



HOUSEWORK

news from transition house • santa barbara, california • spring 2012

A Single Mom Finds Her Way to a Safe Place and a Bright Future

By Gayla Visalli

Hadley Gaffney never imagined that she would be homeless. Growing up in Hawaii in a prosperous family, she had a passion for surfing and, as she matured, developed a desire to help others through the healthful power of yoga. In addition to obtaining certification as a yoga instructor, she also earned a BA in recreation and leisure studies, a Hawaii state teaching credential, and, after moving to California, she earned a multiple-subject credential. But all this education did not prepare her for the frightening situation she found herself in a couple of years ago when she faced an unplanned pregnancy.

Realizing that she couldn't survive on her own as a single mother, Hadley headed to her family's home in Southern California. But her parents couldn't accept her status as an unwed mother and after a while asked her to leave. Perhaps it was better that she left, as alcoholism in the family was an issue; the environment at home wasn't a healthy one in which to raise a child.

What followed was an odyssey of staying with various friends, all the while fearing what might happen if her abusive boyfriend caught up with her. She eventually called the Domestic Violence Service Hotline in Santa Barbara and found sanctuary at their

facility. At their recommendation she applied to enter Transition House in July 2011 and, after six moves in one year, she finally found a safe place for herself and her daughter, Uma.

Hadley admits that it was hard moving in with a group of total strangers, but she gradually came to realize that these people were serving as the family backbone she desperately needed. With determination to make a better life for herself and Uma, Hadley has advanced to Stage Three in the Transition House program, and now has her own apartment in Casa Marianna. To support herself, she works part-time managing a program at a local elementary school and teaches at a yoga center. She's now looking for additional work this summer when the school will be closed.


At the center of her life is Uma, a beautiful and happy 21-month-old girl. All Hadley's plans for the future revolve around providing Uma with a good education and breaking the cycle of alcoholism and emotional violence suffered by so many people from alcoholic families. She also wants her daughter to learn to love the ocean as much as she does.

Hadley is highly motivated by these goals and won't stop striving for more independence until she has her own market-rate apartment and full-time



Hadley and Uma

work. Also on her wish list for the future is the possibility of owning her own business, having a little time off from work and childcare to have some fun, and someday meeting a man who will be a loving father for her little girl.

She accepts responsibility for her life as it is today and is grateful to the staff and programs at Transition House for helping her find a measure of independence, safety, and tranquility. 

Kids Helping Kids!

Transition House has always taken a community-wide approach to solving homelessness, relying on the support of volunteers and local donors. We thought our readers would appreciate knowing that many of those who support Transition House are kids. Year-round, young people in our community give back by giving to the agency. Some donate their birthday money; others buy Christmas presents for shelter residents. Church youth groups bake and sell goodies, school classes hold fundraisers, and teenagers donate their time helping in our infant care center.

On the following pages, you will find stories of kids helping kids. These stories merely touch the surface--there are so many more children in Santa Barbara who are learning about poverty and supporting their neighbors by getting involved at Transition House. To all of the kids who make the choice to reach out and make a change, we salute you!

MARYMOUNT SCHOOL



In early January, the sixth-grade students at Marymount of Santa Barbara approached their teacher, Kate Burris, with an interest in serving their community. They had decided amongst themselves that they needed to do something for children in Santa Barbara. After doing some research, they decided that Transition House was the organization they wanted to help, but they didn't know

how to go about it. They asked Ms. Burris for her assistance. Ms. Burris was so impressed with their eagerness to serve their community that she made a commitment to help them fulfill their wish.

The students organized themselves, chose a representative to call Transition House's Coordinator of Volunteer Services and scheduled a tour of the agency. The class then decided which students would represent them at the tour. These ambassadors came prepared with many questions and took notes. Their desire to help really showed.

While on the tour, the students were surprised at the condition of the blankets and pillows in the laundry room for new families. The Coordinator of Volunteer Services explained that although the agency often receives donations of new pillows, sheets, and blankets, there aren't always enough. The youngsters were also surprised that families couldn't just stay "home" (in the shelter) when they are sick, but instead have to go to the "sick room" until the shelter re-opens in the evening. The "sick room" is a space located in the administrative office

building that has been arranged with a collection of donated items.

When asked what surprised them most on their tour...most answered they didn't expect the shelter to look so nice or to be so clean. They were also surprised to notice that although it was a shelter, it still felt like a home—only bigger. At the end of the tour they were excited to know there were ways people their age could help. They went back to their class, shared their experience, and discussed the different needs Transition House families have and how their class could help.

Together they decided they want to spruce up the sick room. Their expressed wish is that the families (especially the children) have a comfortable, pretty, warm, and inviting place to recuperate when they are sick. They also want to provide the families with new blankets and pillows because they feel that new families, and especially kids, should have a comfy new blanket when they arrive at the shelter. The students know the families are already going through a difficult time and hope the blankets and pillows will offer them a little comfort.

Marymount kids have really taken ownership of the project. Although they could have gone to their parents and asked for help, they wanted to do this on their own.

The final step was to figure out how to raise the funds needed to implement their plans. After brainstorming ways to raise money, they decided to open lemonade stands! Within a month they had set up five lemonade stands in different parts of Santa Barbara. These very caring and resourceful kids have raised more than \$800 for Transition House's homeless families! Who knew that with a little interest, a lot of inspiration, a bit of support and encouragement, school children (plus a few lemons) could have such a huge impact? 🏠

LIAM FRENIERE



Liam meets with volunteer coordinator, Xochitl Ortiz, to discuss plans for the garden.

Liam Freniere, a 14 year-old Dos Pueblos High School student and proud Boy Scout, has chosen for his Eagle Scout service project an idea that will benefit Transition House families for years to come.

His project, which will earn him his Eagle Scout Badge, will consist of re-designing Transition House's vegetable garden, located next to the children's playground in the emergency shelter. The current garden has only two inches of soil and then hits the concrete foundation. As a result, the vegetables that have been planted don't grow very well. Liam will clean out the garden, pull out the weeds, build raised-box planters around the perimeter of the current garden, create a pathway through the garden, and write a "How To" manual. He will also write recipes that call for what is being grown in the garden. Liam will maintain the garden too by checking on it once a month, replanting any dying plants, watering and weeding.

In the coming weeks, Liam will be getting together with one of his friends to start designing and constructing the planter boxes. Liam's father, who is in the construction business, taught Liam how to use building and construction

tools. Once the boxes are built, Liam and his friends will take them to the shelter and install them.

What makes Liam's project so special is that his father is a former Transition House volunteer—volunteering at a time when Shelter Assistant Volunteers monitored the shelter overnight. Liam's father has shared with his son many stories of his experience as a Transition House volunteer, and the importance of community service. That is one of the reasons Liam selected Transition House as the beneficiary of his service project.

As a result of his interest in Transition House's vegetable garden, Liam has been able to combine his new passion for healthy eating with learning how to cultivate nutritious foods. He is excited to build the garden so that children at Transition House can learn how vegetables are grown, and, he hopes, be inspired to eat more of them.

To support his project, Liam has been saving money. He has also collected donations from family and friends, received a donation of fifty dollars towards materials from Home Depot, as well as soil and plants from local nurseries.

Good job, Liam! We can't wait to experience the finished garden! 🏠

2011 Shelter Statistics

Number of clients served

Children	236
Adults	155
Total families	114
Two parent families	42
Single parent families	72

Ethnicity

Asian/Pacific Islander	1%
African American	7%
Anglo	24%
Latino	62%
Native American	1%
Other	5%

Adults Only

Drug/Alcohol Issues	28%
Mental Illness	23%
Dual Diagnosis	16%
Other disabilities	15%

Employment

Number of families maintaining or increasing income	101	89%
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Education level for adults

High school	96	62%
Attended college	42	27%
Average grade completed	11 th	

Residence before Transition House

Santa Barbara City	297	76%
Goleta	67	17%
Carpinteria	6	2%
Other areas of County	12	3%
Other zip codes	9	3%

Disposition upon exit from the shelter

Housing in SB	181	46%
TH-owned housing	83	21%
Other program	8	2%
Relative	27	7%
Other shelter	26	7%
Motel	27	7%
Unknown	39	10%

THE AAPLE ACADEMY AT SAN MARCOS HIGH

The Accelerated Academic Program for Leadership and Enrichment (AAPLE) at San Marcos High School held a rummage sale on Saturday, March 10, 2012, at The Core (Room I-5) to benefit Transition House's new Infant Care Center. Everything from clothes, to furniture, to toys and books was sold. A bake sale also occurred on the same day to increase profits to buy needed items for the new Center, which is scheduled to open in May, 2012.

Part of the mission of AAPLE is to encourage students to get involved in non-profit work to directly benefit those in need in our community. After several meetings, AAPLE chose to help the homeless families living at Transition House. Transition House not only provides shelter, but also teaches homeless parents the skills necessary to stop the downward spiral of poverty, become self-sufficient, and return to permanent housing.

One of the services Transition House provides is fully-licensed, low- or no-cost infant care. A new Infant Care Center currently under construction will accommodate 24 infants.

The rummage sale raised more than \$2,500. The students will choose from a list of items needed for the Center and use the proceeds from the sale to purchase them. The list includes an interactive activity center, rocking chairs, cribs, and sleeping mats.

In addition to purchasing necessary items, several students are creating a collection of multi-dimensional art pieces to hang on the walls of the new center. The art work may include one large mural as well as smaller pieces, perhaps incorporating inspirational words such as *love, acceptance, journeys, hope, transition* or *imagine*. These artworks are in progress and will be presented to Transition House for display before the end of the school year. 🏠

COASTLINE CHRISTIAN ACADEMY



This past Christmas season, junior high students at Coastline Christian Academy in Goleta recognized a need in our community and decided to take action. They launched a coat and blanket drive, publicizing their efforts and collecting coats and blankets for two weeks. They even offered a curbside drop-off one afternoon to allow local residents to donate easily. The outpouring of donations of coats and blankets was tremendous. These seventh, eighth and ninth graders collected over 200 coats and blankets for families seeking shelter at Transition House. 🏠

Mom's Project Nears Completion



Construction of Transition House's newest affordable-housing complex and expanded Infant Care Center is in its final phase. The building, adjacent to Transition House's administrative offices, contains eight apartments for families with children, and an Infant Care Center that will accommodate up to 24 babies and toddlers from low-income families struggling to increase their economic stability and independence.

Transition House staff are working with clients in its shelter and second-stage transitional housing facility to complete eligibility applications for the apartments. The apartment complex will serve families with significant barriers (including disabilities) to achieving housing. To qualify, families must earn below 30% of area median income (AMI) or less.

The process of assigning leases is expected to begin by the end of April. The Infant Care Center, currently located at Transition House's administrative office, will relocate to the new building in June. 🏠

BEI Sensors, More Than Just Business...

By Carly Bass

BEI Sensors, a company that manufactures speed and position sensors, is another example of a Santa Barbara company looking beyond its work to invest in its community. Like many of our corporate sponsors, BEI supports the Transition House mission by volunteering employee time, as well as donating money, and resources. BEI is a brand of Custom Sensors Technologies.

Challenged by their corporate office to give back locally and become a better neighbor, BEI formed a committee expressly to cultivate a culture of giving within the company. I sat down with BEI staff Steve Manwaring and Dali Towpasz to see why they started giving to Transition House and why they continue to give.

During the committee's first year, besides partnering with Transition House, BEI also partnered with Santa Barbara High School's Robotic Program, the FoodBank, Coastal Clean-up Day, as well as sponsoring a blood drive. After hearing about Transition House from the sister-in-law of a committee member, the team looked into the agency and liked that it was not just a place to stay, but a place to get help and ultimately back into the community.

In December of 2011, BEI participated in Transition House's Secret Santa program by offering their employees over 55 tags of wish list items. "Within hours, nearly all the tags were gone," commented Steve. "It was great to see everyone participate, and it boosted company moral. I also personally like how fulfilling it is to volunteer and to know I work for a company that is not just about corporate profit."

After their Christmas experience, BEI wanted to explore other ways of partner-



BEI employees Donna Casteel, Dali Towpasz, Steve Manwaring and Christine Hall have donated time, resources and talent. BEI's corporate office even donated over 20 pies for Thanksgiving!

ing with Transition House. Besides just getting their employees to donate, they wanted to get them involved as individuals. As they explore ways for employees to volunteer in Transition House programs and share their knowledge and skill, both employees and Transition House residents are benefitting from the partnership.

Taking it one step further, BEI is currently employing one Transition House client and looking into the possibility of hiring more, as needed. They want BEI's involvement with Transition House to be personal and year-round.

As we continued talking about ways to expand the BEI/ Transition House partnership, we discussed the Technology & Literacy for Children (TLC) program. TLC uses computers, books, and other technology to help the children at Transition House learn and grow. Jump-

ing on board, they immediately donated funds for the children in our shelter to see the movie *The Lorax*, in honor of Dr. Seuss's birthday month.

Transition House clients greatly appreciate the fact that businesses and community members are supporting them through the tough process of getting back on their feet.

BEI Sensors is one of many companies in town making a tangible difference in the lives of our clients. We are grateful for the various kinds of support we receive from them and from other businesses throughout the Santa Barbara community.

If you or your business is interested in partnering with Transition House to support our work, please contact Carly Bass at 805.966.9668 or cbass@transitionhouse.com. We look forward to partnering with you! 🏠



THE WAY HOME
Transition House

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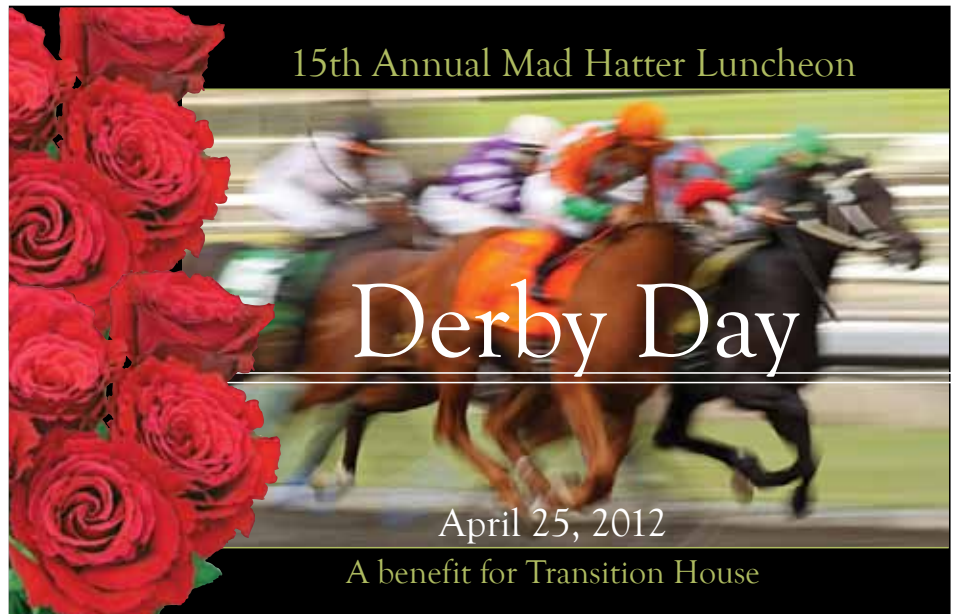
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*Transition House Housework edited
by Isabelle T. Walker.*



“DERBY DAY” is the theme for this year’s Mad Hatter Luncheon. “Post time” is 11:00 AM on April 25th and we will reserve a VIP box for you in the “grandstand” of the Four Seasons Biltmore Coral Casino. Come enjoy the sounds of Kentucky Bluegrass as you sip mint julep, “bet” on auction items, and feast on savory selections. Start planning your day at the racetrack and readying your creative Mad Hatter chapeau for judging today. Proceeds will benefit the effective programs and services Transition House provides homeless families with children in our community, helping them return to permanent housing. **See you there!**

For information about underwriting or advertising, contact Kathryn (805 563-2435). To donate auction items, contact Darlene (805 683-3432). To make sure you receive an invitation, contact Diane (805 964-9742). ↑

www.transitionhouse.com