

your attention please

THE NEWSLETTER OF ATTENTION HOMES | SPRING 2011

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John* grew up in Boulder but moved to Florida with his mom at the age of 13. He showed up at Attention Homes on New Year's Eve, exhausted from driving all the way from Florida, after running from social services when he was ordered into foster care.



John's case was unique. Though he was in the custody of social services, he had never been in a group home or placement. Since John was now nearly 18, he did not want to move into foster care for so short a time before aging out of the system. So, he did the only thing he could think of — he decided to return to the place he still called home.

Upon John's arrival back to Boulder, he was directed to our Runaway & Homeless Youth (RHY) program. We contacted his caseworkers in Florida to reassure them he was safe and healthy. With the assistance of the Boulder Police Department who attested to his well-being, Florida Social Services relinquished custody of John quickly, allowing him to settle back in Boulder.

Our RHY team enrolled John in school and set him up to receive Colorado Medicaid. With our staff's help he is now on track to transition to an independent living program. When John turns 18 he will be beyond our scope of care but he isn't worried about what will happen next. He already has a job.

"The counselors at Attention Homes sat me down and talked to me about what I really needed. They gave me guidance and helped me get back in school. They even helped me get a job! The social worker in Florida talked with the RHY staff so I could stay here. I am very grateful to Attention Homes and everybody at the runaway shelter. Even the volunteers helped me with my homework and cooked really great meals. I know that without Attention Homes I wouldn't have anywhere to live."

"We make a living
by what we get, we
make a life
by what we give."

—Winston Churchill

*John's name has been changed to protect his identity.

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and more!



Attention Homes helps teens in crisis develop into healthy members of our community by providing residential treatment, counseling and safe shelter to at-risk youth.

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JIM RIANOSHEK, *Executive Director*

JULI ROYSTER, *Office Manager*



Dear Friends,

We ended 2010 on a high note, in the face of economic headwinds and the merger of our

programs last February. Later in the year, our Runaway & Homeless Youth program opened its doors to our community's homeless youth. Our Adolescent Residential Care program, now located in our Chase Court home, continues to serve youth, referred by social services agencies or their families, who require our respite, substance abuse, counseling and transitional living services.

2011 marks our 45th year of service to at-risk teens needing "attention, not detention." Help us celebrate our longevity by becoming involved directly with Attention Homes — by contributing or volunteering — to provide the best service for the youth in our care.

1966-2011 is full of many success stories. Here are a few of them.

- a fostered boy who slept at Attention Homes in the late '60s is now a local IT engineer
- a rebellious young girl who lived at Pine Street in the '80s is now a busy county landscape architect
- a tough, homeless youth who lived at Chase Court in the '90s is now a Denver librarian
- a recent 2008 resident who I bumped into slinging sandwiches on the Hill and going to college, is a kid who many adults had given up on prior to his stay at Attention Homes

Each is representative of the 6000 youth served and the counselors who cared for them. Together they have made Attention Homes synonymous with improving the lives of troubled teens.

2011 marks our 45th year of service to at-risk teens needing "attention, not detention."

Our goals for 2011 are to

- build on a powerful community response to the plight of Boulder County's homeless youth;
- serve 90-120 teens with shelter and residential care; and
- commence a major gifts campaign for addressing the additional needs of our programs.

We welcome your joining with us in meeting our goals and helping at-risk youth become healthy, productive members of our community.

Best regards,

Jim Rianoshek
Executive Director

If you would like to be added to or removed from our mailing list, please call Allison Disbrow at (303) 447-1206 ext. 27.



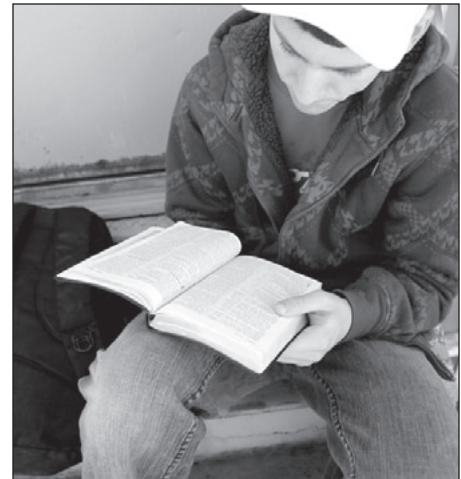


Stable Education for Homeless Youth is a Challenge

As the homeless youth population grows, uninterrupted education for homeless youth is becoming more problematic. Families who do not have a home are extremely mobile, *moving 3-4 times as often as their peers*. Enrolling in school can be further complicated by a lack of:

- records for immunizations
- school transcripts
- permanent home address
- record of birth

Homeless youth experience a level of instability that makes it difficult for them to do homework, or even attend school. Because of these complications, they often fall behind their peers as their education is negatively impacted.



*In 1987 Congress enacted the **McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act**. This act defines homeless children as “individuals who lack a fixed, regular and adequate nighttime residence” and provides federal money for homeless shelter programs. The McKinney-Vento Act employs state-wide advocates and local district liaisons to ensure

- homeless children transportation to and from school free of charge;
- children attend their school of origin (last school enrolled or the school they attended when they first become homeless) regardless of what district the family resides in;
- schools register homeless children even if they lack normally required documents, such as immunization records or proof of residence.

**US Department of Housing and Urban Development*

Wendy Gaylord is a McKinney-Vento liaison with the Boulder Valley School District and works closely with Attention Homes.

Attention Homes: *What is a typical situation you deal with?*

Wendy Gaylord: Each McKinney-Vento

situation is different — grandparents suddenly find themselves caring for a grandchild; a family loses their home in a fire; a mom loses her job and moves in with family friends; or Nicole, a vivacious high school junior sleeps on someone’s couch. One of the primary roles of the district liaisons is to speak with families/ students to determine if they qualify for support under this law. All determinations are made on a case-by-case basis. Another major role is providing needed referrals for each unique situation.

AH: *What critical issues do you see for the future with youth homelessness?*

WG: Critical issues continue to be immediate enrollment in the appropriate educational program and finding each youth the appropriate support. Another critical issue is ensuring safe, strong connections between youth and school and appropriate communication with Attention Homes’ staff and the schools youth attend.

AH: *Can you describe how McKinney-Vento and Attention Homes work together?*

WG: BSVD McKinney-Vento staff has been working with Attention Homes for many years, both getting and giving referrals. In many cases we will know of

a youth with an unstable housing/home situation. In other cases Attention Homes will contact us to help with school placement and enrollment. We work together to ensure school stability though the provision of transportation and communication of the students’ needs.

AH: *Why Attention Homes?*

WG: We call Attention Homes when a homeless youth is identified. Prior to implementation of the Runaway & Homeless Youth Program, we would call even though it was unlikely Attention Homes would be able to provide shelter. We called because there was no one else to call. Unaccompanied youth without a stable and safe place to live are often the most needy and hardest to help. We are thankful now because we have a place we can reliably refer teens to, the new Runaway & Homeless Youth shelter.

AH: *What do you enjoy as a McKinney-Vento liaison?*

WG: Each young life has a unique story. The most rewarding part of my collaborative work with Attention Homes is the opportunity to listen to these stories and help in the creation of a redemptive next chapter of each youth’s life!

\$25 Can Make a Difference

Recently a donor asked if their contribution of \$25 could make a difference. Yes it can, because of what's called the "snowball effect." Here's how it works that **your** \$25 can make a difference!

Let's say every Attention Homes supporter gave \$25 this month. That would add up to roughly \$87,500 this month. Multiply that by 12. **YOUR** combined \$25 monthly donations would equal \$1,050,000 a year. That's over \$1 million dollars to help at-risk youth in **YOUR** community.



Your \$25 donation can
shelter a homeless teen
in our community for two days.

Here is what **your** \$25 can **do**.

- Feed a homeless youth for a week
- Provide two hours of case management to one of our residents
- Shelter a homeless teen for two days

Your donation of \$25 can make a difference. Now imagine what **your** donation of \$50, \$100 or more could do!

Wish List

Thanks to everyone who supports our at-risk youth with in-kind donations! With the growth of our programs, our donation needs have changed. We are no longer able to accept used clothing donations (except for a few specific items). Please see our updated needs list below:

Automobile: Four-door sedan or 6+ person SUV

Incentive: MP3 Players; gift cards to Target, Ross, TJMaxx, Famous Footwear, Walgreens, and local restaurants

New Clothing: Jeans, hooded sweatshirts (hoodies), plain colored t-shirts, socks (boys and girls)

Recreation: Wii w/controllers and games

Street Outreach: Cases of bottled water, granola and snack bars

Check our **Wish List** at www.attentionhomes.org for ongoing updates.

Spring Volunteer Hotlist

It's spring cleaning time! Here are many projects for you to choose from when looking for a volunteer activity at Attention Homes.

- Outdoor spring clean-ups
- Interior/exterior painting
- Sweeping, weeding and planting
- Laying a brick patio
- Deep interior housecleaning
- Indoor/outdoor window washing
- Spring and summer drop-in assistance
- Spring and summer street outreach help
- Summer interns



Volunteers at our Broadway Avenue facility

Opportunities abound for volunteers interested in sharing their culinary talents.

- Cooking in your own home for our Residential program
- Prepping and serving meals in our new Runaway & Homeless Youth home

Groups, individuals and families are welcome. Please call Claire Clurman at (303) 447-1206 ext. 25 or email her at cclurman@attentionhomes.org for more information.

DONOR HIGHLIGHT

Helping Turn a House into a Home

In December, 2010, Attention Homes learned of a potential Hunter Douglas shade donation for our Broadway Avenue house. Today new insulated shades in each one of the 46 windows in our 85 year-old home are helping warm our kids!

Hunter Douglas is the leading manufacturer of custom-made window fashions in North America. In 1985, the company invented energy-efficient Duette® honeycomb shades — the first product of its kind — in response to the energy crisis of the late 1970s. More recently, it introduced the latest generation of honeycomb shades — the Duette® Architella® Collection — which offer superior energy efficiency thanks to their patented honeycomb-within-a-honeycomb construction.

Duette® honeycomb shades were installed in our home in February, thanks to the generosity of the Hunter Douglas Broomfield, Colorado office. In addition to providing our residents with a comfortable home-like style, they offer privacy, insulate our rooms against heat and cold, block unwanted sunlight, absorb sound and improve acoustics.

On behalf of the homeless and runaway teens that make our shelter their temporary home, thank you Hunter Douglas for your huge contribution!



HunterDouglas
window fashions

A Special Thank YOU!

Porchfront Homes for linens and kitchenware.

Colorado Center on Law and Policy for seven gift cards to Target.

Pharmaca for a huge selection of toiletries.

Jen Simms for 15 personal hygiene baskets.

WOW/Mattress King for 33 fleece blankets and two new leather couches.

The following restaurants and shops for supporting Attention Homes:

Bayleaf on Pearl, Chocolive, Carelli's of Boulder, Oak at Fourteenth, Bacaro Venetian Taverna, West End Wine Shop, Halter Ranch, Mary Williams Fine Arts, West End Gardner, Spruce Confections, Nick-N-Willy's Pizza, Bedell & Company, Lindsay's Boulder Deli at Haagen-Dazs, Restaurant 4580, The Mediterranean Restaurant, SALT the Bistro, The Kitchen, The Flagstaff House and the Wyss Foundation.



Volunteer Highlight

Eating delicious, home-cooked meals warms the hearts and minds of our hungry teens. For our generous meal donors, cooking and delivering a special yet simple meal each month is a rewarding way to give back.

Marilyn Lemke has been one such supporter, cooking and delivering meals for over two years

to Attention Homes. "When my brother died in 2003, his two young children were displaced in California," she says. "Their mother was mentally challenged and unable to care for them. If Attention Homes had existed in their hometown, they would have gotten better protection and care. I believe there would be fewer homeless and displaced teens if an organization like Attention Homes could intervene at an early stage of an at-risk youth's life. Every month that I deliver a meal, the kids are happy, thankful and feel special which makes me feel good."

We are so fortunate to have volunteers like Marilyn Lemke. THANK YOU!

We are planning our 2011 Kaleidoscope fundraising event and we want YOUR input! Go to www.attentionhomes.org and click on Kaleidoscope Survey to fill out our survey.



Foothills United Way

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Save the Date

4th Annual



KALEIDOSCOPE

**2011
Saturday, October 8th**

Avalon Ballroom - 6185 Arapahoe - Boulder

A fundraiser for Attention Homes

Live music & fabulous dinner

Resident artwork sale

Exciting live and silent auction

A special appeal for the at-risk youth living at Attention Homes

Contact us regarding available sponsorship opportunities
and auction item donations

(303) 447-1206 | www.attentionhomes.org