

Bright Horizons

BHcare Summer 2025 Newsletter

KELLY

“BHcare created a safe space for me to share my struggles.”



“From a young age, I struggled with alcoholism, starting in late middle school and continuing into high school. My journey took a significant downturn in college when I was expelled for drinking on campus, despite being on the Dean's List. It was in rehab that I first acknowledged I was an alcoholic, although I didn't fully understand its impact at that time.

After rehab, I worked as a gas station attendant, where I met someone who led me into a turbulent chapter of my life. After he violently attacked me in my parents' home, I turned to alcohol to escape. While he was incarcerated, I met another alcoholic who supported me, but he tragically lost his life in a hit-and-run accident. Overwhelmed by grief, I returned to my former partner until my probation officer intervened.”

"I faced homelessness, seeking shelter wherever I could and often panhandling to feed my addiction. Fortunately, I started dating someone who provided me with shelter and support, and encouraged me to pursue stable housing.

Despite receiving help, I continued to struggle with addiction and had multiple run-ins with the law. When my relationship ended, I violated my probation and entered BHcare's Intensive Outpatient Program (IOP). A violent relationship followed, but I eventually realized I needed to break the cycle of abuse. Determined to turn my life around, I completed the IOP and pursued my Certified Nursing Assistant (CNA) certification while working steady shifts.

BHcare created a safe space for me to share my struggles. In July 2020, I made the decision to stop drinking, and I quit smoking the following year. In 2022, I relocated while retaining my housing voucher, which enabled me to achieve lifelong goals, including obtaining my driver's license and re-enrolling in college. I secured a job as a Speech-Language Pathologist Assistant and applied to a master's program at Southern Connecticut State University.

My journey has been filled with challenges, but each step reinforces my commitment to a healthier future. I am grateful to BHcare and my clinician for providing me with shelter and stability. Now, I am dedicated to giving back to vulnerable populations." ~ Kelly

Asking for Help Doesn't Make You Weak

"My two children and I entered The Umbrella Center for Domestic Violence Services' shelter after traveling about 45 minutes from our previous location. Although we were leaving behind family, employment, and schooling for one of my children, we made this move for our safety. I was in a difficult situation with two different abusers, both of whom are the biological fathers of my children, and both lived in the same town we had just left.

During my stay at the shelter, The Umbrella Center advocates provided valuable emotional support as I faced numerous challenges. I arrived at the shelter needing employment, school transportation for my daughter, daycare for my youngest child, court services, mental health care, housing services and a safety plan.

The advocates were often in awe of my resilience and strong determination to progress toward my goals. I have always been quite independent and driven, having taken care of myself for many years. Over time, I began to lower my defenses and became more open to asking for help, realizing that it didn't make me weak. Despite the significant struggles I encountered while in the shelter, the advocates provided support for me and my children.

With the help of the advocates, I successfully obtained two jobs, arranged school transportation for my daughter, engaged in mental health services, got my younger daughter into daycare and ensured my family's safety from the two abusers. I accomplished all of this while enduring a daily 45-minute commute, navigating the complex legalities of court proceedings, dealing with challenging co-parenting relationships and maintaining the mental stability and safety of myself and my children.

With the support of the advocates, I was able to secure a housing voucher in a town closer to my natural support system, my job and my children's school and daycare. I am proud of my achievements and always strive to reach my goals, regardless of the many barriers I face. I am forever grateful for the help I received from The Umbrella Center." ~ Simone



Empowering Our Family

"Our eight-year-old son, Thomas, was experiencing significant emotional and behavioral meltdowns at home. These meltdowns occurred almost every day, sometimes multiple times a day. When things became overwhelming for him, he would act out, making it difficult for him to manage his emotions and get along with our family. He also struggled to listen to me and his father. As parents, we felt overwhelmed and stressed due to Thomas's challenging behavior.



We sought treatment for his issues at BHcare's Shoreline Parent Child Resource Center (PCRC). At PCRC, the staff worked with Thomas to develop a toolkit of coping skills. They also collaborated with my husband and me to create our own toolkit so that we could effectively support our son.

We are extremely grateful to have found a local professional clinic at BHcare's new North Branford facility. From the moment we entered, we felt welcomed and comfortable.

The positive changes in Thomas have exceeded our expectations. Our family is calmer now, we enjoy spending time together and we have tools that have made a significant difference. Thank you for everything you have done for my son and our family!" ~ Thomas's mom

New Resources for Suicide Prevention

Several staff members of the Alliance for Prevention and Wellness (APW) participated in a train-the-trainer session for Counseling on Access to Lethal Means (CALM). A crucial part of suicide prevention strategies, CALM aims at reducing the risk of death by suicide through a collaborative intervention approach. It highlights the importance of increasing the time and distance between an at-risk individual and their access to lethal means, particularly firearms and medications, using both national and local data.



The training equips individuals with the knowledge and tools to initiate conversations about lethal means access, ensuring that safety is addressed, prioritized and maintained. CALM can be applied proactively, starting conversations before a crisis arises, as well as during a crisis, all while respecting the individual's autonomy and dignity.

There are two training approaches for CALM: one for clinicians and another for general community members. Both approaches aim to establish a new norm of not only assessing distress and intent but also taking the additional step of reducing access to lethal means until the individual's crisis or mental state has improved. Ultimately, CALM teaches participants how to recognize when to take action and what steps to follow to create a safe, supportive environment. The CALM modules for clinicians can be completed in 3 to 4 hours, while the CALM Conversations module for general community members takes about 90 minutes to complete.

APW is excited to begin offering CALM training throughout Connecticut's South-Central region. For more information or to schedule a training, please contact Taylor Gainey at tgainey@bhcare.org.

FAMILY FUN DAY

Join us for an afternoon of games, crafts, activities and fun with local community organizations!
Come connect, create and enjoy quality time with your neighbors.

ACTIVITIES

- ✓ Arts & Crafts
- ✓ Games
- ✓ Mini Golf
- ✓ Resource Fair

SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 13

RAINDATE SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 14

BHcare

28 Branford Road, North Branford

11:00 AM - 2:00 PM

Free admission
All ages welcome
Giveaways & goodies

Hosted by BHcare, supporting the health and wellness of our community.

www.bhcare.org

CONTACT US

development@bhcare.org or (203) 892-6486



BHcare
Hope • Health • Recovery

BHcare
A Certified Community
Behavioral Health Clinic

BHcare.org

Facebook.com/CTBHcare

Instagram.com/CTBHcare

Donate Today!



BHcare's funding sources can be found at BHcare.org/giving/support-funding/.