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NEWS...

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

BETHANNA REORGANIZING ON-CAMPUS SERVICES FOR AT-RISK YOUTH

Southampton-based nonprofit agency will continue to provide foster care, adoption, mental health and support services for children, families in Southeastern Pennsylvania

Southampton, PA (February 18, 2009) – Bethanna’s Board of Directors has announced plans to phase out its Residential Treatment program located in Southampton, Pa. Currently, there are 38 boys and girls served by the Residential Treatment program. The agency’s on-campus facility offers a highly structured, 24-hour out-of-home care for children and adolescents with histories of psychiatric hospitalizations and behavioral and mental health dysfunctions.

Given the underutilization of the treatment facility over the past years and the statewide shift from residential treatment to less restrictive environments for treatment of at-risk children and teenagers, Bethanna has made the difficult decision to close the Residential Treatment program by June 30. However, the nonprofit agency will continue to provide foster care, adoption, mental health, and support services to abused and neglected children and their families in Bucks County and surrounding communities.

“Over the last three years, the state of Pennsylvania has been steadily reducing the number of out-of-home beds for children who would benefit from residential treatment services. As a result, the number of referrals from outside agencies to Bethanna has declined. Without these referrals, we cannot continue to operate successfully,” says Charles Seith, executive director for Bethanna.

Founded in 1934, the agency serves youth ranging in ages from infants to 18 years old. Last year, Bethanna provided programs and services to over 2,200 children and families in crisis throughout Southeastern Pennsylvania.

“Our first and foremost concern is the placement of the children currently served by the Residential Treatment program,” adds Seith. “Every child will receive the very best in care and support

from Bethanna. Our agency is making every effort to locate appropriate placements for each child currently in our care. We are working with social workers and county agencies associated with each child in order to make the transition to the biological family, other RTF's, and foster care programs either operated by Bethanna or other area agencies." Currently, Bethanna operates 274 foster care homes in the region.

"At the same time, we are undergoing this major shift in our operation, we are also evaluating plans to reengineer the Southampton facility, transitioning from 24-hour residential services to providing day treatment services for at-risk children and teenagers in the community."

Bethanna has 265 employees and four offices located in Southampton, Philadelphia, Lancaster and Media, Pa.

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