



A Look at the March issue

Dear Friends,

2021 has been flying by. Thanks to supporters like you, the rest of this year comes with exciting new chapters for 180 Degrees and enhanced support for youth in crisis across Minnesota. **With your help, in urban, suburban, and rural communities, we can help turn lives around.**

In this issue of The Turnaround, read about changes 180 Degrees is making to become a stronger service provider for our clients, especially in rural Minnesota. **When a crisis erupts, rural families in small communities may have fewer social services at hand, yet their needs are just as great.** 180 Degrees is working to make shelter services more accessible than ever before.

You'll also read about a big announcement we've been so excited to share -- and we're finally able to! Learn more about this news and see a sneak peak of our exciting new look, launching this spring.

Thank you for making a positive difference!

Sincerely,

All of us at 180 Degrees

Expanding Shelter and Services for Minnesota's Rural Youth

In 2011, when a non-profit providing emergency shelter and services for at-risk youth went out of business, 180 Degrees stepped in to acquire the assets. The acquisition included two facilities: one in the rural Rochester Township and the other in St. Cloud. Both facilities had bedrooms for up to twelve youth, a shared kitchen and living room, outdoor recreation facilities, and a classroom.



Jacey Hansen, VonWald Mobile Case Manager (right)
Dominic Jones, St. Cloud Youth Advocate (left)

*"These programs were providing needed shelter and supportive services for youth and their families in large rural regions **where no other 24-hour youth shelters existed.**" said 180 Degrees CEO Dan Pfarr.*

"We saw opportunity to continue providing these services to the community, drawing on our history and expertise delivering trauma-informed care. We could also share some of the operating costs across all of our programs, improving the financial stability of these two rural programs."

On average, **each year about 200 at-risk youth** from 22 southeast Minnesota counties access shelter at the

VonWald Youth Shelter in Rochester, and 75 youth from St. Cloud and the eight surrounding rural counties access the program in St. Cloud. Over the past two years, 180 Degrees' Continuous Improvement Team has engaged in assessment and planning to strengthen and improve services in these rural programs. **A major undertaking has involved a state licensing change to be able to accommodate more youth, faster.**

Youth can now access shelter and services at our St. Cloud and Rochester shelters without a referral from a social worker. This makes it much easier for youth and families to access services when in crisis.

Other new services for rural programs include:

- New Mobile Outreach Workers who meet youth and families in the community, and connect them to local resources and critical support networks.
- Expanded case management services for youth in shelter (and up to 90 days after leaving the shelter).
- More staff trained in how to deliver trauma-informed service.

"Our goal is increasing accessibility, 365/24/7 for rural youth and families experiencing crisis" said Pfarr. "Licensing, expanded outreach and case management services, and better trained staff all make that possible."

Foster Care Families: Giving a Home to Minnesota Youth

This year alone, an estimated 16,000 Minnesota youth are in need of a safe, caring home. Foster care offers a solution when children and youth need a space due to a number of reasons, including mental and chemical health challenges, unhealthy family dynamics, abuse, and homelessness.

In 2011, when 180 Degrees acquired its 12-bed youth shelter in Rochester, it also acquired a Foster Care Program. Fortunately, during the acquisition Program Manager Rick Sundberg stayed on staff. Rick is an experienced professional with a steady 50+ year career in youth work.



Rick Sundberg, Foster Care Program Manager

Rick and colleague Matt Gates work across southeast Minnesota to connect youth in crisis to families who are or are ready to be licensed and trained in foster parenting.

Each day these two provide one-on-one personal assistance to families, ensuring a safe home for about **40 youth each year.**

Support for potential foster families starts with answering questions about the requirements and commitment for the program. Once a family is interested in fostering a child, Rick and Matt assist them with the licensing process and facilitate meetings with

the foster child, biological parents, and social workers. Once a child is placed with a family, **24/7 support and case management services** continue from Rick and Matt.

"Every child needs a caring adult in their life, and the power of this relationship cannot be underestimated," said Rick Sundberg. "It is the key factor in developing minds and hearts, leading to success later in life."

Due to COVID-19 and the increased isolation of rural youth, our demand for foster parents is high. Are you or someone you know interested in providing youth with a safe and caring home? It doesn't matter if you rent or own, are married or single, have your own children, or are an empty nester. If you have room in your heart and home, we need you!

Rick's appeal is heartfelt: *"Please open your heart and home to a child in need and offer a home of safety, support, and hope."* **Find out more by contacting Rick** at Rick.Sundberg@180degrees.org.

180 Degrees: New Look, Same Dedication to Those in Crisis

After several months of hard work and collaboration, 180 Degrees is in the home stretch of an important project, and we're so excited to share it with you. Coming up in a matter of weeks, 180 Degrees is happy to announce **we'll be launching our organizational rebrand, complete with a whole new website!**

You may be asking, "**But what does that mean?**"



Current



New

THE WHY: Over a year ago 180 Degrees began reflecting on our organizational identity. How do we communicate who we are and what we do? How can we best support our clients? During this strategy session, it became clear we needed to build our recognition in the community, and it was a natural fit to build our visual brand right alongside it.

"180 Degrees does incredible work!" says CEO Dan Pfarr. "We want to make sure more people can support our mission, and the rebrand will help us do that – growing our programs to serve more people in crisis"

THE HOW: Partnering with the talented creative agency StoneArch, we reworked our messaging from the ground up, soliciting feedback from clients, partner organizations, the community, and staff. This valuable input was then translated into an exciting, new visual identity.

THE WHAT: You can expect to see:

- NEW messaging: including six pillars that root us in what we do and how we do it.
- NEW mission statement: to accurately reflect the heart and goals of 180 Degrees.
- NEW visuals: such as our logo, branding color palette, and a completely transformed website.

You can continue to count on:

- Our services, priorities, and values centering around connecting youth and adults who are in crisis to shelter and services.
- A service approach rooted in equity, trauma-informed care, and strength-based programming.
- A commitment to meeting clients where they're at, building community engagement, and creating a safe space for everyone.

(Continued)

THE WHEN: Keep a look out for an e-mail from us, coming soon, when the website is live! This rebranding launch will take place across our digital presence, including our website, social media, and email communications this spring.

Over the past year, 180 Degrees has been responding to what the community needs most. We've added more transitional housing for those coming out of emergency shelters, worked to make emergency housing more accessible to rural youth, and prioritized being a trauma-informed organization with extensive trainings, organization-wide protocols, and staff support.

"Throughout this rebrand, the biggest priority has been clear: to empower and provide safety for as many people as possible who are at-risk of or experiencing homelessness" said Marketing Manager Alex Moeller. "Having a stronger identity will make us a stronger provider."

"Clarifying our message and having an accessible website that tells our story will make it easier for the community to get connected to support. Understanding the what, how, and why of the organization unites staff and the community, and strengthens fundraising for short and long-term stability" Moeller said.

Thank you for your support in this next adventure and being a partner in creating safe spaces for people in crisis.



Thank You to our Newsletter Team

Johan Wyckoff, Social Media Intern
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