



Volunteers
of America®

MINNESOTA

Bar None Residential Treatment Services

Newsletter

Building Hope for Youth and Families

Summer/Fall Edition 2011

Celebrate the Child Banquet

By Amber Anderson, BS

On August 22, 2011, Bar None held its annual Celebrate the Child Banquet. This event remains a special tradition to celebrate the residents we serve at Bar None and the accomplishments they have made. Residents' family, county workers and guardian attorneys are invited to attend the celebration banquet with all agency employees and residents.

Each year the theme changes, and this year's theme was a "Surfs Up" Beach Party. The Lodge was decorated with beach balls, flip flops, palm trees and bright colors. The kitchen cooked a delicious meal with finger foods like chicken, meatballs and an array of salads and desserts. An awards ceremony was held and this year every unit came up with an award for every resident. Awards were given such as "best dancer" and "best athlete," so everyone was able to get recognized. Throughout the ceremony residents enjoyed the raffle, where they were able to win prizes. The ceremony was followed by games which are always a highlight and some new games this year included the hula hoop contest and an obstacle course. This year was also the second year for the staff dunk tank. The staff bravely volunteered to let residents throw balls to dunk their unit staff in the cold water tank, which the residents and even the staff thoroughly enjoyed.



Jennie - A story of perseverance and determination

By Romala Anderson, MA, LAMFT
and Danielle Buchal, BA

Jennie began the Meadow View program at Bar None in October of 2010. She was in several other unsuccessful residential facilities prior to her placement at Meadow View. Upon arrival she was a very cheerful, social, and outgoing individual. She was able to make connections with many of her peers almost instantly. However, she did struggle immensely with her mental health issues. She continued to display self-abusive behaviors and had endured multiple significant traumas in her life. She would commonly find sharp objects with which to cut herself, and ingested cleaning spray and perfumes. Jennie would also have a specific peer hide objects throughout the unit, which she would use to self harm. During her first three months at Meadow View, Jennie was either on suicide watch or suicide prevention on a consistent basis, requiring intense supervision. In addition, she struggled with processing her traumas due to the severity, lack of closure and resistance. It took Jennie a long time to trust the counselors and therapists as well as the process of therapy. Along with her mental health issues, Jennie also struggled immensely with behavioral difficulties. Jennie would become easily frustrated and annoyed with her peers and would lash out verbally and often physically. Jennie was often aggressive and was sometimes placed in holds throughout her stay for the safety of herself and the other residents on the unit.

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Bar None Residential Treatment Services | 22426 St. Francis Boulevard, Anoka, MN 55303 | ph. 763.753.2500

Office Hours | 8:00am-4:00pm Monday-Friday | Located on 700 expansive acres among lakes, woods and walking paths.

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Programming Components

Comprehensive Therapeutic Services

- Clinical staff monitor resident Treatment Plans
- On-site Mental Health Clinic
- On-site Occupational Therapy Clinic
- Individual and Family Therapy (in-home and metro office locations) 1–3 hours per week
- Group therapy on units 5–7 hours per week
- Psychological Assessment and Testing
- Medication Management
- Psychiatric Evaluation
- Weekly NA/AA groups

Aftercare Services

- Planning begins at intake and continues through placement
- Clinical staff provide intensive parent/caregiver support
- Individual follow-up for 6 months post-discharge

Education

- Range of school settings including St. Francis Junior High and High School and Crossroads Vocational School
- Classes concentrate on Basic Standards Testing and preparation for graduation

Work/Vocational

- Work Readiness Program on-site: landscaping, carpentry, painting, janitorial and food service
- Manufacturing and landscaping classes available through Crossroads School
- May acquire jobs in the community
- Restitution/community service options

Spirituality, Diversity and Mentoring

- Weekly religious services and programs
- Weekly Talking Circle (Native American) and Inertia (African American) groups
- Mentoring opportunities available

From the Director | Looking Forward

At Bar None we are always looking forward. We seek continual improvement in the programming available for our kids, in the training of our staff, and in the systems needed to make all of these efforts as efficient, effective and streamlined as possible.

Toward that end, this edition of the Bar-None newsletter will be the last of its kind. With increased and enhanced material being produced by the VOAMN Communications Department, we have decided to deliver our Bar None highlights and updates through that resource. We plan on continuing to share our activities and the accomplishments of our residents and staff on a routine basis, but within the greater context of our larger Volunteers of America family.

In other words, you haven't heard the last of us.

As always, I am definitely looking forward to our "new and improved" process and want to thank you for supporting the newsletter over the years. I hope that you have enjoyed receiving the updates as much as we have enjoyed being able to share them with you. I trust that you will continue to stay connected with us within our new communication format in the future.

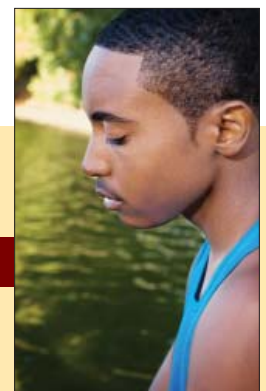
I would also like to take this opportunity to thank all of the people who have made the newsletter possible since it began back in 2004. Over the last seven years, there have been many contributors to the process. In the early years, agency clerical staff helped to format the first newsletter and mass produce it for mailing. Since those humble beginnings, we have since been supported by the VOA corporate Communications office, resulting in the polished, professional newsletters you have received as of late, often electronically. Michelle Rosenau, our Quality Assurance Director, was involved in the newsletter from its beginning as well. Her commitment over the past several years was responsible for bringing this effort to fruition and always assured high quality information was delivered. In addition, there are the many, many employees who provided the content stories for the newsletter. This was all done "above and beyond" during very busy times and everyone's efforts have been very appreciated.

Improving Lives, One Youth at a time.

Terry D. Thompson, Director



**Doing the hard work of
learning new ways to
relate to the world.**



Work Readiness Program

By Shawn Woods, WRP Coordinator

The Work Readiness Program at Bar None has continued to be a productive part of agency programming. The employees of the WRP have put in time doing some much needed tree trimming and landscaping around the Bar None agency. The WRP employees have also been working diligently in the kitchen as well as in the woodshop. The Kitchen staff from New Horizons is pleased with the work that our team is doing in the kitchen, and New Horizons has even started to donate to the program to help with the costs.

The WRP is currently working on filling an order for beds that will be used at the Avanti Center for Girls, and the finished product is turning out with very high quality. The WRP employees have also been working on various pieces of furniture for use on the Bar None Agency common

areas as well at the treatment units themselves. One very large project that is in the process is the replacement of the beds and desks in the bedrooms of the Stepping Stone Unit.

Up until this summer the WRP has consisted mostly of residents from our boys units. This summer we have been very lucky to have a few female residents from the Meadow View Unit join the program. They have brought much enthusiasm and they are very hard workers. The girls have been working in the kitchen and helping out in the maintenance shop and are proving that they are very valuable in any capacity. The Kitchen staff and everyone else participating in the WRP has enjoyed the change of pace working with the girls and they have received much praise for their efforts.

Overall the WRP has been keeping busy with all of the demands of the agency. The employees of the program have been coming through in fine style. I would like to take this opportunity to thank all of those who have been supporters of the WRP and to thank the employees themselves. Without your support and hard work the WRP would not be possible. The WRP is a valuable program that has taught many Bar None residents some very valuable work skills, and it is reflected in the success that the residents have when they leave Bar None and enter the work force.

Treatment Program Units

Meadow View | Females, ages 11-18
Gender specific, evidence based programming
High staff to resident ratio
Milieu emphasis on self-esteem and racial/ethnic pride
Individualized length of stay

Stepping Stone | Males, ages 12-18
Department of Human Services licensed, Severe Emotional Disturbance (SED) Certification, Serious emotional and behavioral problems,
Highly individualized treatment programming

Sunrise | Males, ages 12-18
Department of Human Services licensed, Severe Emotional Disturbance (SED) Certification, Cognitively delayed youth, exhibiting severe emotional and behavioral problems,
Intensive, individualized therapeutic programming, Highly supervised

Evergreen | Males, ages 12-18
Cognitively delayed youth, exhibiting significant behavior problems,
Higher level of delinquent sophistication,
Intensive, Individualized therapeutic programming, Highly supervised

Stabilization Program

Short-Term Stabilization | Males, ages 10-18
Youth in crisis or transition, Safe and supportive environment

Long-Term Stabilization | Males, ages 10-18
Two to six month average placement, Stabilization of behavior and life skill development

- Males and Females, ages 11-18

Evaluation Program

- Males and Females, ages 11-18
- 35 day program
- Medical screening
- Behavior assessment
- Psychological testing-optional Rule 25
- Psychiatric services
- Bio/social/family assessment
- Discharge diagnosis
- Placement recommendations

Program Philosophy

Bar None is a residential facility 45 minutes from the Minneapolis/St. Paul metro area that provides a continuum of treatment and stabilization services for youth ages 12-18 with emotional and behavioral problems.

We assist our residents in gaining the skills necessary to improve their quality of life, the lives of those around them and to succeed as adults.

Pieces of the Puzzle

By Dawn Hirsch, RN

When a child comes into our care, part of the intake process involves meeting with the nursing department upon admission. The purpose of the health screening is to identify acute or chronic medical concerns, follow up on unresolved medical/dental issues, and schedule routine Well Child and Teen Check ups and dental care that may have been missed. Most of the time this, in itself, is a simple task. And other times, when medical care has been fragmented, it becomes like pieces of a puzzle and we find that records are not accessible, memories falter and we spend a great deal of time piecing together the past so that we know what to do for the immediate future. Insurance rules, HIPAA regulations and perhaps many prior placements can make even just clarifications hard to come by. Sometimes what should be simple, simply, is not.

After we have identified what the resident needs, we go to our huge, master desk calendar and begin to add to the schedule.

Every day we can have several residents going to routine and specialty appointments all over the cities. Insurance basically drives where we can take a resident for medical and dental care, but we do try to use

the vendors closest to us (if possible) and the vendors who understand and accommodate some of our more challenging scenarios as a residential center. Even though Bar None is located north of Anoka, we often take residents to providers in St. Paul, Minneapolis, Big Lake, or even Rochester. Our most frequent visits, however, are to the Allina Medical Clinic in Ramsey, MN where our medical director, Dr. Raymond Marier, practices. We also frequent Health Partners Blaine Dental Clinic. Other routine providers are RiverWay Clinic in Anoka, MN and Apple Tree Dental and Select Eye Care in Coon Rapids, MN. The relationships we've established with all of these providers (and

many more) make it possible for us to get the various needs of our residents met. We very much appreciate their contributions to the care we are responsible to obtain.

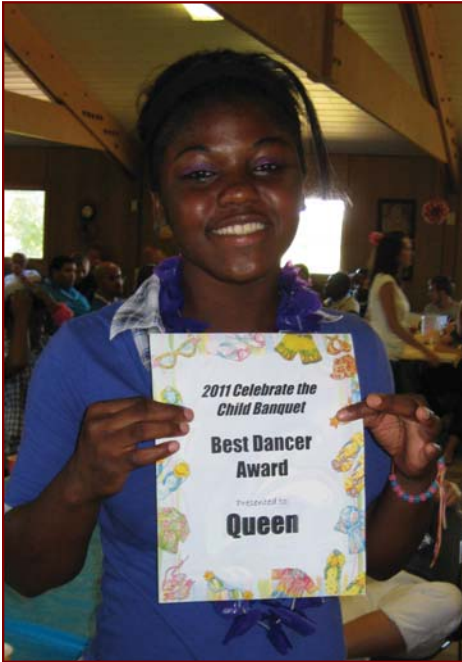
One of our main goals in the nursing department is that upon discharge, every resident will be caught up with immunizations, yearly dental exams and cleanings, current vision checks, and Well Child and Teen Checkups. In addition we work to ensure that any injuries or illnesses which occurred while with us will have been appropriately tended to and that any previous issues prior to placement will also have been resolved.



Writing the Medical Discharge Summary for each resident as they leave provides me with either one of two things: satisfaction and pride that we managed to send a child to their next place with everything medically accounted for and responded to, or an opportunity to make changes to our system if we did not meet these goals as effectively as we had hoped to. Not that writing reports is anyone's idea of a good time, but I do enjoy knowing that, as nurses, we can be confident that we have provided the care that our profession demands and our own ethics require. To be equipped to do our job, in a setting like this, with so many others that care and help to make that happen ...well, at least for me, it doesn't get any better.

For more information contact us at: 763-753-2500

More Photos from Celebrate the Child Banquet



Expressions—Resident Corner

Residents at Bar None are encouraged to expand and grow in all facets of their lives. In addition to learning new behaviors, they work on expanding their interests and learning ways to express themselves. The Resident Corner asks residents to submit expressions of their creativity through various mediums. Below are two recent entries from the young men of the Sunrise unit.

The following poem was written by A.J., sharing his view of the Christmas season.

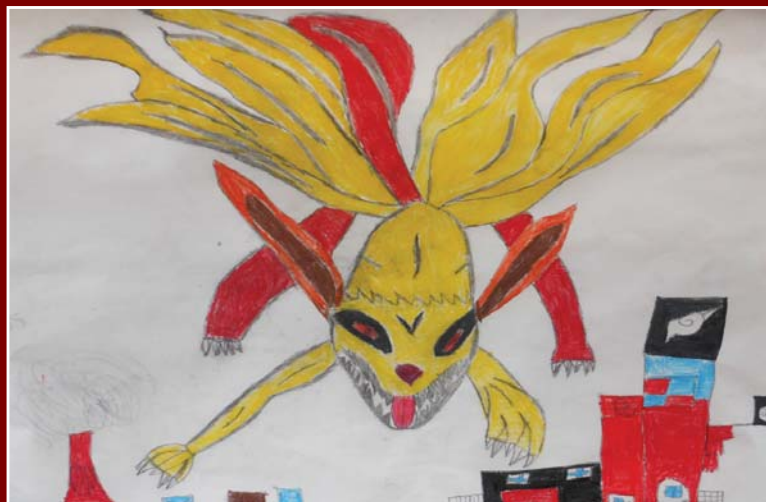
Christmas Love By AJ

***Here I am sitting in my bed, thinking about all that's been said.
All the lessons and advice, it all comes with a price.
Even in Christ's birth, the day has its "mirth."***

***Every season brings others together to celebrate,
new love and passion to create.
With husbands and wives;
many teens wasting their lives.
Boys and girls gather, to see their Santa Clause father.***

***Families mingling, sleigh bells jingling.
Many be singing aloud, parents be proud.
Lover's desire growing,
Hooray! It's snowing.
Soldiers coming home, friends calling on the phone.
Hot cocoa by the fire, then all lie down and 'retire';
just knowing they have felt the magic of Christmas Love.***

This unique piece of art was a collaborative effort between two residents at Sunrise. Drawn by Mike and colored by Jesse, we thank you for your teamwork and creative spirit!



Recreation Corner

By Danielle Patterson, BS, LSW

The Recreation Committee at Bar None organizes a variety of agency wide competitions throughout the year and these recent months were no exception. Because of the wide range of interests of our youth, a wide variety of activities are planned. Some are team sports, some are based on individual skill and some are more creative and artistic in nature. But the one thing they have in common is that they are all a lot of fun!

In fact, the recreation committee had a busy and exciting summer and fall. Although some of the past favorites remain, the residents and staff enjoyed incorporating new games into the recreation program.

The Sunrise residents took victory in the first Bar None Capture the Flag tournament in May. All were impressed with their energy and strategies for the game. Flag football, an agency favorite, was played twice this season- once in June and again in October with Stepping Stone taking first place each time.



The residents of the Stepping Stone unit were showing off their athleticism this summer and took first place in July during the agency Soccer tournament, as well as taking 2nd place overall in the Summer Olympics. This year a long distance run was added to the Olympic events and was a success, with many kids participating. The Male Stabilization Unit took 1st place overall and did exceptionally well throughout the week.

This year the summer Olympics ended with the annual Softball tournament in a combined event for all to enjoy. Though our residents and staff put up a good fight, Ramsey County put a team together and took victory for the first time ever!

We look forward to the upcoming season of snow to see what creative activities will happen next!

Jennie – A story of perseverance and determination

- Continued from front page

However, through perseverance and determination, Jennie made significant improvements during her ten months at Meadow View. She was able to cease her self-abusive behaviors and gained an enormous amount of tools that she could use as coping skills. These tools in turn assisted her with her emotional regulation. Jennie also improved immensely with her aggressive outbursts and handling her frustrations in a more appropriate manner. She was able to learn, incorporate and implement many different evidence based coping techniques that enabled her to calm down, re-focus, and reassess any given situation. Jennie became a positive role model and leader to her peers on the unit.

Jennie was recently discharged to a foster home in the cities. She states that she gets a long well with her foster mom, loves her school and has made many friends. Jennie has stated that she is happier than she's ever been and loves being a healthy teenager in the community. Jennie continues to need support but understands that it is there to help her with any difficulties in life. Jennie often calls the Meadow View unit to say how much she misses it as well as to get support from the counselors that have helped her in the past 10 months. Also, Jennie has called specifically to tell us that Meadow View helped her with her struggles and never gave up on her.

Jennie, we are proud of you and wish you the best of luck in your future endeavors.

Sharing the journey

By Jody Mork, MA, LMFT

The work that our youth do while in placement at Bar None is difficult. Kids are away from most of what is familiar to them—family, friends, school, their neighborhood. Under those circumstances we ask them to dig deep and look at the life choices that brought them here. We then ask them to build skills toward a more successful life. It is a difficult process, but well worth it in the end for most. Here two Evergreen residents share their journey. We applaud them for their work.

Hello,

I'm a resident at Bar None. I'm on Level 3 and I've been here for 5 months. I came to Bar None because 2 years ago I got mad at school, said some things and got arrested. That was my third time getting locked up that year so they told me I've got to go to a placement. So I went to a placement in Grand Rapids. I was there for 6 months and got kicked out for messing around and never doing anything. Went to juvie for 1 month then I went to a place in Wisconsin.

Nothing was working, I felt like I was worse. I ran away a lot, never did treatment, fought, stole, and didn't do anything. I felt like I didn't have any self-control and I felt like the anger got the best of me at times. One day I got mad and ran away. I grabbed an ice pick and started to destroy a van, and I got kicked out. I went to juvie for 2 months. I had no faith in myself and I hated myself. Then they told me that I was going to a placement called Bar None.

At first I didn't want to go there, but I didn't really have any other option. So I went to Bar None. At first it didn't go so good, I hated it there. But as time passed, things changed. The staff helped me out a lot, peers gave me feedback and I was happy. I ended up getting more faith with myself. I still get slip ups every now and then, but I'm doing really good. I did 2 months without getting mad, and I was getting closer and closer to going home for the first time in 2 years. I was actually doing good and I was happy all the groups helped me out. Corrective thinking group helped—talking about all the bad decisions I made. Peers helped me about how to change it. We also had anger management, family groups, and virtue group—all the groups helped. I'm glad I picked here because if I would of stayed at the other place I wouldn't be near home. So Bar None helped me out a lot and I'm thankful for that.

J. P.

Hey,

When I was younger I didn't listen to my parents. I was hanging out with friends, getting high, not thinking where I was headed to. ...til I got locked up and got on EJJ until I'm 21 years old. I still wasn't thinking, was still smoking, skipping school, not learning nothing. My mom and dad would tell me all the time to "stop hanging out with your friends" but I would never listen. I was a hot head with a chip on my shoulder.

My Probation Officer told me I was going to get locked up if I kept on doing the things I was doing. She put me in treatment for 6 to 9 months. I thought I was not going to learn nothing at treatment. Months went by, I started thinking the life I was living was not right. I felt bad because I was putting my family down because I wasn't at home. Now I feel better because I've been sober for a long time and I feel closer to my family. I did change a lot because now I don't want to see none of my old friends. I want to stay out of trouble, go to school, have a job and live successfully.

D. O.



YOU CAN HELP!

We greatly appreciate any and all contributions received by community members in support of our programs. To learn more about contribution options, please call (763) 753-2500.

Wish List Items:

Recreational Items:

Board games, craft items, basketballs, volleyballs, etc.

Landscaping items:

Weedwhips, outdoor flowers, etc.

Gift Certificates:

Target, Home Depot, etc.

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