

Nurturing Hope: Empowering Pregnant Women, Parents, and Homeless Youth with Love and Compassion

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DREXEL UNIVERSITY
College of
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COMMUNITY PARTNER

Mary's Shelter is committed to providing support to individuals and families in the community. They work to prevent homelessness through housing, education, and social service programs. To provide comprehensive and inclusive services, Mary's Shelter has adopted a holistic approach to assessment, intervention, planning, and evaluation. The goal is a healthy well-informed client, who is capable and confident in their ability to live independently in the community.

<https://www.marysshelter.org/>



BACKGROUND/CONTEXT

In response to the growing concern and staggering numbers of Homeless and Runaway Youth in Berks County – Mary's Shelter joined forces with the multiple agencies to find and initiate solutions.

Y.E.S.S Program

- Youths from 14-21 of any gender
- Emergency shelter for up to 21 days
- One-on-one counseling
- Assistance with applications for benefits, housing, services, or another program

STRONG Program

- 18-month housing program
- Youths from ages 16-21 of any gender
- Classes to build social, vocational, or life skills offered weekly
- Case management services

Maternity Services

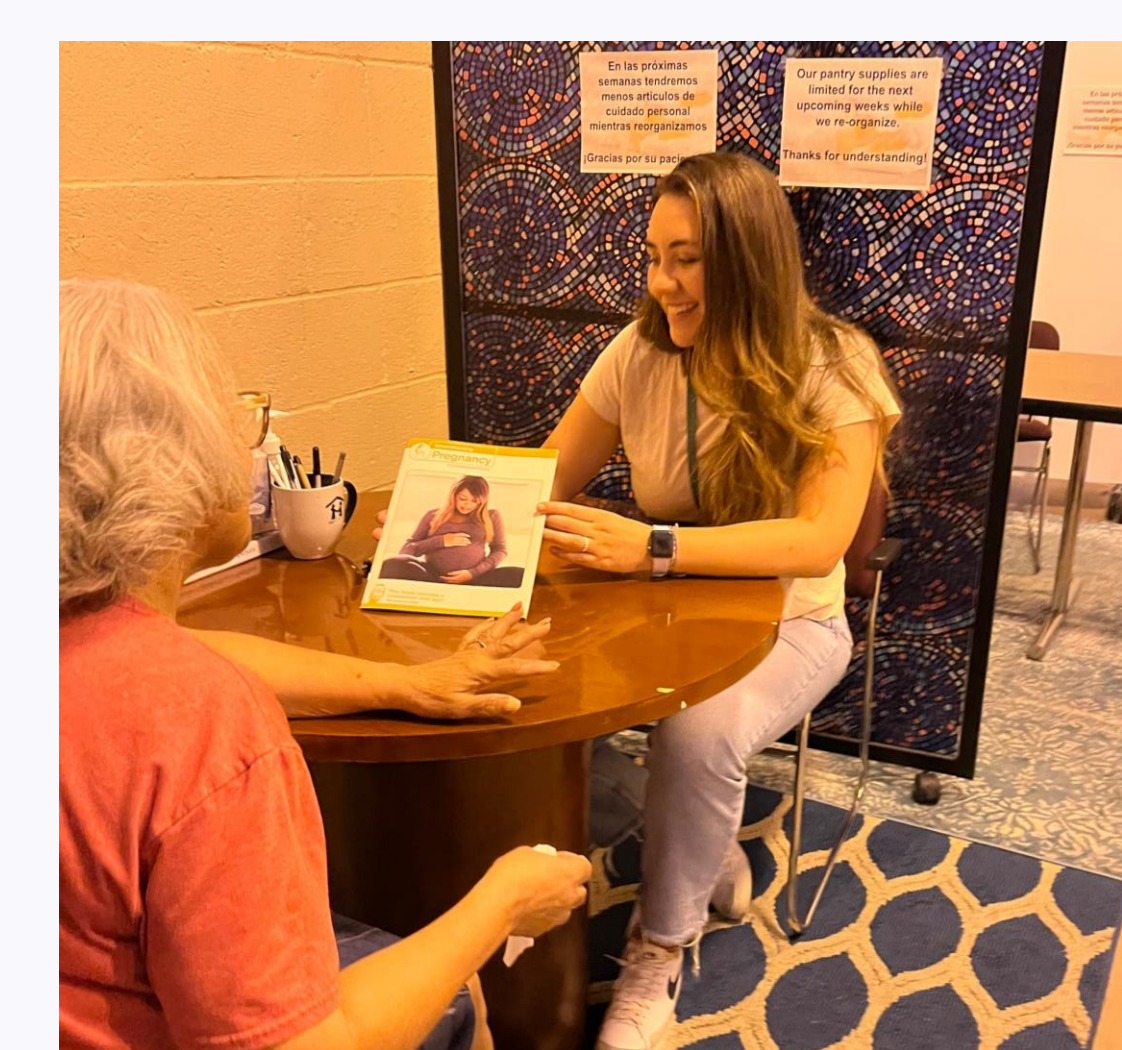
- Temporary housing for pregnant women and their baby
- Pantry and diaper bank services
- Individual and group counseling
- Assistance with prenatal care



TEAM'S EXPERIENCE

- Provided individualized counseling, intake assessments, and medical assessments to pantry/diaper clients
- Actively collaborated with pregnant or parenting mothers and their children, creating service plans tailored to their specific needs
- Drafted essential medical and basic needs assessment questionnaires for use by managers and clinic specialists
- Conducted a class on the dangers of vaping and e-cigarette use and provided medical expertise to teen residents
- Led a storytelling project involving youth residents that resulted in the creation of a meaningful art piece now displayed in the main hallway

ACCOMPLISHMENTS



REFLECTION

“Working at Mary's Shelter this summer had a profound impact on my personal and professional growth. Engaging in numerous conversations with case workers, community clients, and homeless youth allowed me to gain a deep understanding of the diverse needs and challenges faced by the community in Reading. Moreover, forging strong connections with the Shelter teenagers highlighted the critical importance of providing unconditional love and unwavering support. This experience enriched my perspective on empathy, communication, and the power of fostering meaningful connections with others.” – **Ana Maria Barrero**