



Perspectives

PARENTING TIME WORKS FOR HOUSING GRADUATE

By Amy M., Parenting Time Mom and former Supportive Housing Resident

(Amy M. is a graduate from Perspectives' Supportive Housing Program. She shares custody with her ex-husband, and she is a client of Perspectives' Parenting Time supervised visitation program. Working in management at an area restaurant, Amy has multiple goals, including having all her kids under one roof and returning to college. Here are Amy's thoughts on our programs.)

MISSION

Breaking the cycle for at-risk families and children for total family recovery.

PROGRAMS

Supportive Housing –
A national model

- Transitional Housing (22 units)
- Permanent Housing (30 units)
- One-to-one Case Management
- Parent Education and Support
- Recovery Support Groups
- Parenting and Empowerment Classes

Kids Connection Children's
Enrichment

- *Kids Cafe*® cooking, nutrition, and social skills
- *Reach for the Stars* after-school academics
- *Summer Explorers* full-day summer school and recreation

Parenting Time

- Supervised Visitation and Exchange
- Parent Coaching and Mediation

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***Thirty years of
breaking the cycle
... creating hope***

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My name is Amy M. I came to Perspectives on July 16, 2003, a day on which my life changed forever. I first entered into the Supportive Housing Program. It was the first time I had had a safe place to live in more than a year and a half. I moved into my apartment at Perspectives alone, leaving my then three children, Dylan, Ellie and Bailey, behind with their fathers. It was simply my only option at the time.

At Perspectives, you have to either find work or attend school. I found work as a crewmember for a fast food restaurant in St. Louis Park – my first job in five years. I also attended support groups and classes through Perspectives. As a result of these programs, I became a stronger woman and a better mother. During my months in supportive housing, I tried to be with my children as often as possible. It was difficult as my son Dylan lived in Mankato with his father, and I didn't have a car or a lot of money. In addition, the court had ordered supervised visits for me with my daughters, Ellie and Bailey.

I soon learned of Perspectives' Parenting Time parental visitation program. In May of 2004, I was able to start regular visits with my daughters. We are now part of the Monitored Parenting Program, which is less restrictive than Supervised Parenting. During our visits, a volunteer checks in on us to see how we are doing. This allows me the time and freedom I need, but also offers the safety and security their father needs. Our visits started at only one hour but have grown to four. It was only for a few hours, but they were the most important hours of my week!

In July of 2004, I graduated from the Supportive Housing Program and moved into my own home with my son Dylan. Doing well at work, I am now a Closing Manager for my restaurant. In addition, my kids and I welcomed a new baby sister into our lives; Solei turned one year old this month and is already walking and talking.

These last years have not been easy; I've had many ups and downs. But together as a family, we have overcome many obstacles and have achieved many

goals. I have grown in strength, courage, grace, laughter, and spirit from having my children back in my life. Perspectives helped to make this possible. Their Supportive Housing Program gave me safe affordable housing and a growing support system. The Parenting Time Program has given me a safe place to be with my children and the support to mature as a parent.



Amy and daughter Solei

“It was only for a few hours, but they were the most important hours of my week.”

Perspectives offered me the opportunity to become the woman and mother I needed to be for my family. Most of all, Perspectives gave me time – the time needed to correct some of my mistakes – and the skills needed to create lifetimes full of memories and promising futures. For that, I am eternally grateful.

FROM MISMANAGING A LIFE TO MANAGING A BUSINESS

Barbara F. was born and raised in south Minneapolis – the third in a family with 10 kids. She felt neglected by her parents and siblings and came to find a new “family” amongst alcohol- and drug-using friends. Barb starting using at age 12. Though she managed to graduate from high school, her life teetered out of control for the next 20 years. Never married, Barb suffered through a series of difficult, often violent partners, bearing and raising her three children mostly on her own. They are now 14, 17, and 20 years old; Barb is 45.

(cont'd inside)

From Mismanaging a Life . . . (cont'd from first page)



Barb at her store

The absolute low point in Barb's life came in 1995. In the midst of a four-year addiction to crack cocaine and mired in another abusive relationship, she simply saw no alternative but suicide. As she could not imagine abandoning her children, then 3, 6, and 9, she thought blindly that for their own sake the kids would have to go with her. That particular crisis passed, but Barbara would remain chained to her addictions for another seven years.

Flashing past those remaining dark years, Barb now maintains a tally of her days of sobriety – days that began on May 19, 2002. On her release from a halfway house in St. Croix County, WI late that summer, Barb had no options. "I would be on the street but for Perspectives. I had nowhere to go, nowhere at all. When I

called here, it was down to the wire; I didn't know what else I could do." Barb had lost her possessions before entering the last treatment home and had no savings. Her kids were dispersed into foster homes at the time.

So long unlucky, Barbara's luck turned when she overheard a phone conversation about the place she now calls home. Barbara's application to Perspectives led to a rigorous interview process, and ultimately, to an exciting call offering her family a new home. Barbara moved into her apartment at Perspectives in October and was soon reunited with her children. The next step seemed a bit miraculous to Barb. "When I stepped into our apartment, all I could do was cry. The unit was completely furnished; everything you need for your family. And the case managers work with you from the bottom rung up. They learn what you need and they work with you to get it."

Barb took full advantage of the boost. She enrolled in a rigorous job-preparedness program at Twin Cities Rise! and worked hard to improve her skills. She soon secured a position at a west metro retailer, and on a strong referral from that employer, Barb later accepted an entry-level management position with an area convenience store chain. Working incredible hours and at multiple locations, Barbara's drive and talent were recognized and she now manages her own facility and its staff of five. It hasn't been easy – Barb has worked 80 to 120 hour weeks, while managing a home and trying to be a good mother to her children – now all teenagers with challenges of their own.

"When I stepped into our apartment at Perspectives, all I could do was cry."

While Barb plans to maintain her success with the firm, her longer-term goals include enrolling in a medical technology program at an area college and purchasing her own townhome one day. Barb also hopes to expand her role as a volunteer at Perspectives. "The place has given me so much; I really want to give some back." On May 25th, Barbara was honored at an annual Twin Cities Rise! celebration for being one of just 10 program graduates who retained their placements over the prior one-year term. Marsha' Howze-El, Barb's Family Case Manager at Perspectives, has watched her strengthen and grow, noting that, "Barbara is a very strong individual and has a powerful volunteer mentality. She is a real benefit to the other women in our community."

Barbara strongly believes in the intergenerational nature of addiction and abuse – she knows she has been a victim, but she is also confident that she has learned how to avoid passing a destructive cycle to her children. She concluded, "My kids will be better because of what I have learned. I can guide them now, unlike with my own family, who had no idea how to help me. I have cut the rope, ended the cycle, and made a new generation for my kids."

THIRD QUARTER PRIVATE SUPPORTERS

In 2005, 53% of the support for Perspectives programs came from private sources. Here is a roster of the institutional donors to Perspectives during the period June to September 22, 2006 (with support exceeding \$100). On behalf of our homeless and at risk families, we thank you.

Bush Foundation
Cargill Foundation
Charlson Foundation
Dorsey & Whitney Foundation
Edina Rotary Foundation
General Mills Foundation
Guaranty Bank
Horizon Milling LLC
Marathon Group
Minnesota Community Foundation
Onan Family Foundation
Park Nicollet Foundation
Jay and Rose Phillips Family Foundation
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BUY FROM WATKIN'S – AND HELP PERSPECTIVES' FAMILIES

Since its founding in 1868 by J.R. Watkins in Winona, Watkins has provided consumers with quality food products, personal care and earth friendly home care products, health aids, and dietary supplements. Watkins has established a partnership that can raise funds to support Perspectives' programs. By switching to Watkins and shopping in the comfort of your home, you can save money on your monthly groceries and help Perspectives' mothers and their children at the same time. Every time you shop with Watkins, they will automatically send Perspectives a check for 19-33% of your purchases. And as an *added* benefit, 25% of your total purchase (minus tax and shipping costs) are considered a contribution to a nonprofit organization and can be used as a deduction on your yearly

taxes (simply save the receipts that you receive with your order). Follow these simple steps to begin supporting Perspectives and enjoying Watkins products:

1. Go to Perspectives/Watkins Web site at www.watkinsonline.com/perspectivesinc
2. Click on "Join Us" and then "Customer"
3. Complete the simple, one-time Customer Sign-up
4. Become a regular Watkins product customer and boost Perspectives!

For more information, visit the Perspectives website or call Debbie Hagstrom, our Watkins representative, at 952-474-7836.

Perspectives Lauded at Ann Bancroft Gala

For ten years, the Ann Bancroft awards have recognized extraordinary leadership and achievement by women and girls. We are thrilled to report that the Ann Bancroft Foundation has selected Perspectives, Inc. as its winner of the 2006 Ann Bancroft Award for Organizations. The Awards ceremony was held on Tuesday, September 26th at Orchestra Hall in downtown Minneapolis.

Perspectives, Inc. was selected by the Ann Bancroft Foundation for its strong history of supporting girls and women. The Foundation's newsletter notes, "Perspectives' dramatic success rate in returning its residents to the social and economic mainstream is over 70 percent."

The organization, along with two exemplary women community leaders and one exemplary teenage age girl were lauded at the celebration that attracted over 2,000 guests. For pictures from the 2006 Ann Bancroft award ceremony, visit www.annbancroftfoundation.org.

Perspectives' Family Celebrates 30 Years at Founder's Luncheon

On August 23, Perspectives' Kids Cafe was filled with three decades worth of stories of hard work and success. The 30th Anniversary Founders' Luncheon guest roster included Perspectives' co-founders Barbara Montgomery and Carol Daniels, Congressman Jim Ramstad, and many of the organization's original Board of Directors and past Board Presidents.

The event featured stirring testimonials from two of Perspectives' earliest Supportive Housing residents, Linda C. and Joy F., whose lives were transformed and families were reunited at Perspectives in the early 1990s.

To see photos and more information on the Founder's Luncheon, visit www.perspectives-family.org/news.htm

St. Louis Park Foundations Receive Awards for Support of Summer Explorers

Perspectives, Inc. awarded the St. Louis Park Community Foundation and the St. Louis Park Public School Foundation with *Summer Stars Awards* for their support of summer programming for homeless and at-risk youth. The two foundations joined to offer \$10,000 in support of the Summer Explorers program at Perspectives.

The awards were presented to St. Louis Park Community Foundation Board member Curt Peterson, and to the St. Louis Park Public School Foundation Board member Lorraine Boyle at the July Leadership Luncheon at Perspectives.



Lorraine Boyle and Curt Peterson (with awards) join Kids Connection summer students

Kids Cafe Visit to McCormick & Schmick's



McCormick & Schmick's restaurant in downtown Minneapolis again hosted a Pack to School backpack and school supplies drive benefiting the children of Perspectives. To kick off the drive, a contingent of 10 students from Perspectives hosted an old-fashioned lemonade stand in front of the restaurant's Nicollet Mall entrance, raising nearly \$500 in an energetic afternoon of sales. Chef George Snyder of McCormick & Schmick is also a regular guest chef in Perspectives' Kids Cafe.

Summer Basketball League Success

Working in partnership with the St. Louis Park Police Department and PPL, our neighbors in Louisiana Court, Perspectives supported a strong, first-year summer basketball league in the city park just west of our apartments. Each Thursday night throughout the summer, 40-45 youth worked the court with 5-6 police personnel, learning new skills and building camaraderie in the process.



Amid the Studies, Summer Smiling and Splashing

The Summer Explorers full-day summer school and recreation program concluded in August with a strong season. With 62 students enrolled this year, the program offered morning academic and skills training, and after a lunch in Kids Cafe, concluded with an afternoon of summer fun and games. Summer Explorer classroom highlights included the creation of a colorful reading caterpillar project in the rotunda, recognizing reading enthusiasm. The project included the awarding of new books from the Junior League of Minneapolis to high-achieving students. In addition, most of the Summer Explorer students attended weeklong YMCA overnight summer camps, many of them as first time campers. Finally, the summer included a strong field trip collaboration effort with Project for Pride in Living (PPL). The afternoon trips included the Science Museum, Lake of the Isles, and St. John's University.

The annual *Perspectives of Hope* gala will be held on Friday, October 13th at the Metropolitan Ballroom in Golden Valley. Help us to celebrate Perspectives' 30th Anniversary with an evening of great fun for a great cause. Highlights include D'Amico-caliber dining, the Paul Cherba Jazz Quartet, a live auction featuring the sparkling Karen Sorbo, and a silent auction with attractions for every taste and any credit limit. New in 2006, a highlight of the evening will be a raffle drawing for a new 2006 Mazda Miata roadster, courtesy of Morrie's Mazda.

This year, we will mark thirty years of breaking cycles and creating hope for Minnesota families. The evening will include a retrospective display detailing the impacts of our efforts and will include remarks by key founders and alumni of Perspectives, including the family of the late Jane Onan.

Perspectives of Hope will begin at 6:00 P.M. and conclude at about 10:30 P.M. The Metropolitan Ballroom is located at I-394, immediately east of the Xenia/Park Place exit. For information about the event, visit www.perspectives-family.org. The site includes regular updates on the silent and live auctions. To buy tickets or to offer auction or sponsorship support, call Jeff Martinka at 952-926-2600, Ext. 29.

A Perspective of Hope



Winner of the 2006 Ann Bancroft Foundation Agency Award

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WIN A 2006 MIATA FROM MORRIE'S MAZDA!

Through the generosity of **Morrie's Mazda**, Perspectives is pleased to host a raffle drawing for a new 2006 Mazda MX-5 Miata. Tickets are available from Morrie's and from the Perspectives staff and board members at \$10 each. Only 3,000 raffle tickets will be sold. The raffle drawing will be held at the Perspectives of Hope gala on Friday, October 13th at the Metropolitan Ballroom in Golden Valley.

The raffle tickets are available by cash or check at Perspectives, from Perspectives staff, Board, and volunteers, and from Morrie's Mazda at 13700 Wayzata Blvd. in Minnetonka. Tickets may be purchased with credit cards at www.perspectives-family.org.

(You don't have to be present at the Perspectives of Hope drawing, but it would be nice if you could join us. You must be at least 18 years of age to enter the raffle and employees of Morrie's and Perspectives are ineligible. The winner of the Miata roadster is responsible for applicable state and federal taxes.)



2006-2007 CALENDAR

- ✓ Friday, October 13th (6 – 11 pm)
Perspectives of Hope Gala
Metropolitan Ballroom, Golden Valley
(see story at top left for details)
- ✓ Wednesday, November 15th (noon – 1 pm)
Leadership Luncheon at Kids Cafe
- ✓ Wednesday, December 13th (5:30 pm)
General Mills' Holiday Store
at Kids Connection
- ✓ Wednesday, January 10, 2007 (noon – 1 pm)
Leadership Luncheon at Kids Cafe
- ✓ Thursday, January 11, 2007 (6:30 pm)
Supportive Housing Recognition Dinner