



**The Monmouth
ResourceNet
contains
over 1,100
resources
for Monmouth
County families
You can find
what you need in the
Monmouth
Resource Net**

www.monmouthresourcenet.org

Bulletin

Information About MonmouthCares

Family Lift Jump-Starts Three Lives

Jordan C. is a single mom with a full-time job, struggling to meet the needs of her two children. What distinguishes Jordan from other parents doing the same things is that she was doing it without a car.

Jordan had to leave home each morning before the children left for school in order to catch the bus that would allow her to arrive at her job on time. Most afternoons the kids would have to spend a few hours with a babysitter, anxiously waiting for Jordan to return home on the bus. There were times when no one was available to take them to baseball and soccer games, they weren't able to play at a classmate's house in a neighboring town, and they couldn't sign up for after-school enrichment activities ...

the things most families take for granted. Jordan had to schedule all of her family's activities relying on the limited routes and schedules of public transportation.

Jordan was forced to shop at a local convenience store within walking distance, rather than take advantage of better prices at discount supermarkets on the highway. She needed to depend on friends and neighbors to accomplish routine errands such as banking and dropping off clothes at the cleaners, along with attending church services on Sunday. Coupled with all of the demands on and responsibilities of a single mother, Jordan had the added pressure of arranging doctors' appointments according to whether or not she could secure

a ride. Taxi fares were putting a strain on her budget.

Her income also suffered as she had to refuse overtime because of the constraints of the bus schedule, and she was limited in applying for a better job because of the restricted transportation routes.

John and Maribeth Y. were considering selling their 1992 Buick LeSabre when they heard about the Family Lift program at MonmouthCares which accepts donated vehicles, has them repaired, and distributes them to families in dire need of transportation. Their car had low mileage considering its age, and was in good condition, having been lovingly maintained. It was a perfect match for Jordan and her family – the

Continued on back page

Wraparound—One Child's Story

Tariq was enrolled in MonmouthCares four months shy of his sixth birthday. Born of a young mother, Tariq was placed in foster care at birth. Connie, Tariq's mom, had also been a foster child - she entered care at the age of eleven when her mother died of an overdose. Her unstable family life had left Connie very troubled and angry. After multiple foster home placements and minimal education, Connie ran away from her New York foster home at sixteen and lived under the radar as an adult in New Jersey until she was incarcerated on drug charges while

pregnant with Tariq. Tariq had some developmental difficulties due to oxygen deprivation at birth making him challenging to care for. This unfortunately led to multiple foster placements for Tariq leaving him angry and alienated by the time he returned to his mother's care at the age of three.

Connie had used her time wisely since her release from prison. She was motivated to be a good parent, obtained a GED and was termed "bright & insightful" in a psychological evaluation for DYFS around her reunification with Tariq. Even at his young age, Tariq

had learned to get attention by threatening to harm himself and making accusations against adults for abuse. Coupled with his anger, agitation and hyperactivity, Tariq's behavior was extremely challenging. Despite her growing maturity and determination to "get it right," Connie was overwhelmed by her son's needs. Given her own lack of parenting, Connie had little to draw upon. By the time her second son was born, Tariq had had several psychiatric hospitalizations and had been referred to a residential treatment center. It was at that point the family was referred to

Continued on back page

Family Lift (continued)

answer to their prayers. Within a week Jordan had taken title and was "on the road" to a new life, spending more quality time with her children and improving her job prospects to become more self-sufficient and self-supporting.

Jordan wrote the donors: "This car has been an amazing gift in our lives. We love it! The car has enabled me to continue working and provide essential transportation for my children. Words seem inadequate to convey the positive impact your act of kindness has had on us. Please accept my thanks and gratitude."

The Family Lift program gratefully accepts donations of used cars with fewer than 150,000 miles that are currently running and have passed inspection. Donors are eligible for a tax deduction of full fair market value. MonmouthCares, Inc. is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization

To donate your good used vehicle, contact the Family Lift Coordinator at (732) 222-8008 or familylift@monmouthcmo.org

MonmouthCares



100 Highway 36 East, Suite 1E

West Long Branch, NJ 07764

Phone: 732-222-8008

Fax: 732-222-9305

www.monmouthcares.org

Bulletin

Volume 8, Issue 2 Summer 2008

The curled circle represents three elements: The wraparound philosophy of MonmouthCares; the labyrinth that our complex-needs families historically have had to negotiate in order to secure help; and, the waves at our shore.

Kathy Collins
Executive Director

Colleen Meyer
Community Resource Development Mgr

One Child's Story (continued)

the DCBHS System of Care and enrolled in MonmouthCares.

Tariq was eventually voluntarily placed in a "Treatment" foster home because Connie could not manage him at home and resisted support. Tariq wanted to return to his mother and made false allegations of abuse against the foster parent. The home had to be closed and the children removed while an investigation was completed. Tariq went to another "Treatment" home and his negative behaviors escalated. Threats of self-harm landed Tariq in another psychiatric facility where he again made allegations of abuse against the staff.

The Child and Family Team process was not easy for either Tariq or Connie. Connie's strong sense of self-reliance and Tariq's high level of distrust combined to create a very difficult path for all. Embodying the core values of wraparound, the care manager was persistent in seeing the many strengths that both Tariq and Connie possessed and gradually gained their trust by helping them see and understand their own strengths. Over time, Connie was able to begin to open up to others and gain understanding of Tariq's diagnoses. Challenge by challenge, Connie greatly increased her coping skills with the assistance of her care manager and the others on her Child and Family Team. Her fierce independent stance changed slowly into one receptive to outside suggestions ultimately developing into a mature understanding and acceptance of herself and her children.

The Child and Family Team process helped Connie develop into a strong advocate for all of her children. She believed that Tariq's multiple diagnoses were incorrect and that the medication he received was hurting, not helping, his behaviors. With the support of her Team, Connie was able to have the school re-evaluate Tariq ultimately resulting in a single diagnosis of PDD with appropriate medication.

Tariq gained insight into his own behaviors. With his mother's support and encouragement, Tariq was able to minimize the number of false allegations he made against adults. He also gained control over his disruptive behaviors with appropriate medication and was able to stay at home and in the community.

Tariq proudly graduated from MonmouthCares in December of 2007. His mother is well prepared for the challenges she may face as Tariq gets older. Connie knows the appropriate channels to seek assistance if she needs it.

Unification and Innovation comes to Monmouth

There will be a Request for Proposals to unite the Division of Child Behavioral Health Services care management and youth case management services in Monmouth County into one entity. Monmouth County was selected for this project along with Mercer County because of the well-developed human service network that already exists. The unification is designed to make it easier for families, who can obtain services wherever they land on the continuum of case management from one organization and one case manager. Monmouth County will have a chance to innovate, and tailor the services to our local needs and strengths. The unification will be accomplished by January 1, 2009.

Professional Excellence

MONMOUTH CARES



Todd Pisani

Todd Pisani, a MonmouthCares Care Manager since 2001, has received a Care Manager of Excellence award.

Todd's commitment to children and families and to the Wrap-around philosophy, values and principles,

has earned him the nickname "Doctor Wrap-around." His excellent communication skills help him redirect families and children under the most adverse situations to reframe issues while maintaining respect and with a sense of humor. His high level of skill helps families achieve their goals and visions. Todd's creativity and ability to think out of the box supports individualized and strengths-based planning within a community setting. His leadership qualities are appreciated not only by the Child and Family Teams he works with, but also by all of MonmouthCares. Congratulations Todd!

A Special Farewell. . .

To Judy Rogers, Director of Mobile Response & Stabilization Services in Monmouth. Her reliance on facts and data, her clear calm articulation of goals, the respect and sensitivity she showed for the needs of kids and families made her uniquely effective. We will miss her!

New Monmouth-Cares Board of Trustees Members

MonmouthCares welcomes:

Richard N. Keil

Fern Rimler

Dawn Schmidt

Peggi Shader

Douglas Smith

Susan Smith

Thank you for committing your time and energy to help the children enrolled in MonmouthCares and in all of Monmouth County.