

BOULDER COUNTY BUSINESS REPORT

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Attention adding services for teenagers

By Beth Edwards

BOULDER - Attention Homes in Boulder is expanding its services to teenagers by adding overnight emergency shelter services, a street-outreach program and a day drop-in program.

The nonprofit organization opened in 1966 with a focus on youth sent from the department of social services and the department of corrections. It will now provide short-term shelter, transitional housing, counseling and emergency services to runaway and homeless adolescents in Boulder County and surrounding communities.

"According to statistics we have from the state of Colorado, the Boulder Homeless Shelter, Carriage House and Family Tree, there are 200 homeless kids out on the streets of Boulder each night," said Amy Jenkins, executive director of Attention Homes.

"Joy Eckstine at Carriage House was taking as many of these kids as she could, but it's not good to mix them with the adult homeless. We've always taken them too when a police officer asked us to, but we've never had a designated program to provide them with a continuum of care."

The street-outreach program begins Nov. 8, the day drop-in program Nov. 15 and the emergency services program Dec. 15. The emergency shelter will only serve runaway and homeless youth. The day drop-in program will provide basic needs such as food, clothing, shelter and showers. Clinica Campesina in Lafayette will offer medical services.

The program is being funded by private donations, federal and state grants and city funding. To accommodate the expansion, Attention Homes is hiring five new staff members: a street outreach coordinator, a program manager, a case manager and emergency shelter staff.

Attention Homes' Chase House facility at 3682 Chase Court in Boulder will continue to serve adolescents sent from foster homes and juvenile services. Its center at 3080 Broadway will serve runaway and homeless youth. The nonprofit has served 6,000 teenagers since it opened its doors 44 years ago.

