

# A Word From the Executive Director



Dear Third Way Center's friends and family,

Happy April!

"We may encounter many defeats, but we must not be defeated. It may even be necessary to encounter the defeat, so that we can know who we are," Maya Angelou

The kids who come to Third Way Center have a variety of stories. We live in a world that is conflicted, polarized, complicated, and often our youth feel unseen and unheard. Mental health is not valued, and it takes far too long to get help. There is a push to deal only with the symptoms, the behaviors related to the trauma, rather than truly resolving the trauma. Trauma resolution takes time. It's messy, not very straightforward, individualized, and often very complicated. We have a culture that wants everything now, or yesterday, and a conflicting culture that talks about kindness and slowing down. The process of quality mental health care is neither quick nor kind.

I had a supervisor who said, "Sometimes all we have is the truth." At the time, I didn't realize how profound that statement was. Truth is crucial when finding a path to healing. Over the years, it has become harder to obtain records and all the information. We spend a lot of time searching. We all need to understand what happened to us and where we came from, because then we can do something about it, or not. Trauma takes away choice, and truth gives choice. It can go from hopeless to hopeful. As Hildegard says, "no one messes up their life on purpose." There is always a reason. It is easier to be accountable for our mistakes if we understand why we make them.

No matter how painful the truth, it is our truth to do what we must. The truth can change the cycle of abuse, because choice makes change possible. Third Way Center serves 87 kids in placement. There continues to be way more kids in need than beds available in Colorado. We have been doing this for over 50 years, and although it is a fight to stay focused on what is important, we know that each kid

has a different story, with a unique truth that needs to be seen and responded to accordingly. If we simply deal with behaviors, they get masked and return later in one form or another. So, the sooner we take care of our youth, the better, and everyone benefits.

*With Gratitude and thanks!*

*Renee*