

Good Shepherd Services' residential and family-based foster care programs provide safe, compassionate care to almost 800 children and young adults in New York City each year for whom staying with family is not an option. Our 16-bed Euphrasian Rapid Intervention Center (RIC) – one of only two of its kind in New York City – offers a small, safe and supportive environment to young women ages 12-17 in foster care who are in crisis and have been referred by the NYC Administration for Children's Services for stabilization and assessment. Young people receive a comprehensive psychosocial, psychological, psychiatric, medical and educational evaluation to fully assess their unique needs and determine the best possible long-term placement. Our interdisciplinary team works with all young people and their families to promote ongoing **safety**, **permanency** and **well-being**.

Program Components



Counseling

Every young person engages in onsite therapy with a clinical social worker via individual, group and family counseling. Each participant also receives psychiatric and psychological services. Art therapy sessions allow participants to explore and express their feelings. Crisis management services are available at all times.



Community Meetings

All participants and staff engage in daily community meetings, a simple and deliberate ritual often at the beginning of a meeting that allows young people and staff to make emotional connections and establish a sense of safety in the group. Each individual is asked to state how they are feeling, share a goal they would like to work on and ask others in the community for help.



Educational Support

Many young people come to the RIC severely behind in school. We reengage them in education via an on-site school run by the Department of Education. School staff are sensitive to participants' past experiences of trauma and its effects on academic success.



Mentoring

A sense of belonging and connection is essential to healthy development.¹ To nurture it, we partner with Mentoring USA to provide workshops facilitated by staff and mentors from the community on topics such as social skills-building, etiquette, goal-setting and self-image.



Enrichment and Recreation

Activities including poetry, dance, sports and community trips expose participants to new experiences and keep them engaged.

Who We Served in Fiscal Year 2018

101 young people served



93 days average Length of Stay

96% completed Diagnostic Assessments with **89%** reporting physical abuse, sexual abuse or neglect.

Our Fiscal Year 2018 Results

Safety

90% said staff encourage them to use their Sanctuary tools such as safety plans, community meetings and red flag meetings.

100% said staff respect their culture, ethnicity, religion, traditions and sexual orientation.

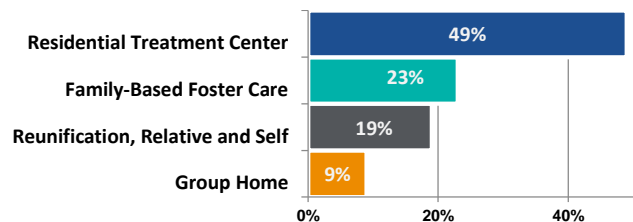
Well-Being

85% feel hopeful about their future.

85% feel their social worker/case manager helps them with their problems.

Permanency

Discharges*



*Includes all discharges who completed case planning.

Using Research to Support Strong Outcomes

Good Shepherd Services' commitment to evidence-based practice ensures that our work with youth and families is informed by the most current thinking and research on effective practices, while maintaining mission-driven coherence across our services and programs. We incorporate into our new and existing services the most appropriate approaches, models and tools with the highest level of empirical support.



Our Approach: Youth and Family Development and Trauma-Informed Practice

All of our programs use an approach that integrates Youth and Family Development (YFD) strategies and trauma-informed practices. This holistic, strength-based approach is supported by research on interventions that promote well-being, mitigate the impacts of poverty and trauma and improve social mobility. Trauma resulting from adverse life experiences can disrupt the brain's architecture and lead to long-term consequences for learning and social and emotional health. Young people in foster care, who have experienced years of trauma characterized by maltreatment, neglect and instability, are at greater risk of adverse outcomes such as unemployment, criminal justice involvement and homelessness.² Research suggests, however, that timely, responsive interventions can protect against and even reverse negative outcomes, essentially reshaping their life trajectories.³

Models: The RIC uses evidence-based/informed models and practices to increase our efficacy.

Sanctuary Model

The evidence-supported Sanctuary Model fosters a trauma-sensitive, nurturing and non-violent culture designed to build community and help participants develop healthy attachments. Infused into all aspects of the program, therapeutic interventions are intended to promote emotional, social, cognitive and behavioral recovery from trauma. We use standardized trauma assessments to deepen staff understanding of young people's histories of trauma and inform individualized services. These assessments identify participants' experiences of traumatic events and gauge prevalence of trauma symptoms.

Therapeutic Crisis Intervention

Therapeutic Crisis Intervention (TCI), specifically developed for residential child welfare facilities, provides a crisis prevention and intervention protocol to effectively manage acute crisis phases, reduce potential and actual injury to youth and staff, teach constructive ways to handle stressful situations and develop a learning circle within the program.

Primary Counselor Model

The availability of at least one stable, supportive relationship can counterbalance a young person's history of adversity, even among individuals with deep-rooted trauma.⁴ Participants are assigned a Youth Development Counselor (YDC), with whom they develop a caring and trusting relationship via regular meetings and support.

Euphrasian Rapid Intervention Center Case Study: Jane, Age 15

Jane (not her real name) came to Euphrasian Residence after her mother could no longer provide adequate supervision for her. She had a severe trauma history, which includes being sexually abused by her mother's boyfriend, as well as being physically attacked by a male intruder in her home. Upon arrival at Euphrasian, Jane presented as insightful and open, but demonstrated very little impulse control, struggled with anger management and had difficulty trusting staff and peers.

While at Euphrasian, she participated actively in daily community meetings, weekly therapy, and created a safety plan – a short list of simple, safe activities that can be done in times of stress rather than resorting to harmful behavior – that she uses regularly and updates as necessary. When Jane struggled with losing her temper or having a negative attitude, she could be re-directed to her safety plan to manage difficult emotions. She consistently took steps to gain her mother's trust back, as well as improve her school attendance and performance with the goal of graduating high school. When Jane and her social worker explored what contributed to her marked decrease in trauma symptoms, she reported that the consistent support and structure of the program, engagement in positive activities, and learning about how trauma impacts mood and behavior helped her to manage stress and negative emotions.

Citations:

- (1) National Scientific Council on the Developing Child (2015). "Supportive Relationships and Active Skill-Building Strengthen the Foundations of Resilience: Working Paper 13."
- (2) Courtney, M. E., & Dworsky, A. (2006). "Early outcomes for young adults transitioning from out of home care in the USA." *Child & Family Social Work*, 11(3), 209-219.
- (3) Jensen, E. *Teaching with Poverty in Mind: What Being Poor Does to Kids' Brains and What Schools Can Do About It*. Association for Supervision & Curriculum Development: Alexandria, 2009.
- (4) Charles, K. and Nelson, J. *Permanency Planning: Creating Lifelong Connections*. University of Oklahoma National Resource Center for Youth Development: Tulsa, 2000.

Good Shepherd Services is a leading multi-service organization in New York City that operates over 80 programs that make a difference in the lives of children, youth and families today. We go where children, youth, and families face the greatest challenges and build on their strengths to help them gain skills for success. We provide quality, effective services that deepen connections between family members, within schools, and among neighbors. We work closely with community leaders to advocate, both locally and nationally, on behalf of our participants to make New York City a better place to live and work. To learn more about Good Shepherd Services, visit www.goodshepherds.org. This report was developed by the Residential Child Welfare Programs and the Program Evaluation and Planning Department at Good Shepherd Services.