

Celebrating Recovery, Strength and Resilience

When was the last time you faced a really



difficult situation? Maybe at work? Maybe at home? Maybe a difficult relationship? Maybe a loss? Maybe an unexpected circumstance or challenge? Life happens. None of us are spared the tragedies or triumphs of life. But the children and youth we serve in our foster care system seem to have more than their

fair share. The cycle of abuse, neglect, separation, impermanence and instability surround their lives and yet they find the strength and resilience to forge forward. Many of you have heard about or seen the movie *Antwon Fischer*. Or, what about the movie *The Blind Side*? Two true stories about the journey of two boys rising above their traumatic life circumstances and successfully entering adulthood. But did you know here at Bethanna we have many true life stories of children and youth rising above their own unexpected traumatic life circumstances? Their stories may never make it to the big movie screen, but on December 1, 2011,

three of these stories made it into our hearts. It was a day of celebration. A small group of Bethanna staff from across programs (Outpatient Clinic, Wraparound, Clinical Transition and Stabilization Services, and Treatment Foster Care) put together an event to recognize and honor how these three found the strength and resilience to face their difficult life circumstances. Collectively they faced being locked in a dog cage, duct taped to a chair, sexually abused by family members, and while in foster care, abandoned by their parents, multiple placements, physically abused, neglected,

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DID YOU KNOW?

- ◆ 75,000 children in foster care will eventually end up homeless.
- ◆ 270,000 American Prisoners were once children in foster care.
- ◆ Children in foster care have 2x the rate of having PTSD than veterans of the first gulf war.
- ◆ Children with histories of neglect, abuse, and or trauma, are at **increased risk** for behavioral, academic, social and emotional problems.
- ◆ Less than 70 percent of youth in foster care finish high school before leaving care.

(Statistics from *Raise Me Up DVD*)

~Community Treatment Services~

Serving Over 427 Children and Youth and their Families

Currently, Community Treatment Services encompasses five behavioral health service programs. These programs include: Treatment Foster Care, an Outpatient Mental Health Clinic, Clinical Transition and Stabilization Services, Wraparound Services, and Comprehensive Autism Assessments. Services are provided by approximately 100

professional staff. Our commitment to excellence means the individuals we serve feel the services they receive are extraordinary, our contractors and referral sources feel their children and families are getting great care, and our staff feel valued. Please call us if at any time you feel we are not living up to our commitment.

If you would like to make a referral to one of our services or have questions please call: Christine Schoppe, our Intake and Referral Social Worker. She would be more than happy to assist you with any questions or referrals to our Community Treatment Services. Christine can be reached at 215-355-6500, ext. 206.



Outpatient Transformation Incentive Program (OTIP)

Philadelphia Behavioral Health Services is moving towards a recovery oriented system of care and invited our outpatient clinic to participate in implementing strategies from their new Transformation Practice Guidelines. Over the past several months a dedicated group of staff have been working with our children, youth and families to implement these guidelines in Outreach and Initial Engagement, Screening and Assessment, Continuing Support, and Community Connection. The goal of each of these strategies is to bring a strength-based approach that promotes hope to the children and families we serve. This was not a difficult task for us, since the same core values presented in the Practice



Guidelines are what drive the work we do:

1) Strength-based approaches that promote hope. 2) Community inclusion, partnership and collaboration. 3) Person and family-directed approaches. 4) family inclusion and leadership. 5) Peer culture, support and leadership. 6) Person-first (culturally competent) approaches. 7) Trauma-informed ap-

proaches. 8) Holistic approaches toward care. 9) Care for the needs and safety of children and adolescents. 10) partnership and transparency. These core values guided the development of the strategies we worked on over the past six months and will continue to drive the work we do here at Bethanna.

One of the major strategies we worked on was improving the link between behavioral health services and physical health concerns for our children and families. Many people who have mental health problems also have significant physical concerns. Significant factors in physical health impairment include exposure to adverse childhood experiences, side effects of psychotropic medications

and inadequate access to preventive health care. Systems were put in place to ensure needed supports for the improved physical health of those we serve. Steps include: 1) Helping families see the importance of the connection between behavioral health problems and physical health. 2) Our behavioral health staff taking a lead role in fostering collaborations with physical health providers. 3) Expanding our current intake and referral medical questionnaire when obtaining a personal and family medical history 4) Partnering with a developmental pediatrician from St Christopher's Hospital to complete pediatric developmental evaluations.

Treatment Foster Care

Bethanna's Treatment Foster Care Program (TFC) offers a distinct, powerful and unique model of care. The program is designed to provide coordinated in-home behavioral interventions delivered by treatment foster care parents to work effectively with children and youth. Utilizing a team approach, focus is placed on promoting safety, stability

and improved behavioral health functioning, leading to permanency and improved well-being. Our TFC parents play a critical role in helping our children form trusting relationships necessary for healthy development. As a member of the team, they serve as a primary agent of change for our children. Between the team work and collabora-

tion of our excellent TFC staff, dedicated TFC resource parents, committed placement stability and clinical review team, exceptional trainings, outstanding support staff, and phenomenal leadership, it is no wonder Bethanna's TFC Program was ranked # one in the city of Philadelphia in 2011.



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and years in a residential facility. They shared how through counseling, the dedication and support of their social workers, the love and care of their foster families, and the support and dedication of school and community members, they tapped into their own inner strength to overcome.

Today they are successfully reaching for their hopes and dreams as they forge through high school, head to college, and find a forever family. We believe these three will not become a statistic. Our hope and dream is that none of the children and youth we serve together will become a statistic.

When we refuse to view our children and youth as victims of the foster care system with emotional and behavioral problems, but rather, see them as individuals with strength and resilience, good things begin to happen. Our aim is to be a help that helps. We strive to support children and fami-

lies along their life journeys, to help them live up to their own inner strength, guiding them to focus on identifying their strengths and abilities and recognizing the challenges that interfere with their life hopes and dreams. Together, empowering them to be the author of their own life stories.