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ANNUAL COME PLAY! GALA RAISES FUNDS FOR CHILD GUIDANCE CENTER

STAMFORD, CT/June 2, 2009 – Two hundred forty guests enjoyed a night of “field day” fun as they gathered together on May 9 for the Child Guidance Center of Southern Connecticut’s (CGC) annual themed benefit gala. Held at Roger Sherman Baldwin Park in Greenwich, ***Come Play!...It’s Field Day*** was a great success in this current economic environment, raising more than \$221,000, which is 84% of what was raised at last year’s event. Proceeds from the benefit will support the center’s mission to provide mental health programs and services to children, teens and families in Stamford, Greenwich, Darien, and New Canaan.

The event committee selected “It’s Field Day!” as the theme for this year’s event to emphasize the importance of play in the lives of children and reinforce the agency’s mission to restore childhood for those young people who grapple with mental health issues.

“We are so appreciative of the tremendous generosity shown by our donors, volunteers, and our guests,” said CGC Board President Nancy Barton. “I was deeply touched by the overwhelming contributions we received during this event. The funds raised will directly benefit children who experience mental health problems that interfere with daily functioning and threaten long-term development.”

Guests were encouraged to add field day flare to their formal attire and many took up the invitation, arriving in sports-related gear such as jerseys or striped referee shirts. The Greenwich Park itself was transformed into a field day playscape, with balls, nets, and hurdles decorating the tent and vibrant flags indicating at which “team” – that is, table – guests were to sit. The playful centerpieces featuring live flowers and grass with colorful horseshoes were designed and underwritten by The Glen Gate Company, while the menu was provided by caterer Abigail

Kirsch. Guests participated in silent and live auctions that featured everything from an opportunity to be a fighter pilot for a day to a visit to a local apiary. Ric Cherwin, also known as “The Singing Auctioneer,” led an entertaining, high energy live auction.

CGC Executive Director Sherry Perlstein was heartened by the generosity shown at the event but acknowledged that there is more to be done. “*Come Play!* was a tremendous success, but we will continue working hard to raise funds. We do not want to be in a position where we are forced to reduce services in a time when referrals have increased over 20%,” she said. “We want to ensure that children with serious symptoms and those experiencing trauma or crisis will receive help. In addition, many youngsters are coming to us with symptoms including anxiety or depression that stem from the uncertain economic environment. We will do everything in our power to continue providing the services needed to help every child overcome emotional barriers to achieve healthy development.”

ComePlay! gala sponsors included Cummings & Lockwood; Deloitte & Touche; GE; Kelley, Drye & Warren; KPMG; Paul, Hastings, Janofsky & Walker; RBS Sempra Commodities; Stamford Hospital; Thomson Reuters; UBS Investment Bank; and Wachovia Wealth Management, a Wells Fargo Company.

The Child Guidance Center of Southern Connecticut is a non-profit mental health resource, serving children and teenagers in Stamford, Greenwich, Darien, and New Canaan, through referrals from schools, courts, human services agencies, and physicians, and families seeking services on their own. The CGC’s clinical staff of psychiatrists, psychologists, social workers, and marriage and family therapists work with more than 2,100 area children annually, providing culturally competent and sensitive care to families representative of the rich ethnic mix of communities CGC serves. Preventative services are provided to youngsters, parents and professionals through public education and consultation programs. Incorporated in 1954, CGC is supported by the Connecticut Department of Children & Families, Connecticut Office of Victim Services and United Ways of Greenwich, New Canaan and Western Connecticut, the Community

Fund of Darien as well as generous individual, foundation, and corporate contributions.

www.childguidancect.org

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Photos (all photos courtesy of Bob Capazzo):

BEN_1: Sherry Perlstein, CGC Executive Director, and Attorney General Richard Blumenthal.

BEN_2: Volunteers, from left: Suze Edwards, Robyn Wayland, Madeleine Marecki, Tom Marecki, Ellie Hartog, and Rosalie Makler.

BEN_3: Members of the Benefit Committee, from left: Kenda McDonnell, Laura Weintraub Beck, Paul Hampel, Amy Zabin, Virginia Hyde, and Alexandra Walko.

BEN_4: Kathy Hanson and Board of Directors member Jim Colica, of Greenwich.

BEN_5: Dr. Lisa Rooney of Greenwich, Board of Directors member and guest speaker for the evening, and husband Robert.

BEN_6: Board of Directors member Dr. Amy Zabin and husband Dr. Steve Zabin, of Greenwich.

BEN_7: From left, Board of Directors members Sallyan Zenko of Rowayton and Laura Weintraub Beck of Wilton.

BEN_8: From left, John Pellegrino of Stamford, Kristine Kirk, Jim and Adrian McClafferty of Stamford, Christine and Mark Schoenherr of Scarsdale, and Lisa and Mike Beldotti of Stamford.

BEN_9: CGC Clinical Director Larry Rosenberg and wife Lina Morielli, Benefit Committee member, of Stamford.

BEN_10: Hon. Mary Sommer, Board of Directors member, and husband Jay Sandak, of Stamford.