



COMMITTED TO EXCELLENCE



August 25, 2016

EVENT CALENDAR

- 9/26** "Southwest 67" Showing, The Miracle Theatre, 535 8th Street SE, 6 p.m.
- 9/27** Grand Opening Event for "Journey" unit - New Beginnings, 8400 River Road, Laurel, MD

KIDSPACE

What Love LOOKS Like

On Friday, August 19, the little ones of DYRS staff members enjoyed an end-of-summer event, "KIDSPACE," where work was a carnival, at least for the day! DYRS staff enjoyed spending the day with their children and watching them bond with the children of their peers. Now that is what love looks like at DYRS.



Special thanks to Wendell Harris, Rashida George, Elaine Russell, Tianna Hay, Brenda Padavil, Attilio Valli, Julie Ennis, Linda Harllee Harper, Garine Dalce, Dana McDaniel and countless others for making this such a wonderful day!

Community Engagement



Breaking Dawn and Stereotypes with Lawn Care in the Community

Saturday, July 30, marked the New Beginnings Youth Development re-birth of the New Beginnings Lawn Maintenance Care Program. Armed with the credo, "Taking Care of The Community, One Lawn At A Time," youth and staff provided lawn maintenance services at the homes of seniors citizens in the DC Area. This hands-on learning opportunity allowed youth to operate lawn equipment, and highlighted the importance of hard work and civic responsibility. It's also another way DYRS provides youth with competency development strength. Level Six residents (youth who are in transition back into the community) will continue to provide maintenance lawn services until September 10. Long-time DYRS employee Carl Matthews started the lawn maintenance care program at New Beginnings half a decade ago to offer youth employable skills, teach youth the value of giving back to the community, and reinforce the importance of respecting one's elders.

Positive Staff Development

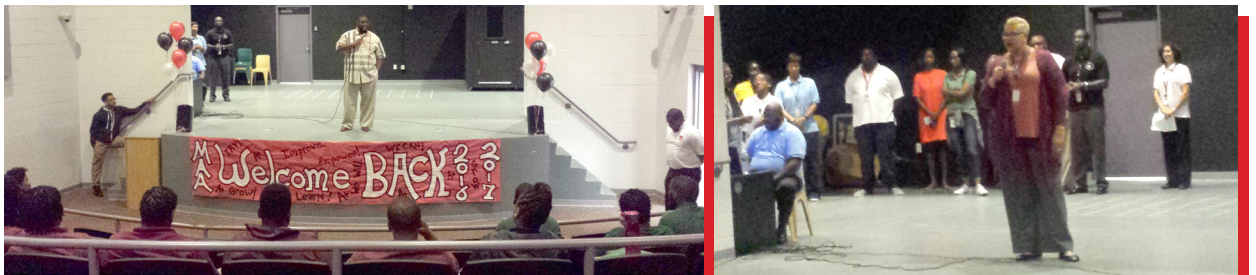


DYRS facilities and community staff participated in a Washington Aggression Interruption Training (W.A.I.T.) with renowned trainer Nels Nelson from Monday, August 1 through Thursday, August 4 at New Beginnings. The training is a cognitive behavioral intervention designed to assist youth with aggression, reduce anti-social behaviors, and offer an alternative of pro-social skills. The session served to train all attendees in the W.A.I.T. approach to be able to facilitate groups at New Beginnings, the Youth Service Center and the Achievement Centers. "W.A.I.T. is an exciting new intervention that will be used in DYRS' facilities to encourage positive interactions for our youth via social skills, anger control and moral reasoning training," said Dr. Ivory McMillian, DYRS Health Services Manager. "It targets areas that our youth struggle with continuously, and research concludes that it has positive outcomes, including possibly reducing recidivism. I look forward to its implementation and know that we are moving in the right direction."

Positive Youth Development

Somebody Said that it Couldn't Be Done

On Tuesday, August 23, the Maya Angelou Academy (MAA) at New Beginnings Youth Development Center held a pep rally to celebrate the beginning of the 2016-2017 school year. Excitement filled the air as this particular rally highlighted the monumental launch of the new girls programming unit - "Journey." Senior Deputy Director Linda Harllee Harper welcomed all youth and MAA staff, who in turn introduced each Youth Development Representative as well the scholar in their respective units. The opening to the school year could perhaps best be summed up by Superintendent Mack McGhee's recitation of "It Couldn't Be Done" by poet Edgar A. Guest. (Excerpt below)."



"...There are thousands to tell you it cannot be done, There are thousands to prophesy failure.
There are thousands to point out to you one by one, The dangers that wait to assail you.
But just buckle in with a bit of a grin, Just take off your coat and go to it;
Just start in to sing as you tackle the thing, That "cannot be done," and you'll do it."
DYRS wishes all students in the District a safe school year!

Jerry M. Update

On August 18, the DYRS case management division received its final Case Planning Follow-Up Report, representing the conclusion of the case planning team's involvement in the Jerry M. lawsuit as it pertains to Goal III of the Work Plan. In October 2015, DYRS received an initial report on its case planning process that concluded that less than 5% of DYRS youth received all of the components of the case planning process. In a May 2016 follow-up report, the consultant found that DYRS had made vast improvements in all case planning areas. However, the DYRS case planning team identified several errors in the data cited within the report. DYRS requested a corrective audit and recalculation of compliance percentages. The final Case Planning Follow-Up Report reflects case planning compliance percentages that are well above the work plan's requirement of 65%, including 92% compliance with Child and Adolescent Functional Assessment Scale (CAFAS) administration; 89% compliance with Team Decision Making (TDM) completions; and 72% compliance with the timely completion of Success Plans. The corrected report is with the Plaintiffs' counsel, and DYRS fulfilled its obligations under the settlement agreement regarding Case Planning reporting. This represents another major accomplishment for the agency on the Jerry M. front. The Jerry M. team - Millicent Jones, Terri Lea, and Allison Fax - sends a huge thank you to the entire Case Management Division for their diligence and hard work in turning the case planning division around in such a short period of time and achieving this compliance victory.

Summer Snapshots



DYRS youth present the Director of the Mount Olivet Boys Home with donations, and youth D.W. and D.D. participate in a nature hike.



DYRS young women enjoy some summertime fun with water activities at Kings Dominion on August 10.

DEFENDING CHILDHOOD PROTECT HEAL THRIVE

Webinar: Understanding Trauma in the Context of Juvenile Justice Systems

On September 16, from 3:30 to 4:30 p.m., the National Center for Mental Health and Juvenile Justice, in partnership with the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention, will present "Understanding Trauma in the Context of Juvenile Justice Systems." Nearly all youth who enter the juvenile justice system experience trauma. Building practitioner skills to understand its impact on youth and to structure systems that support youth is critical for success. This webinar will define trauma/traumatic stress reactions, identify how routine juvenile justice practices can function as triggers, provide real-life examples of youth behavior resulting from experiences of trauma, and offer strategies for the juvenile justice system. This webinar will be presented as part of the Defending Childhood State Policy Initiative. Register at <http://tinyurl.com/j5cpoly>

Worth the Weight



Cruiser Weight Champion for the state of Maryland, Travis Reeves, visited New Beginnings on August 15 to show his skills on the heavy bag. He also shared the story of his upbringing and success with DYRS youth participating in the agency's boxing program, giving them a tangible goal to aspire to.

Working Through Growing Pains



Youth development organization "Grow Up Grow Out" (GUGO) hosted movie and pizza nights at New Beginnings and the Youth Services Center during the second week of August. The young adults also spoke about the pillars of DYRS' Covenant of Peace initiative in small groups with one of the program's facilitator's, GUGO founder, Antonio Fernandez. The youth focused on the pillar "What Love Looks Like," where they consciously asked themselves what love looks like when they are mad at others versus the form it takes when they respect themselves and others. The answers? Values, honesty, and overall respect and love. The night reminded them of the core values key in helping them achieve a successful transition back into the community. Thank you "Grow Up Grow Out" for your constant dedication to DYRS!

Service and Delivery with Food and Friends



On Tuesday, August 16, young ladies from the DYRS Youth Council and staff from the Achievement Center volunteered at Food and Friends - a DC organization that fosters a community caring for men, women and children living with HIV/AIDS, cancer and other life-challenging illnesses by preparing and delivering specialized meals and groceries in conjunction with nutrition counseling. The girls and staff helped to prepare food for delivery to terminally ill residents in the District as part of a local community service project. Food and Friends thanked the team immensely for their support and expressed that their efforts contributed in feeding some of the individuals and families most in need in DC.

Team Building through New Experiences

On August 17, DYRS staff accompanied youth to Harper's Ferry Adventures where they experienced white water rafting! The adventure taught the young people how to follow rafting commands to maneuver through the water, and the importance of operating as a unit to pull their fellow participants back into the raft if they fell out. The end result? A true team building experience!

