

BRIGHT HORIZONS

BHcare Winter 2025 Newsletter

A portrait of a woman with long, straight blonde hair, wearing a blue sleeveless top and a necklace with a cross pendant. She is resting her chin on her hand, which has a ring on it. The background is a soft, out-of-focus grey.

AMY

“It took some time, but I was eventually able to understand my worth as a person.”

“I could not smile for over four years. The post-traumatic stress from being in an abusive relationship had taken a toll on me.

I met my husband while I was living in Connecticut. The first night in our apartment together, he made me sleep on the floor like a dog. Little did I know that this was just the beginning of my nightmare. He quickly began to isolate me from friends and family and was verbally and physically abusive. We moved to Texas about two years after we got married. The abuse continued to escalate.

Some of what happened is still a blur, but I can tell you what I endured was pure hell. He left me with bruises left and right, fractured ribs, and a dislocated jaw. My husband strangled me to the point of passing out and held a gun to my head. Things got even worse when I became pregnant.”

“I tried to leave when he held a loaded gun to my belly. He wanted me to have an abortion. One day, I woke up with him beating me. Fearing for my life and my unborn child's life, I decided to leave. I stayed in a shelter in Dallas for a short period but returned home because I was the breadwinner and needed to get back to my job.

Things got even worse, and I finally mustered the courage to leave. I returned to Connecticut and sought help at The Umbrella Center for Domestic Violence Services. There, I received one-on-one counseling, participated in group therapy, and utilized advocate services. When I filed for divorce, The Umbrella Center made arrangements for me to stay in a shelter in Texas, allowing me the time I needed to sell my house and complete the necessary paperwork.

I cannot thank the staff at The Umbrella Center enough for their support. I make it a point to give back to the program whenever I can. They made a significant difference in my life, and I hope that my contributions help others who are experiencing domestic violence abuse.” ~Amy

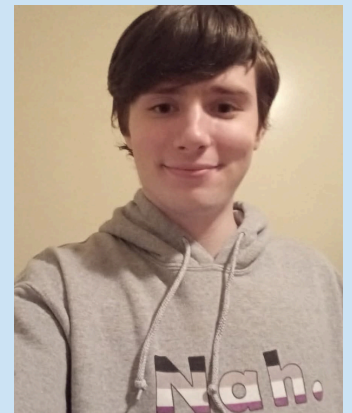
***If you or anyone you know needs immediate support and help,
please call or text the domestic violence hotline at
1-888-774-2900.***

Advocates are available 24/7.

Treatment Tailored to Me

“I was going through a difficult time when my mom suggested I attend my sister's intake appointment at a mental health care facility. That was the beginning of my journey with BHcare.

I enrolled in the Young Adult Services' self-esteem group and later participated in a trauma group. These experiences were incredibly helpful; I found a safe space with people who had similar experiences. Following that, I began individual therapy sessions, which helped me gain the confidence to move back home to care for my mom.



Having been out of work for a couple of years caused me significant anxiety, so I was referred to BHcare's vocational program. At first, I met with my counselor as often as twice a week. He went above and beyond to help me find a full-time position with benefits that not only suited me well but was also with a nonprofit organization that holds great importance for me.

The most significant aspect of my experience with BHcare was that I was treated as an individual rather than just a diagnosis. The staff took the time to get to know me, understood my limitations, and never pushed me beyond my comfort zone. Their genuine client-centered approach makes a real difference, and I am incredibly thankful for everything they have done for me.” ~ Ross

Prevention Professionals Honored

The Alliance for Prevention and Wellness (APW) proudly recognizes two staff members honored by Connecticut's Association of Prevention Professionals.



Anna Gasinski received the Prevention Professional of the Year Award. This award is given to an outstanding Connecticut prevention professional who has made significant contributions to prevention through her/his work and has demonstrated the ability to overcome obstacles.

Anna has a passion for prevention, building collaborations and partnerships and advocating for the growth of prevention. She is well respected by her peers and viewed as a mentor to many, and her accomplishments contribute to changing Connecticut's prevention landscape. Her work has touched lives across local communities and the state.



Brailee Whan received the Rising Star Prevention Professional of the Year Award. The award is intended to recognize an emerging leader in the prevention field, who reflects exceptional growth in contribution to the field and increased levels of leadership and sphere of impact in the past year.

Since joining the Alliance in March 2023, Brailee has shown exceptional commitment to gambling prevention. Her innovative training methods and dedication to promoting responsible gambling education demonstrate her leadership and impact in the field. Her creative ways of sharing the message of prevention exemplifies her dedication of making prevention a priority at both the local and statewide levels.

“The APW team is incredibly proud of Anna and Brailee for their outstanding contributions to the field of prevention. Their dedication, leadership, and innovation strengthen our collaborative efforts to create healthier communities. Their recognition is well deserved,” said Pam Mautte, Director of APW.

Upcoming Prevention Events

March is Problem Gambling Awareness Month. Please join us to learn about problem gambling. Free and open to the public.

- Friday, March 7 from 8:00 to 10:00 am at Moon Rise Café, 2 Broadway, North Haven
- Friday, March 14 from 10:30 am to 1:30 pm at Two Wrasslin Cats, 374 Town Street, East Haddam
- Friday, March 21 from 8:00 to 10:00 am at Madison Coffee House, 724 Boston Post Road, Madison

Visit [APW-CT.org](https://www.apw-ct.org) for more events and trainings.

Managing Big Feelings



“I am a single mom, and my son Brody is a 6-year-old only child. He attends a local elementary school and is part of a small, specialized classroom program. Recently, Brody joined the Parent Child Resource Center’s Little Munchkin Intensive Outpatient group after his clinician and I agreed that he could benefit from a group experience. This program focuses on helping him learn social skills, develop peer relationships and acquire tools to identify and manage his big feelings.

Initially, Brody had little awareness of personal space and struggled to listen to others without interrupting. He often became overwhelmed during structured activities, which sometimes triggered him and led to acting out. With support from the Intensive Outpatient (IOP) team, Brody learned communication skills that helped him build peer relationships. He also gained coping tools that allow him to self-regulate and better manage difficult or frustrating situations. Additionally, he developed social skills that increased his ability to respect boundaries.

Now, Brody can enjoy positive interactions with both peers and staff. During his IOP graduation celebration, he demonstrated awareness of how much he has learned and felt proud of himself for making better choices. He even offered encouragement to new group members. I am very pleased with his progress.” ~ Brody’s mom



Saturday, June 7
10:00 am - 3:00 pm
Quarry Walk, Oxford

Remembrance Walk
FREE Kids’ Bike Parade
Touch-A-Truck
Live Music & More!

achancetoshinect.org



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