

CHARITY WORKS



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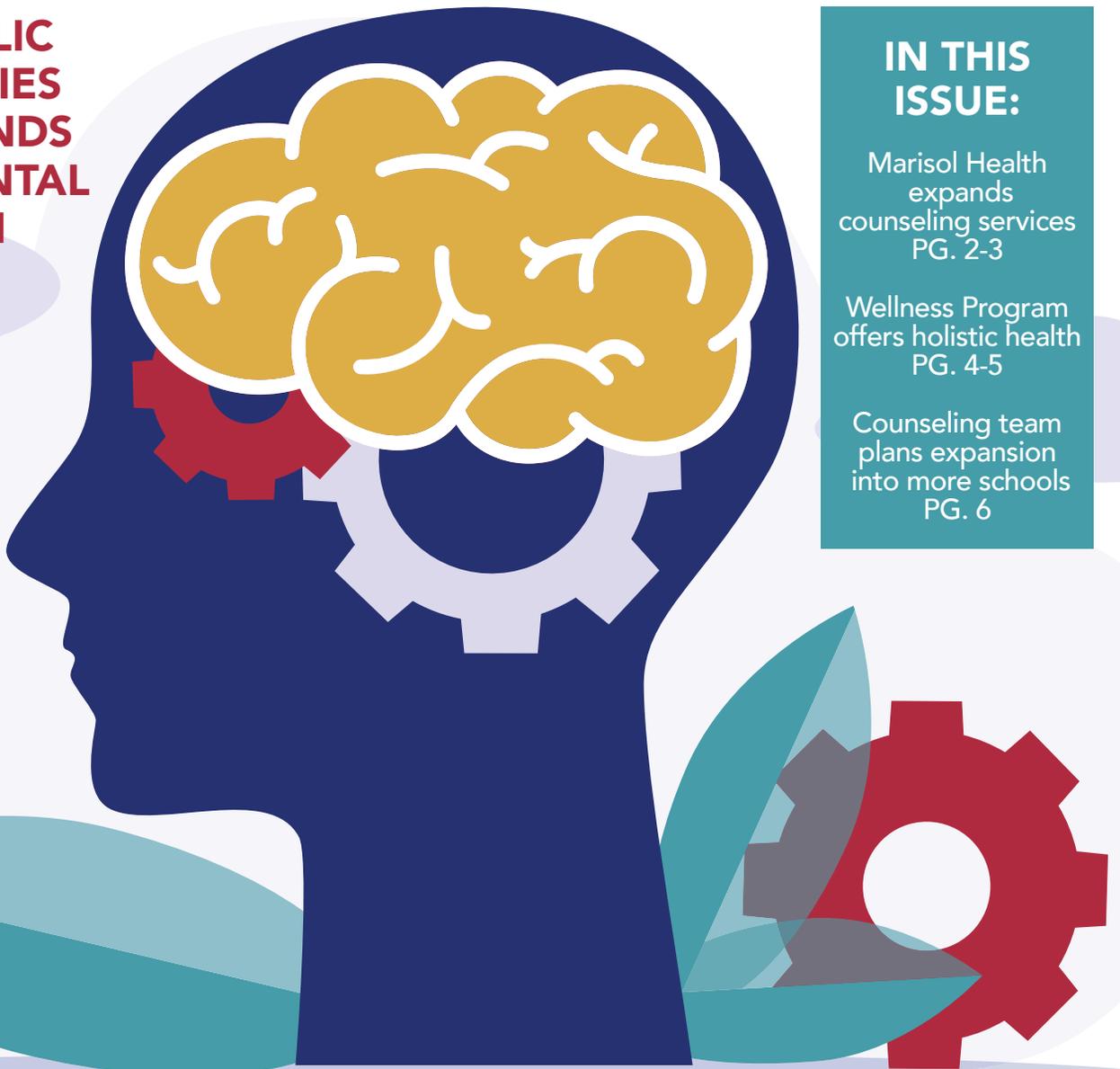
**CATHOLIC
CHARITIES
RESPONDS
TO MENTAL
HEALTH
NEEDS**

IN THIS ISSUE:

Marisol Health
expands
counseling services
PG. 2-3

Wellness Program
offers holistic health
PG. 4-5

Counseling team
plans expansion
into more schools
PG. 6



MARISOL HEALTH EXPANDS COUNSELING SERVICES TO HELP EXPECTANT MOMS

One of the most profound ways we show compassion to each other is to accompany one another through struggles. It's on this firm belief that Marisol Health offers clinical services to women walking through our doors who need healthcare, counseling and support.

"We live in a world that is wrought with a lot of suffering," said Senite Sahlezghi, clinical director of Marisol Health's mental health services and a licensed professional counselor. "There is a lot of good in revealing our suffering to one another. That's compassion—to suffer with one another."

Sahlezghi and the growing team of licensed clinical and social workers offer needed support for Marisol Health patients and their families at locations in Denver and Lafayette. The women served by Marisol Health need a support system and resources, especially when facing unexpected pregnancies and additional challenges with work, relationships, education and economic stability. Marisol Health offers all facets of support for the whole person—and there are plans for continued expansion.

The Marisol Health team is looking forward to growing and serving more women facing unexpected pregnancies as well as those in crisis situations.

"It's unfortunate that mental health support and resources are more and more in need," Sahlezghi continued. "It's a two-edged sword. It's a sad reality to face in society right now, but on the other hand, what a gift to provide dignified, life-affirming services and mental health resources."

One former client and mother, Kisha, felt hopeful when she walked into Marisol Health.

"I felt accepted and that I could just be honest," Kisha shared. "We took a Plan B pill and it didn't work. And now we're here for the best care possible and that's what we got."

In addition to healthcare, baby supplies and gift cards, Kisha received emotional support before and after she had her first baby, Earlene.

"Marisol gave me every single tool I needed and all the strength that I didn't know I had," Kisha said. "My depression would have got the best of me without them truly caring and calling and following up on me and making sure I had the right medicine, making sure I had a support group I could be vulnerable and talk about it." ♥



Kisha (at left), a former client at Marisol Health, received emotional support and healthcare from Senite Sahlezghi and the staff at the clinic. Sahlezghi is leading the counseling program for the Denver and Lafayette clinics.

"When we suffer, we desire to make sense of this," Sahlezghi said. "The clients may wonder, 'What is the meaning of suffering and why did this happen to me?' So to be with women facing crisis and in the midst of vulnerable moments in their lives—it's profoundly human."



Senite Sahlezghi



MARISOL HEALTH HELPS THE WHOLE FAMILY

Catholic Charities' Marisol Health offers an innovative model that provides individuals with a seamless range of services.

We help women and families with unexpected pregnancies including holistic reproductive medical care, counseling, housing, early childhood education, diapers, food and additional support services.

Go to marisolhealth.com to learn more.

WELLNESS CONSULTANTS OFFER HEALTH AND HOPE TO RESIDENTS OF SAMARITAN HOUSE

Some 92 percent of residents at Samaritan House report being a survivor of physical, emotional or psychological abuse, and 83 percent share they've received previous mental health treatment and a diagnosis.

"We have a lot of our clients coming in who've experienced really severe trauma," said Rachel Volmert, a licensed clinical social worker. "We're asking about their physical activity, spirituality and family life. It's a unique approach, and we have the flexibility to do that."

Volmert is clinical director of the Wellness Consultant team at Samaritan House, launched a year ago to help residents.

"Without them, I don't know where I'd be," said Elizabeth, 74. "It's kept me from the streets, kept me from homelessness and it helped me build my self-esteem."

Elizabeth is one of many residents at Samaritan House locations who access holistic counseling services to heal from past trauma and prepare for a life of self-sufficiency. The expanding team of in-house counselors follow a tiered approach to wellness and help lead women, families and veterans to a brighter future.

"We're serving this population in the way we know best," says Volmert. "We meet them right where they're at."

Elizabeth has received counseling weekly for five months at Samaritan House and wants to continue after she's found an apartment.

"There's a whole lot of knowledge here," she said. "Everyone here has opened doors for me."

The team's nine clinicians partner with social case workers to address the social determinants in each person at Samaritan House Denver shelter locations and after they've moved into stable housing.

They assess each of the social determinants of health, which include education, economic stability, neighborhood and environment, healthcare and social and community context.

The social determinants are a key to healthcare and mental health care discussions so that Samaritan House's wellness consultants can "expand to address the whole person," Volmert said.

The mental health clinicians, who are licensed or licensed-eligible, start with an assessment of social determinants and use a tiered model for care that starts with crisis and suicide prevention and safety planning. That's followed by brief solutions and focused therapy with or without a diagnosis. After those levels, a traditional style of therapy with a diagnosis or treatment is offered. ♥



The Wellness Consultant team, overseen by Denver Regional Director Orlando Padilla Jr. (center, first row) and Rachel Volmert, clinical director (top left), provide counseling services at three Catholic Charities' Samaritan House locations.



Elizabeth talks with her wellness consultant Dakota Gundy at Samaritan House Downtown.

By-the-numbers - Wellness Program at Samaritan House during its first year

92% of residents report being a survivor of physical, emotional or psychological abuse

83% received previous mental health treatment and a diagnosis

52% who received a wellness consultation opted for additional meetings

*Samaritan House Wellness Impact Report



SAMARITAN HOUSE

The first building in the nation built specifically to serve people experiencing homelessness, Samaritan House has been a downtown Denver staple since 1986. Today, our focus is primarily on serving women, families and veterans who are experiencing homelessness and food insecurity.

Over the years, we've extended our shelter and support reach into Larimer County with Samaritan House Fort Collins, Weld County with Guadalupe Community Center and the Western Slope.

During the pandemic, we opened an additional location: Samaritan House Smith Road. Our newest location, Samaritan House 48th, doubles our capacity to serve women, making us — by far — the leading provider in Colorado of shelter, food and support for women experiencing homelessness.

COUNSELING TEAM HAS AMBITIOUS PLANS TO EXPAND INTO MORE CATHOLIC SCHOOLS



St. Raphael Counseling's robust and growing team has ambitious plans to offer counseling for every child in local Catholic schools.

The team of compassionate and licensed counselors will double their days of counseling services in Catholic Schools this current school year and has plans to expand into more schools in Northern Colorado to meet the needs of grade-school and high school students.



Dr. Jim Langley,
executive director of
St. Raphael Counseling

School counselors from the Catholic Charities counseling program were available 25 days per week in 14 different Catholic schools in the Archdiocese of Denver, said Dr. Jim Langley, executive director of St. Raphael Counseling and a licensed clinical psychologist. This school year, that number of days will be doubled. Within three years the team wants a full-time counselor in every Catholic school.

"God is amazing because he is already providing," he said. "The even more impressive foundation is that the Catholic schools are now going to have tools available to help even the one child who doesn't fit in — or who is a little more difficult to educate — or just to help provide a more inclusive learning environment."

The start of this major expansion of counseling began with a partnership with the Archdiocese of Denver and its Office of Catholic Schools. Gina Lanz, the director of school counseling and psychology services, is leading the team of school counselors.

"As far as I know, this doesn't exist anywhere else," he said. "And really a lot of it has to do with the vision and generosity

of the archdiocese. They've been incredibly open and exciting to work with through all of this."

The St. Raphael Counseling team has long seen the need to serve children and youth and started with a team of school counselors. However, the need continues to grow.

Last year, Children's Hospital Colorado declared a "state of emergency" in youth mental health, the first time in its 117-year history. Emergency rooms saw children coming in experiencing mental health crises. Low-level anxiety and depression were exacerbated by isolation and stress from the COVID-19 pandemic, sometimes resulting in suicide attempts, according to the hospital.

Langley and his team saw the need to rise to the crisis. They are also forming a crisis response team to respond to emergencies to assist a school community and be present to help them.

The St. Raphael's team is uniquely equipped to aid with diagnosis and assessments of students at Catholic schools. For example, one St. Raphael school psychologist helped a young girl who wasn't getting along with her peers and also struggled academically. She was being raised by her grandmother who had a difficult time providing the resources and time to help her granddaughter, Dr. Langley said. The counselor performed psychological testing and discovered the girl is highly intelligent and gifted, showing an IQ in the 99th percentile. She was not excelling because she was bored in class and reportedly experienced a lot of past trauma. Thanks to St. Raphael's counselor, the young student is now excelling in school and is happy.

Catholic schools are leaders in excellent education, and, more importantly, leaders in forming the whole child, he said, which includes social-emotional development. St. Raphael's plans to ensure every child has the best growth and support possible as a part of their attendance at Catholic schools. ♥

DIAL OR TEXT 988 FOR HELP WITH A MENTAL HEALTH CRISIS

A three-digit number — 988 — was established in July for suicide prevention and mental health emergencies nationwide. “In 2021, the Lifeline received 3.6 million calls, chats and texts. That number is expected to at least double within the first full year after the 988 transition,” according to the Federal Communications Commission. Go to 988lifeline.org to learn more.

98888



COUNSELING SERVICES

Counseling, a ministry of Catholic Charities of Denver, is a comprehensive, community-based psychological service ministry. We offer counseling and mental health services to help restore and strengthen family and parish communities. We are focused on providing assistance to those in need, offering services for individuals, children, teens, couples and families.

Go to straphaelcounseling.com to learn more.





Catholic Charities reaches far and wide across Northern Colorado and does more than most people expect. Here's a quick look at some of the ways we're supporting neighbors and transforming lives.

WHAT'S NEW AROUND CATHOLIC CHARITIES

Archdiocesan Housing Inc. held two groundbreakings on August 11 of affordable complexes in Loveland and Greeley. Staff and partners celebrated the start of construction of St. Valentine Apartments in Loveland, a 54-unit affordable housing project that will serve people at risk of, or experiencing, homelessness. In Greeley, Immaculata Plaza Apartments will be a 30-unit affordable housing complex for extremely low-income seniors aged 62 and over. Both permanent supportive housing projects are expected to be completed by the summer of 2023.



The ninth annual Catholic Charities' School Supply Drive was a success with more than 650 backpacks collected from generous local parishes and distributed to local families in need. Each new backpack was filled with supplies depending on the grade of the student. We are grateful to the amazing parishes and individuals who donated to this critical drive!



Samaritan House 48th in Denver celebrated our one-year anniversary of serving single women experiencing homelessness. Staff and volunteers have continued to grow and expand the shelter, helping all guests access nutritious food, support and resources.

Marisol Health celebrated the birth of 14 beautiful babies – all born in July! Moms and babies are all doing well. The staff is grateful to continue to provide healthcare and extended support to all the moms!

Talented musicians performed August 21 at Songs of Hope, a benefit for Marisol Services held outdoors at St. Mary's Park in Littleton, on the parish grounds. Concertgoers enjoyed a picnic, lounged in lawn chairs and enjoyed the music, including songs from one former Marisol Homes resident and mom. The event raised funds for Marisol Services for women and families, including Marisol Health, Marisol Homes and Marisol Family.



Marisol Family officially distributed a stunning 1.5 million diapers to families in Northern Colorado in the fiscal year ending June 30. The Marisol Miles truck traveled 6,000 miles and stopped at 50 events to distribute diapers and baby supplies at new locations.

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