



**Minnesota Association for Children's Mental Health
(MACMH)
Outstanding Service Award**

Each year the Minnesota Association for Children's Mental Health recognizes individuals who have shown extraordinary achievement and/or leadership in the field of children's mental health. The Outstanding Service Award is open to Mental Health Professionals, Educators, Social Workers, Physicians, Juvenile Justice Professionals, Administrators, Parents, Youth, or other Public Servants. The award recipients will be celebrated at MACMH's Fine Art and Award Celebration event to be held February 10th at the William Mitchell College of

Law in St. Paul, MN. More information about the awards celebration can be found at www.macmh.org.

This year the MACMH Board of Directors selected **Kris Lofgren** to receive the Outstanding Service Award in the category of Mental Health Professional. Individuals receiving this award have demonstrated extraordinary achievement and or leadership in all or most the following areas:

- Engaging in efforts that raise awareness about children's mental health
- Demonstrating compassion for children, youth, and their families in their work
- Advocating on behalf of children with mental health needs
- Developing and/or implementing innovative, successful methods of collaborating with those involved in the life of a child with mental health issues
- Engaging in research to address mental health issues as they apply to children
- Providing a lasting contribution to the children's mental health field

Recipient information presented below was taken from award nominations.

Kris Lofgren has passionately served children and families in Northern Minnesota for nearly 20 years. She has tirelessly worked in collaboration with other agencies to bring services to children and families in methods that would better meet their needs. Kris is employed at the Range Mental Health Center (RMHC) , located in Virginia, Minnesota, as the Director of School and Community Based Children's Mental Health Services.

In 1992 while working at RMHC, Kris developed and directed a new school-based mental health program named, *Accept Differences And Pull Together* (ADAPT). Kris understood that many children were not able to receive mental health services due to the distance they lived from services. She worked to develop a program for the Iron Range that would bring services to the child and family. Through Kris' leadership of the ADAPT program, children began receiving needed mental health services. The ADAPT program now provides child and family services in 13 school districts throughout the Arrowhead Region. The program began with two staff and 15 children in 1992 and has grown to 35 employees and serves over 1,000 children monthly. The service area for this program is 6,400 square miles. Kris was also instrumental in designing the integrated funding model to support these school-based services.

Kris has been an integral part of the Northern St. Louis County Family Services Collaborative Board for 15 years. The success of the ADAPT program was largely due to her ability to create productive collaborations with local Public Health, Corrections, Social Services, Public Schools, AEOA, and other agencies which led to increased access and the creation of the most comprehensive service provider model in northeastern Minnesota.

Kris spoke at the National Conference on Advancing School Mental Health in MN in November 2009 and has worked closely at the state level providing leadership, insight and development of the platform for school-based mental health programs state wide. In 2002 she was awarded the Community Collaboration and Inter-Agency Award: School/Community Based Mental Health Services, MN Association of Community Mental Health Centers.

She has overseen opportunities within agencies requesting information and training in the area of children's mental health. She is a regular presenter at meetings of area Superintendents and at local School Board meetings. Her own expertise is apparent—from working on policy at the government level, to answering a staff questions during a hectic day. Kris has also been consistently involved in community events that focus on bringing awareness to the mental health needs of children and their families.

Her colleagues state that, “When others may not fully understand the needs of a child with a mental illness or the needs of the family, Kris is able to advocate with a gentleness and complete respect for the child and family.” “The trickle affect of her compassion runs through each and every staff/provider of the ADAPT program.” “Simply put - it is with great pride to be able to work with Kris on a daily basis. There is a humanness brought to the forefront of each task. She is our role model of integrity, perseverance, and keeps the true meaning of “serving the needs of children and families” as the cornerstone of each relationship and integrated foundation she forms.”