

# New EYA Strategic Plan is our Road Map

On June 24th, the EYA Board of Directors voted to approve the new Strategic Plan for 2009 – 2013, paving the way for Eckerd Youth Alternatives to blaze more trails for youth and families across America. This was Jack and Ruth Eckerd's original vision more than 40 years ago, and this is why our Strategic Plan is entitled "Blazing More Trails".

## Why Was a Strategic Plan Needed?

To understand why a strategic plan was needed, we must examine the trends. A shift in client needs has occurred over the past several years and our core business composition is no longer residential programming, a focus that previously defined the organization for most of its 40+ year history. The procurement process has evolved as well, becoming more competitive than ever before.

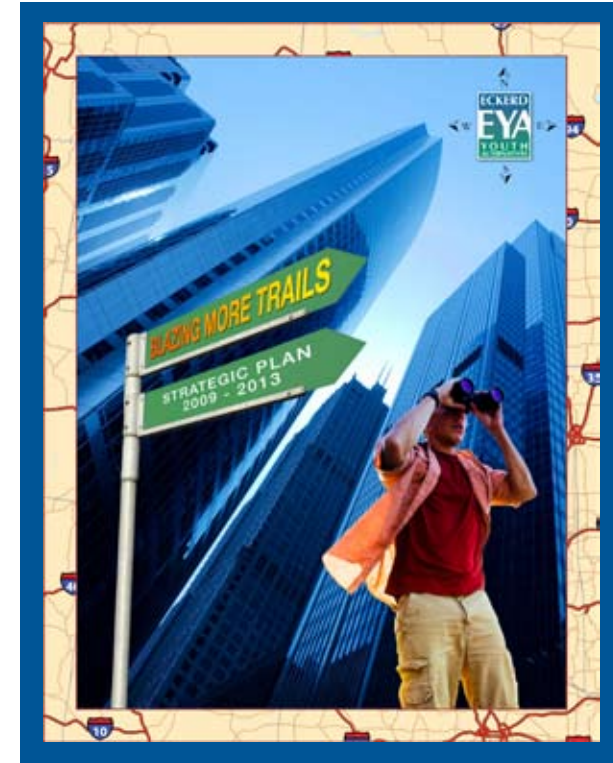
By all indications, the future is going to be even more dynamic. Research points to even greater reductions in federal and state funding for residential services, and an increased interest in community-based interventions. There will be continued demands for shorter residential lengths of stay and movement towards more evidence-based interventions and rigorous evaluation tools.

## Road Map to the Future

In order to remain competitive and to thrive, Eckerd is moving forward in a way that is strategic while remaining true to our roots and to our core guiding philosophy that youth and their families always come first.

While our Eckerd model has served as our road map to success, our new Strategic Plan is our road map to the future, featuring a robust business plan that outlines five main areas of focus:

- Quality Improvement
- Growth and Transformation
- Staffing Enhancements
- Financial
- External Relations



The artwork on the cover of our new Strategic Plan (depicting a camper looking through binoculars while standing in a downtown setting) symbolizes the evolution of services that has already begun at Eckerd Youth Alternatives and will continue as we broaden our service offerings to meet the changing needs of funding agencies and the youth and families we serve.



# 2<sup>nd</sup> Annual Jingle Jangle Jamboree

PROCEEDS WILL BENEFIT ECKERD YOUTH ALTERNATIVES SUCCESS AWARDS AND THE CHILDREN WE SERVE.

SATURDAY NOV. 14<sup>TH</sup>, 2009  
STARKEY RANCH, ODESSA, FL  
6PM – 11PM



Featuring Jett Williams, daughter of Hank Williams

Start rounding up your friends because Jingle Jangle Jamboree is going to be a bigger shindig than last year!

Featuring a Western BBQ, hayrides, dancing under the stars and a special performance by Jett Williams, daughter of country music legend Hank Williams, and more.

SEE YOU THERE, PARD'NER!

TICKETING:  
Individual Tickets = \$125 (Minimum Donation)  
Reserved Table of 8 = \$1,000 (Minimum Donation)

TO ORDER:  
Please contact 727.461.1236 ext. 266 or purchase tickets online at WWW.ECKERD.ORG/JJJ

SPONSORSHIP OPPORTUNITIES:  
For sponsorship information, please contact (727) 461-1236 ext. 305 or kbonsignori@eckerd.org

WWW.ECKERD.ORG/JJJ

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ABOUT ECKERD YOUTH ALTERNATIVES  
Eckerd Youth Alternatives (EYA) is a national nonprofit organization dedicated to helping youth and families succeed. All EYA behavioral health and child welfare programs are strength-based, results-oriented and client focused. EYA serves about 12,000 youth annually through nearly 40 programs nationwide. EYA was founded in 1968 by Jack and Ruth Eckerd, who wanted to create better alternatives for helping at-risk and high-risk youth. To learn more, call 1-800-554-HELP (4357) or visit the website at www.eckerd.org.

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ECKERD YOUTH ALTERNATIVES, INC.



# Today

Fall 2009

WITH YOUR HELP, WE'RE CHANGING CHILDREN'S LIVES TODAY. IMPROVING THE FUTURE TOMORROW.



## Horsemanship Program Breeds Success in the Stables – and in the Classroom

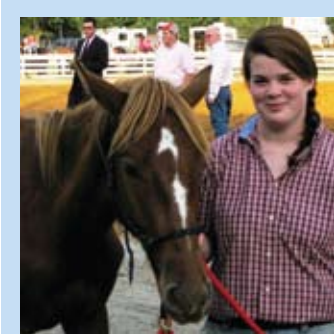
Last January, the Eckerd Academy at Deer Lodge, TN embarked on a partnership with the Cedar Creek Cattle Company to initiate a horsemanship program. The program consisted of a twelve-week "passive training" in which students taught previously unsocialized horses to follow basic commands and tasks.

After twelve weeks of work, the difference in both the two-year-old horses and the students was amazing! The success with the horses inspired the students to challenge themselves in other areas of their lives, such as their education, and they transferred their success from the stables to the classroom. Since working with the horsemanship program, student test scores have improved with all students passing their state-required tests for promotion or graduation.

### A Star is Born

The Wild Mustang Challenge requires students work with yearling Mustangs that previously roamed free and are completely unfamiliar with people or fences - making it the more challenging of the two horsemanship programs. Nonetheless, the eight students participating are up for the challenge. In fact, one female student enrolled in the program is emerging as a star. Her name is Morgan and within three short hours of working with her Mustang for the first time, she had already reached milestones that normally take trained professionals days to accomplish!

“The Wild Mustang Challenge requires students to work with yearling Mustangs that previously roamed free in Nevada,”



Morgan  
Pictured with her Mustang "Thor"

## Wild Mustang Challenge

Working with the Cedar Creek Cattle Company and Bureau of Land Management, eight students were also selected for a more-intense horsemanship program designed to train wild, yearling Mustangs that were captured in the wild on a range in Nevada. As part of the Wild Mustang Challenge program, each student was issued a horse in a random drawing and will work with their animals several months, training their horses to follow basic commands and eventually making them marketable.

In the near future, these eight students will compete with other Eastern Tennessee youth for the opportunity to win a \$2,000 hand-tooled saddle.



Weston  
Drawing for his Mustang

## Celebs Give Back to Eckerd Kids

Several big-hearted celebrities recently teamed up with Eckerd Youth Alternatives to spend time with our kids.

### Feeding the Souls of Youth

On Founder's Day weekend last May, famous Eckerd alum, celebrated chef and reality TV star Robert Hesse returned to Eckerd Academy in Brooksville, FL to "feed the souls" of program youth. Robert helped pay homage to Jack and Ruth Eckerd, philanthropists who more than 40 years ago turned their vision for helping troubled youth into reality.

### Teaming Up for Success

In June, EYA was selected as the charity of choice for an exclusive bowling party with 18 rookies from the Tampa Bay Buccaneers professional football team. Thirty children from Eckerd programs were treated to bowling and pizza with members of the 2009 Buccaneers Rookie Club. Later that month, the Tampa Bay Rays major league baseball team hosted an event to promote adoption. Foster kids from the Eckerd Community Alternatives system of care were featured during a special pregame show at Tropicana Field. And, as the summer heated up, DJ Ekin with FM 95.7 in Tampa, Florida gathered a celebrity crew of professional football players and recording artists to host a day of fun and fellowship for Eckerd youth at a local mega-arcade. His project is called ConnXions and teaches youth the importance of forming positive relationships.



**Rays Have a Heart for Kids**  
Tampa Bay Rays Pitcher James Shields (right) joined his wife Ryane and their daughter Ashtyn (left) to pay tribute to adoptive mother Deanne Lorne and her daughter Joy (center) during a pregame show at Tropicana Field to promote adoption of local foster kids.

## Alternate Ways to Give!

**Eckerd Youth Alternatives can earn a donation every time you search the Internet and shop online!!!**

Search the web with Yahoo-powered **GoodSearch.com** and they'll donate about a penny to Eckerd Youth Alternatives each time you search!

Shop at more than 600 **GoodShop.com** merchants and a percentage of each purchase will go to Eckerd Youth Alternatives!

Bookmark Eckerd Youth Alternative direct charity id link on your browser by visiting <http://www.goodsearch.com/?charityid=179019>

If you have any questions, please e-mail [funddevelopment@eckerd.org](mailto:funddevelopment@eckerd.org) or call 1-800-554-HELP (4357), ext. 222.



<http://www.goodsearch.com/?charityid=179019>

## EYA Enjoys Continued Growth and Success

As Eckerd Youth Alternatives continues to grow and diversify its continuum of services for youth, we are pleased to announce several recent business development successes:

- Collier Halfway House:** Recently acquired through an intensive, competitive bid process with the Florida Department of Juvenile Justice, this 30-bed moderate-risk residential substance abuse treatment program in Immokalee, Florida serves males ages 14 to 18 and features a proven, evidence-based substance abuse curriculum called *Seven Challenges*.

- Vermont Youth Development Program:** EYA was recently awarded a contract by the Rutland District of Vermont Department of Children and Families to provide independent living services to youth ages 14 to 22 who are preparing to exit state custody and transition to adulthood. The program will be co-located with our Eckerd Child and Family Support Services program in Rutland, Vermont.

- Hi-Five Programs:** EYA was awarded two three-year Prevention Partnership Grants for Hi-Five programs in Florida's Citrus and Brevard counties. Both are school-based character programs designed to prevent underage drinking and substance use among elementary and middle school students.

- American Recovery and Reinvestment Act:** EYA was awarded funds through the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) for its school nutrition programs in Florida, Tennessee and North Carolina.

- Contract Renewals:** Two EYA contracts in Florida were renewed for three-year periods — the Eckerd Youth Challenge Program (a 60-bed intensive residential therapeutic program for teenage males) and the Miami-Dade ReEntry Program (which serves 60 youth who are reintegrating back from residential juvenile justice programs).

- Foundation Support:** EYA recently received over a million dollars in private foundation awards to continue their work with at-risk and vulnerable children. Funding was received from the Eckerd Family Foundation for Success Awards to assist youth transitioning from Eckerd programs; the National Foundation for Youth for initiatives to help implement the new EYA Strategic Plan; The Duke Endowment to provide funds for Eckerd programs in North Carolina; and the Neil and Louise Tillotson Fund of the New Hampshire Charitable Foundation for repairs to the E-Toh-Anee ropes course in Stewartstown, New Hampshire.



**Sara and Jesse**  
Shown here with their new adoptive parents Joe and Bernie Young, Sara and Jesse were two of the 321 foster children adopted last year with Eckerd Community Alternatives.

### Eckerd Community Alternatives Enjoys Success in Year One

With its first contractual year ending in June, Eckerd Community Alternatives (ECA) is enjoying success. Operating as the lead agency for community-based child welfare services in Florida's Pasco and Pinellas counties, ECA serves an average of 3,000 children each day and manages the third largest child welfare system of care in the State of Florida. In their first year of operation,

ECA has decreased the total number of children in licensed foster care by 13%, increased the timeliness of adoptions by 5%, and finalized a record-breaking number of adoptions with 321 foster children being adopted during the year (the target goal set by the state was 273).

### EYA Today

is produced quarterly for friends of Eckerd Youth Alternatives. If you would like to be added to the mailing list or if you have any questions, comments, or suggestions, please write us at:

### EYA Today

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External Relations  
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[www.eckerd.org](http://www.eckerd.org)

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### Mission

Develop and share programs that promote the well-being of children and serve at-risk youth and their families.

### Vision

Ensure that each child has the opportunity to succeed.

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## Gifts from the Heart

As the holidays approach, we are reminded of the true intent and spirit of the season - to help others in need. Since 1968, Eckerd Youth Alternatives has been serving some of our community's most vulnerable and at-risk children, and we have done so with the generous support of those who have donated gifts, volunteered time and shared talents.

To help our kids during the holidays please call **1-800-554-HELP (4357).**

### Help Us Help More Kids

There are many ways you can make a difference:

- Mentor a Child:** EYA has several mentoring programs in need of adult mentors. Just one hour a week can make a tremendous difference in the life of a child!
- Volunteer:** There are hundreds of volunteer opportunities in your community to make the most of your talents while offering you the chance to give back in a meaningful way.
- Donate Much-Needed Items:** The following items are needed year-round for our kids: clothes & shoes; duffel bags & backpacks; hygiene items; books; writing & copy paper; stationery & stamps; art & office supplies; blankets & towels; sleeping bags; gardening tools; board games; and movie tickets.
- Help for the Holidays:** Although support is needed all year, our children and families have special needs during the holidays ranging from food items to holiday gifts. A gift from the heart helps ensure our kids have an even brighter holiday season!
- Become a Foster Parent:** Foster parents provide temporary care to children removed from their parents due to abuse or neglect. In Florida's Pinellas and Pasco counties, Eckerd Community Alternatives oversees the licensing of foster parents. To learn more call the recruitment line at 1-866-233-0790.
- Consider Adoption:** Adopting a child from foster care enriches your life and brings joy into your home. In Florida, thousands of foster children await adoption. For more information visit [www.adoptflorida.com](http://www.adoptflorida.com) or [www.heartgallerykids.org](http://www.heartgallerykids.org).
- Donate to Success Awards:** Since 2002, EYA has offered financial assistance to disadvantaged students served by our programs. Success Awards help support the educational and vocational needs of youth, removing barriers that challenge their successful transition to adulthood. Plus, gifts to Success Awards are eligible to be matched dollar-for-dollar from an Eckerd Family Foundation challenge grant.
- Donate to Jack and Ruth Eckerd Children's Fund:** Established in honor of EYA founders Jack and Ruth Eckerd, this fund provides much-needed support to EYA programs where it is most needed.

INVEST IN THE FUTURE:  
HELP EYA HELP MORE KIDS



**YES! I WANT TO MAKE A DIFFERENCE IN THE LIFE OF AN AT-RISK CHILD.**

I've enclosed my gift of \$

- My company will match my gift  
 My check is enclosed (please make checks payable to Eckerd Youth Alternatives)  
 Please charge my credit card:

Card # \_\_\_\_\_

Exp. Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Name on card: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

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