



Indianapolis, IN 46241

MISSION STATEMENT

Restoring Lives West, Inc. is a Christian ministry on the Westside of Indianapolis reaching out to homeless and at-risk young adults with the compassion of Christ in an environment of God's love. Restoring Lives West, Inc. empowers youth by providing street outreach, a youth drop-in center and referral to social services, and educational/job training projects through community relationships.

How we got started.

In July, 2004, the Wayne Township Adult Basic Education (ABE Program) was awarded an outreach grant through the Indiana Department of Education/Division of Adult Education. This grant provided staff time to do case management activities on a part-time basis. In the first year, over one hundred twenty three students were served directly or by referral.

As a direct result of the needs expressed by our students to the case managers, the Teen Issues Counsel of the Wayne Township School ABE Program was formed in 2005 to study what could be done about barriers, such as homelessness among ABE students. This council has met regularly and made community contact in order to share ideas and make connections on behalf of the students.

In August 2006, the Wayne Township ABE Program began expending dollars through a youth employment service grant (awarded through the Indianapolis Private Industry Council, Lilly Grant Funding to help remove barriers, such as lack of stable housing, so that students could complete their GED studies and enter post-secondary training, or become employed.

In November, 2006, a task force of community representatives including Gloria Hubbuch, Director of Wayne Township Adult Basic Education; Belinda Crowley, teacher for Wayne Township Adult Basic Education; Jay Kennedy, Pastor of Lynhurst Baptist Church; Rob Dinniger, Youth Pastor of Ben Davis Christian Church; Tom Smith, Pastor of Garden City Christian Church; Nancy Meyer, St. Christopher Catholic Church, Pastoral Assistant; Don Parrott, Director of LBC Community Center, Hope Garrett, Chairperson, and Representative of Better Indy Babies began to identify the needs of homeless/marginal youth on the west side of Indianapolis. Tasks were assigned to member present.

1. Relevant Statistics – **assigned to Gloria**
2. Observe other centers – **assigned to Nancy Meyer** (Stopover Center and Outreach, Inc.) and **Jay Kennedy** (Shepherd Community and LBC Community Center)
3. Legal Issues: user ages, etc?
4. Financial Issues (Probably much of this information will come from visits to other centers and interviews with those directors.)
5. Funding/Grant possibilities: (assigned to **Belinda Crowley** and **Gloria Hubbuch**)

As a result of these efforts, Outreach, Inc. was identified as a similar program already in existence on the east side of Indianapolis. Eric Howard, Director of Outreach, Inc. attended the January Task Force meeting and described his program. It was agreed upon at that time that he would mentor our Task Force toward the goal of establishing a similar program on the west side of Indianapolis. Later that month the LBC Community Center agreed to allocate some of their space for our project. Terms would be agreed upon at some later date.

Following the advice of E. Howard we began networking to obtain publicity, funds, letters of cooperation, and statistics for the purpose of promoting our endeavor throughout the community of Westside Indianapolis.

A series of meetings followed. We met with Dr. Terry Thompson, Superintendent of Schools in MSD of Wayne Township, at a Community Leader's Luncheon in March, 2007. The Task Force presented our progress and concerns to various community leaders in attendance. In March we also began a three part series of informational meetings at various Westside churches to create awareness within the community of the needs for this service and our progress thus far towards meeting the need. A Steering Committee was established to begin specific planning and to lay foundational formats for the drop-in center. The members of that committee were Hope Garrett, Gloria Hubbuch, and Don Parrott. Later Shenia Suggs was added to the group.

Since that time many things have occurred. We became incorporated on July 13, 2007. A checking account was opened and we started collecting funds from individuals. We also started talking with service groups in the area about the program. On September 13, 2007, the 501 (c) 3 was submitted for approval. We have also begun receiving referrals for assistance from persons who have heard of us. We have begun to give out clothes and hygiene items to persons who drop by the community center and have started giving referrals to persons who are looking for a place to go.

Why is there a need?

These youth find themselves on the street because of physical abuse, sexual abuse, neglect, and/or emotional abuse. Some are runaways, while others have been kicked out of their homes. Some have been in the child welfare system, while others have tried to get services but fell through the cracks, receiving little to no help. Their situations often become so desperate that they see no other option than to engage in acts of prostitution in order to get shelter, food, or clothes. Many are at extreme risk for HIV and STD's. The majority, however, are on the street as a result of intense family problems, which have resulted in deep emotional and spiritual pain. Others remain at home but turn to the street culture for solace.

Most street youth begin to earn a living through panhandling. Due to a lack of proper identification or limited job skills, they cannot find employment. Without identification or social security cards, they are refused many training programs or jobs. Without a job, it is difficult to rent. With no credit history, most cannot buy a car or receive approval for rent. They often then turn to illegal methods for survival, including theft, drug trafficking, and prostitution. Young adults without family support must turn to their peers – who are facing the same struggles. All of these youth are in need of love and guidance.

The programs we want to begin.

Restoring Lives West, Inc. will provide **case management** to individual youth. We hope to help them start to make life changes by assisting them with critical daily needs. These needs will include obtaining ID's, birth certificates, Social Security cards, and transportation, receiving leads for jobs or housing, and receiving referrals for medical and prenatal programs. Our staff members and volunteers will build deeper relationships with the youth by guiding them through emotional and spiritual struggles. Together with each youth, we will develop a comprehensive, long-term service plan with goals and objectives. We will instruct the youth in necessary life and social skills such as money management, employability, and home economics, and we will connect them to GED and vocational training programs.

Our staff will help the youth reunify with their families when appropriate, connect with churches, and network with other service providers and community resources. Since the youth are usually afraid to access other mainline social services or have little access to them because they are not in school, do not have a phone, do not have an ID, etc. Restoring Lives West, Inc. will walk along side them as they connect with needed resources and rebuild their lives.

We are hoping to establish a 24 hour a day hotline that will allow youth to call when they are in crisis. Hopefully this will help them to build trust in us and turn to us when they are in need.

The Restoration Zone

Our drop-in center, The Restoration Zone, will include a clothing and hygiene product pantry, a food pantry, laundry facilities, shower facilities, and meals. The youth can come to The Restoration Zone to access services; have a safe place to hang out, and to work with staff and volunteers on the issues that will help them remove themselves from street life. Many youth may come just to talk. In addition, our Bible Study Group will provide a casual forum for kids who are asking questions about God, Christianity, and their own personal spiritual beliefs. Restoring Lives West, Inc will provide all services regardless of a youth's personal beliefs, lifestyle, or practices.

Full List of Service Programs

Restoring Lives West, Inc. services will include:

1. Housing referrals including referrals for pregnant youths
2. Food pantry and hot meals
3. Employability guidance
4. Food and clothing pantry referrals
6. Street outreach (water, blankets, take to shelter, etc.)
7. Identification-Help with getting ID
8. Safe place (The Restoration Zone)...a home-like environment where social needs can be met and fun can be found.
9. Relational guidance, support & counseling
10. Educational Assistance:
 - GED/High school diploma
11. Crisis responses (e.g. suicide attempts)
12. Provide relational support for youth with legal problems and refer youth to
 - Legal service organizations when appropriate
13. Assistance to help youth access post secondary education opportunities
14. Health referrals (mental, physical, and insurance)
15. Spiritual guidance and counseling (Bible study)
16. Transportation assistance
17. Financial budget counseling (advice, shopping tips, etc.) and life skills
 - Training and advice (e.g. utilities rent, who to live with, personal hygiene, etc.
18. Laundry service
19. Mentoring

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