

## PROFILE YOUTH IN CRISIS

A 14 year old female arrived at the shelter accompanied by the Racine County Sheriff's Department. The youth had been severely beaten by her father. The youth alleged that her father had hit her at least 30 times across the back of her legs, buttocks, and back with a belt. The youth had been to the hospital, photographs taken, and the youth's father had been arrested. The Racine County Human Services Department took temporary physical custody of the youth and placed the youth at the shelter until an alternative placement was found. The youth's three younger siblings were temporarily placed with a relative.

The youth stated that she had been living with her father for the past six weeks and that her mother lived in California. Youth shelter staff and the Racine County Human Services Department left multiple messages on the youth's mother's voice mail, but the youth's mother never returned the telephone calls.

After talking with the youth, the youth informed staff that the youth's mother had an alleged alcohol and drug problem. The youth stated that she had not been attending school, had runaway from home while in California, and had previously stayed at a shelter in California. The youth further stated that her mother was struggling financially and that was the reason why the youth and her siblings moved to Racine with their father.

The youth was suffering from both physical and emotional pain. The youth was angry and justly so. What bravery and courage it took for a 14 year old to contact the police. This youth had endured so much at such a young age. More than many of us have in our lifetime.

The youth wanted to return to California where her mother allegedly lives. Unfortunately, the youth's mother could not provide the stability that the youth or the youth's three siblings needed. In fact, the youth's mother never returned any of the telephone calls and the Racine County Human Services Department believed that the youth's mother probably never would.

The youth and her three younger siblings were successfully placed in a foster home.

## PROFILE HOMELESS YOUTH

A fourteen year old male was brought to the SAFE Haven Youth Shelter late one night by the Racine Police Department. The youth had been listed as a runaway for the last two months and had not been attending school.

When the youth arrived at the Youth Shelter, he was in dire need of assistance. The youth appeared scared, tired and hungry. He desperately needed a shower, clean clothing and a safe place to stay.

At a very young age, the youth's mother had abandoned the family due to alleged alcohol and other drug problems. His father never remarried and had been raising the youth alone for over five years. Three months prior to the youth's arrival at the shelter, things had turned for the worse and the youth's father had begun drinking and was having a hard time holding down a job. The youth was still in school at this point, but all the stability he came to count on in his life was falling apart around him. His father lost virtually everything and was unable to take care of the youth.

After the youth had settled in to the Youth Shelter and had a good night's rest, our staff conducted an individual counseling session with him to best determine and address his needs.

Unfortunately, the youth's father could not provide the stability he needed. Our focus now was to find an alternative living placement for the youth.

Working with Racine County Human Services, three prospective foster homes were identified for the youth. He seemed a bit apprehensive, but was relieved that he would be able to visit the foster homes before placement. He also seemed thankful that he was able to be involved in the process of finding a new home.

The youth was successfully placed in a foster home and reinstated in school.

## PROFILE REUNIFIED FAMILIES

A 17 year old male youth was brought to SAFE Haven by the Racine Police Department. The youth alleged that he had a verbal altercation with his step-father and that his step-father had threatened to beat him.

An individual counseling session was held with the youth and the youth revealed to staff that he had not been following the rules at home, his grades had fallen in school, and he was staying out past his curfew. The youth informed staff that he had a job at McDonald's and that he had withdrawn \$1,000.00 from his bank account. The youth stated that his step-father was unhappy about his grades and did not want the youth leaving the house with that much cash. The youth stated that a verbal argument escalated and that the youth's step-father threatened to hit the youth.

Being 17 years old can be a difficult time for both the parents and the youth. The youth is trying to obtain his identity and independence and in doing so turmoil has occurred in the home. It is also sometimes difficult for the parents to know how much independence to allow and at the same time maintain stability in the home pertaining to rules, respect, and parental guidance.

A family counseling session was held with the youth, his mother, and his step-father. Everyone was allowed to express their feelings and concerns. A service contract was filled out by both the youth and his parents, which identified problems, goals, and what actions needed to be taken to achieve those goals. The family session enabled both the parents and the youth to communicate to each other regarding problem resolution, expectations, rules, and consequences.

The family session was successful and the youth was reunited with his parents.