



Adverse Life Experiences

Trauma's Impact, Impacts Us All

Trauma has a profound impact on everyone, especially on youth. The vast majority of those who need the help offered by OCC have experienced adverse life experience. They've been abused. They are the victims of violence. They've experienced profound loss and hardship, such as the loss of a caregiver, living in poverty with food insecurity, being exposed to substance abuse, having mentally ill family members, and being victimized by discrimination and injustice.

There is a strong correlation between these adverse experiences and the development of their own substance abuse problems, becoming violent, dropping out of school, self-injury or suicide, and a lifetime of financial, physical, and mental health struggles.

OCC exists to help youth in crisis to find constructive ways to better manage the suffering they've experienced. We offer therapeutic, trauma-informed care. We teach positive coping skills and work to facilitate well-being. We do all we can to help them resume their educations, reassess risk-taking behavior, and point them toward new life skills that will raise the possibility of having a more hopeful future.

When trauma is ignored, we all pay for it—one way or another! If these youth and their families receive the help they need, *we all benefit*. You see, when you support the work that OCC does with youth and families in crisis, it's *not only for their good, but for society's good*, as well.



"I Didn't Know
That When I Came
Out of
Juvenile
Detention That I
Wouldn't Be The
Same Kid As When
I Went In."



**Ann Stuhr
Instructs an OCC
Youth During
Class**

In-House School Fits the Needs of Our Kids

Most of the youth who come to our Emergency Shelter for help are struggling in school. That’s because their lives are already so disrupted and they’re dealing with very challenging circumstances. To go into a new school when your life is in such disarray creates an almost impossible situation that can often translate into poor academic performance and uncomfortable social situations. Additionally, they are with us a very short period of time—anywhere from a few days to a few months—so whatever happens to help with education, needs to happen quickly and easily.

For these reasons, we now offer an in-house classroom using not only the APEX online school offered by the State of Arkansas, but we have a teacher—Ann Stuhr—who is working one on one with our students. She is a Hot Springs School District teacher whose salary is covered through Title 1. It’s been a great success for our kids. Considering what they’re going through, this arrangement works so much better for them, which means they’re learning more, too!

Holidays at OCC

We are blessed to be part of such caring communities both in Hot Springs and Arkadelphia. This is never more evident than during the holidays. We get many inquiries about what we need, so here is a list of suggestions to help us help youth and families in crisis this holiday season:

- **Financial Support**—now, more than ever, your financial support is vital to our ability to care for those who need our help.
- **Gift Cards** to retailers such as WalMart, Best Buy, Dick’s Sporting Goods, Old Navy, TJ Maxx, etc. Because our population is so fluid, purchasing specific items is often difficult because they are with us one day and gone the next. Also, our average age is 15, so it’s difficult to know what teenagers like or want.
- **Spread the Love**—the holidays are always so packed with activities, so you might consider doing something special for our youth and families at other times of the year, such as Valentine’s, MLK Day, Easter, 4th of July, etc.

“There can be no keener revelation of a society’s soul than the way in which it treats its children.”

— Nelson Mandela

Everything Within Our Power

Tammie Diggs, our residential therapist, provides therapeutic care to youth and families in crisis who need our help—even when their circumstances might not fit neatly into one of our program categories. Recently, she worked with a parent and teenager who had a very estranged relationship. The teen had spent time in our shelter and after going home, the family still needed help. There was one catch—they had no insurance. Because Tammie had already been working with them, she knew that they needed continued care—insurance or not. They agreed.

She was able to help them with many of their ongoing issues. As a result, they have made progress in how their relationship works. At OCC, we do everything within our power and means to help youth and families in crisis. We are committed to help them work toward a more hopeful future.

Tammie’s therapeutic care with youth includes tactile activities, such as molding sand shapes and fidgeting with puzzles.





Our Scottish Ceilidh was a great success. On October 4th, folks from Hot Springs Village showed up in their Scottish regalia and enjoyed traditional food, song, and dance, all to benefit OCC! We plan on doing this again next year!

She Turned 10 and She was Celebrated!

“Nightmare” might be a word to best describe the situation that brought Kathy (*not her real name*) to us. Her eyes were wild with fear. Her body, thin and small from neglect and abuse. Her development, stunted and unhealthy. For a nine year old girl, she had already lived a lifetime of experiences no one should have to endure.

Just before she came to us, Kathy turned ten. Our staff knew she had not had a good birthday, so we called on our “On-Call Adopt-a-Birthday” volunteer to help her feel special. A beautiful cake, balloons, and card arrived. For a few hours, this child was celebrated and she soaked in every minute of it. It’s a good thing, too, because within a matter of hours, we were told she was to leave.

Before we knew it, her bag was packed and she left us as abruptly as she had arrived. When she did, her celebratory birthday balloons accompanied her to whatever was next for this child.



Homeless Youth Drop In Center to Open Soon

OCC is excited to announce an expansion of our homeless youth outreach program and will soon be opening a drop in center for those ages 25 and under. Clients will be able to shower, get food and clothing, wash their clothes, access the internet, and receive legal help and advocacy with the goal of finding more permanent and safe living arrangements. We are collaborating with the Salvation Army in Hot Springs to better serve clients in need.

We are currently in need of office furniture, a new washer and dryer, a refrigerator, microwave, new computers, and food. In-kind donations will be greatly appreciated. Monetary donations are always appreciated so we can purchase transportation passes and food vouchers.

We also need volunteers to assist staff in working with clients. Those interested in volunteering can email info@occnnet.org or call 501-623-5591 for more information. Volunteers must pass thorough background checks and go through mandatory training before they can become involved. This is a great opportunity to help the runaway and homeless youth of Hot Springs and Garland County. We anticipate that the drop in center will be open by the middle of November.



339 Charteroak
PO Box 1180
Hot Springs, AR 71902

Phone: 501-623-5591
Fax: 501-623-4226
E-mail: info@occnet.org
www.occnet.org

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SAVE THE DATE

NOVEMBER
27

#GIVINGTUESDAY™