







Denver Street School

- History
 - Troubled kids
 - Substance abuse
 - Poor or non-existent role models
 - Second chance to earn high school diploma
- Philosophy
 - Alternative family
 - Academics
 - Social/Emotional
- The model: small, intentional, provide positive role models
- The goal: self-sufficient members of society

The Problem

- Sex Trafficking??? What is that?
- Tom's journey
- Sara's journey
- What is the Denver Street School answer?

Needs of Survivors

- | | |
|----------------------------|--|
| • Safety | • Substance Abuse Treatment/Counseling |
| • Housing | • Transportation |
| • Food | • Life Skills |
| • Clothing | • Education |
| • Legal Guardianship | • Financial Assistance/Mgmt |
| • Legal Assistance | • Job Training/Skills |
| • Translation | • Child Care |
| • Medical Care | |
| • Mental Health/Counseling | |

What can DSS do?

Survivor Needs

- Safety
- Housing
- Food
- Clothing
- Legal Guardianship
- Legal Assistance
- Translation
- Medical Care
- Mental Health/Counseling
- Substance Abuse Treatment/Counseling
- Transportation
- Life Skills
- Education
- Financial Assistance/Management
- Job Training/Skills
- Childcare

DSS Mission

- Provide comprehensive education
- Provide positive role models
- Family-type environment
- Safety
- Loving, caring adults
- Acquire tools to problem solve and set goals
- Identify and overcome negative habits
- Help provide a vision for a positive future
- Provide opportunities to acquire financial skills and knowledge
- Work to identify, develop, and maintain healthy relationships
- Work to complete the necessary coursework to attain high school diploma

The Denver Street School Answer: Hope Academy

- Trauma-informed campus
- Undisclosed location
- Individualized academic plan at student's tested academic level
- One-on-one instruction and supervision monitored by our Special Education instructor
- One-on-one counseling
- Equine Therapy
- Over 300 fully trained volunteers
- Transportation to and from school
- Enrichment classes and activities offering therapeutic outlets for self-expression and self-care in four categories
 - Creative Expression
 - Health and Wellness
 - Life Skills
 - Spiritual and Emotional Development

What Else We Do

- On-site childcare
- Support students within their families
- Provide emotional support
- Collaborate with other anti-trafficking and restoration programs
- Collaborate with law enforcement, social services, legal services, probation officers
- Offer transportation to and from medical, dental, vision appointments
- Support students within legal system
- Help students with housing, food, health options
- Provide ongoing services to students after they leave

Lessons Learned

- These girls are SURVIVORS not VICTIMS.
- Strong boundaries are necessary for staff, students, and volunteers.
- Because our students have often missed a lot of school, attendance and academic motivation are difficult concepts for them to accept.
- It's both acceptable and important to enforce boundaries and standards with the girls.
- Consequences, positive and negative are part of life and the girls need to accept and understand this.
- The girls need to have opportunities to make their own choices, within the structure of the school.
- We cannot take responsibility for the girls' choices.
- We cannot take personally the girls' behaviors.
- We are not a residential program, so we cannot operate as one.
- Sometimes there are adults who have a desire to work with these kids (as staff or volunteers) who are not capable of keeping confidentiality or accepting boundaries. They must be dealt with immediately.
- It's important to recognize and accept the need for self-care.
- Staff must all be "on the same page", while not necessarily all having all of the information on the girls.
- These girls are likely NOT ready to share their story, so our job is to allow them to be teenage girls and help them navigate this part of their lives in a healthy manner.
- THE MOST IMPORTANT THING for these girls is to have people in their lives who love and accept them unconditionally, and who do not judge their behaviors.

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