

A Word From the Executive Director



Dear Third Way Center's friends and family,

Happy Independence Day!

"Our greatest weakness lies in giving up. The most certain way to succeed is always to try just one more time." — Thomas Edison

We must never give up on kids in Colorado. There are way more kids in need of residential treatment than there are beds. Our state is in flux, and residential treatment is getting a bad rap. Our Child Welfare System is shifting to a Managed Care system. There are probably many ways to interpret the changes, but I see it as going from a child-centered to a financially centered process. These kids are our most vulnerable. There have been so many changes over the last few years, and it is hard to keep up.

I truly believe that every kid is treatable. I believe that trying *'just one more time'* makes a difference. They feel special when we go above and beyond, and we all need to feel special.

We may not always be good enough, but when we work together, when we are honest and authentic, we are so much better at reaching these kids. When we remain focused on the kids and their families, rather than on what makes our job easier (if there even is such a thing), the chances of success increase tremendously. Isn't that true with most things, most people? What happens when we just go through the motions? We know when someone truly cares. Sure, we can get fooled some of the time, but not for long, and generally we figure it out. Same with the kids at Third Way Center- they know.

This job isn't for everyone. It is challenging, and not everyone wants to be challenged. Trauma work can be downright terrifying, sometimes for both the therapist and the family. Some do not like the emotional toll of being truly involved. It is easier to go home at the end of your shift if this is simply a job. These

children watch every move we make. We can't fool them. So we need to be willing to look at ourselves, to acknowledge our mistakes, and to continuously learn, because every kid deserves our dedication to seeing and hearing their unique story. They notice when we stay a little later to meet with them, or call their mom, or read their essay, or *try one more time*. It's not easy, but it is necessary and makes a difference.

To really understand what happened to these kids takes courage. To address the pain that is hard to see, to hear, to feel- can stir something up in us as well. Seeing beyond that crazy behavior meant to keep people away is so tricky. It is counterintuitive to move towards the fire- yet it is crucial. We can not respond in fear either; however, we also need to be cautious. No one really knows what they are getting into until they are here. And the part that makes them feel like it is all worth it- comes only so often; sometimes we never truly know. We can never give up on the kids of Colorado. They are our future, and together we can all do our part to make a difference.

"It's not that I'm so smart; it's just that I stay with problems longer." — Albert Einstein

With gratitude and appreciation!

Renee