



Footprints



VOLUME 1, ISSUE 1, JUNE 2009

Newsletter Theme is "Communicating Feelings"

Yoga Classes Bring Sanctuary to Life at the RTF

Special points of interest:

- *Got an Idea for Footprints?*
We'll even help you write it!
- *How are YOU feeling?*
- *Resident Council to Contribute to Footprints*
- *Watertown Birth Parents to receive Footprints Newsletter*
- *Newsletter Sub-Group Members Announced*
- *Get Ready to Move One Step Closer...*
- *Random Facts of Sanctuary Contest Announced*



Inside this issue:

Sanctuary "Braggs"	2
Contest: Random Fact Man Arrives!	2
Pilot of Newsletter to Watertown Foster Care Birth Parents	2
Pitter-Patter	3
We'd REALLY like to know—"How are you Feeling?"	3
Show Us YOUR Footprints!	3
Footprints Mission Statement	4
Ideas, or Feedback? Just Clip & Send!	4

Christine Eddy, RTF Primary Therapist and Volunteer Stephanie Van Savage demonstrate that they are at the cutting edge of trauma-based care. They have teamed up to bring healing through the body, by providing yoga classes for staff and youth at the RTF. As a long-time Certified Yoga Instructor, Stephanie is well aware of the benefits of yoga, whether it is releasing held tension, paying attention to the present, or regulating the nervous system. Christine Eddy has been involved with yoga for many years. Why is this so important? "Trauma causes the body to be frozen in a state of fear, terror and hyper vigilance," says Dr. Bessel A. van der Kolk, a clinical psychiatrist and founder of the Trauma Center in Brookline, Massachusetts. "So, fundamentally, the effect of trauma is in relationship to one's body. One's body gives the signal that it's not safe, and your body keeps fighting an existing enemy." By understanding the physiological effects of trauma on the body, it has become increasingly clear that practices such as yoga are instru-

mental in helping to unlock the body's patterns of fear. This mind to body link is something that yogi's have known for thousands of years and now, modern science is finally beginning to catch up. Through Sanctuary training, we have learned that trauma has many physical effects. According to van der Kolk, "It's great to be able to put your feelings into



words, and feeling that somebody understands your suffering is enormously comforting. But, it doesn't make your body know that you are safe. The real method is resetting your physiology." Stephanie Van Savage explains that yoga is non-verbal and allows people to use their bodies as a means of self-expression. By focusing on the body, breathing patterns and stillness, we connect with our bodies, feel and tolerate

sensations and then begin to learn to live and move with it, in a healing way. Recent research into the effects of trauma on the brain have clearly shown a definitive link between the mind and healing trauma through the body. "To feel what you feel and know what you know in your body, can go a long way toward healing," says van der Kolk. At the RTF, Christine Eddy and Stephanie Van Savage are demonstrating first-hand how the value of yoga allows our youth to gain mastery over their bodies through deliberate movement, poses, breathing and finding the power of their core. In this way, through counseling and yoga, children are able to learn to become masters, not victims of their trauma.

Former Resident Sends Warm Regards to all Who Made a Difference

Travis was a recent resident of the IIP who transferred to another agency. During the time he was in our care, Travis struggled on a daily basis. About a month later, out of the blue, Primary Therapist Wendy Lakeman received a letter in the mail. Sometimes, we don't know just how much of a difference we make in the lives of children. Sometimes it takes a child looking back to find meaning in the efforts we made.

"Hi everybody, I just wanted to tell you that I am doing good and hoping you all are too. I miss all of you so much, but I will always keep in touch. April, if you are there, I feel so sorry for making you so sad. Quinlan, I hope you are doing good. Dan, I don't care how much we fought; you are so funny, and I miss you Big Guy! Merima, hope everything goes well for you. Liz, have fun making those yarn balls. Mr. Jodlowski, keep on helping kids; if they can't find anything to do, help them

invent stuff. Hi to Mr. Fay, Mrs. Dodge, Mr. Curtis, Mr. Carter, Mr. Schultz, Ms. Frazier, Miss. Lil, Mrs. Mare, Mrs. Griffin, Mrs. Dablin and Mr. Clark. Tell Frankie and Andrea that I miss them so much. Frankie, I will always remember you by the leopard you gave me. All of you stay out of trouble and do good; get out and that will make me feel better. From Travis L." (Printed with permission of Travis and his birth mother, Amy.)

Our Own Sanctuary “Braggs”

How you “feewing doday”? My name is Bobby, I am 3-1/2 years old, and I live with my “real” sister in a foster home. I also live with “Mama Jess” and “Papa Matt,” and they have twins! I came to live with them after I had to leave my grandma’s house; she didn’t watch us too good. Before that, I used to live with my “real” Mom and Dad. They used to leave us alone lots of times. They cooked drugs on the stove too. My sister even walked on the railroad tracks when she was only as big as me! My cousin watched us lots of times when Mom and Dad were sleeping. Dad used to hit Mom a lot, and she cried. I like where I live now because I have a behavior chart, and when I be good, I get to have a treat and I have been working

toward a dinner at Friendly’s if I have a really good week! I also like getting hugs from Mama Jess and Papa Mike, and they make me peanut butter rolls for my lunch sometimes too! A few months ago, my foster parents went to a training at the place where I go and have my visits. They came home and taught us how to do Community Meetings. I really like to be the one who conducts these meetings. I know all three questions all by myself! “How you feewing doday?”, “What is your doal?” and “Who you dunna help?” If you can tell me that you are feeling good, I will tell you “No, no no. Dood not a feewin!” I can even answer these questions if you want to ask me! I like to help everybody with their goals too. Come to have a Community



Bobby & Mr. Tooley lead a Community Meeting

Meeting with me sometime! These meetings really help us. I can tell you now when I am angry. I used to just kick and scream if I needed something. Now that I know what a word is for how my body feels, I don’t kick and scream any more. I can also tell you if I am feeling happy. I used to be hyper if I was happy. Now I can tell you and ask you to play a game with me when I feel happy. My goals usually are to have a good day and to help my teachers and Mama Jess. I like it where I am. I like it that I can say how I feel, even if I feel angry. Sanctuary was a “dood” idea!

Random Facts of Sanctuary Contest Begins



To all staff: coming to a site near YOU, after each newsletter publication—you might just have a chance to be randomly selected to participate in a fun & fantastic contest called “Random Facts of Sanctuary”. By day, the mild-mannered Doyle Rager located at the Business Office is our Training Secretary but QUICK—look again~ RANDOM FACT MAN will

make an appearance, and our staff will be eligible to win exciting prizes! It’s totally “random”, so be on your toes! If you happen to be stopped by Random Fact Man, he’ll ask you a question that’s directly related to the *Footprints* edition, its theme or maybe it will be a question about a general Sanctuary concept. Answer correctly, and you will win a prize on the spot! Show him that you have been reading *Footprints* cover to cover and that you’ve been busy implementing the skills that you have learned in the Sanctuary Tool Box. Our ‘winners’

will be listed in the following edition of the *Footprints* newsletter. Do our agency, do your program, do our clients PROUD and show your knowledge. Each question you answer correctly, will bring us ALL one step closer to Safe Haven. Prizes can be attached to your identification badge, or can be worn on your HGS shirt. When people ask, “What’s that?” show them you triumphed over Random Fact Man!



Pilot Project to Include Watertown’s TFC Birth Parents



Safe Haven is an agency-wide initiative that requires a partnership and open communication between staff, clients, foster parents AND birth parents. Toward this goal, the Newsletter Sub-Group believes strongly to eventually include all birth parents in the *Footprint* newslet-

ter distribution. What better way to show our commitment to this partnership than to pilot the *Footprint* newsletter to the birth parents of our agency’s foster care clients in the Watertown Tri-County Therapeutic Foster Care Program? Recruitment and Retention Manager in the Watertown Therapeutic Foster Care Program, Theresa Lampack has generously offered to test market this for all birth parents.

Once we get feedback on how this is received, we will begin to plan a way to include distribution to ALL birth parents of our clients. Recognizing the importance of this effort will allow the concepts of Sanctuary to extend across the board to everyone who is involved with The House! Shared governance and open communication are two of Sanctuary’s core values and will become a TEAM effort at HGS!

Pitter-Patter: Calling all Youth at HGS-Sanctuary Through YOUR Eyes

Remember when you were feeling unsafe and one of the staff was able to help you feel safe again?

Remember feeling sad and someone was able to help turn it around for you?

You know how you set a goal at the Community Meeting the other day, and later that day you were able to say you did it? How cool was that? Is that happening more for you? Are you able to offer to help others reach their goals? Tell us about it!

We'd like you to share - we care! We want to celebrate with you!



Yoga Instructor, Stephanie Van Savage leads yoga group in "Warrior Pose"



AWESOME JOB!
Samantha received a Yoga Frog for her outstanding effort & participation in yoga class!

Ted Wheelock witnessed all the children at MACS participating in a kick-ball game on the field out in front of the MACS Building. Everyone was having a great time playing the game together. Older children were helping the younger ones play the game. They would allow the younger children to make it to first base without being tagged out. What a great example of sportsmanship and learning how to get along together with the positive peer relationships! Staff were also enjoying the game with the children, and it was a perfect example of the Sanctuary skills moving from theory to practice. Great Work!

We'd REALLY Like to Know—"How are YOU Feeling?"

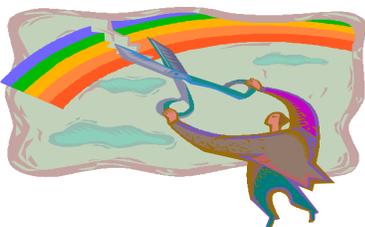
"How are you feeling?" Do we take the time to know? If you Google "How are you feeling right now?" you can read and exchange words or feelings with pictured individuals—but that can seem a bit distant and abstract. If you see an acquaintance in passing, you may ask, 'How are you feeling?', but it is usually with very little thought to their automatic response. In the world of multi-tasking, do we really take the time to settle in and ask ourselves this important question? Our Community Meeting ques-

tion, 'How are you feeling?' provides an actual time focused solely upon JUST THAT—How ARE YOU feeling? Plenty of time is allotted to seek out your individual response, and it gives us a chance to actually share it with a group of others who are there to listen and provide support! The key message is, YOU are valuable. Each one of us is valuable, so slow down. Take the moment. Go inside yourself and seek out the answer in your body and mind. Then, you are able to share it with others who CARE and are

there to listen to you. Beyond that, you have the honor of helping to create this special time for the person sitting beside you. This seemingly simple act has a very powerful impact upon each of us—and has the added impact of helping to build a caring community.

COMMUNITY MEETINGS ALLOW US TO REINFORCE AND DEMONSTRATE KEY SANCTUARY CONCEPTS LIKE: "HOW ARE YOU FEELING? TALK IT OUT."

Show Us YOUR Footprints!



We need YOUR help, YOUR ideas, YOUR observations, YOUR stories. Don't feel you write well? Not a problem—we've provided an option. If

you have a Sanctuary-related story, no matter how small, that you would like to share, we ask that you consider verbally sharing it with Sue Kappler. She will help you to write it. Sue's office is conveniently located upstairs in the Administrative Office Building on the main campus, just off the lobby area. Whether you're a child in a program here at The House, an employee, or a parent—we want to help you to

share your experience.

For your convenience, there is a *Footprints* mailbox located in the Reception Office on the main campus. You can address an interoffice envelope directly to *Footprints*, and it will find its way to us! We look forward to sharing the stories and moments that are all a part of the agency moving One Step Closer to Safe Haven.

Newsletter Theme is "Communicating Feelings"

To submit articles, stories, artwork, brags , etc. for print
Send Interoffice Mail to:
Footprints Newsletter
The House of the Good Shepherd
1550 Champlin Avenue
Utica, New York 13502

Phone: 315-235-7600
Fax: 315-235-7609



The Mission of the *Footprints* publication:

***"Communicating,
encouraging and celebrating
our shared commitment to
Safe Haven".***

VISIT HGS ON THE WEB

WWW.CHANGINGCHILDRENLIVES.COM

It's SO EASY....Just Clip and Send!

Footprints is a bi-monthly publication of The House of the Good Shepherd and welcomes your input. If you have suggestions, comments, feedback or ideas to share for future articles, feel free to submit them to the *Footprints* Mailbox located in the mail room of the Administration Building. You may attach additional paper as needed.



Newsletter Sub-Group Members Announced



To help bring the concepts of Sanctuary to life, the CORE Team tasked Carol Altimonte, Director of Development here at the agency, to put together a Communications Committee. The committee represents a group of staff from the CORE Team who are willing to tackle the enormous task of communicating the message of Sanctuary to all agency staff on an on-going basis. It's likely that you may

have noticed the huge banners announcing our commitment to the Sanctuary Principles. Or perhaps you have seen the curious posters announcing One Step Closer....? Maybe in a staff meeting, you were inspired by a really cool DVD that made you think more about what this initiative is all about. These are all a part of the work of the Communications Committee of the CORE Team, who have worked hard to find ways to capture and share the important message of Sanctuary with you. Carol Altimonte is really good at what she does, but she can't do it all alone. This is how the Newsletter Sub-Group was born. We'd like you to "meet" the driving forces behind our *Footprints* newsletter,

which is no easy feat (or FEET?). It takes ALL of us to build an effective newsletter, whether you are reading, talking about, contributing to, or just supporting it! Special thanks to Co-Chairs: Sue Kappler and Donna Hamilton-Gross. Kudos for outstanding participation and effort to the following Newsletter Sub-Group members: Lori Crandall, Doyle Rager, Darcie Goodenough and Rhonda Hummer. This group, with over 50 years of combined agency experience is committed to finding ways for you to receive important information about how we ALL share in the responsibility of Safe Haven's success here at The House!