

# A Word From the Executive Director



Dear friends and family of Third Way Center,

Happy March!

March brings ***Women's History Month, Ramadan, Spring, St. Patrick's Day, March madness and more snow!***

I want to begin with a ***shout-out*** to the incredible, dedicated staff, from top to bottom, from inside and out, who make Third Way Center work. From the administrative staff who look after the financials, the operations, the IT, and compliance, human resources who look after the staff, and development who raise money to fill in all the gaps- to the treatment staff and teachers who work with the kids, manage the day to day programming and develop the treatment plans. It takes all of us, and it takes all of us to be ***all in***. A team is a glorious thing!

It is not a glamorous job, nor does it make anyone particularly rich monetarily. The brave who stick it out, who keep going in spite of all the obstacles, are who make it all work. Our entire outfit is designed to support the treatment of the most in need adolescents and their families.

It takes extraordinary staff to work with our amazing clients and their families. It also takes many others behind the scenes to make it all work. We are fortunate and appreciative to have staff who are experienced, willing to learn, and able to go above and beyond, as well as those who are new and ready to learn. ***Thank you, Third Way Center staff- we appreciate you!***

*Wishing our Muslim staff, friends, and families a blessed Ramadan filled with spiritual growth and reflection, and may this holy month bring you peace, joy, and blessings.*

***"I raise up my voice- not so that I can shout, but so that those without a voice can***

***be heard. We cannot all succeed when half of us are held back.” - Malala Yousafzai***

Our Colorado Medicaid system is very complicated for kids and families with mental health issues. Medicaid was, and I believe still is, designed to help the most vulnerable. Medicaid pays for our clients' placement. Child Welfare has historically managed the Medicaid funding for kids in our Colorado system. They call this a 'carve out'. Somewhere along the way, when all the changes in our system came about, the 'carve out' went away. It's hard to understand who is making all the decisions or how this happened, but our systems are not working together very well, and we seem to be in flux.

July 1st, 2025, is when the Child Welfare system is expected to turn over all Medicaid funding to the RAEs (Regional Accountability Entities). This process has already begun, and there are many issues. The RAEs are insurance companies. So in essence, the public funds are being turned over to insurance companies to capitate. The insurance companies are also being given complete control over all the clinical decisions related to the kid's needs.

The problem is that Medicaid allocated for those most in need is going from a child protection model to a financially driven business model.

There is, however, some hope. The legislation is in session, and there are some strong advocates who are better at navigating the system and the situation.

Giving a voice to those who don't even know they need a voice is all of our concern. Let's keep our fingers crossed and speak up whenever we get the chance.

With gratitude and appreciation,

Renee