

Project Return

A Shelter Program for Single Women Aged 18-24

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Homes with Hope



Agenda

- Project Return History
- Project Return Today
- Transition
- Challenges
- Successes
- Questions & Answers



Project Return History 1986-2016

- Therapeutic group home for adolescent girls in crisis
- 7 bed capacity with length of stay 1 to 5 1/2 years for ages 13-21
- Served the needs of more than 160 girls and their families
- Provided warm, nurturing therapeutic milieu in homelike setting to help girls rebuild their lives
- Relational, trauma-informed, highly individualized treatment
- Focus was on internal program supports to provide positive role models, healthy parenting, to strengthen family connections, build independent living skills, and engage youth in age-appropriate activities



Project Return History cont.

- Child welfare shifted its focus from being an agency that protects youth to being an agency focused on preserving families
- Congregate care programs phased out and replaced with foster care
- All state funding for group homes eliminated June 2016



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...welcoming PROJECT RETURN

Project Return Today

- A shelter program for young adult women ages 18-24
- Length of stay is up to 6 months
- Primary goal is to help the women obtain housing
- Secondary goals focus on the development of independent living skills needed to sustain independent living
- Individual case management is provided to secure important documents, identify and connect clients to appropriate community resources, utilize public transportation, gain employment, further education, and to manage financial, physical and mental health needs



Transitions - What we changed

- Program provides a safe, warm, place to stay where basic human needs are met
- Reduced staffing - one staff 24/7
- Shorter stays with specific and obtainable youth driven goals
- Greater independence and freedom
- Individual structure directed outside of program and community based
- Focus on connecting youth to community resources that can remain in place when discharged



Transitions- What we kept

- Warm, safe, nurturing, and inviting environment
- Capacity limited to 7 or 8
- Group activities
 - Dinner - food brings people together
 - Chore night - music, singing, and dancing
 - HEAL - altruism, purpose, and positive leadership
 - Health and fitness - walking, biking, and working out



Challenges

- Housing, Housing, Housing, Housing, Housing
- Psychiatric Services
- Substance Abuse
- Transportation
- Need a high level of engagement, positive social supports and safety network
 - Brain is still developing
 - Seeks stimulation
 - Will gravitate toward the negative if active positive engagement not available



Successes - mostly

- Served 14 young adults since mid-November 2016
- 1 discharged within 5 months to 3 bedroom apartment with her family
- 1 discharged within 4 months to her own apartment through the Connection's START program
- 1 discharged back to her family within 2 months
- 1 chose to remain homeless to be with her boyfriend
- 3 where discharged due to using crack and K2 within the house
- 7 are currently in the program
- 1 of the 7 will be housed within a week or two



Questions?

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