

Totem Times Quarterly Newsletter

SKILL ORIENTED ADOLESCENT REHABILITATION - SOAR

IN THIS ISSUE

Issue Date

From the Juvenile Director

by Deputy Director – Juvenile Division: Michelle Finstad

Welcome to the Totem Times, our quarterly newsletter for Boys Totem Town. It is our intention to use our newsletter to provide our community of stakeholders with updates on our programming and activities. We welcome your feedback and are always open to guest writers for special topics.

As I write this first column for our newsletter, our staff are implementing a pilot of our new program model which became effective July 5, 2016. Youth who are at placed at Boys Totem Town under our new program model will experience a program that combines the best of our former program with a program model that has:

- one comprehensive treatment plan,
- a defined levels system,
- understandable and agreed upon goals that each youth will work on
- a behavior management program that is managed by our staff and is designed to recognize successes and give opportunities for learning from mistakes

Our new program is called SOAR: Skill-Oriented Adolescent Rehabilitation. The name expresses the intent of our program model. Our work with youth is about helping them develop and/or enhance the critical skills necessary to be a valued member of their community. We want to provide youth the ability to learn how to manage their emotions and behavior, to make good choices and decisions, to develop a sense of competency, to learn teamwork, to form positive peer relationships and acquire the academic or technical skills needed to have a job they enjoy.

There have been many department staff involved in helping us refine our model. Our work at BTT is an extension of our department’s mission of building safe and healthy communities through interventions that promote personal change and accountability. We welcome your feedback and input and thank you for your support of our work.



BTT Off Campus

Boys Totem Town residents are able to earn time off campus to experience new adventures. Over the past months residents have gone to Lake Phalen to participate in the Urban Boatbuilders boat launch, MN Zoo and horse back riding.

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Moving Forward

Boys Totem Town has been making several changes over the last few months. Read about those changes in this article.

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From the Residents

Repetition – Repetition

Ours is a long love song,

A push out into open air

A stare into the barrel

A pool of grief puddling

Under our single body

A national shame, amnesia and same again.

We are a pattern a precursor imperative,

A break beat.

Ware live on the airwaves,

Until they close, in the pubs until they close

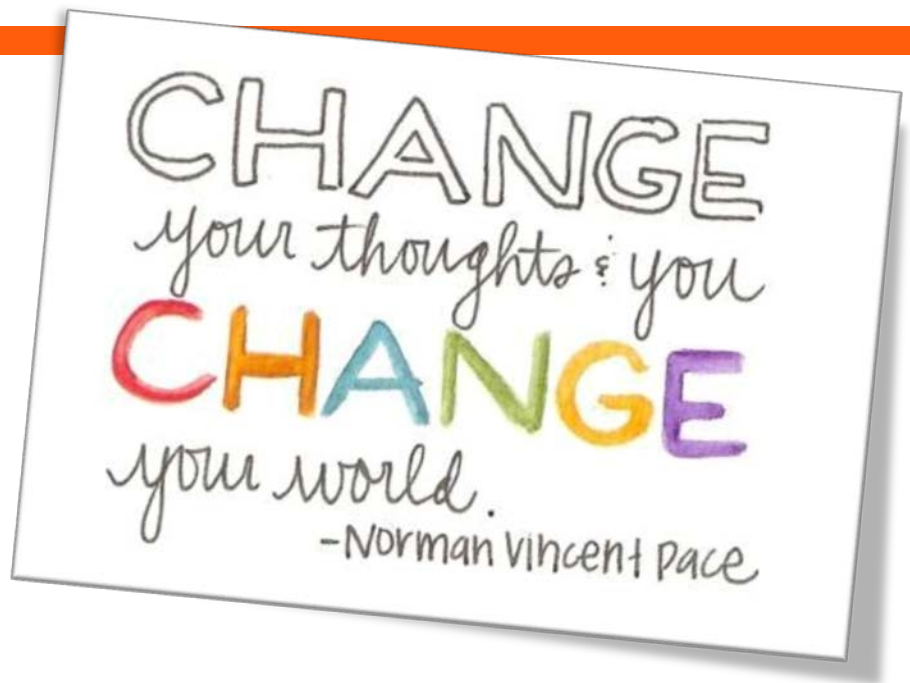
In the schools until they close

We are close the edge of the city limits.

We are limited to the hood.

Until we decide we are not.

- Willie



Reflection from a former resident:

Before BTT I was hard headed, impulsive trouble maker who didn't listen to nobody. I did what I wanted when I wanted when I wanted. I also use to fight A LOT and handled most of my situations with violence. And used my leadership for negative instead of positive.

Now I am a responsible and respectable young man. I listen to what others have to say, I also have gained more skills at BTT that

I can use out in the community like: negotiation, being patient, and staying out of fights. In the period of time I have been in BTT I realized that I can't do the things I used to do. Because I have younger family members that look up to me and see me as a role model. So I have to set a higher bar for them, I don't want them to ever see the inside of a cell.

- Quashawn

Volunteers In Corrections



Volunteers with Community Corrections provide a direct, caring and personal link for both juvenile and adult offenders. Volunteers make a real difference in the lives of offenders by serving as tutors, group facilitators, library and research assistants, befrienders and dorm assistants for both adults and juveniles.

If you are interested in volunteering at Boys Totem Town please follow the link below.
<https://www.volgistics.com/ex/portal.dll/ap?AP=1533010267>

If you have more questions please contact us at: volunteer@co.ramsey.mn.us or 651-266-4090

BOAT LAUNCH



A resident wades into Lake Phalen with the one person canoe built at Boys Totem Town through the partnership with Urban Boatbuilders.

Boat Builders Boat Launch

On Monday June 6th 4 residents attended the annual urban boat builders boat launch at Lake Phalen. The residents had a great time getting to test out the boats that they all had a hand in making. This was each residents first time being in a boat (kayak, row boat and one person canoe.) They took pride in their achievements, and had a great time getting to learn this new skill.

BTT Off Campus

by Robin Budd, Matt Stombaugh and Ruby Hogan

Minnesota State Zoo

Boys Totem Town (BTT) residents had the opportunity to attend two exciting off grounds activities this week since they are off school. The first outing was to the MN Zoo on Monday, June 13, 2016 and the second was a horseback riding trip at Bunker Park Stables on Wednesday, June 15, 2016.

Boys Totem Town residents who attended both outings include Quashawn, Willie, and Rashaan.

Horseback Riding

Bunker Park stables proved to be quite an experience for residents as none of them had ever been on the back of a horse before. They were nervous, anxious and excited to get on their own horse for a ride through the woods. All residents conquered their fears and did an excellent job navigating their horse through the trails. At the end, they were quite proud of themselves.



City Wide Clean Up

Wilbert and Quashawn attended the annual city-wide Community Clean Up at Harding High school from 730-1030 AM. During that time, we filled four 40 yard dumpsters. As the pictures suggest, we made a good time of it. This was a good opportunity to let the kids find how team work can make a tedious situation fun.



The MN Zoo trip offered residents an educational experience about conservation topics while observing Zoo animals on exhibit. The animals were quite active and residents also enjoyed a special behind the scenes tour of the tiger barn led by a Zookeeper. All the residents were tired out by the end of the day and whether they admit it or not, they all learned something new.



We played 9 holes at Garlough Park in West St. Paul. Both residents took to disc golf well and remained socially appropriate. Introducing them to disc golf gave staff another chance to mentor and relate to the residents. It also gave residents a cheap and alternative idea of what they can use the city parks for. Below are the scores:

Matt: 31 Quashawn: 36
Ruby: 42 Willy: 33



Employee Recognition Event

FOR MORE INFORMATION

Abico eurs...



The Ramsey County Employee Recognition event took place on Thursday June 23rd at Battle Creek Regional Park.

Probation Officer Melvin Robinson won the award for Outstanding Performance. Below is the nomination written for him:

This nominee is one of the hardest working case manager I have worked with at BTT. He is dependable in the work he does and assists with other responsibilities if it will help the resident in need. He is a team player and never hesitates to assist in making a resident's life better if he can. This nominee truly cares about each resident he works with and he makes sure to connect with the parents of each resident. He makes every family feel at home even when there is chaos in the treatment and case management services. I have seen this nominee come in on his day off just to say goodbye to a resident that was looking forward to seeing him (the nominee) before they were released. This nominee is always professional. Lastly, one of this nominee's strengths is the ability to de-escalate a client from feeling overwhelmed, escalated and frustrated. He just has a nature gift in working with kids and keeps a calm demeanor. He is always a JOY to work with daily.

The following staff from Boys Totem Town were also nominated:

Creativity and Innovation:

Frank Taft

This nominee needs to be recognized for his constant efforts to save the county money.

While fueling up vehicles for Boys Totem Town, he utilizes cents-off coupons and is aware of what days the gas stations offer double-discounts. After reviewing his receipts for the last five years, it was discovered that he has saved Ramsey County over \$600! Thank you for your voluntary, personal, efforts to stretch the budget.

Kim Stubblefield

She is always looking for a solution to the issue and how it can be addressed in the most productive way.

Outstanding Performance:

Jo Young

She completes duties as housekeeper with a high level of quality. She is willing to accept assignments and performs them effectively. She takes initiative and is not afraid to confront issues while suggesting solutions.

Spirit

Gerald Settles

In his duties he consistently tries to improve the lives of our youth by exposing them to new opportunities. He has taken on the responsibility of bringing prominent community members to meet and work with youth. In his work, he has built strong community relationships. He is a great role model for staff and youth in our care.

Mary Jo Dupre

This nominee is an excellent example of what it means to work "with" not "for" someone. Aside from promoting a safe and healthy working environment for residents and staff she is always available to listen and bounce things off of, she is a wealth of knowledge with her many years of service and shows great compassion and loyalty to the rank and file.



Mentor

Gerald Settles

He is a great example of a supervisor that show genuine interest in the staff he supervises. He is supportive to staff by always willing to listen and give feedback when asked. He is a great role model and staff can always count on him to follow through with what he says. His years of experience is an invaluable resource to staff and it shows as he is regularly used as a sounding board. He truly wants the best for staff and is willing to coach and mentor staff in a way that is well received.

Melvin Robinson

He has been a huge positive influence for me, from his careful attention to detail, to his communication with families of youth. He's a great role model to other case managers and is always willing to provide advice and feedback when asked.

Joe Fiebiger

This nominee came up through the ranks and is now a supervisor at BTT. He is approachable if you have a problem, supportive and shows genuine caring and compassion for staff as well as residents. He has excellent ideas and listen to the ideas of others and then passes them along. But most importantly he leads not by rank, but by example.

Excellence

Gerald Settles

He goes above and beyond to keep clients connected with the community and cultural events. He seeks creative ways to engage residents. Connects with community organizations and invites them to speak at the facility to enhance positive options for our residents.

