

We're here for Recovery

GREAT NEWS

TRUSTING SANTA MARIA CHANGES A FAMILY

On the edges of her life, Courtney had always used drugs recreationally. It wasn't until her infant son Jacob died in his sleep, co-sleeping with his father that her use spiraled out of control. She could not stand the feelings of anger and despair caused by her grief. She felt she needed to numb her racing mind. And so, she did for two and a half years. She no longer cared for her daughter, Kylie in the loving way she had before. She compromised her own safety, and that of her daughter, as her dependence progressed. Courtney lost her moral compass, her determination and her soul.

It took an arrest for public intoxication and possession in 2014 that landed her in the Harris County jail to get her attention. It was there, as she detoxed without medical assistance from "whatever she could shoot into her veins" that she discovered she was pregnant. It was through that arrest, involvement with CPS and the introduction of a restorative option of treatment, that she came to Santa Maria. She arrived at her new residence depressed, angry with God and in denial about her real situation. She mistrusted the staff and could not believe they were on her side. She was often non-compliant with assignments, policies and procedures and prescribed routines. Early on, she was not making progress.

Eventually, new thinking started to surface. There was her family to consider. There was another baby on the way. Following the path of recovery, this baby could be born healthy

> more inside

COURTNEY AND KYLIE - THE FACES OF RECOVERY

SANTA MARIA



> continued

and thrive. Also, with a clear head, she began to see how her decisions had affected Kylie's life. Although Kylie was in the safe care of her grandparents, this vulnerable child, who had suffered so much from her mother's absence, began to have serious emotional issues. It was in the loving and compassionate support that the SMH staff showed her daughter that Courtney finally realized she was in a place of help and hope not just for herself, but also for her children. She opened her mind and her heart and began to fully participate in everything that was offered. She continued with outpatient treatment for three months.

Today, on reflection, she feels like the unity with the other residents, the parenting classes, the 12 -step groups and the tenacity of her treatment team are the major contributors to her successful discharge. With the unbelievable care she received during her difficult pregnancy and the early birth of her baby girl, Courtney began to structure her life around her own health and her children's development. With the extended time available through the safe housing program, she was able to become a better parent and integrate her recovery skills into their lives.

Even now, she still structures her day with the simple discipline she learned while she lived at Bonita House. She still wakes up every day and vows that just for today, she will not use drugs. She calls her sponsor, she attends women's support meetings, prepares meals, runs the carpool for school and helps with her children's activities. "Some might say I live a boring life, Courtney says, but I know that I am focused on the good things, the things that matter." Courtney celebrated 5 years in recovery this past November.

Kylie, now 18 and a senior at Humble High, shares her family's story with her friends. She has just been awarded a \$60,000 scholarship to attend Howard Payne University and plans to study business and psychology. She feels that the individual counseling and family therapy she received made her worry less about her mom and understand her better. "These things have made me stronger. I share my experiences with no shame. I am proud of my mom."

Courtney adds, "Santa Maria literally changed our lives. It saved us - our whole family."

SHE IS THE FACE OF RECOVERY.



Nadine Scamp, LMSW, CEO

DEAR FRIENDS,

With the emergence of spring across our community at Santa Maria (SMH), we find ourselves recovering from the great freeze of February. Like most of you, we lost power and water service for some period, the roads became impassable for staff to report to work demanding that some stay overnight to cover and we sustained some plumbing damage. We appreciate all of those that have reached out with care and concern and even donations to assist us. We are getting back to normal operations and wondering how to replace our extensive landscaping, lost in the cold.

Just as they did with the COVID-19 protocols, our staff and clients rose to meet the latest challenge with calmness and courage. Although there are always ways to improve response, we kept everyone safe, fed and as warm as possible with our community spirit of pulling together.

Recent announcements in the state of Texas will not change our current COVID protocols at Santa Maria. The protocols and processes we put into place almost a year ago and which have been updated regularly have been designed to maximize the protection of our clients and staff. These precautions still limit volunteer and family participation with our clients, but we are constantly inventing new ways to safely provide that critical interaction.

This newsletter strives to share one growing portion of our program offerings, the "Caring for Two" initiative. We have tried to outline the key components of the program, celebrate some of our success stories and recognize the strong funding support we have received from our community partners. We are especially excited to announce the plans for expansion of these services in outlying counties such as Galveston, Montgomery and Ft. Bend counties, all in the near future.

We hope you will be inspired enough to join us for our annual fundraising event, RISE on Tuesday, May 4. This will be a second year of hosting this celebration through a virtual platform. Since 1957, Santa Maria has served thousands of women in crisis and has continually responded to the emerging needs of the recovery community. Today we are achieving our mission to empower women and their families to lead healthy, successful, productive and self-fulfilling lives. Our RISE event is instrumental to achieving this mission.

We are proud to share that last year alone we served 6274 women, children and family members. However, there is still a great need and more work to be done! With your help we can continue to change the lives of women who are living with substance use disorder and provide them and their children with the care, support, stability and healing they need.

We are grateful for our community of supporters. Without them, without you, our work would be impossible.

SINCERELY

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Nadine Scamp".

NADINE SCAMP, LMSW, CEO

CARING FOR TWO

Caring for Two (CFT) is a home and community-based intervention to improve maternal and child outcomes for women who are pregnant or have children up to 18 months and who are at risk for or currently using alcohol and drugs, including those with co-occurring mental health disorders and histories of trauma. CFT uses a family-centered approach to build well-being and resiliency, including supporting mothers' physical and emotional health, improving social determinants of health, and providing skills and support to promote early childhood brain development. It is a natural extension of our continuum of care and has been experiencing rapid growth since its inception in 2013.

At its foundation, CFT promotes healthy infant-child development through improving the home environment and caregiver competencies, attitudes, and behaviors. A crucial component of the work involves improving the mother's physical and mental health to support both her long-term recovery and her ability to successfully bond with and care for her child. There is a large body of research showing that exposure to adverse events and trauma in childhood, including untreated maternal substance use and mental health disorders, childhood abuse or neglect, exposure to domestic violence, or separation from a parent, can negatively impact future adult health behaviors and outcomes because of changes to the developing brain. Consistent, positive caregiver interactions and strong parent-child bonds help protect the infant from the effects of toxic stress and adverse experiences. By supporting maternal physical and emotional health and providing the family with skills and support to promote healthy family interactions, the program sets a solid foundation for the long-term health and well-being of both mom and baby.

CFT uses an integrated, multi-disciplinary team, including Parent Coaches (master level counselors or LCDCs), Nurse



Health Educators, Peer Recovery Coaches and consultant physician. CFT provides parenting education, parent coaching to model positive parenting behaviors, baby safety and infant care, screening for postpartum depression and other behavioral health disorders, peer support, mental health counseling and linkage to other treatment services as needed, health care navigation, care coordination and social supports such as transportation and housing assistance.

Our staff tailors services to each family, providing services in an individual or group format, at the home or a community-based site, to best meet family needs. In addition, CFT works with partner healthcare and social services providers to improve their ability to serve vulnerable families impacted

by substance use and/or trauma through the provision of education, training, and onsite support. CFT services are currently provided at our Santa Maria housing and treatment programs as well as at multiple partner locations throughout Greater Houston, including health clinics, assistance ministries, shelters, and high schools. This year, we are targeting expansion to outlying counties such as Montgomery and Liberty counties.

A recent independent evaluation of the Caring for Two program found statistically significant improvements in key areas including parenting attitudes, maternal emotional expressiveness and connectedness, knowledge of early brain development, quality of life indicators including improvements in physical and environmental health, and improvements in recovery capital, which includes social support, addiction recovery, community integration, and other key social capital domains. As one participant stated in her interview with the evaluators, "You learn that you need to take good care of yourself in order to take good care of your baby." We are proud of the life-changing impact this program has on multiple generations.

WE ARE GRATEFUL TO OUR SUPPORTERS. THANK YOU FOR BELIEVING IN OUR FAMILIES.

BLUE CROSS BLUE SHIELD OF TEXAS

Blue Cross Blue Shield of Texas (BCBSTX) began the **Healthy Kids Healthy Families** program as a three-year initiative designed to improve the health and wellness of at least one million children through community investments. We are grateful for their recent award and recognition of the impactful work of our Caring for Two program.

EPISCOPAL HEALTH FOUNDATION

Episcopal Health Foundation is committed to supporting efforts across Texas that are helping moms, dads and other caregivers promote healthy brain development for the youngest Texans. Their support for SMH to serve pregnant women and mothers with young children who are affected by substance use and trauma have helped us build a foundation and are allowing an expansion of the Caring for Two program.

HOUSTON METHODIST

Houston Methodist has again generously awarded a Mental Health Innovation Grant to Santa Maria to support bilingual counseling staff and mental health counselor salaries for the MIRRORS component of CFT as well as play therapy services through their community benefits efforts. This award will assist us in expanding our reach to the community. We are truly grateful for their continued and meaningful assistance.



Renita and her son, Bream

Renita is 32 years old and she gave birth to her son, Bream while in our program. Her baby was born at full term and healthy!

“This program has helped me a lot. It has definitely helped me to maintain sobriety and to not get more chaos in my life; to be more stable. It helped me a lot with my mental health concerns by addressing the issues and helping me understand my triggers and other things.”

Our parent coaches helped Renita develop a “Plan of Self Care” to assist with “Hug Your Baby,” “Nurturing Parenting” and “Kangaroo Care” methods.

CARING FOR TWO

CONTINUED

Kearra is 29 years old and a mother of 3 children. She has found the resources she needed to become a better parent at Santa Maria. A few months ago, she was required by CPS to take parenting classes, one of the key components of our Caring for Two program. She joined one of our virtual offerings, a series of 8 sessions led by one of our parent coaches. “The Nurturing Parenting” curriculum provided Kearra with best practices for raising kids with healthy self-esteem and strong family bonds.



Pictured is Kearra proudly showing her certificate of completion that she will now provide to the court. Congratulations to Kearra!



Nicole and Baby Noah enjoy the sunshine and some nourishment.

Nicole joined our residential treatment program during the 7th month of her pregnancy. Baby Noah was born early, at 36 weeks, and while Nicole was discharged from the hospital, her baby had to stay in NICU for two more weeks.

During this difficult separation, our Caring for Two staff was able to assist with virtual ZOOM video daily visits between Nicole and Noah, to strengthen the important bonding process. With the support of her parent coach, Nicole could pump her breast milk daily and have it delivered to the hospital to keep the infant nourished. Once the baby came home, the new mother was provided with training and tools through “Kangaroo Care” to build the all- important skin to skin contact for healthy bonding.



VOLUNTEER SPOTLIGHT

WINGS MINISTRIES - YEAR ROUND SUPPORT

Our friends from WINGS Ministries support our clients in many ways. From delivering goody bags to surprise and delight those they serve, to donating big screen TV's that made our virtual classes more efficient, to answering a call for a coat drive and much more, they always stand ready to help!

Their main mission is to provide transformational classes for life and work skills, and the faithfulness of that program has continued throughout the pandemic on both of our campuses. We are proud of our partnership with WINGS Ministries and their incredibly dedicated volunteers.

ReNew H-Town - DECEMBER 2020

We are grateful to have started a new partnership with ReNew H-Town, a non-profit organization that is committed to helping sex trafficking survivors transition to independent living. Kudos to Harriet Zivley, founder of ReNew H-Town and her partner, Dru Cone.

Pictured here is April Radford, a Santa Maria alumna at her new home, which was fully furnished and decorated by ReNew H-Town. April and her twin boys were filled with gratitude for the amazing support they received during this time of transition into independent living. They were happy to see the transformation of a new house into their home.



THE SMITH FOUNDATION — DECEMBER 2020

A U-Haul Truck filled with baby items and toys pulled into Santa Maria's parking lot mid- December, and we have the Smith Foundation to thank for the bounty! We were very excited to meet and greet Harry Leonard Smith, Mya Smith-Edmonds and 8 other members of the Smith Family, who came to spread joy around campus with their gifts. Some members of this foundation even flew from Indiana to be with us!

A heart-felt thank you to the Smith Foundation for directly impacting the lives of our residents who are working very hard to rebuild their lives.



THE POST OAK SCHOOL — FEBRUARY 2021

Our appreciation to Dr. Alicia Kowalchuk, our medical director for referring the students from The Post Oak School, who, for the second year in a row, have provided Santa Maria with handmade blankets for our infant residents. The blankets were darling, great fabric and colors!

Pictured are high school students working on this project as part of a commitment to MLK Service Day.



CURIOSITY CRUISER — DECEMBER 2020

Barbara Bush Houston Literacy Foundation and Harris County Public Library joined forces to promote literacy and language by providing a socially-distanced book event.

The kids at Bonita House were treated to a visit from the Curiosity Cruiser, a library on wheels. Cases of books were delivered for all of our children, on their reading

level. The partnering organizations strive to provide reading materials and create programs that foster a love of books.

Barbara Bush Houston Literacy Foundation has been a great supporter of our early language and maternal bonding development efforts. They have promised to return once our children can safely explore the Cruiser.



TEAM MALDONADO — CHRISTMAS EVE

Low Masters Car Club teamed up with friends Viejitos Car Club, H-bombs Car Club and Brown Impressions Car Club on Christmas Eve to lead TEAM Maldonado in a parade through the neighborhood and then the parking lot of Bonita House. Bringing up rear was a truck with the most important guest of all, Santa Claus! In a truck loaded with toys and good cheer, Santa's helper, Omar Maldonado provided the HO HO HO for our Christmas Eve afternoon. Residents, children and staff all lined up to watch the parade led by off-duty police as motorcycle escorts.

Santa and his pals unloaded the truck, as each child present was able to select a toy and enjoy donuts, pizza and juice boxes to sweeten the festivities. The low-rider cars were displayed for all to see and cameras/phones clicked with non-stop photos.

Not everyone gets to have an amazing low rider antique car parade with Santa, toys and snacks to raise their spirits! But, the lucky community at Santa Maria did and we have Omar and Anna Maldonado to thank for that! Shout out to the many volunteers and big-hearted people that made this a unique and special event.

Pssst...we heard they also know the Easter Bunny!



RISE

LUNCHEON

BENEFITING
SANTA MARIA
HOSTEL

2021

Be a part! We are less than a month away from our RISE virtual event

Please partner with us by purchasing a sponsorship, individual ticket or donation

Honoring
Ellen Cohen
with the Visionary Award

Featuring
Autumn Still
a story of hope

TUESDAY, MAY 4, 2021

To register:
[www.santamariahostel.org/
news-events/rise2021/](http://www.santamariahostel.org/news-events/rise2021/)

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ELLEN COHEN

Always a champion and visionary for women in Houston and in Texas, Ellen Cohen is our 2021 Visionary Award recipient.

Ellen has lived and worked in the city of Houston for the past 44 years. She served for 10 years as the Executive Director of the American Jewish Committee and for 18 years as the CEO of the Houston Area Women's Center, working with survivors of sexual assault and domestic violence. In 2006, she was elected as the Texas State Representative for District 134. After serving two terms in the Texas Legislature, Ellen continued her public service career at home. She ran for Houston City Council and was sworn in to office in January 2012 as the Council Member representing District C. During her tenure on the City Council, Ellen championed the Houston Equal Rights Ordinance, the elimination of the former backlog of over 6,600 untested sexual assault kits, the creation of a dedicated Human Trafficking Division within the Houston Police Department, the introduction of neighborhood-specific parking solutions for the Washington Corridor and Montrose, and many other initiatives to improve the quality of life of her constituents. Ellen was honored to serve as Houston's first Jewish Mayor Pro Tem from 2016 through the end of her term on Council, when she was term-limited in December 2019.

Ellen currently serves on the Houston Forensic Science Center Board of Directors. A 50-year breast cancer survivor, she also serves on the Memorial Hermann Health System's Community Relations Committee.



SANTA MARIA

2605 PARKER RD., HOUSTON, TX 77093 | T: 713-691-0900 | F: 713-691-0910

