

Oradell Public School Child Study Team:  
*An Inside Look at a Special Department Helping OPS Students Succeed*

**WHAT IS THE CHILD STUDY TEAM?**

The Child Study Team (CST) is a group of educational professionals who provide parents and teachers with a variety of learning related services. These services include consultative and evaluative services for students who are experiencing social, emotional, or academic difficulties. Oradell's CST consists of a school psychologist, a learning disabilities consultant (LDTC), social worker and when necessary, a speech/language therapist, physical therapist and/or occupational therapist. Marie Menti serves as the secretary for the Child Study Team office. It is the goal of the Child Study Team to ensure that each and every student's educational experience at OPS is a positive and rewarding one.

**Karen Chang, Learning Disabilities Teacher Consultant (LDTC)**



My name is Karen Chang and I am the Learning Disabilities Teacher Consultant (LDTC) at OPS. I am a certified teacher with a Masters' degree in Educational Psychology and an Educational Specialist degree from Rutgers University. In addition, I am certified by the state of New Jersey as a Learning Disabilities Teacher Consultant. As a member of the Child Study Team, I work with teachers and parents to address the educational needs of students who are experiencing academic difficulty in the classroom. In my role as the learning consultant, I conduct individual educational evaluations to identify a child's academic strengths and weaknesses. In addition, I develop individual education plans for children that are eligible for special education services. I enjoy working with students, teachers and parents at OPS to help our youngsters develop their academic skills and reach their potential.

## **Jill Van Praagh, Social Worker**



Joining OPS a few years ago as your school social worker has again given me the chance to help make a difference in the children's lives. Whether working with a family during the Child Study Team evaluation process, intervening to ease a student's school day, or facilitating a plan to ensure student success, I handle each situation with a balance of experience, knowledge, and "heart". I truly believe that "Help today creates Hope for tomorrow".

## **Amy Rabinowitz, Speech-Language Therapist**



I am excited to begin my seventh year as a speech- language therapist at Oradell Public School. I love what I do and I enjoy working in the school setting because it is the place that kids spend most of their day, learning new skills. Strong communication is important for speaking, thinking, writing, reading and learning. As the speech–language therapist at OPS, I work with children who have articulation and communication problems that affect their success in classroom activities, social interactions, literacy and learning. My goal is to help children become capable listeners, speakers, readers and writers as they progress in school. There's nothing better than seeing students making progress with their speech and language because it can only mean good things for their classroom work and self-confidence!

**Michele Kalotkin, Speech-Language Specialist**



My role as a speech-language specialist on the Child Study Team here at OPS gives me the opportunity to help many children and families. I am involved in the assessment of children's communication; the way the child speaks, understands and uses language affects their education. Speech and language is a tool for academic success, as well as for social interaction with their peers. Children who participate in speech and language therapy work hard to gain the skills they need. One of the best parts of my job is finding new ways to make the learning fun and interactive, so the kids enjoy our time together. Seeing children make progress at being more effective communicators is wonderful. I enjoy being part of a Child Study Team that works together, sees each child as unique, and finds what works best for them.

**Jennifer Adona, School Psychologist**



I am very excited for the opportunity to work for Oradell Public School as the new school psychologist. I have worked with school-age children for the last ten years in such capacities as a camp counselor, before and after school care leader, nanny, and most recently as a school psychologist. Working with children and being part of their growth and development is not only my profession, but a true honor. My hobbies and interests include baking, travel, teaching yoga, volunteering, going to concerts, and spending time with family and friends. I think that viewing each student as a unique individual, maintaining a positive attitude, and working well with colleagues are vital to be successful working in student support services.

**Brian Mistretta, Supervisor of Special Services**



As the Supervisor of Special Services, my goal is to ensure the delivery of high quality, student centered programs and services. In my role I oversee the Child Study Team, Special Education teachers, nurses and instructional aides. The best part of my job is being in classrooms watching students succeed and working alongside teachers as they inspire students to reach their fullest potential. Since starting at OPS on July 1<sup>st</sup>, I am continually impressed by how well the CST works together with parents, teachers and administration to put together programs that meet each individual student's learning, social and emotional needs.