

THE WORLD THROUGH OUR EYES

Impressions from the hearts and minds of children with mental health disorders.

In the summer of 2005 the Idaho Federation of Families for Children's Mental Health, a support organization for families that have children with serious emotional disturbances (SED), launched an ambitious statewide art program entitled "Art from the Heart."

The goal was to provide children and youth an opportunity to express in pictures and words their feelings about themselves, their loved ones, and the world around them. Selected works from that art program were used in the creation of a traveling art display, "The World Through Our Eyes."

The goal in sharing these personal impressions is to foster a better understanding of mental disorders, which in turn will promote greater compassion and assistance for children and families in Idaho.

CHALLENGE

More Than 17,000 Idaho children have a serious emotional disturbance (SED) yet less than half of them receive help through public services. The difference exists because parents are often reluctant to reach out for fear they will be blamed for their child's condition. Of them may fail to recognize their child has a problem. The Idaho System of Care (ISOC) assists by educating families and the public about children's mental health issues, which helps to eliminate stigma and encourage families and communities to assume a more active role in ensuring proper care for children.

CONTACT INFORMATION

For information about the traveling display please contact Gayle Feller at 208.334.5722



SOLUTION

The Idaho System of Care, along with the Idaho Federation of Families sponsored the creation and implementation of a traveling display on the subject of children's mental health as part of a statewide anti-stigma campaign. The display consists of pictures and words produced by children from around the State of Idaho who live with a serious emotional disturbance. The display entitled "The World Through Our Eyes," communicates in images and words how children with SED view the world's challenges and rewards.