

Ravencroft Foundation



Giving Youth of Today a Second Chance at
Life

Comfort Care Support Change
Innovation assistance



Influencing Today's Youth and Promoting Education, Skill Building and Training, Support, Intervention and Counseling Services

A place where young adults struggling with addiction, sexual exploitation, abuse, homelessness, and those who have fallen onto the fringes and found themselves in trouble with the law, in gangs or without job prospects due to not having completed JR and SR level high school can come to feel safe, receive help and assistance and a fresh new start, a 2nd chance, at a fulfilling and healthy life.

Helping Tomorrow's Leaders Today Through Intervention, Skill Training, Support, and Assistance

Groups the program is designed to help and
Target age group: Early teen up to 30 Years old



Intervention, counseling and assistance for drug and alcohol addiction, and mental, emotional and psychological illness

As stress levels increase due to the increasing segment of the population who are slipping into poverty or near poverty, you begin to see a breakdown in family and support systems, especially affecting the younger population. To deal with the stress, an increasing number of young people are turning to drinking, smoking, and illegal drugs as well as abusing prescription drugs.

This issue further impacts their ability to cope, function as productive members of society and leads to a strong probability with trouble with the law. We can do something to break the cycle, to help in their recovery and assist them with moving forward. There is **no** shame in mental illness, there should be **no** stigma attached to a person who suffers from one and they should **never** feel bad, scared or intimidated from seeking help for it. How can we do this?

- a) If requested by a concerned family member, friend, police or the prosecutor's office (as an alternative to incarceration) we can intervene. We would do this by responding to where the person is with authorities (called crisis intervention), interview those involved in making the request and then bring the youth to a safe location where an assessment can be done by a mental health and medical health professional to develop a treatment plan.
- b) That treatment plan will include stress and anger management, completion of high school if it applies, mental health support and counseling, medical treatment if needed, and finally life and job skill training to get them back on their feet, working and on their way back to being independent and productive members of society.
- c) Mental illness is nothing to joke about, it is a serious, pervasive and destructive thing that destroys people, lives, families and society. Without treatment, it can have devastating effects on a community. When we think about mental illness, people tend to gravitate toward a skewed view of people who are crazy and should be locked up.

That simply isn't the case. Mental illness is depression, bi-polar, schizophrenia, manic-depressive disorder, OCD (obsessive compulsive disorder), agoraphobia, and it can include stress/nervous disorders, paranoia, fear (excessive levels) of people-places-things, and phobias. It also can lead to suicide, neglect, abuse and homicide, which are things we want to prevent from happening.



Intervention, counseling and assistance for the sexually exploited, abused or victimized and rape crisis intervention

To say that sexual exploitation, of both men and women, is greatly underreported is itself an understatement. In Japan, the rate of underreported sexual exploitation, sexual assaults and rapes is very high, partially due to cultural reasons. That is unacceptable. No-one should feel ashamed, intimidated or scared to report the fact that someone else harmed them in these ways.

Our young adults need to feel that they are safe in reporting crimes like these, and they are indeed crimes, and they need to be able to access the medical, legal and psychological assistance needed in order to recover from these crimes. We, as a society, have a duty to protect the children and young adults in our communities. How can we start to address these issues?

- a) Some schools have become increasingly proactive and openly telling students they can come to a designated teacher or official to talk if they need to or if something has happened. We need to turn that 'some schools' into 'all schools' and they need to make it confidential, accessible and do it in a way the young person feels safe. To help facilitate this, we will create an 'action plan' to assist schools in implementing a 'safe space' for victims to go and obtain help or counseling within the school.
- b) We will also have a separate rape, assault, abuse and sexual exploitation (which includes sexual slavery, human trafficking and prostitution) program where we will offer support, treatment, counseling and a safe place to stay away from the situation until longer term arrangements can be made, essentially a 'safe haven'.



Intervention, counseling and assistance for those who have yet to finish Junior and Senior level high school

With increasing financial strain and an ever-increasing lower income class as we watch the middle class slip into poverty or near poverty (the current reports put 1 in 6 families now living in poverty or near poverty in Japan), one of the things families are faced with are putting food on the table, paying rent or paying for high school and supplies.

There is an increasing number of families who are finding the decision of progressing on into high school financially impossible. There are a few reasons for this, one being the costs of the schools and supplies themselves, and the other is the fact that they need everyone who can work to enter the workforce.

Entering the workforce without at least a high school education almost guarantees a low wage paying job and therefore also a further decreased standard of living, perpetuating the cycle of poverty. The other reason is that it's possible that there were family or other issues where a student couldn't leave home, couldn't follow along in school and quit or any number of other reasons. We can help fix this issue, the education system must change and adapt to today's society and those operating within it.

Since, in Japan, mandatory education stops at 9th grade (junior high school), there is an increasing number of young people falling through the cracks and out of the education system, and we need to work now to start changing this. How will we do this?

- a) If there is a young adult who has completed junior high school but has not begun high school due to financial reasons, or other mitigating factors, we will assist them with enrolling into a high school program that suits them, whether it be correspondence, night, weekend at a vocational, regular or private school. We will make every effort to work with the local municipality to obtain reduced fees and grants to assist in the financial burden placed on the education, and the Foundation aims to be able to pay the balance between the fees reduction and grants and the balance outstanding in a scholarship fashion.

All students will be interviewed for this program, and while attending school, the requirement will be to live in on-campus (Foundation campus) dormitory housing so that progress can be monitored, and support and assistance can be given the student as it's needed at the time it's needed. This program is not limited to those just in the 14 to 20-year old range, but will assist those up to age 30.

- b) If there is a young adult who has completed some high school but has not graduated high school due to financial reasons, or other mitigating factors, we will assist them in enrolling into a high school program that suits them, whether it be correspondence, night, or weekend course at a vocational, regular or private school.

We will make every effort to work with the local municipality to obtain reduced fees and grants to assist in the financial burden of the education, and the Foundation aims to be able to pay the balance between the fees reduction and grants and the balance outstanding in a scholarship fashion. We will also petition local businesses to set up scholarship funds and grants to help cover the costs of the education.

- ☞ All students will be interviewed for this program, and while attending school, the requirement will be to live in on-campus (Foundation campus) dormitory housing so that progress can be monitored, and support and assistance can be given the student as it's needed at the time it's needed. This program is not limited to those just in the 14 to 20-year old range, but will assist those up to age 30.



Intervention, counseling, assistance for those who've been incarcerated, are on probation or are/have been in gangs with the intention of removal from harmful influences while providing job/skill training, life skill training, life choice guidance, and assistance with job or apprenticeship placement upon completion of program.

Crime happens, bad things happen to good people and good people for one reason or another may find themselves on the wrong side of the law. Life happens. While our goal is to prevent young adults from falling through the cracks and into trouble in the first place, we understand that in reality we can't save everyone, we can't catch everyone, and there will be those who are arrested and sentenced to jail or probation.

The question that is most commonly NOT asked is **why**. Why did this person fall into criminality? Why are they stealing? Why have they acted violently? **WHY?**

You can't treat the outcome or results without first understanding causation or the reasons why a person acts the way they do. I will tell you that it is true that some people have zero reasoning behind why they break the law, there is a small segment of the population who are mentally, psychologically and emotionally disconnected from humanity and reality, who have no sympathy or empathy, the result is a psychopathic personality (of which there are different variations) where apathy prevails and which cannot be treated or rehabilitated.

The majority of young adults can be helped though, and every effort should be made to do so. Subjecting young people to the institutionalization of the jail/prison system is not acceptable and needs to change. Their new mentors become older criminals, and the cycle continues. We need to actively work to break the cycle. How can we do this? Here's how we can start:

- a) I'd like to say it'll be easy to remove young adults from gangs, when in reality, it's one of the hardest things to do as for many gang members, their gang is their family, more so than their actual family. To gang members, it's a support system, brothers and sisters, even mentors who accept them unconditionally.

Sounds like what an actual family should be right? We need to look at why a person joined, what their home life before was like, was it abusive or were their parents' addicts, were they poor or disadvantaged in some way, does the young person even have any living family?

These are all important root questions that need to be answered if you hope to remove someone from a gang. You need to be able to provide them a stable environment, you need to 'become' their family, a more wholesome alternative that they can accept but that will not leave them with less of a support system and then you need to maintain that contact and support.

- b) For those who have become part of the criminal justice system and have been arrested or incarcerated, we will look forward to working with law enforcement and the courts and prosecutor's office to get low risk offenders or young adults into a program where they can receive counseling, support, and rehabilitation. Our goal is to get them back into society as productive and useful members, and to do this effectively, we need to ask all those questions again... Why did you steal? Why did you choose drugs? What made you drive after drinking? Why were you violent? Again, you need to understand the root problem so we can solve the problem, like with anything in life. We need to be asking questions, not just acting reactively and defensively. We need to become more proactive.
- c) Along with providing a healthy and positive support net for these young people, we also need to look at whether they have completed a junior or high school education and get them back into school if they haven't. Education is a cure for many of society's ills, we need to give them more positive opportunities, we need to ask them 'what do you want to be/do/become in life and then work with them to get them there. We also need to work with them on job skill training and placement with the end result being gainful employment, for them to develop healthy social connections and living independently in their own apartment as productive members of society.



Intervention, counseling and assistance for those who have become unemployed and/or homeless with job/skill training, job/apprenticeship placement and support

The worst thing that can happen, I feel, is to become homeless. You lose your sense of self-worth, independence, ability to provide, your self-esteem, your pride and dignity. This sets a person up to stand at the edge of a pit where falling into a downward spiral into that pit is almost a guarantee.

Homelessness is a gateway to failure to thrive within society which leads to crime, health issues/crisis, disease, violence, exasperation of mental illness, sexual crimes and exploitation, abuse, job loss/inability to gain employment among other negative outcomes.

This situation is a gateway into other issues such as drug and alcohol abuse, prostitution, gang affiliation and violence, theft and other criminal activity, health issues such as AIDS/HIV, STD's (sexually transmitted disease), malnutrition, and a host of other medical conditions which, in the long run, will cause a greater financial burden on the general populace regarding medications and treatments. The most important impact though is to the victims themselves.

Homelessness is a preventable social disease, and it is completely treatable as well when communities come together and see 'people' instead of budgets and bottom lines. The first line of response is to get people off the streets, and I mean OFF, *not* **'relocated to another area where they are less visible to the public eye'**. Relocation isn't an answer, it isn't even a good band-aid, it is however a cowardly way to deal with the issue.

As the middle class shrinks and the at or near poverty line class expands, globally, we will see an increase in homelessness and those who are at risk of becoming homeless. We will continue to see an increase in the cost of living, a decrease in the average income and an increase in unemployment as governments and companies raise the costs of everything (food, basic necessities) to cover their expenses, and to pay out to their stockholders while the ones who can least afford it (working class and poor/near poor class), must bear that burden. These institutions are pricing a growing segment of the population out of being able to financially survive. How do we plan to treat this social disease and give these people their lives, self-respect, and self-esteem back? Here's how:

- a) Give them someplace safe to take a hot shower, get food and necessities, a fresh change of clothes, immediate medical attention and intervention if needed and connected to the correct social services departments to get further assistance, for however long it takes. The goal is to get back on their feet, self-sufficient and healthy and on their own again in their own apartment with a job.
- b) One of my goals is to give each person coming into the center something I call a 'go bag'. This is a reusable bag which will hold a fresh change of clothes, shampoo/conditioner, soap, toothbrush, toothpaste, a comb or brush, deodorant, socks, healthy non-perishable snacks, a towel and face cloth, and if it is wintertime-a hat, gloves, scarf and jacket. These are basic necessities, which we take for granted and that many homeless youth have no access to and lack the money to buy themselves.
- c) For those who haven't completed high school yet, the goal is to have them enroll in an appropriate program for them and for them to graduate and go back out into the workforce leading a healthy productive life. If the person is a minor, our first goal is for them to finish high school, and to locate their family. If the family can be located, then re-introduction in monitored stages will be attempted with counseling but if the family and home situation is/was not healthy or is/was abusive, the minor

will be able to stay on in the dormitory until they reach majority and finish high school. It is the worst possible thing to put a child back into an unhealthy or abusive home just for the sake of keeping a family unit together.

- d) The ultimate goal is protection and support of minors and youth first. To do this we need to force society to reassess how we treat children and young adults, that abuse comes in many forms-physical, psychological, emotional, sexual- and that it is **not** ok, ever. Many youth run away from home for reasons just like this, and we are going to lose them, and their children after them, to a continuing cycle of abuse unless we break the cycle and teach the children abuse is not ok, and do better by them. They are our future, we cannot teach them to perpetuate our past mistakes.



Intervention, counseling and assistance for individuals and families dealing with abuse (child, spouse, elder) and stressed families as well as those with anger management issues and coping skills crises

Abuse takes many forms, has many faces and affects everyone, directly and indirectly. That is a fact. The big question is, how can we prevent it or intervene and stop it? Mental, psychological, emotional, physical and sexual abuse is real, it is more pervasive than what is reported, many times due to fear, intimidation, indoctrination, conditioning/brainwashing, social stigma, cultural mores and norms and a host of other reasons. It can happen to babies, children, teenagers, adults and the elderly. It happens **to** both men and women **by** both men and women. Abuse in its many forms knows no gender or age.

Many times, you can find a history of it running through families, from parent to child, going back a couple generations, which is a cycle we need to break. Perpetuating bad decisions, actions and behavior is counterproductive and dangerous. Other times someone falls into a relationship with an unhealthy individual or falls into an unhealthy situation which causes them to become victims. Every time you will find that the victim in prolonged or long term abuse will develop some level of dependency on their attacker (a form of brainwashing), or a fear of leaving.

In these situations, it isn't enough to help the victim leave, you need to provide a new healthy 'family' or net for them to recover in in a safe place where their abuser/attacker cannot gain access to them. Then you need to provide continuing support so that they don't fall back into the previous unhealthy and abusive situation or a new one. You need to help them become mentally and emotionally strong and independent.

Children cannot defend themselves, we need to be their rock, advocate and protector and do it for them. **We need to be better advocates and protectors.** I cannot stress this point enough, if you see something, say something, tell someone. *Report it.* Many times, the elderly also cannot defend themselves and need strong guardians, watchdogs so to speak, who will advocate for their health and safety. These 2 groups are the most susceptible to unreported/underreported cases of abuse and there are signs that you will see if you only look, really look, that will give you those 'red flags' where you know they need help.

Adult women, and men, also can be both abusers and victims, and there are signs there too you can see if you look and listen. It may not just be what you hear and see, but what you don't hear and what is covered up. There is such a thing as marital rape, and it is horribly under-reported due to stigma, and the pervasive

thought process that 'he's my husband/she's my wife so it can't be rape'. If the person says no, it means **no**. No never means yes. For anyone, regardless if you're married or not. Rape among young men/women not married is also an issue, and we need to change how society thinks about sexuality and that victimizing women is not acceptable, and vice versa victimizing men is also not acceptable, under any circumstances.

Elder abuse is a growing issue worldwide as the elderly age group rapidly increases and their middle-aged and younger children and family members are left to care for them, many of which suffer from dementia, Alzheimer's, and other major medical issues. Caregivers get stressed, they get frustrated, and they take it out on the ones they are supposed to take care of. It's a reality, we as a society, have an issue accepting and it is underreported. Many times, these relatives have little or no prior training or knowledge to help them care for their elderly family members, and have no one to turn to for help themselves, they often also are still working.

There are times when a family is just at the point where they cannot deal with the stress of being a family, and need counseling on how to communicate effectively, reconnect with each other and their children and to get support for financial reasons before the family unit fails. The goal should be to connect them to the appropriate resources to prevent this from happening, to help heal the emotional and other issues so that they can recover and move forward. Ignoring problems does not make them go away, they fester like open infected wounds, getting bigger and worse until they reach a flash point and the issue explodes, affecting everyone around and involved in it.

Victims of this kind of abuse have a long and oftentimes very difficult road to recovery, we need to make sure we are there with them every step of the way until they can get back to living the new normal of their lives. How can we tackle these issues? Here's how:

- a) Sit down with the involved parties separately and then as a group, to assess the dynamic and interaction between them and proceed forward with either counseling and support or intervention up to and including involving the appropriate authorities and assisting with removal from the dangerous situation.
- b) The goal is to always try to keep family units together, when in reality, that is sometimes impossible, and separation for all parties is the healthy and safe choice. Life isn't perfect and neither are people, so if the best route is to go down different roads, then support and counseling should be given and maintained to facilitate this in a safe, efficient and effective manner where all parties are helped equally.
- c) Provide immediate emergency housing for emergency situations. Provide short term housing for individuals in need of a safe place while they work through the system and find their own safe housing where they can return to living independently. This is very important as you need to remove the victim from the dangerous, and possibly life threatening situation immediately before the abuse progresses further and does even more damage to the victim.
- d) Work with the city and prefecture child protective agencies to assess, intervene, support and assist during emergency situations. They see what is reported and referred to them, but like any system, they are oftentimes overwhelmed with a large caseload and cannot routinely check each at-risk child frequently enough. Coordination with support programs can go a long way to relieving much of the overflow from the system, better communication between the agencies, schools and community support groups will go a long way to catching more victims before they fall through the cracks.
- e) Provide parenting and stress coping classes for new parents, stressed families or for family members who are taking care of children which are not their own. Many new parents, especially single parents

(men and women) are unprepared for the stress of having a new baby, they may not know all the things a baby will require, not have developed the coping skills to take care of another living being or are just not ready for parenthood.

- f) Just because you are an adult does not automatically make you a good parent or a knowledgeable one either. Just as being a teenager doesn't automatically make you a bad parent, you just have more challenges, especially if you are still in school. Infant, early childhood, juvenile and young adult education classes should be offered to help the parents or guardians and the children move forward in healthy and low stress lifestyles. Support groups where the adults can discuss issues with other adults should be available as well.
- g) We will provide support and care classes for those who are involved in caring for elderly persons or persons who are disabled, up to and including those who are working with children who fall on the Asperger's Autism spectrum, or other learning disability. Support groups, counseling, and training classes should be made available, along with routine in-house consultation reviews, to check on progress and status and to catch any issues before they get too far along and injury or death occurs, of either the caregiver or the patient relative.
- h) Provide a safe place for counseling for victims of sexual abuse, trafficking, and exploitation to come for rescue and intervention. A rape crisis, trafficking, sexual abuse and exploitation emergency line, location and support system should be in place to make the victims feel that they do have a place to go, that there is no shame or stigma. There is nothing worse for a victim than to be made to feel it was your fault by the person(s) you are reporting the crime to, and yes, they are all crimes.
- i) There should be no judging, just a 'safe haven' for someone to go and talk, and assistance in reporting it to the police if they are scared, immediate medical attention and emotional and psychological support. We need to be active advocates for those at-risk and who have been assaulted or exploited. To do so, we need to build strong cooperative ties with the police, and push for sexual abuse and exploitation recognition in communities, schools, and to the greater public.

Helping Tomorrow's Leaders Today Through Intervention, Skill Training, Support, and Assistance

Programs which we aim to offer:



Assistance for those who have yet to finish Junior and Senior level high school

- 1) Assistance with enrolling in adult education, night school or a specialized vocational school to learn a trade and graduate with a degree or license.
- 2) If needed, we will provide assistance preparing for the high school entrance exam if applying to a public or vocational high school.
- 3) Support, counseling and tutoring for those who need extra help with courses so they stay positive and continue to stay in school. It goes without saying that having at least a high school education is crucial in today's working and financial world, and we need to make the learning process as low stress and effective as possible so those we help succeed.
- 4) Ideally, for this reason, I would like to see all the students in the program stay on campus in a dormitory where they can not only benefit from the counselors but other students as well, to build lasting social connections, a student support net, and relief from the stressors commonly found at home, which may have been the reason for them not finishing in school in the first place.
- 5) We will strive to create contracts with local private and vocational schools where students can attend at reduced cost, and the Foundation pays part of the costs of attending through scholarships, as we feel relieving some of the financial burden of school is important.



Stress and anger management therapy with a focus on coping skills and positive thinking and healthy decision making skills

- 1) We will offer stress recognition and management classes and support groups with intervention if needed to keep the person and their family members safe. Part of the program will include PTSD (post traumatic stress disorder) counseling, yoga, dance, meditation, art therapy, music therapy, and a few other options. We want to see people succeed, and we want to make people realize that there are options, ways to deal with stress and cope with loss. We want to reduce the suicide rate to zero, and while we realize that goal is almost unrealistic, we aim to try.

- 2) We will work with local authorities when the need arises, to intervene and counsel for anger management issues and assist with long term treatment placement if it is warranted as well as removal from the situation for the safety of the person and their family members. We want to stop the anger before it turns into physical abuse, harm or something more permanent like death.
- 3) Classes and support groups to teach coping skills along with positive reinforcement and positive thinking will be made available, and if the teaching of basic life skills is required to facilitate this-such as budgeting, cooking, time management, etc.- these classes will be given. The goal is to have the person back to living a low stress independent and productive life.
- 4) If we find that intervention and assistance by a mental health professional is needed, we will assist in the facilitation of this to get the person the help they need. There should be no stigma attached to having a mental illness and no-one should feel ashamed or embarrassed to seek help.
- 5) Continuing support will be available as a transitional aid, to provide a support system which will help the person continue to build a strong, positive coping system and encourage them to continue to build healthy relationships and social connections, as well as positive life choices.



Mental health treatment and counseling, emotional and medical support, addiction counseling

- 1) If we find that intervention and assistance by a mental health professional is needed, we will assist in the facilitation of this to get the person the help they need. There should be no stigma attached to having a mental illness and no-one should feel ashamed or embarrassed to seek help.
- 2) The goal is to create a stable, non-aggressive, positively reinforced environment which is conducive to therapy and counseling to assist the person with adjustment, coping, and compliance, especially when medication is required for the person to function safely. To do this, each person will be interviewed and assessed by a professional, and if medical treatment is required, then the person will be referred to the appropriate place and medical professional. This needs to be done confidentially, smoothly and in a non-traumatic way so to give the person a sense of safety and stability.
- 3) Once they have been assessed and treated, it's time for support groups, therapy including yoga, dance, art, music and group discussions as well as individual sessions to locate the root issues and help them deal with them while building a strong coping ability and regaining independence.



Life, job and skill counseling and training

- 1) It's all about one long and extremely important word: **Empowerment**. Empowerment of today's youth is absolutely vital to the future of the economy and country as a whole. To do this, we need to give them the tools and support to achieve success. We need to sit down and find out what is holding them back. Group brainstorming and individual counseling sessions is one way to achieve this point.

- 2) Additionally, we will reach out to companies, stores, restaurants and craftsmen in the area to create contracts for job skill training and apprenticeships to help connect employers with possible new employees. Eventually, one of our goals is to have stand-alone shops and restaurants, that we will staff with those who are in the training program, to give them real hands-on training and experience as well as for these locations to help support the Foundations programs.
- 3) There will be cases where someone has been living on the street for a while and did not gain any real-life skill training. Whether it be something as simple as how to do laundry or cooking simple healthy meals to personal finance budgeting and accounting, we aim to provide these necessary life skills through classes and workshops.
- 4) For single parents who will be entering the workforce for the first time or returning after an absence, we will have support groups to assist in the adjustment and stress of returning to a working environment. While they are meeting with potential employers on campus (initial interviews will be required to be given on campus to protect the job training program member), we will provide free child care.
- 5) While any person who is attending any of our classes or workshops, sessions or support groups on campus, who has a child or children, we will provide free childcare. We feel the lightening of this stress and burden is especially important as many parents, especially women, bear an unfair burden with having to balance home and work life.



Safe Refuge for at-risk persons due to abuse, assault, homelessness, crisis

- 1) People generally prefer to be and feel safe, but there is a growing segment of people who do not feel that way as they do not have anyplace safe to go to or live in. Our goal is to give them that. Whether the person is homeless, fleeing abuse issues, a victim of sexual assault, rape, abuse, trafficking, exploitation, or just needs a helping hand and someone to talk to, we aim to be the place they go to for help.

To do this, we will offer walk-in counseling and intake interviews which will help us assess what the issue is, and what we-or another agency we might have to call upon- can or must do to make sure that person is safe, both to themselves and to others.

- 2) The important thing is that they feel that they can walk in and talk to someone confidentially and get help. Many times, this may require the assistance of the police and other city agencies. We will strive to make open communication and cooperation between us and those agencies effective and rapid so that we can all respond rapidly, effectively, safely and with positive results.
- 3) Ideally, we would like to have temporary emergency housing in a dormitory on-campus to enable us to give them someplace to stay while we work with them to get them further assistance or into an appropriate program if substance abuse or mental illness is involved.
- 4) Upon entering the temporary emergency housing, they will each be given a 'go bag' which will include toiletries including, soap, shampoo, toothpaste and toothbrush, brush or comb, deodorant, for women-female oriented products, a bag of non-perishable snacks and bottled water, tissues, and a fresh change of clothes and socks. The goal is to give someone who comes in with nothing, something they can call

their own, where they can get clean and start to recover their self-worth, self-esteem and pride in themselves. It's the first step to putting your life back together after a serious issue or event.



Family mediation, parenting counseling for new parents, counseling and assistance for single mothers and minor aged parents.

- 1) New parenting classes, for currently pregnant and post birth, will be offered along with individual and group support. Exchanging ideas, information, tips, and talking about issues is key to reducing new parent stress for mom, dad and baby to prevent the possibility of neglect, abuse or burnout.

This is also important for single parent families who are balancing supporting 2 or more people on one income while raising children and working. This is an incredibly high stress situation and oftentimes you see families where the parent overworks consistently just to pay the rent and bills each month. We see an increase in this currently in Japan, with a sad increase in overwork deaths, **Karōshi**, which is killing young and older people alike, depriving families of parents and oftentimes the sole income earner.

This is a growing issue and has potentially serious repercussions for the parent and child over time. We feel at-home visits are key to make sure that they are handling everything outside the program ok as well, to ensure a safe living environment for the child or children and parents.

It will also give us an idea of whether the family needs other assistance we cannot give such as public assistance for money, food, housing, insurance, etc. so that we can connect them with the right agencies to get them the assistance they need.

- 2) 'Mommy Boxes' will be given out to new parents as well, as a helpful start for the new family to prepare for their new baby before and after birth. This is a growing trend in both Europe and the United states which has gotten very positive reviews and results.

A 'Mommy Box' is quite literally a box, filled with baby supplies such as soap, shampoo, baby wipes, diapers, diaper cream, formula powder, bottles, bibs, pacifiers, onesies (clothing), socks, hats, blankets, information sheet with contact information for important agencies and parenting tips, baby nail clippers, comb, etc. Everything you need to get started as a little helping hand. Also, there is research showing that the boxes are safer for newborns to sleep in, reducing the risk of suffocation and SIDS (sudden infant death syndrome) and encouraging safe sleeping habits for parents and babies. It is generally advised against sleeping with a baby in the bed with you due to these reasons.

See here for more information on the boxes: <http://www.bbc.com/news/magazine-22751415> , <http://www.webmd.com/parenting/baby/features/why-babies-are-sleeping-in-boxes> , <http://www.npr.org/sections/health-shots/2017/03/26/521399385/states-give-new-parents-baby-boxes-to-encourage-safe-sleep-habits> , https://www.nytimes.com/2017/02/12/nyregion/new-jersey-parents-cardboard-bassinets.html?_r=0 , <http://www.nbcnews.com/news/us-news/hospitals-u-s-give-away-free-baby-boxes-curb-infant-n732421> , <http://www.self.com/story/what-are-baby-boxes> , <http://www.independent.co.uk/life-style/health-and-families/two-charts-which-explain-why-babies-should-sleep-in-cardboard-boxes-a6729331.html>

- 3) Additionally, we aim to do at-home visits as well to make sure that they are handling everything outside the program well, to ensure a safe living environment for the baby and parents. It will also give us an idea of whether the family needs other assistance we cannot give such as public assistance for money, food, housing, insurance, etc. This is also an important part of the program, after-support and after-care to make sure the new family, especially young parents (minor or just legal aged), have access to all the resources they need and have all the help and assistance they need as well as connecting them with the right agencies to get them that assistance.
- 4) Sometimes we will find a family is stressed, having issues that they cannot resolve themselves or a little intervention and mediation is needed, this often arises out of misunderstandings and lack of understanding or failure to communicate effectively or not at all. Individual interview and counseling sessions will be offered for each family member and group sessions where they interact and have open dialogue together will be held as well. If more specialized treatment is needed, such as substance abuse or mental health treatment, we will refer them to the most appropriate professional.



Safe, temporary housing while in transition in the program and assistance in housing placement after program completion

- 1) For those who are in the school completion program, we ideally would like to house them on campus as well so that we can ensure a safe and positive environment conducive to learning and to give support where and when needed.
- 2) Additionally, for those who are in our job skill, life skills, specialized training or apprenticeship programs, we would also like to see them living on-campus. This is to protect the person from exploitation and to give support and assistance along the way as needed and intervention as well if needed. This is an important factor in providing a safe, controlled environment and routine which will better prepare them to move into transitional housing upon completion to ultimately get them back to living independently.
- 3) Part of the program completion entails assistance in finding and securing a new home in safe, affordable housing. Our goal is to do so through community connections, a screening process for rental locations and coordination with appropriate agencies if housing financial assistance is needed.