

Bright Horizons

**“After receiving the life-changing services at The Umbrella Center, I made a promise to myself that I would pay it forward someday.”
~ Morina**

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Fulfilling a Promise

"I was trapped in an abusive marriage and had no one to turn to for help. I came to Connecticut from England but was here illegally. It was just me and my daughter.

My husband, who had two children of his own, controlled everything. He did not allow my daughter and I to eat "his" food. I had no money to purchase anything, and what little food we were given went to my daughter. I lost so much weight and remember being so hungry all the time.

He would keep track of how long I was gone and check the mileage on the car when I picked up my daughter from school. There was a time when I took my daughter's friend home, and as her mother was telling me about a birthday party, I began to panic thinking about how long I was gone and how my husband would react. When I got back, he was furious and screamed at me asking why it took me so long. I tried to explain, but he cursed at me and called me a liar. He flicked his cigarette at me burning the top of my lip then punched me. All this happened in front of my daughter, who was crying hysterically.

I thought there was no hope for us. Who would believe me? I had few friends and didn't want to burden my mother. My daughter told her teacher about the incident, and she contacted the Department of Children and Families, who referred us to The Umbrella Center for Domestic Violence Services.

I will never forget when the advocate showed up at my door with a box of food. I still get choked up talking about it. It was Christmas time and she explained BHcare's Under the Tree Project where my daughter and I could give her a wish list and a donor would buy a few items. Much to my surprise, the donor bought everything on my daughter's list. Her excitement on Christmas morning was so heartwarming.

We lived in a safe house for a short period of time and eventually moved in with my mother. I started to rebuild my life. I applied for a green card, started to work, and during this time I made a promise to myself that when I was in a stable financial position, I would pay it forward. This winter, I fulfilled my promise and donated six new chairs to one of the safe houses. The Umbrella Center gave me the tools and support to survive an abusive relationship and I am forever grateful for all they did for me and my daughter."

~ Morina

Your gift allows us to provide services to families without finances being a barrier.

Creating Drug-Free Communities

This past year, the Alliance for Prevention and Wellness (APW) conducted several direct mail campaigns targeting communities throughout the Naugatuck Valley and Middlesex County to build awareness of local prevention efforts.

Opioid overdose fatalities in Ansonia and Derby exceeded the national rate every year from 2014 - 2018. More recent data shows the Ansonia rate has more than doubled, and in Shelton the rate increased by 76 percent during 2018 - 2020. As a result of this campaign, APW received multiple calls regarding safe medication disposal and how to access medication lock boxes in the Naugatuck Valley. In 2021, the Valley medication drop boxes and Drug Take Back days collected more than 1,472 pounds of medications.

The Middlesex mailer increased awareness and traffic to the mobile harm reduction services in this rural, underserved community. Naloxone, fentanyl test strips and other resources were distributed to hundreds of residents throughout the region. One resident returned more than 900 used syringes, and another dropped off blankets for clients in need.

APW continues to work hand-in-hand with community partners to implement evidence-based prevention strategies to enhance community well-being.

Your support is helping to build strong and healthy
drug-free communities now and for generations to come.

Overcoming Anxiety

“My 16-year-old son Joshua was referred to the Parent Child Resource Center (PCRC) because he had extreme social anxiety, which kept him from spending time with his peers. If his friends asked him to hang out or go to a school function that was in a public place, he would attempt to go, get anxious and have a panic attack. His hands would shake and so would his voice. He would cry and ask what was wrong with him.

Joshua was not involved in any activities outside of school. Many of his friends had part-time jobs and he also wanted to work but was too nervous to go through an interview. Instead, he would spend most nights and weekends isolated in his room.

Since receiving care at PCRC, Joshua has learned how to cope with his anxiety. He now has the tools and skills to manage unhealthy thoughts and choose healthier behaviors.

As Joshua works on expressing his thoughts, he is beginning to step out of his comfort zone. He has attended more social gatherings including a concert. Recently, he started his first job and spends his weekends with friends. Joshua understands the connection between his thoughts, feelings and behavior, and states that he now has little anxiety overall.

My husband and I have a better understanding of what fuels Joshua’s anxiety and how to be a good support system for him. The PCRC program has been a godsend.”

~ Joshua’s mom



Your donations give children the tools to cope with their conditions and teaches parents how to help support their recovery.

Lighting the Way



Because of **you**, clients like Ed have the support needed to live their lives to the fullest, and no longer feel hopeless and lost.

“I started getting services at BHcare when my insurance ran out and I could no longer afford my psychiatrist. I am a recovering alcoholic and addict plus I have bipolar disorder and suffer from schizophrenia.

I tried to go off my medication and go without help but realized I cannot fight this illness by myself. I am working with a counselor, clinician and a case manager and I attend both individual and group therapy. Plus, BHcare assists me with medication management. They help me look at myself and acknowledge the positive aspects of my life along with the challenges.

A few years ago, gambling became a problem. I could not hold onto a dollar. I turned my finances over to BHcare to manage and now have a cushion in the bank, which is something that I have not had in over 20 years.

The way I look at it is, BHcare is a torch that guides me through my darkest times. They let me fall when I need to fall and pick me up when I need to be picked up.

I cannot express how much BHcare has done for me. I still struggle from time to time but know I can count on them no matter what. I have it good today and owe everything to them.”

~ Ed



Pictured above: Tony SanAngelo, BHcare board member, Sheila and Cliff Parizo and Dave Cox of the Derby Elks.

"The Derby Elks are always looking for opportunities to give back to the community. The Elks was founded to promote the virtues of Charity, Justice, Brotherly Love and Fidelity. Our mission is to build stronger communities and improve the quality of life with our motto being 'Elks Care, Elks Share.'

Each year Derby Lodge sets up a holiday giving tree which displays ornaments with the name of a person and their holiday wish. This year, we were thrilled to be a part of BHcare's Under the Tree Project.

Over 50 wishes were fulfilled by our members, and being able to brighten the holidays and put a smile on the faces of the men, women and children served by BHcare truly warmed our hearts.

We were overwhelmed by the generosity and kindness of our members and honored to be a part of this year's program. We look forward to participating next year."

~ David Robinson, Exalted Ruler

Learn about ways you can help at BHcare.org.

BHcare is supported by the Connecticut Department of Children and Families, Connecticut Department of Social Services, Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services, Katharine Matthies Foundation, the Guilford Community Fund, the Guilford Human Services Council, the Community Foundation for Greater New Haven, The Valley United Way, United Way of Milford, The Valley Community Foundation, Connecticut Coalition Against Domestic Violence and the Towns of Ansonia, Bethany, Branford, Derby, East Haven, Guilford, Hamden, Madison, New Haven, North Branford, North Haven, Orange, Oxford, Seymour, Shelton, West Haven and Woodbridge.

BHcare is accredited by the The Joint Commission and is licensed by the Department of Public Health and the Department of Children and Families.

BHcare is a partner agency of CommuniCare, Inc. An Affirmative Action/Equal Opportunity Employer.

We apologize for any omissions or oversights. If your department, foundation or municipality has been overlooked, please bring it to our attention.



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