



*Promoting Healthy Communities*

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## Building Brighter Futures

*Building Health... Building Hope... Building Capacity*

### **First Monday Memo**

**Keith Rickard, Executive Director**

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First Monday Memo? What's that? Who's Keith Rickard?

Were those your first questions when you opened this piece of mail? They would have been my first questions.

Well, let me quickly explain. I would like to use this communication format to share information with individuals and community agencies interested in knowing more about The Guidance Center and our plans for service delivery in the weeks, months, and years ahead.

The Guidance Center has been around for over 70 years and we provide a comprehensive range of mental health and substance abuse services to the citizen living in Atchison, Jefferson, and Leavenworth Counties.

This memo will share primarily information about what is happening in Atchison. Atchison is going to be the focus of growth and expansion for The Guidance Center over the next few years. We want you to know what we are doing and we want your input related to service improvement.

Nearly 1000 people from Atchison receive services from The Guidance Center each year. This number has grown by over 300 people since 2004. At the current rate of service request we anticipate being unable to meet the demand without expanding the number of service providers and programs. In order to achieve our objectives we will need stronger partnerships with schools, governmental entities, SRS, the business community, and other social service agencies operating in the county.

Since 2004 we have added 2 Therapist positions and 5 Case Manager positions. We also have asked Dr. Anand to provide two days per week of psychiatry services and we hired an ARNP to supplement the medication service system an additional two days per week.

As some may know, we remodeled our office space at the Atchison Hospital in 2005 and rented additional space from Atchison Hospital at the Ramsey Building. That office space is now filled to capacity and we cannot grow without additional space. We also face the loss of our office space altogether with the relocation of Atchison Hospital in about two years.

The Guidance Center Board of Directors is interested in finding alternative space for our facility needs and has begun the process of securing capital grants, applying for tax credits, negotiating for land, and working with an architect. We hope to announce plans in the near future about what we hope to bring to Atchison to improve the service delivery system for those who need help.

So, on the first Monday of every month for the next year or so I will be providing you with information about The Guidance Center and our work in Atchison. I invite you to call me anytime to discuss your ideas or share feedback. I can be reached at (913) 758-9417. This phone rings right at my desk and I'll be delighted to hear from you.