



# THE CONNECTION

familyconnections

Counseling resources with *family* in mind

www.familyconnectionsinc.org

VOLUME 8 Edition 3 2013

**CLINIC**—Call for information about our counseling services:

Weirton Medical Center  
Medical Office Building  
651 Colliers Way, Suite 412  
Weirton, WV 26062  
Phone: (304) 723-3423  
Fax: (304) 723-3426  
E-mail:  
admin@  
familyconnectionsinc.org

**BROOKE PLACE**—Call for a referral for residential group treatment for girls:

P.O. Box 348  
Tent Church Road  
Colliers, WV 26035  
Phone: (304) 527-3303  
Fax: (304) 527-3306

This facility is funded in part under an agreement with the Bureau of Children and Families, WV Department of Health and Human Resources

Email:  
brookeplace@  
familyconnectionsinc.org



## "There's No Place Like Home"



Our 6th annual gala event, "There's No Place Like Home," will be held this year at the Serbian-American Cultural Center in Weirton on April 27th beginning at 6 PM.

We invite you to attend this great evening of dinner, beverages and dancing for a donation of \$25 per person. Raffles, 50/50 drawings and door prizes will take place throughout the event so please join us for this night of fun and games! All proceeds will directly benefit our Brooke Place residents.

In keeping with our Wizard of Oz theme, we are offering four levels of donation recognition: You will receive eight (8) tickets for your donation of \$1,000 at the Ruby level; four (4) tickets for your donation of \$500 at the Emerald level; and, two (2) tickets for your donation of \$250 at the Silver level. Yellow Brick Road is the designated level for a donation of \$100, which, as with all levels, is accompanied by publicity and public recognition.

For more information, or to purchase tickets, please contact Barb Jones at (304) 723-3423. Thank you for your support!

### Brooke Place Wish List

Gift cards for girls' birthdays	Mesh bags for large laundry baskets	Beach towels
Overnight carry all bags/satchels for home visits	Batteries, all sizes	<b>Questions?</b>
Pajamas—S,M,L,XL	60 watt light bulbs	<b>Please contact Barb Jones at 304-723-3423.</b>
Slippers	White twin sheet sets	
Regular white towels	White washcloths	
Toilet paper, paper towels	Toiletries	
Underwear—all sizes	Flip flops	

## TIME WELL SPENT!

Two of our lovely young ladies will be leaving Brooke Place at the end of the school year in May. They both turned 18 years old during their time at Brooke Place. In order to remain past this time, a girl has to decide, voluntarily, to remain "in care." As both girls wanted to finish their senior year, they voluntarily completed the necessary paperwork and agreements. One young woman will be moving to the Morgantown-Fairmont area. The other will begin college classes in Wheeling.

We asked the girls a few questions and we thought you might be interested in their responses.

### **What have you learned during your time at Brooke Place?**

*I've learned responsibility and have worked hard to maintain my grades. I've loved having the staff to talk to. I've learned to trust people. I've learned positive coping skills that will help me throughout my life.*

### **What are you looking forward to?**

*I'm really excited about leaving and taking what I have learned here and apply it to life. I'm excited but I'm sad to leave my home. I've been here for almost 4 years. I am scared to leave but I know I have a lot of support. I'm excited to get a job and go to college and support myself. I'm ready to show people who did not believe in me that I can do it when I walk across that stage to accept my diploma.*



### **What advice do you have for girls entering Brooke Place?**

*Always stay strong and never give up. Accept consequences. Take responsibility for your actions. Stay in school. Accept help from people. It was hard for me to learn how to do this when I first got here because I thought people were trying to bring me down but I found out they were trying to help me. You're capable of doing anything, as long as you are willing to work hard for it.*

## Holiday Generosity



Family Connections was the recipient this past holiday season of unbelievable generosity from many businesses and individuals who donated a large array of thoughtful gifts for our girls at Brooke Place. Wonderful cash donations were also made that enable us to bolster our programs and fulfill our mission. One such group of donors is the Children's Christmas Fund who, for several years now, fulfill many a resident's wish list and also buy needed items for the house where the girls live.

Pictured at left is Mario Traffichini who, with his daughter, Andrea, delivered a huge pile of presents to Brooke Place. Andrea wrapped all the gifts! Pictured with them on the right is Jean Bartholow from Family Connections' Fund Development Auxiliary. We appreciate the support of the community who recognize the needs of our organization and never fail to make special times during the year even more special. Thank you very much.



## Giving Hope to the Hurt

I'm betting there is a song out there that when you hear it, your thoughts immediately turn to a particular time and place. For me, it's a Beatles tune that transports me to the Delaware shore where I am sitting with friends around a bonfire on the beach. What about a scent, that when you catch its fragrance, a memory unfolds? For me, it's getting a whiff of anything that reminds me of my grandmother's cookie tin. There are memories associated with all of our senses, and when those memories are pleasant, they are a joy to re-experience.

What about when they're not? What about when the memories bring to mind an event that we would rather forget? Or, even more troubling, all the disturbing feelings are suddenly unleashed and we can't associate them with the event that provoked them?

Trauma is like that: scary, unsettling, unpredictable. Childhood trauma follows a person for life. Not every child who experiences abuse, neglect, domestic violence, bullying, loss, abandonment, accidents, community violence, or natural disasters will be burdened with the symptoms of trauma. There are many influencing factors: intensity, frequency, and duration of the trauma; the supports in the child's life, the reaction of the adults around the child to the event, and the child's age/developmental age when the trauma occurs.

What neuroscience is showing us is that trauma *changes* brains. Trauma is a *wound*.

Consider the infant who is ignored for hours, for days, in a carrier while her parents and their friends get high. Think about the toddler who watches her mother regularly being beaten, the four year old who is locked in a closet every time her parents leave the house, the six year old whose only meals are what the school provides, and the ten year old who is being photographed for pornographic internet sites. Any one of these events can be at the root of trauma. Now consider that this might be the history of single girl.

At Brooke Place, we talk about putting on our trauma glasses and understanding how powerful traumatic triggers influence behavior. It is our responsibility to make sure we are connecting with our resident, providing them positive experiences where they can learn to problem solve, feel safe in new situations, manage their feelings, and form and maintain relationships. We train our staff to help girls identify and cope with reminders of their trauma, create opportunities for girls to experience success, and provide experiences that will facilitate attachment.

*Joanne Dobrzanski, Executive Director*

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### MISSION STATEMENT

*Family Connections is committed to helping individuals function to the best of their abilities by engaging the resources that exist naturally within their family and community. Interventions provided by Family Connections are theory-based and are guided by the principle that the individual is best treated within the context of their family. Family Connections is dedicated to the care, welfare, and respect of families and the individuals who comprise them.*

*family connections, inc.*

P.O. Box 348

Colliers, WV 26035



**There's No Place Like Home**

**April 27, 2013**  
**Serbian-American Cultural Center**  
**\$25 per person**

**For tickets: 304-723-3423**

*By giving a contribution in memory of or in honor of a family member or friend, many generous people have found a way to express their caring spirit while investing in the lives of those served by Family Connections.*

***In Honor Of***

*Joanne Dobrzanski by Linda Johnson*

***In Memory Of***

*James Shepard by Joanne Dobrzanski; Carolyn Schafer*

*Gwen Jones by Robert & Dorothy Swearingen*

*Florence Ajayi by Richard Ajayi, M.D.*

*John Springer by Cathy Sobel*