy to quantify. Our successes are often best described in narrative case histories, in the stories of personal triumph of many of our youth clients and their families.

Most often, these narratives are written from the point of view of the caseworker, as the progress of the youth is tracked over the course of weeks, months or years. But success looks very different from the vantage point of the youth in placement. This report offers both perspectives.

# How do we measure success?

While case histories are usually presented anonymously to protect the privacy of the individual youth, in this report we break that practice to offer a picture of one exceptional young lady we have served. Her name is Crystal Cagata, and she has gone public with her story in order to help other foster youth.

We hope the perspectives presented here will help all of us remember that the success of our services is measured, ultimately, one youth at a time.



President and Chief Executive Officer



When, at fiscal year's end, we contemplate and evaluate our activities of the past twelve months, we naturally enough look at Hale Kipa from the perspective of the service provider. We tend to examine our successes and failures in terms of statistics and case studies written by staff and counselors. While it gives us a very real picture of how we're doing, it's not always the whole story.

A recent interview reminded me of that fact. A young woman was talking about how difficult it is for an adolescent to be in placement in one of our residential or shelter programs; how abnormal that is in comparison to a "typical" adolescent experience. I began to think about how different Hale Kipa's work appears from that young woman's point of view.

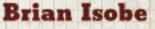
Looking at the work we do from the client's eyes, we get a sense of the courage these youth show in their willingness to engage in the process. Thrust into unfamiliar social situations like emergency shelters, residence homes or foster families, these brave youth must confront major issues as they learn to take control of their lives. I truly wonder if I would be able to do what any one of our clients does on a daily basis.

Seeing the process from the perspective of the youth we serve can be humbling. We begin to recognize that when we are successful at Hale Kipa – as measured by the growth in our clients' ability to appropriately participate in society – our work is only part of the solution. The transformational changes that take place in our clients are clearly the result of a partnership between Human Services and client. Without the willingness of the individual to put in the necessary effort and to be open to change, the process would be futile.

Agreeing to participate by becoming a member of the community of a residential or shelter program or by living in a foster home is much more difficult than we sometimes recognize and acknowledge. Many of us live lives of relative comfort. I myself am often provoked by frustrations and irritations that may pale in comparison with the difficult life issues that our young clients face.

I cannot know each individual's sense of the degree of difficulty of a problem, the enormity of the challenges they face, or the severity of their personal and psychological pain. Each person experiences the world differently. But in every case, our clients must demonstrate tremendous commitment and a willingness to trust us in order for our partnership to succeed.

In the stories that are included in this Report we find a perspective that is important to remember: from a client's eyes the services that we provide appear dramatically different than they are from those of a funder, referral or provider. We must always respect and appreciate that fact.



Chair, Board of Directors July 1, 2003—June 30, 2004

Success. What you can measure, you can manage.

That theory lies behind the reliance of many organizations to see their work in terms of facts and figures. It's the reason that the members of Hale Kipa's Board of Directors often evaluate the success of Hale Kipa by monitoring attributes that are susceptible to measurement.

Performance reports, budgets, cost reimbursement reports: these are the tools we use to obtain funds for our programs. The government agencies that purchase our services from us are under constant pressure to work within limited budgets. They want to be able to evaluate and track finances, client referrals, clients served, and clients that graduate from programs.

But in human services there are, of course, other measures of success that are harder to measure, though no less real. They reflect the positive impact on our society – socially and economically – when kids are diverted from outcomes that include drug use and criminal behavior. Their consideration is just as important as anything we can assign a number to.

The Board rarely interacts with clients. And so our focus on numbers and statistics can obscure the very real challenges these youth face on a daily basis. Fortunately, the staff of Hale Kipa helps to remind us of the humanity of our mission. The words of the clients themselves are an inspiration.

We can best measure our success when we consider all aspects of the outcome of our work: the operational efficiency of the organization, the cost effectiveness of our programs, and the real and personal individual success stories of the thousands of youth we serve.

Ultimately, what matters most is the perception of the youth we serve. When they believe in their own success, then we as an organization have truly succeeded.



## Ho'okala

When she entered the program, this young woman was dealing with the shock of finding out that her father killed himself when she was very young. That her mother was now married to the deceased father's brother caused even more pain. She was failing school and was in an unhealthy relationship with a boyfriend.

I didn't want to go into counseling. My mother made me.

Within a year of starting counseling sessions with Hale Kipa, she was earning a 3.0 in school. When her life began to improve, she was the one who began to ask for her sessions to continue. As far as she has come, however, her pride in her accomplishments is tempered by a strong sense of where she is and where she has to go.

I still make some not so great choices. I put stuff off I should be doing. But I'm getting better all the time.

### **Hale Kupono**

For some youth, the transition into the structured environment of a residential home is particularly difficult. At first, this youth resisted every attempt to help her improve her behavior. But when she realized that the staff was not going to give up on her, she began to change.

The more I did what they asked me, the more I got to play. I wasn't the one that was always in trouble anymore.

She began to resist the provocations of her friends, and started to make good choices on her own. Short visits with her mother became whole weekends. Back at the residential home one Sunday night, she asked "Aunty" to hold the toys she had brought from her Mom's house so that she wouldn't be tempted to play after bedtime.

I couldn't believe the reaction I got. She hugged me. I am going to miss her when I go home, but I will finally be with my mom.

### Youth Outreach

For weeks, this teen had been living on the streets. It has been days since his last good meal or shower. An infection on his foot needed medical attention. He was about to give up hope when he met Kevin, a Youth Outreach caseworker.

He hooked me up with some snacks, condoms, a toothbrush, and told me about a place called YO. I wasn't too sure about it, but decided to check it out.

The YO house in Waikiki isn't fancy, but for hundreds of streetidentified homeless teens, it's a place to get a decent meal and a chance to regroup. Drop-ins can see a nurse, do laundry or just take a warm shower. The staff can even help teens find a job or a place to live, or help them get back into school.

I like how they didn't try to tell me what to do, just offered to help. I'm still tired, hungry, and wet when it rains, but I know I've got a place to get warm and dry.

### **Shelter Services**

This youth's mother and boyfriend were arrested for using their home as an ice lab. The youth was separated from younger siblings, for whom he had cared, and placed in Hale Kipa's Emergency Shelter program. After a few weeks, the youth began to realize that things were getting better.

#### I felt safe. I didn't have to wonder when I would get to eat again.

Hale Kipa staff helped him to understand that his mother needed help, that the separation would give her time to heal. Weekly visits with the teen's siblings were arranged. The shelter provided a program of activities within a structured environment that included daily chores and house rules. The staff always made time to talk.

We all missed our families, but it just felt better than worrying all the time. I guess this was our family, for a little while. The work of Hale Kipa always comes down to its effect on each individual client.



### **Crystal Cagata**

She's 17 years old. She's about to graduate high school with a solid B+ average. When she walks down the hall, it seems like everybody knows her, wants to say hello. People know her outside of school, too: she's been quoted in the newspapers and participates with Hawaii Coalition of Foster Youth to help raise awareness of the challenges for youth in foster care.

Three years ago, her doctors would have told you none of this was possible.

Crystal entered Hale Kipa's Therapeutic Foster Home Program at age 14. She had come directly from Kahi Mohala, a residential treatment center, where she was diagnosed with schizophrenia. Her treatment team thought that there was some hope for her, but that she might be in and out of mental institutions for the rest of her life. At regular intervals, she would suffer psychotic breaks that would erase most of the progress she had made.

Three years counting, and no breaks.

Actually, Crystal was an A student before her first psychotic episode, before her life began to fall apart. There had been some problems in her past, and she had been removed from the home when it became clear her family had difficulty caring for her at that time. What followed was a series of institutions and foster homes, one loss after another.

Hale Kipa found Crystal the perfect match in her

therapeutic foster family. Already caring for their own son with special needs, the foster parents brought understanding and empathy to the task, and developed a nurturing, structured environment for Crystal. She gradually began to believe that she was in a safe environment, that she would not be abandoned yet again. She began to ask for the support she needed, and the support came.

Three months after entering the Program, the Hale Kipa team transitioned Crystal into Waipahu High School. At first reluctant to accept her, the school decided to give her a shot. The going was tough at first. She was teased by other students and got into fights.

Then things began to change. Building on her safe home environment and regular sessions with her Hale Kipa caseworker, Crystal began to make real progress. While she had started in special ed classes, she began to fit in regular classes as well. Her grades improved, the fights stopped. She got a job working on campus, and began to make friends at school. As Crystal changed, so did the attitudes of her schoolmates.

The future is uncertain for Crystal Cagata. After graduation, she will say goodbye to her foster family. She may enter Hale Kipa's Transitional Living Program or another such program. She'll have to find a job. She'll have to learn how to make it on her own. Just like the rest of us.

Guess what? I'm an artist. I designed Waipahu High School's Hawaiian club shirts and name tags. Also, I designed Kapolei's canoe paddling team shirts. I'm going to take art classes every day after school. I also want to be a cook and a massage chiropractor. One of these days, I will be famous.

I thought you were a great friend in my heart. In my heart I will always care for you, no matter what. I remember you taught me a great lesson, always respect and talk in pride no matter what! I've taken in so much pride and it was because of you! You made me smile when I was down.

Love/Thank You, Crystal

# **Financial Statement**

Fiscal Year 2002-2003

REVENUE and SUPPORT	2003	2002
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Program Service Fees	\$3,807,951	\$4,412,124
Government Grants	2,873,301	2,561,840
Gain on sale of property	1,649	290,842
Aloha United Way Allocation	194,660	207,431
Contributions	111,754	40,874
Foundations Grants	84,342	96,080
Interest Income	12,786	21,222
Other Income	8,871	7,714
Total Revenue and Support	\$7,095,314	\$7,638,127

#### **EXPENSES and LOSSES**

Program Services	\$6,695,325	\$6,695,893
Management and General	622,278	692,885
Fundraising	64,026	41,989
Total Expenses and Losses	\$7,381,629	\$7,430,767
CHANGE IN NET ASSETS	(\$286,315)	\$207,360
NET ASSETS AT BEGINNING OF YEAR	\$2,353,094	\$2,145,734
*NETS ASSETS AT END OF YEAR*	\$2,066,779	\$2,353,094

Financial Information as of June 30, 2003 and 2002

Figures are excerpted from our audited financial statements. A complete copy of the audited financial statement is available by writing or calling Hale Kipa, Inc.

### Contributors

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### Collaborations

Youth Outreach Waikiki Health Center, Hale Kipa, Inc.

Hui Malama Ohana Susannah Wesley Community Center, Parents and Children Together (PACT), KEY Project, Hale Kipa

Statewide Shelter Maui Farm, Hale 'Opio Kauai, Salvation Army Family Intervention Services, Hale Kipa



