

On the Mend

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FALL 2004

GOING ON 15 YEARS

On January 9, 2005, The Women's Treatment Center will celebrate its 15th birthday! In this and coming newsletters we'll look back at some of our history, starting here with our beginning.

Born of a mandate from Governor Jim Edgar, TWTC had an auspicious beginning when it was decided that its home would be the building that once housed the last incarnation of Mary Thompson Hospital, at the corner of Lake and Ashland.

This hospital was founded six

years before the Chicago Fire by Dr. Mary Harris Thompson, one of the nation's first woman surgeons. The hospital was designed to care for indigent women and children. It established the first women's



TWTC carries on the mission of the old Mary Thompson Hospital, providing first class care to Chicago's women in need.

medical college in the Midwest in 1870, and the first nursing school in Chicago in 1847.

TWTC is proud to carry on the great tradition of Dr. Mary Thompson -- providing women and their children with quality care. Like the hospital, TWTC offers services that women cannot find anywhere else. TWTC provides a continuum of care that takes care of not only their needs, but their children's as well, with extensive childcare and parenting services. We look forward to the next 15 years!

TWTC Wins Grants from WNUA, McCormick Tribune Foundation

On September 24, 2004, TWTC was awarded a grant from the WNUA Cares For Kids Charities.

The grant is for TWTC's Crisis Nursery, a one-of-its-kind facility in Illinois, whose primary goal is to provide a safe place for children while their mothers embark on treatment.

Funding for WNUA Cares For Kids Charities comes from the sale of WNUA's "Smooth Jazz CD Sampler." Volume 17 was released on November 2.

On October 11, 2004, TWTC's Parenting Program received \$50,000 from the Chicago Tribune Charities-Holiday, a fund of the

McCormick Tribune Foundation. This is the eighth year that the McCormick Tribune Foundation has lent its support to this important program.

Thanks in part to the McCormick Tribune Foundation support, the Parenting Program served 105 families in FY2004.

MISSION STATEMENT

The mission of The Women's Treatment Center (TWTC) is to provide comprehensive, compassionate, clinically appropriate chemical dependency treatment for women and their children.

The scope of this treatment includes social services, medical care and mental health services, which are offered without regard to race, creed, color, sexual orientation, disability, national origin or ability to pay.

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Major Funding Provided by:

Illinois Department of Human Services Division of Alcoholism and Substance Abuse; the Illinois Department of Children and Family Services; and the Chicago Tribune Holdiay Fund, Robert R. McCormick Tribune Foundation.

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'Tis the Season....

It is the beginning of the holiday season and there are many excellent reasons to include TWTC on your holiday gift list.

As you read on page one, for nearly 15 years, TWTC has been there for some of Chicago's neediest families, helping thousands of mothers and children mend the bonds stressed by drug and alcohol addiction. Your contributions make it possible for us to continue to deliver these vital services and get the message out that treatment works.

The concept of giving to others -- because they are in need or because you can -- is time-honored in all cultures, and a vital social service. Here at TWTC, we are lucky to count many generous and creative practitioners of the art of giving among our supporters: those who make financial contributions, those who donate needed items for specific programs, those who donate toys and clothes and those who contribute their time.

We have Girl Scout Troop 187 of LaGrange, IL, who made fleece blankets for the babies in our Crisis Nursery. We have the First Grade Class of K.A.M. Isaiah Israel in Hyde Park, who, for the second year running, are collecting coats and winterwear for our mothers and children. We're grateful to know

*From the Desk of Jewell Oates,
Ph.D., Executive Director of
TWTC.*

Women of Wisdom who can always be counted on to help PACT, a literacy program for children whose moms are imprisoned. There are also our volunteers who come in on Saturdays to help Miss Hazel sort through donations and organize the clothing room.

Then there's the Junior League, whose members have volunteered at TWTC for the last 10 years. They work specifically with our Recovery Home women and children, organizing fun leisure activities that would not have been available for our women to do.

TWTC is also developing a relationship with our newest volunteer group, high school students from Chicago's Latin School, who are learning to be of service by assisting our childcare staff with the children in the evenings. The point is it can feel good to give as it does to receive.

Early in December, you'll see our Annual Fund letter. In this season of giving, we ask that you do what you can to help give us another 15 years of service. Every dollar donated provides desperately needed services to children and their mothers. Please know your kindness is always greatly appreciated.

HELP US REACH YOU BETTER!

As you can see, lots of wonderful things have been happening at TWTC. Help us reach you sooner with glad tidings by sending us your email address. By using email, we can let you know more quickly about upcoming events like "Peter Pan" and other happenings, without the extra expense of postage. Send your email address to:

ygoinis@womenstreatmentcenter.org

Tales of Treatment Past, Present Happiness and Future Success

Joyce was admitted to TWTC on August 31, 1992 at 12:15. Twelve years later, she remembers the moment clearly: She was strung out, and her addiction was taking a clear toll on her two-year-old twins. Her daughter, staff noticed, was unemotional, a little adult with few “child-like” qualities. Her son, suffering from asthma, was constantly sick. She needed help for them and for herself.

In treatment, Joyce got the tools to heal herself and her broken family. She learned how to communicate, how to respect herself and her children. This, she believes is key: “If you don’t know anything about yourself,” she says, “you don’t understand certain things about other people. Once you understand about yourself, things become clearer. Once ‘Joyce’ understood ‘Joyce,’ I could see the kids differently, validate their feelings.”

Just as TWTC’s programs and staff helped Joyce with her problems, she says they did the same for her children. The Director of Children’s Programs recommended play therapy for Tiara, Joyce’s daughter. As Joyce was able to take on more responsibility for the children’s care, Tiara became more of a child. TWTC’s consistent environment, with its people and routines that Tiara could count on every day, also helped her become the child she was meant to be.

Joyce’s son Tavarius was one of the very first chronically ill kids to take up residence at the Center. His asthma, which Joyce believes was made worse by the emotional stress

brought on by her addiction, led to many trips to the ER. Before coming to TWTC, Joyce hadn’t realized how sick he was. TWTC staff helped her learn how to take care of him, give him his meds on a regular schedule, how to “advocate for my baby” in the healthcare system.

Today, the twins are 15 years old. Tavarius is an avid reader, chess player and stock market watcher, who intends to be an entrepreneur. Tiara, who wants to



Joyce, Tiara and Tavarius in 2002.

be a doctor and who was selected for a four year scholarship to a private school, is an honor student. Their mom is clean, sober and-- for the last 8 years -- a valued staff member in TWTC’s Daycare Program. She tries to pass on what she got at TWTC to the moms she works with, mostly by example. She and her family have a future they could never have imagined 12 years ago.

Felisa’s son was 11 months old when she came to TWTC on March 7, 1996. He learned to crawl, walk and talk in the 15 months she spent here. She was, in her own words, “a full-blown drug addict. I didn’t know anything about parenting. I’d been incarcerated before and learned about recovery through a program in prison.”

Felisa knew she had to get her life back on track, but also knew she needed a lot of support to do it. At TWTC, she found it. TWTC, she says, was different than the other options available. She could be treated with her child, who could stay in the Crisis Nursery while she detoxed. If, she says, TWTC hadn’t been there, “I’d still be out there, because I couldn’t leave my baby.” The structured programs, the access to psychologists gave her what she needed to stay clean and sober.

TWTC’s parenting program gave her the tools she needed to raise her son. Prior to coming to TWTC, she had relied on physical discipline. She had no idea a child “could learn via time outs, or taking something away, or giving him something else to do.” She learned how to ask for help, to relax, to enjoy her child.

Today, Felisa’s son is 9 years old, an honor student at a Christian school, who loves to read, and who loves his mom. Felisa, who didn’t even have a GED when she came to TWTC, now has her CADC degree and is finishing up her Bachelor’s degree in Applied Behavior Science. Like Joyce, she is a valued member of TWTC’s staff, where she is a counselor in one of our residential units. She, too, tries to pass on the gifts of recovery and knowledge that she got as a TWTC client.

Those of us who have been at TWTC for a long time have had the privilege of watching Joyce, Felisa and their families grow in recovery. We’re proud to call them our own!

We know a place where dreams are born!

*Save
This
Date!*

Let us take you there!
Join us on
Sunday, February 6, 2005
for a matinee performance of
J.M. Barrie's beloved classic
Peter Pan
starring Kathy Rigby.
Invitations are coming soon!



Nelson Gill Plays for TWTC's Children

Nelson Gill, an award-winning performing artist and educator, brought his joyful Caribbean sounds to TWTC on October 26th, 2004.

Gill, who is also a preschool teacher, combines his expertise in early childhood education with immense musical talent to create songs that not only delight young children, but also helps them learn.

From the opening notes of his performance, Gill had TWTC's

children and staff dancing and singing. He performed such Gill hits as "Come to Belize," "Tick Tock," and "Friends," which won Best Song honors at the Chicago Music Awards.

His music is filled with positive messages for children, such as the importance of friendship, perseverance and universal harmony. TWTC's children couldn't get enough of his wisdom and style.



Nelson Gill and his band get down with some of their new young TWTC fans.