



# CULTURAL COMPETENCY UPDATE

...a newsletter to address cultural issues that enable us to effectively work in cross cultural situations.

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## Josie’s Place “Where I Belong”

By Elena Carrillo, BHSII and ART Group Facilitator  
Submitted by Carla Skiles, Program Coordinator

I had the pleasure of spending some time with our Transitional Age Young Ladies one afternoon. The young ladies had completed the ART (Aggression Replacement Training/Teaching Pro Social skills). They were proud of their accomplishments and able to process with their group leader the changes they had made in attitude and demeanor that were resulting in some real changes in their overall personal lives.

One young lady was able to see the differences in her personal relationship with her significant other and family. She was happy with changes she had made and could tell that is was a new challenge for her significant other but a welcomed one. She is actively involved in women’s group and other center activities. She had just attended the annual Santa Cruz outing and had a great time. She described being able to utilize the drop in center to help “center” herself and have a place where she can have some time to work on herself and what she needs. She appreciated the support provided by the staff but, more importantly, was finding new support in a new peer network at Josie’s Drop in Center. She reported feeling safe and enjoying having a place to be that was her own and gave her the opportunity to meet other young people who didn’t judge, bully or make her feel like an outsider.

Another young lady described similar experiences and was happy with the support of the individuals and groups at the center itself. She has made tremendous growth in her world and continues to work on herself daily. She was able to see past behaviors and how she is reacting differently than before, which is impacting her life in a positive manner. She also described finding a place to “belong” where she could come without judgment, feel safe to be herself, and work on the things in her life that will help her to move onto and achieve goals she has set for herself.



**Inside this issue:**  
Josie’s Place 1/2  
“Where I Belong”

**BHRS Cultural Competence Oversight Committee meets on the 2nd Monday of each month from 9:00 a.m. to 10:30 a.m. in the Redwood Room, 800 Scenic Drive**



The center offers a variety of groups and activities to help support Transitional Aged Youth to achieve their goals and find happiness on their own terms. Activities and groups vary from day to day to accommodate the individual needs and goals of clients as no two members are alike. It is hoped that using art, sports, movies, music or even tea time will help young members to begin to define themselves by what they love and who they are—people first-- with gifts, talents and unique goals. Members have a desire to be healthy, happy and have successful, supportive relationships. Diagnosis is a part of the big picture of who the youth are, but not the sum of who they are as individuals. Young people are encouraged to step outside their comfort zone and try new activities. You never know who is a budding artist or singer until they have the opportunity to try these activities in a safe, non-judgmental environment. You'd be surprised what you find out in a Karaoke afternoon!

Josie's Place is always trying to reach the need of the young members, while morphing to meet the needs of the individual. As an example, the LGBTQ group came out of a need of multiple consumers with similar needs for a community of their own that they were struggling to find elsewhere. As a result, the LGBTQ group has come to not only support each other but also connect with the community in a safe and productive manner. Young women's support group originated to help some young ladies, who struggle to make friends due to social and peer anxieties, and find a way to connect. It continues to grow in numbers and strength monthly.



Currently, the volunteers and Drop in Center staff are working to help others in our outlying communities find similar places for their Transitional Aged Youth. Josie's place is collaborating with Center for Human Services to bring Drop in Center-like services to Oakdale. We are hoping to have our Open House by October 2014. The Drop in Center staff has done much outreach in the community and our peers and volunteers are excited to bring the opportunity to another group of young people in need of support.

Additionally, we collaborate with the CERT /MAT team and our own clinical team to meet the needs of the individuals that do not want or qualify for full services at the mental health level. The peer support counselors work individually with consumers in need to work on connecting with community resources including work, housing, eligibility-including Covered CA, SSI, ID and birth certificates—as well as health resources, parenting and individual support networks for members of all cultures and life experiences.

We are blessed at Josie's place to have a creative, diverse and energetic staff that think outside the box and are passionate about their work and working with Transitional Aged Young Adults. They work to provide a safe, open setting that allows Transitional Aged Young Adults to grow and flourish on their own terms, in their own time. Come by and see us at Tea Time or join Movie group! Check out the calendar! We look forward to seeing you around!

If you have questions or suggestions regarding Cultural Competency, please forward them by e-mail to:

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