

A note from Alice

Dear Friends,

In our last newsletter we were nearing the end of 2020, heavily evaluating how the pandemic has affected us on a personal and professional level. We feel cautiously optimistic for 2021; vaccine distribution is underway and we hope to play a part in raising awareness for vaccine accessibility and safety in our community. Moving forward with the wisdom 2020 brought us, we plan to tackle what will undoubtedly be tumultuous times ahead.

In the early days of this year we have already seen an increase in gun violence in New Haven. We always see violence increase during times of need--and this time is no different, especially as the pandemic rages on. Our Community Health Organizers are working with the City and other local organizations to canvass affected neighborhoods and listen to residents about what their needs are and how we can help in an ongoing effort to prevent violence before it happens.

While we still see people struggling, telehealth continues to bring us success in reaching clients in ways we could not reach before. Some of our programs have seen increased attendance and program completion using telehealth, such as the SAFE-Family Recovery program which supports parents and caregivers to sustain their substance use recovery.

So many youth are also struggling with their mental health during this time of trying to balance school, family, and a lack of social life, and telehealth has been vitally important in reaching these children so we can provide them with the support they need, as you will see in some of the stories we have to share. This time will continue to be a historic challenge. If there is anything the last year has taught us, it is that we can weather the storm, and our perseverance is always made possible by your continued generosity. The outpouring of love and support we have received continues to fuel our work everyday.

Warmly,



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Donations Requested for Diapers

Our friends at The Diaper Bank of Connecticut are in need of diapers and donations during the pandemic - will you help new parents and caregivers of infants?

Donate today at thediaperbank.org/donate

Winter 2020-2021



From fiscal year 2020 to 2021, we have seen school based care coordination referrals increase by **400%** from 27 referrals to 108. This shows the importance and necessity for care coordination during the COVID-19 crisis.

Helping Our Kids Balance It All



We found out one of our 4th grade students, Emilio, has developed a fear of doctors and needles after having to undergo a weekly medical procedure for a chronic health condition, which can sometimes pull him out of school. Because Emilio's mother does not speak English, she and Emilio both had been struggling to communicate their hardships to school staff. When we became aware of the situation, we assigned Emilio and his mother a care coordinator and clinician. They worked with Emilio and Mom to acquire individual therapy services. Our care coordinator and clinician have also helped support Emilio and Mom with their medical needs, translation, and coaching Emilio through his anxiety with exposure therapy to aid in Emilio's medical and overall wellness. Today, he reports feeling much more comfortable with his medical procedures, his school attendance has improved, and Mom reports them both feeling much less anxious about trying to navigate Emilio's chronic illness while balancing school.



Our donor Roslyn Meyer on one of her many travels!

Get To Know Our Donor, Roslyn Meyer

Roslyn Meyer retired five years ago after a decades-long private practice offering therapy to young adults, adults and couples. A donor of Clifford Beers for over 20 years, we spoke with her about her thoughts on Clifford Beers's work and how it impacts our community.

How did you first hear of Clifford Beers? Why did you want to start giving?

After finishing my studies at Yale, I found out about CB when I was a clinical psychologist and saw early on that CB is a reliable and effective referral source for clients. Alice Forrester has always been at the forefront of incorporating the Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) model into the work, understanding that treating trauma in anyone who has experienced things like violence needs a "wholistic" approach, incorporating the whole family. It is also easy for clients to get referrals to CB's programs and this accessibility was always fundamental to my practice.

Why is CB still a part of your giving today?

This year CB has had a terrific response to the pandemic, jumping right in with two feet to launch programs like Reach Out CT. People have always needed information and care but offering something so concrete like the warmline that can offer people compassion is exactly what so many of us need right now. CB has always been a pillar of community service.

What other organizations do you give to/are involved with?

My husband and I have always been long time supporters of United Way. We were some of the co-founders of Leap in 1992 and I helped launch the Int'l Festival of Arts & Ideas, and I still serve on the boards of both organizations today. I love being a part of projects that heal and move marginalized communities forward through art. Right now we are very involved with URU, the Right to Be's Our Humanity project. The goal is to bring more vaccine awareness and clear information to black and brown communities in New Haven, and to improve access and counter vaccine skepticism with accessible information from trusted messengers.

Is there a motto or quote you like to live by?

Be Kind. Be responsible. Be there.

Stressed? Overwhelmed?

We are here to help.

Reach Out CT offers free emotional support and connections to resources. Whether you need free food or infant supplies, are worried about Covid-19, or are feeling lonely during the pandemic and just need someone to talk to, we are here. Let us help you figure out how to get you what you need, whatever it may be.

You are not alone.

To learn more visit
www.reachoutconnecticut.org



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Building Trust With Public Schools During Covid

Our Vice President of Community & School-Based Services, Christine Montgomery, shares her story of the importance of collaborating with schools to help the children and families we serve.

"Clifford Beers has had a long relationship with New Haven Public Schools (NHPS). This deepened in 2014 when we received funding from DCF and the Dalio Foundation for our school services to embed in schools with clinicians and Care Coordinators to provide trauma screening and training, clinical services, home visiting, professional development, and resources to teachers, school officials, students, and parents. When the pandemic hit, we knew we would have to work very closely with those 14 schools- and all New Haven schools to make sure families were taken care of.



Immediately, we increased our outreach with NHPS to strategize ways we could better support families. We trained 60 staff in telephonic support, teaching them how to ask students if their needs were being met; are there safety concerns in the house, how is their mental health, what are their technological needs, is there anything scary happening in the home, and so on. We have delivered items such as gift cards, groceries, tech devices and more to our students in need. We have done community walks, knocking on doors throughout neighborhoods to ask people face-to-face what they need. We are committed to meeting families where they are at.

Recently, over a weekend, we were contacted by NHPS leadership when a family experienced a devastating fire. The Red Cross initially stepped in to provide temporary shelter but our team reached out to the school principal and parent to make sure their other basic needs and mental health needs were met. The school system told us that they couldn't have handled this crisis without the help of Clifford Beers.

Collaboration will always be the key to our success. School principals, our staff, school social workers, health care providers and more all play a part in helping our families. When the school year ends, our services are there year-round to make sure families are still taken care of. When a family is struggling, we make sure the school knows when and how to help. It will always be a team effort, and I am very proud of the work that we do, together."