

Contact: Amy Garmon
Development Manager
agarmon@childsavers.org

ChildSavers
200 North 22nd. St.
Richmond, VA 23223
www.childsavers.org
Phone: (804) 591.3913
Fax: (804) 644.9593

ChildSavers

Press Release

ChildSavers Expands Mental Health Care for Children

RICHMOND, VA, April 2, 2019:

Children in our community need access to trauma-informed mental health services. With funding support from The Virginia Health Care Foundation (VHCF), ChildSavers is able to expand its outpatient mental health services to better serve our community's children.

Debbie D. Oswalt, Executive Director, Virginia Health Care Foundation, said, "Unaddressed trauma in children (and adults) produces physiological and behavioral health effects with lasting consequences. ChildSavers works to teach resilience skills to its clients to mitigate those effects. VHCF is proud to support this important work."

VHCF's grant provides support for two children's mental health therapists and increased hours of service for child psychiatry. Their support allowed ChildSavers to hire and retain experts in trauma like Mavis Mintaah, Licensed Clinical Social Worker and Certified Trauma Specialist, and Brie Jordan-Cooley, Licensed Clinical Social Worker. As a result of this and other investments, ChildSavers provided 485 children with more than 7,800 hours of mental health therapy, an increase from 6,700 hours in its last fiscal year.

This funding provides quality, trauma-informed mental health care to communities who would otherwise not have access. Due to the complexity of many of our cases, there is often significant non-billable time associated with care. Mintaah shared a story about providing guidance and encouragement to a young client, and her family members, experiencing a transition in her living situation. Mintaah was subpoenaed to court during custody hearings, and helped the family coordinate multiple systems to make the most-informed decisions for themselves and their child. Mintaah said, "There were challenges and setbacks, and while we're not done, I have seen tremendous growth and transformation in this journey."

Mintaah and Jordan-Cooley shared many skills that they help their clients build, such as coping strategies, healthy boundaries, feeling identification, problem-solving, and self-regulation. Many children with a trauma history have difficulty establishing relationships and building trust. Jordan-Cooley said, "I feel most successful when my clients can identify me as a safe person who offers a safe space to ask questions and explore their thoughts and feelings. In therapy, there is an opportunity to grow within one's self. Sometimes when we grow, things fall apart, and we need to feel safe enough where we are, to be able to put the pieces back together again."

L. Robert Bolling, Chief Executive Officer of ChildSavers, said, “Virginia Health Care Foundation’s investment in our work has not just helped grow our outpatient clinic and connect our families with resources they need, but also challenged us to solve a problem many of our clients face: transportation. As a result, we now have a system in place to connect our families who need it with free transportation. We are grateful that these partners are playing a key role in the growth of ChildSavers and in our initiatives to address childhood trauma.”

One of the key elements for reducing the impact of trauma, is a quick response in the aftermath of a traumatic event. Bolling said, “VHCF helps ensure that families are connected to the opportunities and the mental health services they need in a timely manner. They don’t have to be told to wait a long time. They have access sooner and, hopefully we help them achieve some stability in their life.” Reducing the amount of time a child has to wait in the wake of trauma reduces the likelihood of developing PTSD. Therapy and healthy relationships with an adult helps children be resilient.

ABOUT CHILDSAVERS

ChildSavers is a nonprofit organization whose mission is to guide our community’s children through life’s critical moments with trauma-informed mental health and child development services. They are committed to the health of children and the positive bond between adult and child. They support this with clinical treatment, education, and training services that offer reassurance, healing, and the skills necessary to achieve normal life and development.

ChildSavers was founded in 1924 by Martha Patteson Branch in memory of one of Richmond’s first pediatricians, Dr. McGuire Newton. Early in their history, ChildSavers addressed the mental health and developmental needs of children, especially those who have experienced trauma.

Their offices are located at 200 North 22nd Street in Church Hill. To learn more, visit www.childsavers.org or call (804) 644.9590.

###