

# Perspectives on RECOVERY



A NEWSLETTER OF THE MENTAL HEALTH CENTER OF DENVER • FALL 2013

## **COLORADO GIVES DAY IS TUESDAY, DECEMBER 10, 2013!**



Once again in 2013, Community First Foundation, in partnership with FirstBank, is sponsoring **Colorado Gives Day**. This is an opportunity, over the 24 hours beginning at 12:00 a.m. on December 10, to “Give Where You Live.”

The Mental Health Center of Denver participates in this annual event. Last year, a remarkable \$15.7 million was distributed to Colorado nonprofits following Colorado Gives Day. Community First Foundation takes no administrative fees

from the donations so that every dollar given goes directly to the nonprofit of the donor’s choice.

To participate on Colorado Gives Day, go to [ColoradoGives.org](http://ColoradoGives.org) to make your gift or go to [www.mhcd.org](http://www.mhcd.org) and you will be connected to the Colorado Gives site. Not only will 100% of your gift come to the Mental Health Center of Denver but we will also benefit from a gift from the FirstBank Incentive Fund.

For more information, contact Barbara Shaw at 303-504-6727 or [barbara.shaw@mhcd.org](mailto:barbara.shaw@mhcd.org)



**The Gifts of Joy Holiday Gift Drive** provides gifts and gift cards for children and adolescents in our treatment programs as well as for some of our adult consumers. For all of these, a gift or simple \$10 gift card says, “You are not forgotten,” and many use their gift cards to unselfishly buy gifts for others.

A simple act of kindness can go a long way. The Mental Health Center of Denver supports those in our community who might be alone at the holidays. Without this program, many of our children and adults might not have a joyful holiday.

### **What you can do:**

- Donate gifts of cash or \$10 gift cards (Target, King Soopers, WalMart, Walgreens) at any time.
- Adopt a boy or girl – Children indicate on gift tags a specific gift they want; you then have the opportunity to fulfill that wish. Deliver your **unwrapped** gift with the gift tag to MHCD at 4141 E. Dickenson Place, Denver, CO 80222.

## **GIFTS OF JOY HOLIDAY GIFT DRIVE**

- “Adopt” one of the Mental Health Center of Denver’s Group Homes at the holidays by providing a holiday meal and gift bags for the residents.

### **When:**

Gifts will be delivered to children on Friday, December 13, 2013 and holiday boxes will be delivered to the residences the week of December 9, 2013.

Please help spread the word by announcing **Gifts of Joy** at your religious or civic group. If you are involved with groups where you could place an announcement in a bulletin, newsletter, or elsewhere, let us know and we will send you an electronic announcement that you can edit to fit your needs.

For more information contact Joanne Aiello at:  
[joanne.aiello@mhcd.org](mailto:joanne.aiello@mhcd.org) or 303-504-6732

The Mental Health Center of Denver is a  
501(c)(3) nonprofit organization  
Visit [www.mhcd.org](http://www.mhcd.org) to learn more about **Gifts of Joy**.

## TRAUMA-INFORMED CARE FOR CHILDREN AND FAMILIES



*Therapists Allison Miller and Dorothy Renner work with children and families using trauma-informed care*

At the Mental Health Center of Denver, we believe that healing is possible. In our Child & Family programs, clinicians have been trained to recognize the presence of trauma symptoms and acknowledge the role that trauma has played in the lives of the children and families they serve.

Evidence shows that traumatic experiences can be dehumanizing, shocking or terrifying and often include loss of safety. Trauma can result from experiences of violence; physical, sexual and institutional abuse; neglect; intergenerational trauma; and disasters that induce powerlessness, fear, and recurrent hopelessness. Chronic stress can also become traumatic, when the intensity of frightening events becomes unmanageable to the point of threatening physical and psychological integrity. Trauma impacts one's relationships with self, others, communities and environment, often resulting in recurring feelings of shame, guilt, rage, isolation, and disconnection as well as a need to be in a constant state of alert.

Therapists Dorothy Renner and Allison Miller have explained how transforming the atmosphere of the N. Federal Child & Family Outpatient Clinic has been a key part of understanding the role of trauma in young lives. The building is more welcoming and feels safe. It is a “playful” space with lots of color and brightness. And not just the building has changed; so, too, have the clinicians by becoming more aware not just of what is said but what shows through to the child or family through the tone of voice, body language, and approachability.

*“The clinicians, being mindful and emotionally regulated, provide a ground for the creation of a safe professional helping relationship. The overall tone of unconditional friendliness and confidence embodied by the therapist supports a sense of ease and possibility; that no one will be judged or rejected for having strong emotions or intense fears.” – Dorothy Renner*

Almost all the children and families who come to the N. Federal Clinic have a past history of behavior impacted by trauma and this has typically resulted in a lost sense of safety and trust. Recent stories of emotional and physical bullying are becoming more frequent. There is often trauma associated with losses within an extended family, community violence, and untreated illness. When therapists first visit with children they begin to assess the child's need by creating a sense of safety, being approachable, making a connection, and being authentic. Children are often difficult to diagnose and may present with an initial issue which later is found not to be the true cause of their distress.

By focusing on the trauma which created the emotional disturbance in the child, a therapist is usually able to provide needed treatment and care within six to 12 months. Many times, parents receive treatment as their children receive treatment which leads to better outcomes for the family.

*“It is about giving hope and integrity to children and families who feel as though the world has let them down and they were never worthy of better. It's about restoring a sense of play, joy and acceptance in our families by providing a safe, non-judgmental environment where they can learn to heal and overcome challenges with confidence.” – Allison Miller*

Case Managers and A New Day Resource Center also play a vital role in the care of families by evaluating the resource needs of the family, including the need for food, shelter, transportation, etc.

By using a team approach, clinicians at the N. Federal Child & Family Outpatient Clinic are experiencing significant positive outcomes through trauma-informed care.

## GIFTS OF HOPE FUNDRAISING BREAKFAST



On Tuesday, October 22, more than 330 friends and colleagues gathered at Temple Emanuel to enjoy the 9th annual Gifts of Hope Fundraising Breakfast. With a focus on the work being done in our community by the Child & Family Services program, guests enjoyed hearing about several of the key program areas where the Mental Health Center of Denver partners with other local organizations to help meet the needs of our children and their families.

## REPORT ON THE GROWTH – ENRICHMENT – RECOVERY CAMPAIGN

At the 2011 *Gifts of Hope Fundraising Breakfast*, the Mental Health Center of Denver launched its **Growth – Enrichment – Recovery** campaign, an effort to raise \$8 million for a new Recovery Center for adult out-patient services as well as funds for increased outreach into the community and expansion of existing program services throughout the organization.

At this year's breakfast, an updated Campaign Case Statement recognized that over 75% of that \$8 million goal has been met. The final year of the Growth – Enrichment – Recovery campaign is focused on expanding services, increasing outreach, and exploring more innovative ways to serve our community.

An updated Campaign Case Statement can be found at [www.mhcd.org](http://www.mhcd.org) or by contacting Barbara Shaw at: 303-504-6727 or [barbara.shaw@mhcd.org](mailto:barbara.shaw@mhcd.org)

## GROWING SUCCESSFUL CHILDREN



Bestselling author Paul Tough (left) joined Clayton Early Learning Center President and CEO Charlotte Brantley, Denver Public Schools Mental Health Services Program Manager Steve Nederveld, the Mental Health Center of Denver's Director of Child and Family Services Dr. Lydia Prado, CEO of the Mental Health Center of Denver Dr. Carl Clark, and Colorado State of Mind host and executive producer Cynthia Hessin in a panel discussion on "Growing Successful Children."

Over 100 of Denver's top leaders attended the September 24 event sponsored by the Mental Health Center of Denver and Rocky Mountain PBS, who are collaborating to engage the community in conversation on methods and actions that will promote the greatest possible success among the next generation of children.

For more information about the town hall meeting, contact Ric Durity at: 303-504-6715 or [ric.durity@mhcd.org](mailto:ric.durity@mhcd.org)



## UPCOMING ENRICHING LIVES AND MINDS EVENTS

As a part of the Mental Health Center of Denver's efforts to increase mental health literacy in our community, we offer a free, one-hour informational session called Enriching Lives and Minds. These informal group gatherings give guests the opportunity to learn more about the Mental Health Center of Denver and about a specific program in one of three areas: Adult Recovery Services, Child & Family Services, and Rehabilitation.

For information about the next Enriching Lives and Minds event, contact Joanne Aiello at: [joanne.aiello@mhcd.org](mailto:joanne.aiello@mhcd.org) or 303-504-6732.



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**SAVE THE DATE!**

THE MENTAL HEALTH CENTER OF DENVER'S ANNUAL MEETING

Wednesday, February 26, 6:00 p.m.






 **Community  
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WORKING FOR A HEALTHY AMERICA

**Contact Us:**

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4141 E. Dickenson  
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