



FY19 ANNUAL REPORT

DEAR FRIENDS OF SAN MAR,

REFLECTION IS A GIFT WE ARE GIVEN WHICH ALLOWS US TO EVALUATE THE PAST. THE BENEFIT OF EXAMINING OUR TREATMENT FOSTER CARE PROGRAM EACH YEAR IS THE ABILITY TO MAKE CALCULATED DECISIONS WHICH WILL AFFECT HOW THE FUTURE IS SHAPED. I WOULD LIKE TO CHALLENGE YOU AS YOU REVIEW OUR FISCAL YEAR-END REPORT - 2018 TO 2019, THAT YOU ADJUST THE LENS A LITTLE AND SEE THE EVIDENCE OF OUR DIRECTION. WE HAVE BEEN WORKING DILIGENTLY IN MANY AREAS TO STRENGTHEN RELATIONSHIPS AND BECOME MORE SKILLED.

THROUGHOUT THESE PAGES WE WILL TELL YOU THE STORIES - HOW WE ARE HELPING TO SHAPE THE LIVES OF OUR CHILDREN IN CARE, BUT NOT ONLY THEM, ALL OF US IN THIS JOURNEY ARE EMBRACING NEW WAYS TO RESPOND AND GROW.

THANK YOU FOR TAKING A FEW MOMENTS TO COME ALONG THIS JOURNEY WITH US. WE ARE HOPING YOU WILL CATCH THE VISION AND THE EXCITEMENT WE FEEL AS WE MOVE INTO ANOTHER YEAR.

SOME OF THE THINGS TO LOOK FOR:

- SIX (6) CHILDREN FINDING THEIR FOREVER HOMES - THEIR ADOPTIONS AND THE CHILDREN WHO ARE IN THE PROCESS OF ADOPTION IN THIS COMING YEAR
- THE IMPLEMENTATION OF AN EVIDENCE-BASED TRAINING PROGRAM FOR ALL STAFF AND FOSTER PARENTS, CALLED TOGETHER FACING THE CHALLENGE
- CONTINUAL, INTENTIONAL DEVELOPMENT OF STRONGER RELATIONSHIPS WITH OUR AGENCY PARTNERS THROUGHOUT EVERY COUNTY IN MARYLAND TO SUPPORT OUR ADMISSIONS COORDINATOR IN FINDING THE RIGHT FIT WITH A 'CHILD AND FAMILY'.
- STRATEGIC IMPLEMENTATION OF OUTREACH TO SHOW OUR COMMUNITY THE COMPELLING REASONS TO BECOME FOSTER PARENTS

THANK YOU FOR YOUR CONTINUAL SUPPORT IN BETTERING THE LIVES OF OUR CHILDREN.

WITH SINCERE GRATITUDE,
ELLEN



PROGRAM INFORMATION

| FOSTER FAMILIES | DATE OF CERTIFICATION | DATE ENDED |
|--------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| Jamie & Russell | 7/5/2001 | Transitioned 7/9/2019 |
| Roberta & Charles | 12/21/2015 | |
| Cathy | 8/1/2007 | 3/13/2019 |
| Veryle & Perry | 6/30/2009 | |
| Terry | 12/6/2010 | |
| Belinda & Tim | 10/10/2012 | |
| Melissa & Rob | 1/3/2013 | |
| Sherri & Buck | 12/13/2016 | |
| Harriet | 9/30/2016 | |
| Susan & Bruce | 6/8/2008 | 8/31/2018 |
| Dee | 10/1/2018 | |
| Jenn & Pattie | 9/26/2017 | |
| Melinda & Brian | 10/22/2018 | 5/17/2019 |
| Ann | 4/3/2015 | |
| Brigitte & Leonard | 9/1/2011 | |
| Tavasha & William | 6/6/2016 | |
| Barb & Gary | 3/12/2007 | |
| Selena & Duane | 6/28/2017 | |
| Mary & Chuck | 2/3/2016 | |
| Debbi & Joe | 9/15/2011 | |
| Kim & Keith | 9/21/2011 | |
| Leslie & Kim | 3/1/2006 | |
| Lake & Mike | 9/23/2015 | |
| Mironda | 7/1/2007 | 6/1/2019 |
| June | 11/26/2007 | |
| Cortney & Nathan | 6/7/2019 | |
| Elsie & Kevin | 3/21/2019 | |
| Grace & Richard | 9/6/2007 | |
| Marina & Chuck | 2/1/2013 | |
| Madelin | 12/12/2018 | |

MEET OUR LICENSING COORDINATOR



Colleen Carter was promoted to the role of Licensing Coordinator in June of 2019. She tackles one of our greatest challenges - licensing more resource families who have the special qualities to do this work and continue over time.

While five of our families have completed their time in Treatment Foster Care, 29 continue with us providing services to children. The good news is there are 4 new families in the process of becoming licensed and we continue to spread the word about the amazing opportunity to serve families in need.

ADMISSIONS

OUR ADMISSIONS COORDINATOR, BECKY CARPENTER, REACHES OUT TO AGENCIES ALL OVER THE STATE OF MARYLAND TO BUILD RELATIONSHIPS, TO TELL ABOUT THE SUCCESS OF OUR PROGRAM, BUT MORE IMPORTANTLY, BECKY SHARES ABOUT OUR AMAZING PROVIDERS - THE MEN AND WOMEN WHO GIVE FREELY OF THEMSELVES TO CREATE A LOVING, SAFE AND THERAPEUTIC ENVIRONMENT FOR OUR CHILDREN.

In the Spring San Mar hosted a brunch, inviting placing agency workers around Maryland to learn more about our Treatment Foster Care Program. These are the folks who have children with very specific needs requiring the "right" family. By the end of 2019, Montgomery County became the second highest jurisdiction to place children with San Mar. The largest number of children are from Washington, our home county. A representative from Montgomery County recently shared, "I will tell you why we have placed so many children with San Mar. San Mar answers our calls. They listen to us and they make things happen! That's why we love working with you."

San Mar continues to build these personal relationships with placing agencies all around the state. Our goal is to place children and youth in families where they will thrive. It's the best work ever!

**[SAN MAR] LISTENS TO
US AND THEY MAKE
THINGS HAPPEN!**

- PLACING AGENCY WORKER



Becky Carpenter
22 years with San Mar



FOSTER PARENT ADVISORY GROUP

In January of 2019 we held our first Foster Parent Advisory Group meeting. It began with five foster parents and two staff. The first three monthly meetings were used to formulate the mission and vision for the group. An impressive secondary gain during this time was the beginning of personal relationships between the members. It was a forum where participants could hear the stories of others and gain confidence in themselves as well as the support of others. In April members of this group joined with program staff to complete the three day training of Together Facing the Challenge before it was presented to all of our providers in May and June. And, in July this group helped with the watermelon stop of the San Mar bike tour.

SAN MAR TFC BY THE NUMBERS 2018-2019

50 CHILDREN SERVED

| AGE | BOYS | GIRLS |
|--------------|-----------|-----------|
| BIRTH - 5 | 1 | 3 |
| 6 - 10 | 5 | 6 |
| 11 - 15 | 6 | 9 |
| 16 - 20 | 8 | 12 |
| TOTAL | 20 | 30 |

16 ADMISSIONS

| GENDER | TOTAL | RACE | TOTAL |
|--------------|-----------|---------------------|-----------|
| MALE | 6 | WHITE | 8 |
| FEMALE | 10 | LATINO/ HISPANIC | 3 |
| TOTAL | 16 | BLACK/ AFRICAN | 1 |
| | | BI-RACIAL | 4 |
| | | TOTAL | 16 |

PLACEMENT AGENCIES

- Department of Social Services (DSS)
- Department of Juvenile Services (DJS)

| PLACING AGENCY | CLIENTS SERVED |
|-------------------------|----------------|
| Washington County DSS | 16 |
| Washington County DJS | 1 |
| Allegany County DSS | 1 |
| Frederick County DSS | 7 |
| Montgomery County DSS | 10 |
| Carroll County DSS | 4 |
| Baltimore County DSS | 6 |
| Anne Arundel County DSS | 1 |
| Charles County DSS | 2 |
| St. Mary's DSS | 1 |
| Out of State | 1 |
| TOTAL | 50 |

24 DISCHARGES

| DISCHARGE CATEGORY | NUMBER DISCHARGED |
|---------------------|-------------------|
| ADOPTION | 6 |
| RETURN TO FAMILY | 4 |
| REGULAR FOSTER CARE | 2 |
| INDEPENDENT LIVING | 2 |
| ANOTHER TFC | 4 |
| HIGHER | 4 |
| AWOL | 2 |
| TOTAL | 24 |

Of the 24 discharges from our program 18, or 75% were able to transition to a lateral or lower level of care. Sometimes we take a risk in bringing a youth into our program. For example, in the case of one female who AWOLed, it was the right thing to do. We gave her a chance to have what she was asking for - a place in a family. Sadly, she was not strong enough to be successful. Recently, we spoke to her placing worker. She is now living in a more protective environment and experiencing great success.

THIS IS THE WORK WE DO

One young girl, we will call Katie, along with her siblings, saw their parents during visits in the community for many years. Katie thought they looked healthy and happy. They seemed to love her. But, she never got the answer as to why they couldn't find housing. It was three years – and they continued to struggle with homelessness. Sometime in the future Katie may describe the time that her whole family lived in a car. But she does not talk about it now. She has locked that memory away.

When Katie was adopted, her siblings were adopted as well, but each one is now in a different family. Katie is happy that she gets to see her siblings regularly. But the unspoken questions Katie carries in her heart for the years to come are, "Where are my parents? Do they love me? Are they okay?" She will often wonder about these things.

We were with Katie on her adoption day. It was a very difficult time. What should have been a happy moment for Katie was a traumatic one. She could not stop the tears welling up in her eyes. She would not let her foster dad put her down. He said that as soon as they got to the courthouse door, she jumped into his arms. She was holding on like a Koala holds its mother – cheek to cheek, very tight, longing for protection and safety. You see, the court took Katie from her parents three years before. Now on adoption day she feared they would take her away again, this time from her new family. I felt the pain she was carrying.

But I also watched the incredible love and support she was being given by her adoptive family as the adoption was completed. The journey is not over.



ADOPTION ON JUNE 26, 2019



ADOPTION ON JUNE 11, 2019



ADOPTION ON MAY 29, 2019



GLEND A (ABOVE), RECENTLY TURNED 21 YEARS OLD AND IS A FORMER FOSTER CARE YOUTH. SHE HAS SPOKEN TO SEVERAL GROUPS DURING EVENTS SPONSORED BY SAN MAR.

GLEND A HAS TAKEN THE LEAD IN A FEW EVENTS TO HELP OUR TEENS FEEL SPECIAL AND TO SHOW THEM THE POSSIBILITIES FOR THEIR FUTURES. SHE HAS ALSO SPOKEN AND TOLD HER STORY TO OUR BOARD OF DIRECTORS.

ONE OF HER MANY GOALS IS TO ONE DAY JOIN THE SAN MAR BOARD OF DIRECTORS!

A MOTHER'S DAY LETTER

FROM A FOSTER YOUTH TO HER FOSTER MOTHER - MAY 2019

For Marina,

First and foremost, I want to let you know this letter isn't even half of the words nor emotions I have towards you. I don't tell you enough how much I love you! Our story has been rocking, emotional, but it's our story. From the moment I walked in your house almost 6 years ago, you treated me as your own. You taught me so many things along the road of this journey called life. Our family changed my life in ways you will never understand. Many times kids who grow up in foster care want to feel loved, accepted and understood. All of that came natural from you. Not once did I ever feel out of place or unwelcome. I've always known that you guys were my family, and I couldn't let go.

See, the difference you made in my life isn't something that stopped when I turned 21. We have formed a bond just like any other family. I come to you about some of my issues but not all of them, because I want to be independent. I know that at the end of the day, I can always turn to you. You taught me that it's okay to cry, and sometimes being sad isn't the worst thing in the world. Not only did you love me, but you gave me a forever family. Yes, sometimes we get on each other's nerves, but what family doesn't. Thank you for everything even though I don't say it often.

*Always and Forever,
Glenda*

THE VILLAGE PEOPLE

JAMIE AND RUSSELL SERVED AS LICENSED TREATMENT FOSTER CARE PROVIDERS WITH SAN MAR FOR 18 YEARS, FROM 2001—2019.

San Mar and Foster Parents are the ones who turn towards the world of domestic violence, substance abuse, untreated mental illness, and children traumatized by neglect, abuse and abandonment. We reach into that world, take hold of that child's hand and softly say you're coming with me.

More times than not they look at us with their sad fearful eyes and say, "No I AM NOT!"

We are the bridge being built over their troubled waters. A warm place to sleep free from hurt and abuse. A place to regroup and find all their pieces. A word of encouragement, a smile, a laugh. A mentor, a counselor, a mother, a grandma, a friend, a supporter!

Many tears fall and you wipe them away. Fostering isn't easy but it makes a difference. Fostering can impact generations to come. So you promise yourself you will continue to foster just one more day...just for one more day. 19 years later....

There is a darkness with foster parenting that foster parents rarely verbalize. I imagine it's the same reason police officers and firefighters rarely share their darkness. People just don't understand unless they have been in the trenches with these hurting broken souls.

The reason we don't talk about it is because to verbalize it means to hear from others, "You should just stop fostering. You're too stressed out...you need to focus on yourself and family." To verbalize the darkness is to invite people to discourage you from doing this thing that you know you are called to do even though the cost is high!

The journey of foster parenting can be a long and windy road. One with twists, turns, bumps, and pot holes... many times with no warning.

Every foster parent needs a no matter what friend – someone they can vent to...no matter what...someone they don't have to explain themselves to...no matter what.

**"WE ARE THE BRIDGE
BEING BUILT OVER
THEIR TROUBLED
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FROM HURT AND
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San Mar has been to us that no matter what place... where we have spoken of the darkness and struggles of being a foster parent...verbally vomited at times with no judgement...only understanding and encouragement...ok and a few more grey hairs.

Their support is one of the reasons why we have stayed the course for 18 years. They have advocated, listened, stood in the gap, given of their time, talent and treasure. That's the kind of support every single foster parent needs. It has allowed us to continue to minister to these children when our tanks were empty.

They have a heart for the vulnerable children of this world, and at the same time they embrace and care for the care givers. In our experience, that has not always been the case in the world of foster care and other agencies.

Some children that came to our home were not prepared for a nurturing home setting. It is heartbreaking to have to let them go, hoping and praying somehow your love could have poured oil in their wounds.

You might be temporarily in their lives; they may be temporarily in yours. But there is nothing temporary about the love or the lesson.

I am not afraid to grieve. I am afraid of what will happen to these children if no one takes the risk to love them!

It does take a village...you are the village people.

You are a part of a puzzle in someone else's life. You may never know where you fit...you may never foster a child in your home. But someone's life may never be complete without your support! Believe me when I say...San Mar is fertile soil to plant your seed!

Thank You!

Jamie, Foster Parent (2001-2019)

**"I AM NOT AFRAID
TO GRIEVE. I AM
AFRAID OF WHAT WILL
HAPPEN TO THESE
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TRAINING

EMPOWERING RESOURCE FAMILIES THROUGH "TOGETHER FACING THE CHALLENGE"

TOGETHER FACING THE CHALLENGE (TFTC)

TFTC is an evidence-based model of care developed to support existing agencies to enhance and improve the quality of training, service delivery, and outcomes for youth within Treatment Foster Care settings. TFTC brings to us a comprehensive training package, including in-person training, necessary materials and on-going coaching and consultation.

THE CURRICULUM PROVIDES EFFECTIVE STRATEGIES TO STAFF AND FOSTER FAMILIES TO BUILD UPON THREE OF THE PRIMARY RESEARCH-SUPPORTED FACTORS FOR SUCCESS IN FOSTER CARE:

- Supportive and involved relationships between supervisors and foster parents
- Effective use of behavior management strategies for foster parents
- Supportive and involved relationships between foster parents and the youth in their care



STAFF TRAINING TOGETHER FACING THE CHALLENGE | MARCH 25-27, 2019

All TFC staff and three key foster parents took part in this training out of Duke University. We presented these same materials to many of our foster parents in May and June of 2019. Trainings were held on Thursday evenings and Saturday mornings for seven consecutive weeks and concluded mid-June. We had a little fun on Thursday evenings sharing dinner and dessert. We were appreciative when a couple of our foster families helped out!



THE 21ST NATIONAL CONFERENCE ON CHILD ABUSE AND NEGLECT | APRIL 24-26, 2019

Treatment Foster Care staff Becky Carpenter, Colleen Carter, Aida Lazo, Joe Woodburn and Ellen Savoy joined staff from other San Mar programs at the 21st National Conference on Child Abuse and Neglect, April 24-26, 2019 in Washington, D.C.

This was a time for education and camaraderie building. People in attendance were from all over the world, networking and learning from the best. Topics included "Putting Families First" and "Making Child Welfare More Trauma Informed." One specific interest for our team was a session titled "Promoting Partnerships Between Parents and Resource Families."

We continue to make strides and learn the best ways we can support the children and families we serve!



ACTIVITIES FOR OUR FAMILIES



FALL TRUNK OR TREAT

OCTOBER 19, 2018



Left: Case Manager, Joe Woodburn, is in full costume and having fun with a client



HOLIDAY DINNER AND GUEST SPEAKER

DECEMBER 7, 2018

Steve Fitzhugh is a champion for youth, motivator, author and humorist gifted at reaching all audiences! Because of his unique communication skills and effective presentation style, Mr. Fitzhugh remains in high demand.

Steve Fitzhugh, a husband, father and mentor leads men into success and significance with life altering antidotes for everyday living. His timeless stories of life in the National Football League serves as the perfect platform to motivate and inspire.

Steve joined San Mar for our 2018 Annual Christmas Party. He inspired everyone in the room with stories of resiliency and purpose.



GIRL EMPOWERMENT DAY AND EASTER FESTIVITIES

APRIL 19, 2019

Children connected with our program came together today for exciting opportunities and a holiday celebration. A youth in our program had a vision for providing connections and fun for other kids and worked with our case managers to create this fun event.

Young women participated in several stations including make-up, nails and hair. They created vision boards to set the stage for future goals, and other youth in the program joined in activities including an egg hunt with gift cards for a fun night out at movies or local restaurants.

Later in the day they went through a series of fun activities including coloring, painting and hunting for candy placed around the Boonsboro campus. There was even a special appearance by the Easter Bunny.



SUMMER PICNIC

JUNE 20, 2019

EVERY YEAR WE GET TOGETHER FOR A SUMMER PICNIC AND INVITE ALL OF OUR FOSTER FAMILIES. THE 'MOON BOUNCE' THIS YEAR WAS ENJOYED BY ALL - KIDS AND GROWN-UPS ALIKE!

Our families came together for the end of school summer picnic. Our families contributed to the delicious meal.



MY STORY OF ADOPTION:

THE JOURNEY AND REWARDS

It has been a roller-coaster journey, but we are now reaping the fruit of our labor. Fostering or adopting children is hard work. It means sleepless nights, messy places, little appreciation and few people who truly understand the sacrifice. People look at you like you're crazy at times and indeed that is exactly how you feel. But, what I learned after all of these years is that those same horrible feelings that I had were the same ones Jessi carried. We were sharing in her pain and struggle through childhood, teen years and early adulthood.

After Jessi turned 18, the placing agency was able to help us locate her birth mother. Jessi wanted so much to know who she came from, who her parents were. To our surprise her mother, Christine, lived within ten minutes of our home the entire time. When I met Christine and showed her Jessi's picture she said, "I know her. I have seen her many times." They met face to face just shortly after Jessi turned 18.

Christine struggled for a long time with guilt for giving her child up for adoption. She believed that God was punishing her for her action. But the day I met her I thanked her. I thanked her for giving Jessi life. I was so thrilled to have this blessing of being a mother. You see,

Jim and I were told that we would never conceive children. But both of us were okay with becoming adoptive parents for a child who needed us. Honestly though, I did tell Christine that I could have given Jessi back when she was in her teen years. That time was not a party for either of us. Christine smiled at me, probably thinking that I was indeed a crazy lady.

But I have prayed and my prayer was answered. I prayed that we would find Jessi's mother and that she, her mother, would want to meet her child. The day I met Christine she gave me the answer to my prayer. She said that she had recently purchased a book about how to find a child whom had been given up for adoption. Christine read the book and felt it would be expensive and impossible. She thought that Jessi had been placed in another state, far, far away. She had no resources to find her.

Today Jessi interacts regularly, not only with her mother but with her birth father, too. They have learned to accept their past and move forward with healing connections and support. This is the fruit of our labor that I was talking about. Would Jim and I go back and do it again? Absolutely!

- Ellen Savoy, TFC Director





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