

A Word From the Executive Director



Dear Friends and Family of Third Way Center,

Happy August!

Summer is coming to an end, and school is soon to begin. It is bittersweet. A new school year brings about new beginnings, a time to start over. We are usually ready for something new.

“Remember to be gentle with yourself and others. We are all children of chance, and none can say why some fields will blossom while others lay brown beneath the August sun.”

– **Kent Nerburn**

All adolescents need to grow into capable, healthy adults. We need to give them the opportunity. We hear daily about the **mental health crisis** among our youth, and continue to look for blame rather than solutions. Research shows that it is a holistic issue, not solely about the individual; it is related to the community, the family, the schools, social media, and our crazy, divisive culture, as well as genetics and trauma. The building blocks for resilience are connections, opportunities, and empowerment.

Third Way Center has always believed in deinstitutionalizing kids who often come from multiple prior placements. We also recognize that treatment is a time-consuming process, and our current system focuses solely on managing behavior. The response from our state has been to increase rules and regulations, leading to micromanagement and overly complicated systems. We continue to push back; however, that sometimes leads to less collaboration and more audits. We continue to strive for outcomes that benefit the youth, their families, and the community. It is not easy, but it is important, and we will always push back if it is in the best interest of our youth and their families.

As many know, the Federal Reconciliation Bill, H.R. 1, will be lessening Colorado’s

revenue by as much as 30%. Reportedly, this is due to increased tax deductions for Corporations. Apparently, this is a surprise to many of our legislators, and the impact will be significant for Medicaid. I'm not sure how this will affect programs dependent on Medicaid funding, but it can't be good.

We will keep fighting to provide treatment to the most vulnerable adolescent population. Third Way Center kids are currently on break between summer school and the start of the new school year. They are busy with activities that provide opportunities for normalcy, depending on their needs. 6 kids will be attending college this fall. For these kids, success would not be possible without individualized treatment. These are kids who couldn't function at home, at school, in lesser levels of care like foster homes, and needed (and continue to need) a safe, consistent place to focus on really hard stuff. They need to be seen and heard to truly succeed for themselves and the community.

With appreciation and gratitude,

Renee