Kids@Home Manual for Family Counselor Interns

An Experiential Project

Presented to

The Faculty of the Adler Graduate School

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In Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for

The Degree of Master of Arts in

Adlerian Counseling and Psychotherapy

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By:

Diane Rawlings

January 2011
KIDS@HOME MANUAL FOR FAMILY COUNSELOR INTERNS

By Diane Rawlings, Adler Graduate School, January 2011

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Section 1. Kids@Home Program Overview

Program Summary

The Kids@Home Program has been established to assist low income families who live in the City of Richfield and whose children attend schools located in Richfield. Because of the difficulty of finding affordable housing, many of the families in the program have experienced a lot of transition and moving.

Financial assistance for housing in Richfield improves the chances that children in the program will remain in a Richfield school for a longer period of time. More stability will increase their chances of academic success.

In addition to rental assistance, each family meets at least monthly with a family counselor who provides support and guidance around each family’s unique needs. The family counselor works with each family to establish goals and a plan to address the stressors and risk factors that these families face.

Providing both financial assistance and counseling over a three year period enables Kids@Home to make a significant impact on improving the family’s quality of life in Richfield and the educational, learning experience of their children. The program funds up to thirty families. While not advertised, 10% of Kids@Home funding is set aside for hard case families with disability or loss of job.

Kids@Home Program Objectives

The main objective for the Kids@Home program is to increase the number of workforce families in Richfield who receive rental assistance for permanent housing and for their children to remain in the same school for at least one year. The program combines rental assistance with a social service component.
The program is designed to:

- Increase number of workforce households eligible for rent assistance
- Provide more stable housing environment due to rent subsidy
- Provide more stable school opportunity due to stable housing
- Shared cost design provides incentive for families to keep working
- Serve approximately 30 households annually

**History of the Kids@Home Program**

The program was established in 2004 because of the need for affordable housing in Richfield, Minnesota. Prior to its creation, the only rental assistance program Richfield HRA had was the Section 8 Voucher Choice Program.

Section 8 housing has not been able to address the large need for affordable housing. Among the 11 housing authorities in the Metro area who administer the Section 8 housing program, all have closed waiting lists. Once families are on the list, they can expect at least a 12 month wait. Some have to wait years. Also, 75% of households newly admitted to the Section 8 program must have incomes at or below 30 percent of the area median. Kids@Home income qualification is at or below 50% of the area median, making assistance available for low income working families. Kids@Home program is especially helpful for low income working families that are waiting for Section 8 housing or who need rental assistance to secure adequate housing.

In September 2004, the HRA authorized the staff to proceed with the Kids@Home Program. The first two families in the program began receiving assistance in December 2004.

Since the Kids@Home program follows many of the principles of the Section 8 program, the Section 8 staff administers the Kids@Home program. For the first four years of the program,
Storefront was hired to provide the social services support for the K@H program. Since 2008, interns from Adler Graduate School serve as family counselors to the families in the program.

**Kids@Home Awards**

The Kids@Home program received several national and state level awards in 2008.

- NAHRO (National Association of Housing and Redevelopment Officials)
  - **The North Central Regional Council Housing Achievement Award**
  - NAHRO, National Level
  - **Award of Merit for Program Innovation—Affordable Housing**
  - NAHRO, National Level
  - **Award of Merit for Program Innovation-Resident/Client Services**

- NAHRO, State Level
  - **Agency Achievement Award** (only one agency in the state receives this annual award)

**Funding for Kids@Home Program**

The rental assistance portion of the program is funded through Richfield’s HRA’s Housing Trust Fund. The Housing Trust Fund consists of tax increment financing (TIF) from past, present, and future redevelopment projects. When Best Buy relocated to Richfield, Minnesota in 2003, the tax increment financing began to contribute $500,000 annually to Richfield and will contribute this amount for approximately 20 years. The HRA distributes this money to fund various HRA programs, one of which is Kids@Home. Kids@Home receives $200,000 annually for rental assistance, enough to fund 30 families.
Criteria to Receive *Kids@Home* Program Assistance

Kids@Home is a 36-month rent assistance program. Families have a transition period of 12 months to 24 months to receive additional (minimal rent assistance) based on individual family’s need at the end of the 36-month program.

**Criteria for families to qualify:**

- Have a child or children in Richfield schools (K-12)
- Child or children are enrolled and attend a Richfield school
- One parent (or adult in family) is employed for a minimum of 24 hours per week
- Independently live in the city of Richfield
- Do not receive any other housing assistance
- Annual income must fall at or below income guideline (see Income Guidelines)
- Rental payments must be current with landlord
- Must be citizens, permanent residents, or have proper immigration status
- Family member’s criminal history must not include drug-related or violent criminal activity
- Must be willing to work with family counselor to set goals and work toward goals that support the family’s quality of life.

**Income Guidelines to qualify:**

This program focuses on working households who have an annual income between 30% and 50% of the median income guidelines (set forth from Section 8). All households at incomes less than 50% of median are eligible for Kids@Home assistance, if they fulfill the criteria listed above.
Income limits effective 5/14/2010:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Persons in Household</th>
<th>Income</th>
<th>Persons in Household</th>
<th>Income</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>$33,600</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>$48,750</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>$37,800</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>$52,100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>$42,000</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>$55,450</td>
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<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>$45,400</td>
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**Program Length**

The Kids@Home program is a 36-month rent assistance program with a transition period of 12-24 months at the end of the initial 36 months. The length of time a family can be in the Kids@Home program will vary from family to family based upon their individual need and circumstance.

**Portability**

Families must live in the city of Richfield to receive the assistance. If families move out of Richfield, the Kids@Home rental assistance is no longer available.

**Housing Payments for Program Participants**

Program participants will receive the flat payment allotted for the bedroom size for the first month of assistance. After the first month, then amount of rental assistance is based on the lower amount of these two:

- Section 8 payment standard (listed below) less 30% of family’s income
- Flat payment (listed below)

Because most families in the program have an income, the Section 8 payment minus 30% of the family’s incomes is usually the amount of qualifying assistance. It is usually a lower amount
than the flat payment rate. Rental assistance based on the Section 8 standard minus 30% of the family’s income does not decrease each year. The Section 8 Payment Standard is listed below:

**Section 8 Payment Standard – Effective 10/1/07**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Voucher Payment Standards</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>O Bedroom</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$554</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Rental assistance based on flat payments is typically for those who face difficult circumstances such as job loss, disability, or extended illness. Flat payment rates decrease each year so that the family’s portion of rent will increase. Flat payment rate is listed below:

**Flat Payment –10/01/2010**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Bedroom Size</th>
<th>1&lt;sup&gt;st&lt;/sup&gt; Year K@H Payment</th>
<th>2&lt;sup&gt;nd&lt;/sup&gt; Year Payment</th>
<th>3&lt;sup&gt;rd&lt;/sup&gt; Year Payment</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>One</td>
<td>$550.00</td>
<td>$500.00</td>
<td>$450.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Two</td>
<td>$650.00</td>
<td>$600.00</td>
<td>$550.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Three</td>
<td>$800.00</td>
<td>$750.00</td>
<td>$700.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Four</td>
<td>$850.00</td>
<td>$800.00</td>
<td>$750.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Rent Limits for Kids@Home**

There are no limits to the rental charge for the housing that the participant has chosen. The amount of rental assistance is based on income and qualifying guidelines, not the amount of rent that the participant is charged.

**Income Calculation**

After a family qualifies for assistance, Kids@Home will need to determine your annual income, deductions, and allowances to calculate the amount of financial assistance and determine
which type of assistance (based on Section 8 standard or flat payment). The family needs to disclose all of its annual income. After the total annual income for the household is determined, Kids@Home will determine deductions and allowances.

**Some examples of income:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Employment</th>
<th>Public Assistance</th>
<th>TANF</th>
<th>MFIP</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Unemployment</td>
<td>Disability</td>
<td>Alimony</td>
<td>SSI</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pension</td>
<td>Worker’s Compensation</td>
<td>Net Income from</td>
<td>RSDI</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Real/Personal Property</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Child Support</td>
<td>Gifts/ Contributions</td>
<td>Social Security Payments</td>
<td>Military Pay</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Annuities</td>
<td>Interest from Assets</td>
<td>MSA</td>
<td>GA</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Five possible annual deductions and allowances for *Kids@Home* include:

1. **Dependent deduction:** A dependent is anyone under the age of 18 or any member 18 years old or older who are full time students or people with a disability. Head of the household or spouse of the head of the household does not count as a dependent. A $480 deduction is given to all dependents.

2. **Elderly Family deduction:** A household whose head, spouse or sole member is 62 years old or over or is a person with a disability. A $400.00 deduction is given for the family.

3. **Allowable Childcare Expenses:** Reasonable child care expenses for children 12 years old and under, if they enable a family member to work or go to school.

4. **Allowable Medical Expenses:** Medical expenses greater than 3% of the Annual Income will be deducted for all family members. This includes medical premiums,
medicine, and transportation to medical appointments. The family must have receipts for deductions to be taken.

5. Allowable Handicapped Assistance Expenses: Expenses for handicap assistance that exceed 3% of the Annual Income will be deducted if expenses permit a family member to work.

Additional Rental Assistance, if Crisis or Short Term Need

Kids@Home anticipates that families will encounter a financial crisis or need for emergency funds during the 36 months of the program. To address this, additional funding is available.

- **First month on the program**: All families receive the full flat payment the first month of the program, no matter which rate they qualify for (the Section 8 payment minus income or flat payment. See flat rate table for first year/bedroom number for amount.)

- **Special Circumstance Rent Assistance**: Two times during the 36 months on the program, families can ask for a larger K@H payment related to flat payment. The amount families can request for a month’s payment is the *first year monthly flat payment*, no matter how long the families have been on the program or if their payment rate is based on Section 8 payment standard or flat rate payment standard.

- **Special Circumstance Fund**: If the Family Counselor determines that there is a family in financial crisis or emergency, she can request $100 additional rent assistance for the following month. This can occur twice while families are on the program.

- **Job Loss**: If a K@H family loses its income due to job loss, Kids@Home will provide more financial assistance and support during the transition time of looking for another job. This also includes meeting with the Family Counselor twice a month, after 60 days
from the job loss. The Family Counselor will assist the family in job goal setting, transition planning, and connections with resources such as the WorkForce Center in Bloomington. Kids@Home needs to be contacted as soon as the job loss occurs. If the family does not have a parent who is employed or in a training program for over 30 days, the family will need to request to remain on the program.

**Applying for Kids@Home Program**

Those interested in applying for the Kids@Home program must contact the office at 612.861.9770. To apply, the program must have openings (e.g. less than 30 families in the program). Application for the program occurs only during the Richfield Public School year. If there are openings and it’s during the school year, sign up is available:

- First day of school, starting at 10:00 a.m. and ending at 4:00 p.m.
- The first Monday of the month during the school year from 10:00 a.m. and ending at 4:00 p.m.
- There is no sign up for the months of June, July, and August.

There are other steps to processing the application to the Kids@Home program. Applicants should expect two months for processing. For example, if a family signs up in Septembers and follows all the guidelines, the earliest they will receive rent assistance is November 1.

**Unit Inspection**

Michelle Luna conducts the inspection of the housing unit to ensure that it meets Housing Quality Standards (HQS). The unit must pass the HQS inspection before any Kids@Home payment can be made. The purpose of the inspection is to ensure that the unit is in decent, safe, and sanitary condition.
Listed below is a checklist of the 11 most common areas which cause units to fail inspection:

1. Leaking faucet
2. Smoke detector not operable
3. All appliances must be in working condition
4. Bathrooms must have working vent system or window that opens
5. Cover plates must be on electrical outlets and light switches
6. Light fixtures are secure. No hanging or exposed wiring
7. Infestation of vermin or rodents
8. Windows must be installed and operate correctly
9. Balcony railings must be secure
10. Shower area must be clear of mold and mildew
11. Floor coverings should not have holes or gaps that are tripping hazard

After the unit passes inspection by Kids@Home, the family’s rental assistance will be calculated. The Kids@Home contract will be prepared and mailed to the owner of the housing complex. Rental assistance will begin at the first of the month. If your unit is approved during the month, rental assistance will begin the first day of the next month. Rental assistance checks are sent directly to the owner of the housing unit, not to the family.

At the time that rental assistance is determined, Kids@Home sends a statement to the family indicating the rental assistance amount that it is entitled to receive. A welcome letter is also sent to the family, which includes the name of the family counselor intern assigned to it.
Family Counselor Informed Of New Families

The Kids@Home administrator sends an email to the Family Counselor Intern with the family welcome letter attached. The email will also include family information, including names and birthdates of all family members. Also, the email contains information about when the family begins the program. It is up to the Family Counselor intern to contact the new family for the initial meeting. (See “Getting Started with New Clients” tab in this Handbook).

Richfield HRA’s Policies and Procedures

It is important that families follow the policies and procedures of the Kids@Home Program. Violation of a family obligation or policy of Richfield HRA may lead to termination from the Kids @ Home Program.

*The following lists the instruction that is given to the K@H participants:*

**As a participant on the Kids @ Home Program you must:**

1. Participate in the Social Service Component of the Kids @ Home Program, including, but not limited to:
   - Completing an Initial Family Assessment within 60 days (from date rent assistance starts) with an assigned family coordinator,
   - Completing a goal setting plan within 60 days (from date rent assistance starts) with an assigned qualified family counselor, and;
   - Signing school verifications allowing the social worker and Richfield HRA access to your child’s attendance records.

2. Actively work on goal setting plan. (Meet with assigned Family Counselor either once or twice a month depending on goal setting plan.)

3. Have a child or children in Richfield schools (grades K – 12).
4. Live in Richfield.

5. Have one parent who is either employed or who has an active status in an approved training program, unless family is qualified under a medical waiver prior to placement on the Kids @ Home Program. If employment ends or status in a training program becomes inactive the family will need to become gainfully employed or active in an approved training program within 6 months.

6. Supply true and complete information regarding your family’s circumstances; and notify Richfield HRA within 10 days of all income, asset and expense changes and household member changes.

7. Supply any information Richfield HRA determines is necessary in the administration of the program, or for use in a regularly scheduled re-certification or interim re-certification of family income and composition.

8. Sign and submit consent forms for obtaining information. Each member of the family who is at least 18 years of age, and the head of household and spouse regardless of age, must sign consent forms.

9. Disclose and verify Social Security Numbers of all family members who are at least six (6) years of age.

10. Supply any information or certification requested by Richfield HRA to verify that you are living in the unit, including any requested information or certification on the purpose of your absence. You must promptly notify Richfield HRA of any absence from the unit.

11. Notify Richfield HRA before you give the owner notice of lease termination or vacate the unit.

12. Promptly give Richfield HRA a copy of any owner eviction notice.
13. Use the assisted unit solely for the residency of your family. The unit must be your family’s only residence.

14. Allow Richfield HRA to inspect the unit at reasonable times and after reasonable notice.
    The unit must be inspected annually.

15. Have verifiable immigration status (determined by INS) that allows the family to receive housing assistance.

As a participant on the Kids @ Home Program, you must **not:**

16. Own, or own any interest in, the unit (be listed on the mortgage or live with someone who is listed on the mortgage.)

17. Commit any serious or repeated violation of the lease.

18. Participate in illegal drug or violent criminal activity.

19. Sublease the unit, assign the lease, or transfer the unit.

20. Receive assistance while receiving any other housing subsidy for the same unit or a different unit.

21. Cause a violation of the lease, including any of the following:
   
   ♦ Fail to pay for any utilities that are to be paid by the tenant:
   
   ♦ Fail to provide and maintain any appliances that are required by the lease to be provided by the tenant;
   
   ♦ Allow any member of the household or guest to damage the unit or premises beyond normal wear and tear.

(If you cause such a violation, you must correct the problem within the time stipulated by Richfield HRA, not to exceed 30 calendar days. Failure to correct the violation will result in the family being terminated from the Kids @ Home Program.)
Grounds For Denial or Termination of Assistance:

1. If the family violates any procedures as outlined.
2. If the family moves from the city of Richfield.
3. If the family has no children in the Richfield schools (grade K – 12).
4. If the family does not have a parent who is employed or in a training program for over 30 days. The family must request a waiver from Richfield HRA if they would like to remain on the program and have exceed the 30 day time line.
5. If Richfield HRA has ever terminated assistance under the Section 8 Program for any member of the family.
6. If any member of the family commits fraud, bribery, or any other corrupt or criminal act in connection with housing assistance programs.
7. If any member of the family engages in drug related criminal activity or violent criminal activity.
8. If the family currently owes rent or other amounts to Richfield HRA.
9. If the family has engaged in, or threatened abusive or violent behavior toward HRA personnel or social service agency personnel.
10. Richfield HRA may deny or terminate assistance if any member of the family fails to sign and submit consent forms for obtaining information.
11. If the family does not cooperate with Richfield HRA’s request to inspect the unit at reasonable times, or if the family is responsible for a violation of the lease by: a) failure to pay for utilities that are to be paid by the tenant; b) failure to provide and maintain any appliances that are to be provided by the tenant; c) any member of the household or guest damaging the dwelling unit or premises beyond normal wear and tear. If the lease violation
caused by the family is life threatening, the family must correct the defect within no more
than 24 hours. For other family-caused defects, the family must correct the defect within the
time specified by Richfield HRA, not to exceed 30 days.

**Termination Procedures**

Richfield HRA will terminate a family from the Kids @ Home Program automatically and
without a meeting if:

1. Family moves out of Richfield.
2. Family does not a child or children in the Richfield schools (does not apply to school
   vacations)
3. Family members have a criminal history that includes drug-related or violent criminal
   behavior.
4. Family is determined to be a non-citizen of the United States and does not have eligible
   immigration status.

If Richfield HRA believes that there has been an infraction for anything other than those
outlined above, the following steps will be taken:

1. A letter will be sent to the family, stating the infraction as well as schedule a meeting date to
discuss the infraction (called a non-disclosure meeting). This meeting gives clients the
   opportunity to discuss the issue(s) informally with the Kids@Home Program Director
   (Lynette) and the Family Counselor Intern.
2. After this non-disclosure meeting, Richfield HRA will decide if there is cause to continue
   through to terminate the family’s rent assistance. If Richfield HRA determines there is cause
to terminate the family from the Kids @ Home Program, a letter will be sent to the family
and the landlord indicating the date rental assistance will end. If Richfield HRA determines
not to terminate the family’s rental assistance a letter will be sent indicating this decision.

3. If the family does not attend the scheduled meeting and does not contact the K@H office
prior to the meeting, termination procedures will commence.
Section 2. Kids@Home Family Counselor Intern Roles & Responsibilities

History of the Kids@Home Family Counselor Intern Role

When the Kids@Home program began in 2004, The Storefront Group was engaged as the support provider for the program. With a location in Richfield, The Storefront Group is a non-profit human service and mental health provider that supports the development of school-age children and their families. When The Storefront Group provided the support service for Kids@Home, the counselor role was less involved with the families. There was one Storefront counselor who called each Kids@Home parent once a month to check in about how the family was doing. Occasionally, the Storefront counselor would visit K@H families in their homes.

When the Kids@Home transitioned from The Storefront Group to Adler Graduate School interns, the K@H program decided to increase the level of support and assistance to the families. The first Adler Graduate Student intern, Diane Rawlings, joined the Kids@Home program in 2008 when it became an internship site. Another Adler intern soon joined her. Kids@Home has continued to be an internship site for Adler students. Usually, there are two to three interns as part of the Kids@Home program.

Roles and Responsibilities of the Kids@Home Family Counselor Intern

The role of the Kids@Home Family Counselor Intern is to provide support and encouragement to families in the program. This includes working with families to set goals, to create plans to achieve goals, and to find resources that support family and parent goals. A great deal of the family counselor role is problem-solving and encouraging client families.

The role can also be a therapeutic and educational one. As the family counselor, you may develop more of a therapeutic relationship. You may take a more therapeutic approach in your monthly meetings, using Adlerian techniques to help client families gain more insight into their
dynamics or to help parents with individual issues. The majority of Kids@Home families are single parent households, led by the mother. Often, the single parents in the program struggle with depression or anxiety from the family and financial stress they have to manage.

At the end of this manual, there is a literature review and Adlerian perspective about developing resiliency factors with low income families. You may help chaotic families develop more structure and routines. Or, conversely, you may help over-structured families develop more flexibility and support of one another.

You may also be asked to help a family in its decision-making or in its parenting practices. The family may need help to learn positive parenting. Or a family could need education about how to create a budget.

Kids@Home is an optimal place for an Adlerian internship. As the family counselor, your role is a combined therapeutic, educational, and supportive one.

Responsibilities as a Kids@Home counselor include the following:

- Meet monthly with your assigned Kids@Home families. This should be an in-home visit when possible. Sometimes, a phone visit works best due to schedules or circumstances. Whenever possible, the family counselor should have a face-to-face meeting.

- Ensure that your family has set goals for improving or maintaining the quality of life they desire.

- Track the families’ progress toward achieving their goals.

- Be prepared to share goals & progress status with Lynnette.

- Connect families to appropriate resources as needed. Lynnette Chambers will also help you find resources for your families when special circumstances arise.
- Maintain the confidentiality of your clients.

**Kids@Home Intern Meetings with Program Director**

Once every six to eight weeks, Lynnette Chambers, K@H program director, will meet with the Family Counselors so that the interns can discuss their experiences, offer ideas, and share what they are learning with one another. It is also an important opportunity to hear from Lynnette about what is happening with Richfield city housing as well as current information about programs and resources that are helpful to the K@H families. Lynnette is also available as a resource to help remove or mitigate any barriers that are preventing Kids@Home families from achieving their goals. The purpose of the meeting is for encouragement, learning, and problem-solving. This meeting counts as either part of your Peer Counseling hours or Site Supervision hours.
Section 3. Contact Information and Key Resources

Kids@Home Contact Information

Lynnette Chambers (program director): (612) 861-9773

Michelle Luna (administrative assistant): (612) 861-9768

Contact Information for Other Key Resources for Client Families

When you begin your internship, the Kids@Home program will provide you with a comprehensive *Navigating the Waters Handbook* that the Hennepin County has put together. It is a handy reference for you, especially for Richfield city resources.

For Richfield school issues, contact Lynnette, the program director, first. She has a relationship with Richfield’s social worker. If a child has a school performance or attendance issue, the social worker can assist you in connecting to the appropriate school resources.

Listed below are a few of those resources that may be especially helpful because of their convenience to Richfield and their type of support.

VEAP (Volunteers Enlisted to Assist People)

9728 Irving Ave South
Bloomington, MN 55431
**Telephone:** (952) 888-9616

**Hours of operation:**
9:00-a.m.-4:00 p.m. Tues., Wed., Fri.
9:00 a.m.-6:30 p.m. Mon, Thurs

Located in Bloomington, this local non-profit agency provides transportation, food, and social services assistance. Many Kids@Home clients visit VEAP for groceries. VEAP provides up to a 5 day supply of food. At the holidays, VEAP also provides extra groceries for holiday celebrations. Social services are also available for gas, bus vouchers, and car repair.

Transportation assistance is provided for medical care and other appointments for disabled
residents and the elderly. VEAP also provides food delivery or transportation to assist the client in a visit to the VEAP Food Pantry.

**Loaves and Fishes—Dining Site in Richfield (Free Dinners)**

**Hope Presbyterian Church**  
7132 Portland Avenue South  
Richfield, MN 55423

Free dinner is served in the church basement. Volunteers prepare and serve dinner.  
**Hours**: Tu, W, Th 5:00-6:00 p.m.

**MIRA (Hispanic Resource Center)**

7145 Harriet Ave South  
Richfield, MN 55423  
**Telephone**: (612) 243-3064

This non-profit provides a variety of education and professional services to assist Spanish-speaking families. Program offerings include: ESL adult education, family counseling, pregnancy classes, energy assistance, police liaison, and health care. Additionally, educational workshops are provided and as well as pre-school/daycare for kids with parents participating in MIRA’s programs.

**Bridging Inc. (Furniture and Household Items)**

201 W. 87th St.  
Bloomington, MN 55420  
(952) 888-1105

This non-profit provides economically disadvantaged with a one-time gift of quality furniture and household items which helps to stabilize and improve their lives while effectively using community resources. Through a network of over 160 social service agencies, eligible clients are referred to their warehouse for a once-in-a-lifetime shopping experience. In 2009, Bridging served 5,146 families (15,173 individuals) in the Twin Cities area.
Note: For Kids@Home families, Richfield school social workers can refer them to Bridging Inc. Lynnette will contact the Richfield social worker on behalf of the family.
Reusable and Free Clothes & More

Arc’s Value Village
6528 Penn Ave S,
Richfield
612-861-9550

Assistance League Thrift Shop
6416 Penn Ave S
Richfield
612-866-2135

East Side Thrift store
1928 Central Ave. NE.
Minneapolis
612-789-0600

The Clearance Rack
3504 Nicollet Ave. S
Minneapolis
612-822-0324
(Tues. – Sat. 10a.m–7 pm;
Sun. 12 noon–4pm)

Clothes Closet Oxboro Free Church
Free Clothing Program
9431 Nicollet Ave. S
Bloomington
9952-881-6956
(Tuesdays 9am–12 noon)

Consignment Clothes Look Again
9915 Lyndale Ave S
Bloomington
952-885-0025

Community of the Cross Church
Free Clothing Program
10701 Bloomington Ferry Rd.
Bloomington
952-941-1247
(Wednesday 6-8pm)

Goodwill Store
7845 Lyndale Ave. S.
**Bloomington**
952-881-2468

**Joseph’s Coat**
Free clothes
1107 West 7th St.

**St. Paul**
651-291-2472

**New Life Family Services**
(Maternity & Infant Clothes Closet)
1515 East 66th St.

**Richfield**
912-866-7643

**Nu Look Consignment Apparel**
4956 Penn Ave. S.

**Minneapolis**
612-925-0806

**Once Upon a Child** Children’s clothing, toys & furniture
582 Prairie Center Dr.

**Eden Prairie**
952-941-3515

**Plato’s Closet**
Teen clothing & accessories
4831 Joiner Way

**Eden Prairie**
952-941-6200

**Salvation Army**
3740 Nicollet Ave S

**Minneapolis**
612-822-1200

**Second Début**
(renewed fashion and art boutique)
4300 W. 36½ Street,

**St. Louis Park** 952-922-9640

**Savers**
8049 Morgan Circle

**Bloomington** 55431
952-881-7300
Unique Thrift Store  
(Tuesday 25% discount)  
14308 Burnhaven Dr., **Burnsville** 952-898-0988  
4471 Winnetka Ave N, **New Hope** 763-535-0200  
2201 37th Ave N E, **Minneapolis** 763-788-5250

Vine & Branches  
(Agency referral for free clothing)  
Hope Presbyterian Church  
7132 Portland Ave S  
**Richfield** 55423  
612-866-4055  
(Wed. 6:30-8pm; Thurs. 1–4pm  
Sat. 10am–1pm)

Victory Thrift Store  
9517 Lyndale Ave. S  
**Bloomington** 952-224-9194

The Free Market  
651-222-7678  
[www.twincitiesfreemarket.org](http://www.twincitiesfreemarket.org)  
The Free Market is a listing service for residents who want to give or get free reusable goods for the home or garage. It is part of an effort to reduce the amount of reusable goods being thrown away.
Section 4. Scheduling Monthly Meetings & Record-Keeping

In most cases, the family counselor intern will meet with each family on a monthly basis. Due to scheduling issues, there may be an occasion where the meeting takes place over the phone. An in-person meeting is expected whenever possible because of the support nature of the role. If a male parent is involved, the meeting takes place outside the home, so it is more comfortable for female interns.

There may be circumstances that warrant more than a once a month family visit. According to K@H program requirements, the family counselor intern will meet twice a month when a parent loses her job. This is to increase support resources and to assist the parent in the transition and job search. If the client family is near the end of the 36-month assistance period and coming off the program, the family counselor may offer to meet more than once a month, if more budget planning and problem-solving time is needed with the parent.

There could also be non-program circumstances that could warrant more than one monthly meeting with the client family. In a scenario where the family is in crisis, you may be called on to facilitate family discussions among family members. Or, you may be asked to meet with one of the children monthly in addition to meeting with the parent. In one turbulent K@H case, the family counselor met three times a month with the family during a four month period of time. One meeting was with the parent. Another meeting was with the nine-year-old child. The third meeting was with the parent and child together.

These “extra” meetings are at the discretion of the family counselor. If you are meeting more than once a month with a client family due to non-program circumstances, you should let Lynette, the program director, know. It is also something you may want to discuss with your Adler supervisor. As an Adler intern, you want your supervisor to be apprised of any unusual
Kids@Home situations so that you have the guidance and supervision of the Adler Graduate School.

**Scheduling Monthly Meetings**

Working with the client to schedule monthly meetings can be a challenge. The majority of the Kids@Home clients are single working moms who are juggling one or two work schedules, their children’s schedules, and, in some cases, a class schedule for attending college.

All of this combined can create a challenging scheduling situation. Also, if you schedule too far out, clients have a tendency to forget the meeting time. Calling to confirm appointments a day ahead of time can help.

Another reason is to call the day before a scheduled meeting is to make sure that the client family is in good health. Sometimes, clients will not call to let you know when a family member has a contagious illness. Depending on the illness and circumstances, you may choose to re-schedule.

**Dealing with No-Shows**

As the family counselor intern, you may find that one or two of your clients are not reliable in terms of being ready or available for the designated appointment time. Because the visits take place in the client’s home instead of an office or clinic, some clients avoid the appointment for personal reasons (e.g. the house isn’t clean or they do not want visitors that day). Others treat it less as a formal appointment, as they would a doctor’s appointment, and more like a friend stopping by for a visit. In one case, the family counselor arrived on time for the appointment but no one answered the door. When the counselor called the client, the client explained that she had taken her daughter shopping for a school program. She asked if the counselor could stop by later when it was more convenient. The family counselor had driven
fifty-two miles round trip for the meetings and had confirmed the meeting with the client the previous day.

In those cases there are different expectations between you and client around meeting times and the importance of appointment times. As the family counselor, you need to have a conversation with the client to set clearer expectations. Usually, talking about the meeting in terms of your effort and the inconvenience of missed appointments is enough to improve the situation. If the client continues to miss appointments, you need to let Lynnette know. Usually, a strongly-worded letter is sent to the client, emphasizing the need to meet with the family counselor in order to stay on the K@H program.

**Record-Keeping and Progress Notes**

The Kids@Home program does not have any required forms that you must fill out after a client visit. However, it is strongly recommended that you keep good records of your monthly visits and brief progress notes about the meeting outcomes. While not a federally regulated program, Kids@Home is a Richfield city program. Also, due to the nature of the program visits being in-home, good record-keeping is an important component to track your involvement and your work with the client family.

There are sample forms for tracking home visits and recording progress notes that you may use. You are not required to hand in any information to Lynnette. However, you may be contacted when circumstances arise regarding housing, family conflict, or school issues. As part of your internship, you will want to document your family visits.
## Tracking Monthly K@H Meetings

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<th>March</th>
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</tbody>
</table>

- X – meeting
- N/A – not on program
- x-phone – phone meeting
- Xx/Teen – meeting with parent and teen
- Not sch – not scheduled
- x/sch – meeting scheduled
- No – no show
Section 5. First Meeting with a New Client Family

The family counselor intern has a key role in helping new Kids@Home clients utilize the benefits of the program. Having free family counseling available to new clients as part of the K@H program can be an invaluable resource to them. However, the benefit of family counseling may not be immediately understood by clients. The benefit grows out of the relationship between the family counselor and the client family.

Beginning the counseling relationship, however, can be challenging. The dynamic is different than beginning a therapeutic relationship through a private practice or a clinic setting. To start the counseling aspect of the program, the family counselor initiates the contact, not the client. Also, the relationship begins a program requirement, not a client request. It may also be the first time that the new client has had home visits as part of a program. The client may be embarrassed or uncomfortable for a stranger to visit because of the appearance or cleanliness of the apartment. They may be uncertain about what you will report about the apartment and the family to Kids@Home.

From that context, the challenge of the family counselor is to build rapport and trust with the new client, starting with the first phone contact and the first in-home meeting.

Scheduling the First Meeting

Prior to your calling to set up the first meeting, the Kids@Home program will have sent a letter to the client family. You will be introduced in the letter as their family counselor. The letter also explains that you will be meeting with the client once a month as part of the program requirement. The letter also explains that you are part of Adler Graduate School of Psychology’s internship program. (Sample letter is at the end of this section. The family counselor intern’s business card should be included in the letter)
Your first contact with the client begins to set the stage for your relationship. Optimally, you want to accomplish three things in the initial call with the client: briefly explain who you are and the purpose of the meeting, schedule the in-home visit, and begin to set a friendly, encouraging tone for the relationship.

First Phone Call Tips

Here are a few tips for the first conversation with the new client:

- Reference the Kids@Home letter that mentioned your name and that part of the program is a monthly visit with you, the family counselor intern.
- Set up the meeting within two weeks. If you schedule the meeting farther out in time, the client may forget about the appointment and will not be as motivated to meet with you.
- Explain that the first meeting is an opportunity to meet one another, especially other family members, and to get to know each other.
- Set definite time limits. Monthly meetings are typically an hour in length. The first meeting may be shorter.
- Ask for additional directions to the apartment complex if you do not know where the client is located. Also, check with the client about how to get into the building. Some of the outside communication systems do not work. You may want to check with the client about calling her when you arrive so she can let you into the building.
- Since it is your first meeting, you may want to ask if the client wants you to call and confirm the appointment the day before the meeting as a reminder. Because
of their heavily scheduled lives, many clients, at the beginning of the program, have difficulty remembering a new meeting.

- Be sure to give the client your phone number so she can call you if the meeting needs to be rescheduled.

**First Client Family Meeting**

The first in-home meeting is an important beginning to your working relationship with the new K@H client. Like a first meeting with a therapy client, your ability to “join” the parent and the family is critical to the success of your first visit. In general, the new client family’s attitude toward the first meeting falls into three categories: welcoming to a family counselor resource, not welcoming or interested in having a family counselor resource, or in crisis and in need of immediate support. Typically, the new client is welcoming and interested in learning about your role and how you can help the family.

Before filling out the “First Meeting” form, begin with social conversation to help make the new client comfortable with you. Setting a positive tone is helpful, too. (e.g. “I’ve been looking forward to meeting you.”) You may also meet other family members when you arrive, too. In the K@H welcome letter the program requests that the family is present at the first meeting so that the family counselor can meet everyone.

You may want to be prepared to share about yourself, too. This leads into describing the family counselor role, why you are interested in being a family counselor, and reiterating your support for the family. It would be useful to explain the purpose for the monthly meetings and give a brief explanation about what will happen during the meetings. You can give examples of things that the client may want to talk over with you. This could include discussing financial needs, family issues, school issues, parenting issues, or helping with a job change.
For the rest of the meeting, you can fill out the introductory information on the “First Meeting with the New Client” form. Having a form to fill out will give the meeting and conversation some structure. It will also help you gather information about the family in an easy way. (See “First Meeting with New Client Form” at the end of this section.)

Before you leave, discuss the best way to schedule monthly meetings and their availability. It is also good to give the client your Kids@Home business card with your contact information.

If the client family is in distress, you will want to assess the severity of the situation and spend the time together considering options and problem-solving. You will also want to call Lynnette, the program director, after the meeting to apprise her of the situation.
SAMPLE OF CLIENT LETTER INFORMING THEM OF FAMILY COUNSELOR INTERN

DATE

CLIENT NAME

STREET ADDRESS
Richfield, MN 55423

Dear CLIENT NAME:

Welcome to the Kids @ Home Program! I hope you recall during the briefing, Michelle spoke to you about meeting with a family counselor to establish a goal setting plan for you and your family and working actively with your family counselor to achieve the goals you establish. The counselor will work around your time schedule and in most cases will be able to meet you in your own home. The family counselor that you have been assigned to is NAME OF FAMILY COUNSELOR INTERN. NAME OF FAMILY COUNSELOR INTERN attends Adler Graduate School of Psychology and his or her role as family counselor is part of Adler's psychotherapy internship program.

NAME OF FAMILY COUNSELOR INTERN will contact you within the next 30 days to set up an appointment to meet with you and your family in order to establish your goal setting plan. NAME OF FAMILY COUNSELOR INTERN will then continue to meet with you on a monthly basis, which is part of the requirement in order to remain on the Kids @ Home Program.

Establishing a goal setting plan for the family is a useful tool and your goals can change as your families’ needs change. Goals that have been set by Kids @ Home Families vary, such as:

- Saving to purchase a home.
- Finding a tutor to help a school aged child in one or more subjects.
- A parent going back to school to receive training in a field that will allow them to get a better paying job.

In addition to working with NAME OF FAMILY COUNSELOR INTERN, you still need to report changes of income or a family size to Michelle Luna at 612-861-9768.

Again, welcome to the Kids @ Home Program!

Sincerely,

Lynnette Chambers
Leased Housing Specialist
Kids@Home Family Information:

First Meeting with Family Counselor Intern

Date: ____________________________________

Program Participant (Parent): ________________________________

Age: ____________

Date of Birth: ____________

CONTACT INFORMATION

Address:

Apartment Complex ________________________________

How long at this address ________________________________

Telephone: ______________(Home)

______________(Cell)

Email: ________________________________ (share with Kids@Home Staff)

Preferred way of contact (circle)

Home phone   Cell phone   Email

Marital Status

Single   Married   Divorced   Domestic Partner   Widowed
Kids@Home Family Information:

First Meeting with Family Counselor Intern

**Employment:**
Company or Institution _______________________

Job Responsibility ____________________________

**Education**
Highest Degree Achieved ____________________________

If currently seeking additional degree or training
__________________________________________ (Degree type)
__________________________________________ (College/Institution)

**Medical Conditions/Health Status**
________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________

Under a doctor’s care?    Yes   No

Seeing psychotherapist?    Yes   No

Other family member seeing a doctor or psychotherapist
________________________________________________________________
Kids@Home Family Information:

First Meeting with Family Counselor Intern

Family Members

*It would be helpful to know if children have different fathers.*

Children Names & Ages (in birth order)

1. (Oldest) __________________________ School Grade/Age _____________
2. __________________________________ School Grade/Age: _____________
3. __________________________________ School Grade/Age: _____________
4. __________________________________ School Grade/Age: _____________
5. __________________________________ School Grade/Age: _____________

How long client has lived in Minnesota _________________

Length of time at current residence: _________________

Circle rating of satisfaction with current living situation:

Very Satisfied  Satisfied  Somewhat Satisfied  Somewhat Dissatisfied  Dissatisfied  Very Dissatisfied

Other housing prior to Kids@Home:

____________________________________________________________________________________
Kids@Home Family Information:

First Meeting with Family Counselor Intern

What is going well in your life right now?

What challenges/difficulties do you currently face?

There are different things that we can work on together in our monthly meetings. Of the list below, which ones would you interested in our exploring together as we meet monthly:

-- personal counseling
-- stress management
-- family issues/parenting
-- finding financial/assistance resources
-- career planning
-- help with medical/insurance/government & other assistance programs

For Family Counselor Intern: Observations about family from first meeting
Section 6. Diagnostic and Family Intervention Tools

This section compiles a selection of useful tools and approaches for the family counselor intern to use during in-home visits. These tools are especially helpful when there is conflict among family members or there is a need to intervene in the family dynamic. Helping families better understand and support its members is the underlying foundation upon which resiliency is built.

The Diagnostic Tools section lists tools and diagnostic questions to understand how the family operates, to identify their strengths, and to build a shared vision of the relationships and family environment that they would like to have. These assessment and diagnostic tools provide a deeper context and understanding about the family’s needs prior to goal-setting. The other three sub-sections are interventions, tools, and questions that the family counselor can use divided by family, parent(s) only, and child or teen only.

Diagnostic Tools for Families

Family Discussion Activities or Questions

1. Rating and discussing Adlerian life tasks (modified for family).

On a chart or large piece of paper, draw the Adlerian life tasks as a pie chart. Fill in the tasks, modifying the task language to accommodate the family. Have each member rate on 1-5 scale their happiness/satisfaction with their family life.

Tasks to discuss: (1) Our family relationships (2) Social/fun aspect of our family (3) Extended family & friends support (4) Spirituality/Faith (5) Work/School (6) Love

After rating each task, facilitate a discussion among family members:

- What are our family strengths?
- When “TASK” is working well, what does it look like for our family? Who is having the most success with that task in the family?
• How could we do more of what works well for us?

Have each member answer this question: What is one thing the family could do that would make you feel more supported?

2. Family History

Draw a timeline of the family history, starting with grandparents of the parent. Include key events, where people lived, transition points, relationship events (births, deaths, weddings, divorce, emotional cut-offs, family traditions). This takes a systemic look at family patterns. Have the family identify patterns. What strengths do they see in their family history?

3. Adlerian Lifestyle Assessment with the Parent

After completing the Lifestyle Assessment, ask the parent to consider what themes carry into her current family.

4. Typical Day

Ask the family to describe a typical day for them. Facilitate a discussion around how the family operates, who does what, family routines and rules, assess togetherness versus separateness, and other family system features.

Family Interventions/Tools

Family Connection & Relationship-Building

1. Play the game “Family Facts.” This is a fun way to engage the family members in a fun conversation that increases their knowledge of one another. Have a prize for the one who knows other family members best. (You may want to have multiple prizes in case there is a tie.)

Give each family member a large blank index card. Have them put their name on their card and number it from 1-10. They are to write down their answers on the card. After all the questions have been answered, collect the cards. Ask the question again, only this time have family
members guess how they think the family member answered it. Whoever gets the answer right for another family member gets a point. You can give more than one person a point if multiple people get the answer right.

1. What is your favorite color?
2. What is your favorite song?
3. If you had $200 that you could spend on anything, what would you buy?
4. What is your favorite tv show?
5. Who would you most like to meet?
6. Who is the first person you would talk to if you were really upset?
7. Whom do you most admire?
8. What was your favorite toy as a child?
9. What place would you most like to visit?
10. Which family member are you most like?

2. Name/Birth Stories

Ask the parent to share birth stories about each of the children or how their names were chosen, including alternative names they considered.

3. Chairs

Using a Virginia Satir activity, have the family arrange chairs in the way that they feel connected to family members.

4. Family Rules

Ask the family to list the spoken and unspoken rules that the family follows.
5. **Pass the Ball**

Have a ball to pass among family members. Pick an emotion and pass the ball to a member to have them give an example or memory when they felt that way. Keep the ball moving across the family. When someone has the ball, it’s their turn to answer.

Examples: A time when you were angry. Sad. Scared. Happy. Confused.

6. **What I Like About You**

Have each family member take turns sitting on a designated chair. When on the chair, each family member tells one thing they like about the family member.

**Improving Family Dynamic/Environment**

1. **Give the family a task to do together.**

   You could give them pretend $2000 and tell them they have 20 minutes to plan how they will spend the money. Debrief roles, what happened, how their behavior doing the task is similar to real life.

2. **Discouraging/Encouraging Family Environment**

   Lead the family in a discussion about the kinds of things that make a family encouraging or discouraging. Make a list for both. Identify the ones on either list that best describe what it is like to be in this family. Debrief around how the family can be more encouraging to one another.

3. **Moving Forward After Conflict Among Family Members**

   Draw the pattern of the argument in a circle or loop. Put the behavior-reaction in steps (X got mad & yelled at Y; Y slammed the door in X’s face, etc.) After you have the behavior pattern mapped out, start at the beginning of the argument and ask each person to tell (a) what they wanted at that point (b) what they thought. Help the two see assumptions made, private logic and misdirected behavior. Talk through the situation again from an ideal standpoint. What do
they wish would have happened at each step? Transform the behavior into positive behavior and asking questions to understand the other person.

4. Joint Problem Solving

Using the model from *Positive Discipline* (Nelson and Lott, 2000), teach the four-step joint problem-solving model. Facilitate a “real” problem-solving discussion.

1. Teen shares his or her issues and goals.
2. Parent shares his or her issues and goals.
3. If goals of teen and parent are far apart, brainstorm to find options.
4. Teen and parent pick an option they can both live with and try it out for a short time.

5. Mother-Daughter (teenager) or Mother-Son (teenager) Role Expectations

Mothers have expectations for their daughters that may be different than expectations for their sons. Fathers have expectations for their daughters that may be different than expectations for their sons. Often, those expectations come from the parents’ families of origin. It can be insightful and helpful to facilitate a parent-child about the expectations the parent is bringing into the relationship and how the child is reacting to those expectations. The outcome of the discussion is to help both see the strengths of one another and that expectations come from their need to belong and be significant to one another.

6. Family Discussion of the Miracle Question (from Solutions Therapy)

Ask the family to answer the Miracle Question. “What if something happened overnight and all the family’s problems were solved. What would you be doing differently? How would you know the problem was solved?
Parent Intervention/Education Tools

1. Early recollections (use Sue Brokaw’s materials)

2. Genogram

   After drawing the genogram, you can draw a map that shows relationship patterns among family members. Help the parent identify family/generational patterns. Reframe the parent’s story in terms of strengths and resiliency.

3. Relationship map

   Have the parent list all the people in her life and rank how close she is to them and how significant they are. You can create a hierarchy of people by significance and then color code those that she is closest, too. Often, the relationship map reveals strengths and support gaps in mom’s working, family, and personal relationships.

4. Prepare/Enrich’s Circumplex model

   Use the model to describe how family structure (on the chaotic/over-structured continuum) can make a safe or scary family environment for children to develop their own identity and self-realization. Have the parent describe her family of origin and draw parallels and differences with her family. Identify ways to build the optimal family structure (routines, rules, discipline).

5. Positive Discipline education and application

   Using Positive Discipline for Teenagers (Nelson and Lott, 2000) as a reference, work through the concepts of each chapter, focusing on one chapter per visit. You can use the tips and summary charts in the chapter as a handout. Use real family situations that the parent is facing to apply the concepts. Conclude each session with one or two things the parent can implement or do to follow a positive discipline approach. At the next meeting, debrief with the parent about what happened, what she learned, how she has applied the learning.
6. Setting personal boundaries and self care

As simple as it sounds, looking at the parent’s calendar and responsibilities, prioritizing and sorting out what to reduce or stop doing, and adding time for self care can be very helpful. For some of the parents, learning to say “no” to the things that take a lot of energy away from what is most important can also help. List the activities of a typical day. Color code the ones that are the most significant. Circle the activities that drain the parent’s energy and focus. Help the parent identify ways to increase time spent on what is most important and how to reduce the energy and time spent on the less important and more draining aspects of her day.

7. Twisted thinking

Help the client identify which types of twisted thinking she uses when she encounters stressors: all or nothing thinking, fortune-telling, overgeneralizations, mind-reading. (For a complete list see David Burns’ (1990) *The Feeling Good Handbook.)*

Children/Youth Interventions/Tools

Children

1. Artwork

Having children draw pictures or cut out pictures and arrange in a collage can be effective ways to engage them in conversation.

Ideas for drawing:

- Dreams
- Favorite place
- Memory
- Important event
- Aquarium: draw inside of aquarium (types of fish) to describe friends & self
2. Emotions Face Chart or Words

Use the chart with different facial expressions to have the child talk about how something feels to them.

3. Make a storybook

If there is something hard for the child to understand, make a storybook with them that helps them frame the story in a way that helps them make sense of what happened. (e.g., parent’s divorce, dad’s absence, mom’s illness, brother’s drug use)

4. Identify the child’s mistaken goals and redirect.

Ask questions to understand the purpose of the child’s behavior. Connect that to behavior that would be more useful for the child. Talk with the child about what that behavior would look like at home or at school.

5. Play therapy

Play a game or play with dolls or people toys. Observe the child’s ability to empathize and express emotions. Use the play opportunity to role play a family situation.

Teens

1. Teach distress tolerance

Teach teens techniques for meditation and relaxation, focusing on positive aspects of painful situations, focus on present moment, awareness exercises.

2. Teach mindfulness and emotion regulation

Help teens identify stressors that trigger anxiety or anger. Explore beliefs and assumptions about stressors. Teach teens to be aware of what they are feeling and techniques to self-soothe. Lead teens through visioning exercises where they step back from reaction, think of their options, and make good choices. For more explanation of these techniques, see Marsha Linehan’s (1993) *Cognitive-Behavioral Therapy of Borderline Personality Disorder.*
3. **Relationship Map**

Have the teen build a relationship map that identifies who is most significant and who is closest to the teen. Identify where the teen would like to improve or build relationships. Talk about the teen’s strengths in the close relationships. How can she be that kind of friend or show some of those same behaviors with whom she wants to build relationships.

4. **Teach interpersonal and conflict resolution skills**

Teach the teen empathy and active listening skills, how to identify options, and how to ask for what he or she needs. Role-play and rehearse situations that are current conflicts the teen faces.
Section 7. Setting Goals with Client Families

Setting goals with Kids@Home client families is an important component of the program and your counselor role. The purpose of goal-setting is to provide a collaborative, strengths-based process that will actively build client awareness and skills to handle life’s stressful demands more productively. In Adlerian terms, the goal-setting process is about strengthening the client’s courage to cope with life’s challenges. Setting goals is a way to teach and build on client’s skills and thinking that support their resiliency. Goal-setting and planning help client families identify strengths and abilities and resources to leverage toward forward movement in their lives.

Identifying Client Family Goals & Success Measures

Goal-setting begins with conversations about what the stressors are in the client family’s lives and what kind of family environment is needed for family members to develop their resiliency and ability to make effective decisions and responsible behavior in the life situations they face.

There are a few things that the goal-setting process is not. It is not a deficit-based approach that looks at family conflict and at-risk behaviors as deviant or disordered and sets up punitive goals to control or punish others in the family system. It is also not an optimistic, “if you try hard enough, you can attain any goal” either. The other side of the coin of that thinking is “blaming the victim” for not achieving goals that one has set for oneself.

The goal-setting conversation is in the context of Adlerian framework and leverages the diagnostic and Adlerian Lifestyle Analysis tools referenced in Section 6. Using Adlerian life tasks works well in terms of looking holistically at the client family to set family goals. This means that the family counselor engages the client family in discussions about what is working
well and family strengths. It also asks the family to identify where there are stressors within the life tasks. The family counselor leads the family or parent to discuss how members behave and react to those stressors. The counselor can then explore with the family or parent, mistaken goals and the function (purpose) of the behavior. This helps the client understand his or her private logic and the operating system of the family.

Also, using the Circle of Courage resilience model (Brendtro, Brokenleg and Bockern, 1990), the counselor can then guide the client toward connecting reframed goals in the context of belonging, achievement, autonomy and social interest/altruism. This helps direct the client toward broader and deeper thinking around family and personal goals. Identifying Kids@Home goals in the context of the four protective resilience factors of belonging, achievement, autonomy, and social interest/altruism broadens goal-setting to more than problem-solving or achievement. It also brings in the context of the family environment as an aspect of goal-setting. (See the tip sheet at the end of this section for sample discussion questions to set the stage for goal-setting.)

With some Kids@Home families, the parent may decide to engage the entire family in the goal-setting process. In that case, the goal setting discussion is a family meeting. The discussion is in the context of building a resilient family environment, learning to manage relationships that support or stress the life space of the family (e.g. peer, school, community, neighbors, family), and identifying how to support individual members’ goals and needs.

In most cases, the goal-setting work is with the parents. A critical success factor for the goal-setting is that the client is identifying her goals and what would be different if the goals were implemented. The latter are measures of success. It is helpful to shape the success measures into specific outcomes. (See Sample Goal Template at the end of this section).
Leveraging Client Family Strengths in Client’s Plan of Action

In the diagnostic and assessment of the client family, the individual members and family strengths have been identified. This includes the family explaining what their behavior looks like when they are operating from their strengths. During the goal-setting and plan of action with the client, helping the client visualize and understand how to apply her strengths to the goal will encourage and cultivate the qualities and strengths that will make her successful in her movement forward.

Identifying Resources and Plan

Part of the planning process is helping clients identify outside resources (people, places, programs, service providers, internet sites) that would help clients with their outcomes and goals. This also includes the self-directed question around what the client can do and how can leverage his or her own strengths. That includes talking with the client about another time when the client did something that helped them accomplish a goal.

Another aspect of this part of the process is helping clients think of purposeful behavior that will help them accomplish their goals. “If you do that in the midst of the situation, what will happen?” Helping clients to be more reflective and able to step away from emotionally charged, stressful situations to choose more productive behaviors can be an important parenting goal.

Brainstorm first about all the options and things that the client could do to accomplish their goals. Then help the client choose which resources and options she would most like to access or put into practice. The outcomes of the goal-setting and planning process are that clients finish the process with a sense of hope that they will be successful, a plan for where to go for support and help, and a clear idea of small steps that they can put into practice that will help them accomplish her goals.
Tracking Client Progress

At the end of this section, there is a form to track the client family’s progress toward their Kids@Home goals. This can be a reference tool when reviewing client family goals and progress with Lynnette, the program director. It can also be used as a reference when evaluating and celebrating a client family’s progress while in the Kids@Home program. More explanation is given about progress evaluation and celebration in Section 10 of this manual.
# Kids@Home Goal Sheet

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Client</th>
<th>Goals</th>
<th>Progress Notes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Letisha</td>
<td>1. Complete nursing program</td>
<td>• Got A/B grades for term just finished</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2. Have back-up plan if loses job</td>
<td>• Taking summer off—will start classes again in August</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3. Move to larger space</td>
<td>• Moved to New Orleans townhome</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>4. Build more of a support network for childcare</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>5. Find a new apartment</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Helen</td>
<td>1. Complete early ed. Program</td>
<td>• Met with advisor – feels better about how much is left</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2. Delegate more responsibility to Casey</td>
<td>• Created responsibility with Casey</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3. Exercise and lose weight (osteoarthritis in knees)</td>
<td>• Lost 10 lbs.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>4. Carve out self-care time (very intense work, school, family schedule)</td>
<td>• Went out to dinner with friends</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>5. Build relationships outside family</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teresa /Sarah</td>
<td>1. Parenting skills positive discipline approaches</td>
<td>Teresa</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2. Improve health and self care</td>
<td>• Working on parenting in concrete situations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3. Address financial situation</td>
<td>• Went to doctor about medical condition</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sarah</td>
<td>1. Learn to manage emotions/anxiety</td>
<td>• Babysitting to make extra money</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2. Address lying issue</td>
<td>Sarah</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Practicing anxiety reduction techniques</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Understands impact of lying</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tanya</td>
<td>1. Help son find apt./job</td>
<td>Teresa</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2. Would like to go to college</td>
<td>• Completed 3/28 Goal setting session</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3. Continue “give back” work with other women</td>
<td>• Wasn’t able to connect in April</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>4. Find male companion (christian0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Section 8. Ethical Situations

During your internship with Kids@Home, you will be held responsible to follow the MFT (Marriage and Family Therapy) Code of Ethics. Other psychological associations to which you may belong have additional guidelines to follow, including the American Psychological Association (APA) and American Counseling Association (ACA). Your internship is the entrance into the professional community of psychology and therapy.

As a family counselor intern, you will encounter situations with Kids@Home client families that are in a grey area of ethical interpretation. These situations should be discussed with your Adler supervisor and with Lynnette. You may also want to reach out to your Adler student peers to make sure you are making a good decision about how to respond.

The ethical principle to follow is “do no harm” to the family members. Protecting the client relationship is the family counselor’s professional responsibility. There are also specific federal (HIPPA) and state laws that you must follow that protect clients; specifically, mandated reporting of suicide risk and child abuse, not having sexual relationships with clients, and maintaining client confidentiality.

Because you are conducting the counseling in the home of the client family, establishing professional boundaries are important. Once you step inside the home, you are entering an intimate “space” for the conversation. It is an ongoing challenge for any therapist to find the optimal distance and intimacy when working with clients in their home.

Another consideration is that the Kids@Home program selects participants from a diverse multicultural population in Richfield. The family counselor needs to be aware of assumptions he or she is making based on one’s gender, race, socioeconomic class, religion, age, or lifestyle preferences. Being mindful of your own values, beliefs, and preferences is another
aspect of maintaining a level of objectivity and professionalism that this type of relationship requires.

The rest of this section discusses various situations that you may encounter as a family counselor with the Kids@Home program. Included in the discussion are ethical considerations and options to consider. These are situational and dependent on where you are in your professional development, what kind of a relationship you have established with the client, and what decisions support your acting in good faith and in the best interests of the client family. For your own protection and the family’s protection, getting the advice of your supervisor and Lynnette would be a best practice before deciding on the appropriate response or action. The types of situations below are also ideal for discussion at the Kids@Home intern meeting or Adler’s internship class.

**Invited to Family Events**

Family counselors have the opportunity to create a strong bond with the client family over the course of time. The longer you work with the client family, the more likely it is that you will be invited at some point to a family activity or event. Diane’s experience included being invited by different families to the following: a dance recital, a baby shower, a birthday party, family dinners, and various school programs. The difficulty is that often children were at the center of these requests. They did not always understand how someone who is so familiar to them and visits them at home cannot attend an event that is important to them.

In the AAMFT Code of Ethics 1.3, it states that family therapists are to “make every effort to avoid conditions and multiple relationships with clients that could impair professional judgment or increase the risk of exploitation.” The family counselor intern could attend the
event in the counselor role. The Code of Ethics does not explicitly state that family therapists cannot attend a social event on behalf of a client.

Even though it was awkward and disappointing to the family, Diane turned down family invitations to keep the professional part of the relationship intact. Attending a family or school event in a personal setting seemed to her to cross a line into a role other than counselor or therapist. She felt that it sent the wrong message to attend any family event.

However, Diane also did want to honor the request to join the family in something important. She tried to find an alternative to connect with the occasion. In the case of the dance recital, she asked the teenager to show her part of the dance routine at her next family visit. The family turned it into an occasion, with one family member running the sound system, another family member substituting as her dance partner. In honor of the birthday party she missed, Diane came to the monthly meeting with the young girl’s favorite milkshake, took her picture with her mom, and gave her the picture as a keepsake at the next monthly meeting.

**Transportation Request**

While you want to avoid driving your client anywhere, clients that do not have car and rely on the bus system may need a ride for food or medicine. Diane had four transportation requests during her time as intern.

It is not unusual for Kids@Home clients to have transportation issues. The program allows for three clients to be on disability. There may be medical reasons why the client cannot drive or ride a bus easily. Some client families do not have cars, relying on the bus system for transportation. Also, the client’s car may break down and repair is delayed due to lack of financial resources.
The AAMFT Code of Ethics does not address this situation specifically either. Like invitations to family events, the question is about the extent to which the family counselor providing transportation creates a multiple role with the client. Even if you think that you are providing an additional service to your client, you still could be at risk in terms of liability if you were to have an accident with the client in the car. Whenever possible, find an alternative rather than drive the client anywhere.

**Gift-Giving**

Principle 3.10 of the AAMFT Code of Ethics states that family therapists “do not give to or receive from clients (a) gifts of substantial value or (b) gifts that impair the integrity or efficacy of the therapeutic relationship.” This is the guideline for you to follow with your Kids@Home clients.

You may encounter situations where you would like to provide something for celebrations of goal achievement or special events. Lynnette, the program director, has Target, restaurant, and gas gift cards available for you to use for that purpose.

You may also be given small gifts during the Christmas holiday. Lynnette, the program director, is not concerned about your accepting small presents if the gift is appropriate for the situation and you are comfortable with accepting it.

**Illegal Activity of Non-Family Members**

While working one-on-one with teenagers, you may encounter a situation where you learn about illegal activity in which your client’s friends are involved. As a counselor of youth, you can learn about all sorts of things that are going on around your client as you help he or she learn to make good choices and take care of themselves outside the home. This is another fine line around what to report and not report. You will need to decide if reporting anything outside
the family will jeopardize your relationship with the teen and could possibly bring harm to the teen. Even if you choose not to report something, you will want to inform Lynnette, the program director, about your concerns.

The Kids@Home director is located in the Richfield city building where the Richfield police also reside. Lynnette has a close working relationship with the police and knows how to work in that system effectively.

**Unsanitary or Hoarding Conditions in Home**

It may be that you encounter a home environment that is extremely dirty or has an unpleasant smell. You also may have a client who appears to struggle with hoarding behavior. The housing units of Kids@Home clients have had to pass an inspection prior to clients entering the program. The inspection requirements are listed in Section 1 of the manual. If the home condition is disconcerting to you, reference the inspection requirements. Lynnette does want the interns to apprise her if the quality of the property is not being maintained, whether that is the client’s fault or apartment manager’s responsibility.

**Contact After Leaving Kids@Home Program**

When the family counselor or the client family is leaving Kids@Home, the client may ask about keeping in contact. Like terminating therapy, the family counselor should maintain professional distance and not pursue a personal, social relationship with the former client.

If the family counselor is leaving the program, he or she must ensure that the client family has been transitioned to another family counselor when possible. 1.10 of the AAMFT Code of Ethics states that the family therapist does not “abandon or neglect clients in treatment without making reasonable arrangements for the continuation of such treatment.”
Section 9: Dealing With Crisis Situations

As your family counseling relationship with the family grows, the likelihood of your becoming involved in a client family crisis also increases. Kids@Home families, like any family, will experience stressful events that may escalate to a crisis point. Knowing how to direct the family to appropriate resources and how to support the family through the crisis are important aspects of the family counselor role.

In crisis mode, the client family may reach out to you outside the monthly meetings and ask for your help. You will need to decide the extent of your involvement, what may need to be reported, and your ethical responsibility as a professional mental health employee of Kids@Home. You also need to work closely with Lynnette when situations arise.

The following sections discuss some of the more common family crisis events that may occur while the family is in the Kids@Home program and ideas for how you can support families in difficult situations.

At the end of this section is a model and summary from Crisis Counseling by H. Norman Wright (1993). This model can be useful as you help clients deal with the emotional impact of crisis situations.

Financial Situation

Kids@Home families are on tight budgets. If the car breaks down or a medical situation arises where costs are not covered, the family faces an immediate problem of meeting their monthly expense obligations. The Christmas holiday is also another time of year where families have difficulty paying their bills, especially January and February after extra spending in December.
A common issue to deal with is client families not having funds for car repair. One of our clients had her car break down at her job site in St. Louis Park. She rode the bus to get home in time to meet her daughters coming home from school. However, she did not have the money to have the car towed to a repair shop. She also did not have the money to have it repaired. If she spent money repairing the car, she would not be able to pay her portion of rent. As a housecleaner, she did not have a car to drive to the buildings that she cleaned. Riding a bus to her work sites significantly limited her time and ability to earn money. It is common for this kind of domino effect to happen for client families when a significant unexpected expense happens.

Clients may make decisions not to pay their portion of the rent sometimes. This may or may not be something the client discusses with you. If the client does not pay her rent, the apartment manager typically calls Lynnette about the situation before court action is taken. If court action is taken, an eviction notice will be sent to the client.

There also may be reasons other than unexpected expenses or monthly shortfall in earnings. It may be that the client is having a dispute with the apartment manager (e.g. heat needs to be turned up) or having a large bill due that month that she paid instead (e.g. taxes, college fees, driver’s education or other school program). Kids@Home will exhaust all resources the program has to address the situation before court action is taken.

You may have insight into the client’s situation that could be helpful. If so, talk with Lynnette about it. The two of you may decide that you are the best person to follow up with the client. If the non-payment issue goes to court and the client still does not pay the rent, the client will be terminated from the Kids@Home program. They can reapply to Kids@Home if they pay the landlord the amount that is owed.
When clients are in need of extra financial assistance, one option is for clients to elect to use the extra payment option in the Kids@Home program. Two times during the 36 month assistance program, clients can opt to have a larger Kids@Home rental payment related to the first year monthly flat payment. There may also be emergency resources at VEAP for transportation and car repair.

It would also be useful to direct the client to Richfield and Bloomington resources. VEAP provides a five day supply of food and gift cards for gasoline. United Way has emergency funding as well (phone number 411). Lynnette has also been able to provide gift cards for food or gasoline when families are in a financial crisis.

**Job Loss**

If a Kids@Home family loses its income due to a parent’s job loss, the program will provide more financial assistance and support during the transition time of looking for another job. If a parent is still not employed or in a training program after 30 days, the family will need to request to remain on the program.

If the client loses her job, Kids@Home needs to be notified immediately. You will need to meet twice a month with the client to help them with job goal setting, transition planning, and connections with resources.

Two helpful resources in the Richfield area include the WorkForce Center in Bloomington and the Multicultural Development Center in Richfield. The WorkForce Center provides job re-training, resume-writing, and job search classes. The Multicultural Development Center is especially helpful to those with English as a second language. Their services include resume writing, ESL and computer classes, and job search support.
Family Violence or Abuse

In rare cases, there may be a family crisis related to a conflict between the child and parent, among siblings, or around visitors in the home. The argument can escalate to a threat or an act of violence. It could happen that weapons, like a gun or knife, could be involved. There can also be physical harm from fighting among family members or family members with others. It is may happen that there is fighting with neighbors.

There also could be physical, sexual, or emotional abuse occurring in the client family home. In one case, a teen girl was raped by her brother’s friend, who was staying overnight. In another case, a teen was slapped multiple times and yelled at in front of her friends by her mother’s ex-husband.

It is extremely unlikely that you will personally witness these types of events. It is also unlikely that families will ignore escalated violence or abuse. In most cases, someone calls the police. Teens may end up in juvenile court. A county social worker may get involved.

Your role may be more focused on helping the family repair and restore after a difficult event where family members were hurt. You may also need to help the family with setting boundaries and family rules/guidelines. You may also want to facilitate a family discussion where members talk through their emotions and thoughts to understand each other better.

School Truancy or School Suspension

To meet a requirement of Kids@Home, children of the client family must attend school regularly. There have been different situations among Kids@Home families related to school truancy or suspension that have needed intervention by the K@H family counselor. One scenario is that you suspect that the children are not attending school as they should. The Kids@Home program has permission to check on K@H children’s school attendance. The
K@H program also periodically checks attendance. If you suspect that there are attendance issues, call and discuss with Lynnette.

Another situation you may face is a teen running away from home or staying with a relative or friend outside Richfield and not attending school. If this happens, you need to discuss the situation with Lynnette and report it to her as soon as you know about the situation. The parent also needs to report the situation to police and also to check with relatives and friends to be aware of the situation and to enlist their support.

Finally, if there are problems with a child’s school suspension or poor attendance, you can work with the parents on their becoming more involved with the school. Some parents need the family counselor to role play conversations with the principal or people in authority at school. Some parents need education around positive parenting strategies and around understanding their child’s mistaken goals and the function (purpose) of their behavior. The parent may need to work out alternative ways for her child to make up school work or enlist tutoring or other types of support if related to a learning problem. In general, further punishment for school issues only escalates rather than resolves the crisis situation.

**Suicide Risk**

As family counselor, you may encounter a parent or a child who is not functioning well due to depression and may indicate to you that he or she is contemplating suicide. If the parent or child is self-reporting their suicidal thoughts or self-destructive behavior, you need to assist him or her in finding immediate treatment. This could include in-patient or outpatient treatment programs. Also, work with the parent or child to have a “support” plan (e.g. list of specific things to do and people to reach out to).
If a child tells you that he or she is having suicidal thoughts, you need to have a conversation with the parent and then with the parent and the child immediately. Connecting the client family to the resources that will help them is critical. Also, be sure that the parent knows to call 911 if a situation escalates. HCMC has a well known walk in center for suicide prevention. Their number is (612)873-2222. Also, there is a 24 hour Teen Suicide Hotline that could be helpful, too. That number is (952) 442-7601.

This is a situation where you need to inform Lynnette. You also should let your Adler supervisor know about the situation. Your supervisor may have further guidance.

Another scenario is that the suicide crisis happens and the family takes action without your knowledge. Kids@Home families have experienced suicide attempts of family members. We have also had family members enter into residential treatment programs. In these cases, you may or may not be involved. In most cases, families follow up themselves with their medical doctor and psychotherapist for treatment.

The family may request that you visit the teen while in a residential or in–patient program or request that you play a role in the child’s treatment plan. After the crisis event, it will be important for you to talk with the family and with the teen about the best way to support the family as they move forward through this difficult situation.
# CHANGE AND CRISIS SEQUENCE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TIME</th>
<th>Hours</th>
<th>Days</th>
<th>Weeks</th>
<th>Months</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>RESPONSE</td>
<td>Fight or flight</td>
<td>Anger, fear, guilt, rage</td>
<td>Positive thoughts begin</td>
<td>Hope</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>THOUGHT</td>
<td>Numbness, disoriented</td>
<td>Ambiguity, uncertainty</td>
<td>Problem-solving</td>
<td>Consolidation of problem-solving</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DIRECTION</td>
<td>Search for lost object (denial)</td>
<td>Bargaining or detachment (denial of pain)</td>
<td>Search for new object (for meaning)</td>
<td>Reattachment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BEHAVIOR</td>
<td>Reminiscence</td>
<td>Perplexed</td>
<td>Focused exploration</td>
<td>Reality testing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GUIDANCE</td>
<td>• Accept feelings</td>
<td>• Support spiritual insight</td>
<td>• Use learning as opp for growth</td>
<td>Reinforce hope</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
  • Reflect--be patient
  • "Why?"-cry of protest
  • Forgets easily
  • Task-oriented direction

---

## WHAT IS A CRISIS?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CHARACTERISTICS OF CRISIS</th>
<th>Types of Losses</th>
<th>Types of Losses</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• A crucial point in time</td>
<td>• Hits without warning</td>
<td>• Real or concrete</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• A turning point in the course of anything</td>
<td>• It threatens security</td>
<td>• Abstract: love, hope, ambition, control</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• A time of change</td>
<td>• The resolution is uncertain</td>
<td>• Imagined</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• A time of either despair or opportunity</td>
<td>• It presents dilemmas</td>
<td>• Threatened</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• A pivotal point in a person's life</td>
<td>• It erodes self confidence</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• A crisis up close removes us from being a spectator to becoming a participant</td>
<td>• It helps us define our values</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Section 10: Acknowledging and Celebrating Client Family Progress

One of the most encouraging and supportive things that family counselors can do is to recognize when families make progress toward their goals. It is important to recognize and celebrate small steps of accomplishment.

It is also a good practice to establish quarterly or six month goal check-in discussions. The purpose of this kind of conversation is for the family counselor and the client family to talk together about progress, about actions and “small steps” which family members have taken related to the family goals. This kind of family feedback session can be useful to build more connection and support among family members. It also re-sets the family purpose around the goals and reinforces what they are proud of in terms of strengths, progress, and accomplishments.

A change management principle is to build on small accomplishments. Have the family identify what is working well and where they have made progress. Help the family consider how they could do more of the kinds of behavior and actions that are working for them. If there were mistakes, talk about them in the context of what everyone learned from the experience. Creating a family environment of support is the most critical factor for building resiliency in at-risk children.

It is also important to celebrate when the family or parent achieves a family goal. It can be a fun activity to plan with the family how they will celebrate their accomplishment. One family decided to cook an authentic Mexican meal together and invited the family counselor to join them.

Kids@Home may also have a restaurant gift card or coupon for the family that the family counselor can use or give to the family. In one case, the family counselor took Starbucks’s
Frappacinos for all the children and the mother to celebrate their moving into a rental home. It had been the client’s goal for two years to save enough money and to find a home to rent that could accommodate her three daughters, had a back yard, and provided more of a home environment rather than an apartment complex. The family counselor and the family celebrated with a house and back yard tour and by giving a “toast” to the new home and the family’s accomplishment.

As a family counselor, your observations and encouragement about the client family’s strengths and progress are meaningful and important to the Kids@Home families. In some cases, these parents come from homes where their parents may not have done a lot of validating or recognition of positive qualities. Acknowledging and celebrating family progress is a good model for families to learn that promotes positive parenting and contributes to a supportive family environment.
Section 11: Transitioning Clients To A Different K@H Family Counselor Intern

One of the best aspects of Kids@Home is that K@H family counselor interns have the opportunity to build a relationship over time with family members in the program. In some cases, the family counselor intern may become integral to the family’s decision-making, to understanding their needs for support, and even in helping families navigate a crisis.

In-home therapy is an intimate experience. As family counselors, we are coming into their living space. We are stepping into the world where they live. Having conversations with family members in their homes is a different context and a different environment than in a clinic or office setting. Therefore, it is important to transition families to a different family counselor in a respectful, caring way.

It is the responsibility of the departing family counselor to ensure that the transition to a new family counselor is seamless. It is also important to set up the new family counselor for success with the family.  

Bringing Closure to the Relationship

Like bringing closure with a therapy client, K@H family counselors will need to bring closure with the K@H families that they have worked with. Aspects of closure to consider include the following: 1) explaining why you will be leaving the program (or why client is reassigned), 2) emphasizing the family strengths and accomplishments/growth you’ve observed while working with them, 3) explaining how the contact with you will be going forward, 4) reinforcing that the level of support from K@H program is not changing, 5) introducing the transition meeting and the new family counselor.
Transitioning K@H Clients Tip Sheet

Family Counselor Transition Process

- Leaving counselor meets with family and tells them about transition to another family counselor and sets up Transition meeting (closure conversation)
- Leaving counselor and new counselor meet prior to the Transition meeting to prepare for the hand off.
- Leaving counselor and new counselor have a Transition meeting with the family client.

Leaving Counselor Intern: Closure Conversation (Leaving Counselor and Family)

- Explain why you will be leaving the program (or why client is re-assigned)
- Emphasize the family strengths and accomplishments/growth you’ve observed while working with them
- Explain how the contact with you will be going forward
- Reinforce that the level of support from K@H program is not changing
- Introduce the transition meeting and the new family counselor.

Leaving & New Family Counselor Intern Meeting to Prepare for Transition

The leaving counselor intern will provide the following information to the new counselor:

- Give the new counselor information about the family, including transfer of the client folder,
- Provide historical context about the family’s experience in Kids@Home program
- Share the family client’s goals and plans, and progress against those goals
Transitioning K@H Clients Tip Sheet

- Provide an understanding of how you have supported the family, including any therapeutic treatment you have provided.

*See sample materials on next page.*

Transition Meeting

Leaving counselor intern should facilitate and lead the conversation with the client family and the new counselor intern.

- Introductions
- Connecting “Chit-Chat”
- Joining conversation about the client family’s goals and progress against those goals
- How to best schedule monthly meetings. New counselor sets up the follow up to get the next monthly meeting scheduled
- Emphasis on the continued support of Kids@Home program
- Leave on an ending note of encouragement and gratitude
Kids@Home Family Transition Information

Program Participant (usually Parent): ________________________________

Age: ________________

Birth date: ________________

CONTACT INFORMATION

Address: ____________________________

Telephone: ________________________ (Home)

_________________________________ (Cell)

Email: ________________________________

Preferred way of contact (circle)  Home phone  Cell phone  Email

Job:

Company or Institution _________________________  Job Responsibility _________________________

Company or Institution _________________________  Job Responsibility _________________________

Education

Highest Degree Achieved ________________________________

Medical Conditions/Health Status
Kids@Home Family Transition Information

Brief Description of Family of Origin

Years in Kids@Home Program  _______________

Other Adults in Family

Names & Ages
1. ________________________________
2. ________________________________

Family Members

Children Names & Ages (in birth order)
1. (Oldest) ________________________________
2. ________________________________
3. ________________________________
4. ________________________________
5. ________________________________

Any Comments/Observations about Client’s Family
**Kids@Home Family Transition Information**

**K@H Family Goals**

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**Family Strengths**

**Treatment Notes**

**Other Notes/Comments**
References


