THE JOURNEY



Child Care Services

Serving ALL Children in our community

Independent Living

Residential & independence programs for adults with disabilities



TRANSITIONING FROM FEAR TO FAMILY LIVING INDEPENDENTLY THROUGH UPS AND DOWNS THE JOURNEY FALL 2022 A PUBLICATION OF FRASER, LTD.

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FRASER, LTD'S MISSION

Supporting children, youth and adults on their life's journey toward independence.

CHILDREN'S SERVICES

Fraser childcare isn't for special needs children, but all children. Our facility is one of the few inclusionary daycares in the community, which means every child here experiences an atmosphere that embraces diversity and promotes acceptance—both vital to building empathy and contributing to an inclusive society.

TRANSITIONAL YOUTH SERVICES

Our Transitional Youth Services are vital resources for at-risk and homeless youth in our community. We provide life's necessities and support during crisis and guide youth on their journey to independence. We achieve this by giving homeless youth access to day-to-day necessities, providing mental health services, and offering temporary and permanent supportive housing—all with coaching, guidance and support every step of the way.

ADULT SERVICES

We believe that regardless of physical or developmental challenges, we all deserve a safe place to call home, support for independence, and the opportunities to contribute to this great community. That's why we provide residential support, life skills, and community integration opportunities to individuals with a wide range of challenges, including dementia, autism spectrum disorder, hearing loss and vision loss.

VALLEY HOPE COUNSELING SERVICES

Since 2012, Fraser, Ltd. Valley Hope Counseling has been providing confidential outpatient mental health therapy to those utilizing Fraser's services in addition to the public. Our therapists specialize in trauma-based therapy approaches. Our facility offers a comfortable atmosphere for all ages, individuals, couples and families. **Call 701-232-3301 for an appointment.**

DIRECTOR'S CORNER

with Sandra Leyland

Greetings!

Tyranny—perhaps a strange word to use at the beginning of a magazine focused on family and children.

But, just maybe when the articles concentrate on fear, lack of family or foundational support, and poor mental and behavioral health issues the perception of tyranny has the



potential to be considered a real thing, alive today in our society.

Consider the statement by author Timothy Snyder "History does not repeat, but it does instruct". In this quote, he's referring to the rise and fall of democracy and goes on to suggest that many people assume our democratic heritage automatically protects us from many evils. He considers this to be a "misguided reflex" and says we are as vulnerable as the Europeans who saw their democracies yield to fascism, Nazism, or communism in the twentieth century. To learn from others' experiences Snyder suggests twenty lessons from the 20th century that are applicable today.

The current economy and workforce issues are creating problems for us all. As an organization within an industry reliant on a healthy workforce and dependent on donations to provide services to marginalized populations, his words and a few of his "lessons" resonated with me and our current state of affairs.

Especially on the heels of a pandemic from which the world still finds itself in recovery. This aftermath directly impacts the quality of life for people with disabilities and those disenfranchised. It lessons a service provider's ability to give them a level of care that allows dignity of risk, individual choice, and their right to live in an environment least restrictive and person-centered. In short, if we cut off these impacted individuals' access to these fundamental rights we take away their ability to be empowered and self-directed. We have built upon decades of services to give our targeted populations a purpose in life, which ultimately gives them the capability to give back to a society that periodically supports them. Will the economy and lack of a workforce dedicated to human services be our downfall?

Snyder's lessons such as "Be calm when the unthinkable arrives" we have recently been there. "Remember professional ethics"... hmmm, a colleague recently commented on the cannibalistic antics surrounding the current pilfering of employees. Another is, "Contribute to good causes"—be active in organizations that express your view of life and help others to do good.

A lesson that rang clear; "Be as courageous as you can". Snyder suggests that if none of us is prepared to die for freedom, we will die under tyranny. Can the same be said of speaking up and advocating for those who find themselves homeless, or cognitively and emotionally challenged? Or how about those who are at risk of other injustices and still need to be afforded the resources that will keep them in the mainstream and not pushed decades backward in history? Finally, Snyder points

out the lesson to STAND OUT. Someone has to. He tells us to "Remember Rosa Parks. The moment you set an example, the spell of the status quo is broken, and others will follow".

Pastor Martin Niemoller wrote, "First They Came. First, they came for the Communists and I did not speak out because I was not a Communist. Then they came for the Socialists and I did not speak out because I was not a Socialist. Then they came for the trade unionists and I did not speak out because I was not a Trade Unionist. Then they came for the Jews and I did not speak out because I was not a Jew. Then they came for me and there was no one left to speak out for me."

We are speaking up for those who cannot. We invite you to "DO GOOD" by supporting nonprofits during a difficult time and we are courageous in our pursuits to maintain quality services when it appears that things are taking on a different form around us.

As always we appreciate your continued support of our mission and THANK YOU for contributing to a cause we hold close in our hearts.

Remembering the Season, we wish you Happy Holidays,

Sandra Leyland CEO & President, Fraser, Ltd.



For more than 125 years, Fraser has served the Fargo community as a champion of children, youth, and adults on their path to independence. Now we prepare for another century of success - we do so by securing \$16 million over the next 10 years. You can be a part of that legacy.

For more information about The Fraser Foundation, please call: 701-232-3301

It Takes a Team

Navigating first-time parenthood and the special needs of a special child

As one of the few inclusionary childcare facilities in our community, our Fraser team prides itself on creating a place where all children can thrive regardless of abilities.

Ray has been attending our daycare for two years. During complications from a surgery, he suffered a brain injury, making his needs more unique than some of his peers.

"As first-time parents and parents of a child with extra needs, Fraser has helped us make sure Ray is getting his daily needs met and they have always been willing to work with us through challenges he has or new transitions," said Ray's mother. "They help us with our needs of brace wearing, an altered diet as well as the stretching and playing he needs."

Fraser uses a special chair with Ray that allows him to sit and eat as well as a stroller for when they play outside.

"Outside time is one of his favorites," Ray's mom said. "The team has made sure he has a stroller that he can sit in to see and feel part of the action and there is a swing that he has so much fun in! Some of the biggest smiles we see are from his time in the swing."

The team ensures Ray can participate in the same activities as his peers. Fraser's program offers art, learning, music, play, and outside time to ensure each child gets a well-rounded experience.

"He participates in everything his peers do and that has helped him to learn and grow," Ray's mom said. "He socializes and loves to see his friends. It's been a stimulating environment and one that has helped him feel included and loved!"

The open and transparent communication between Fraser childcare and Ray's parents also plays a part in creating a cohesive team for him that helps him succeed. The team communicates needs, concerns and issues to create an inclusive and successful experience. In addition to his day-to-day activities, Fraser also works with Ray's therapists to ensure his goals at daycare match his goals at therapy. "They truly work to cater to the individual needs of the children they work with," Ray's mom said.

In fact, Fraser works alongside all parents of the children, addressing any concerns they may have about their child's development, answering questions, providing information, and if needed, referring them to a local agency for further developmental assessment. It's all part of creating an environment that offers the support that each individual child needs to thrive.

"We are very grateful for the past two years with Fraser and appreciate all of the opportunities that they have provided for our son. We feel at ease knowing the team has our back and they know we will always work with them!"

This means the world to us as it puts us at ease knowing he is not only getting the care he needs but that he is thriving and being stimulated to participate in activities with his peers.



Another Fraser childcare family shares how these experiences have helped their children grow.

How does Fraser support the needs of your child?

Fraser staff does a great job at supporting our youngest child (2), by helping with potty training and working on time without her pacifier. With our older, four-year-old they support her in her growth and development by taking her on field trips and working on different skills. Ultimately, the biggest support I see is that Fraser staff is always greeting our children with a smile and excitement which means the world to our daughters.

What does that mean to you?

To us as parents it means everything. It's easy to be comfortable with a place that genuinely cares about what they do and the children they care for.

How has that impacted your family?

As a family, since moving to Fraser our life has greatly improved. We have zero doubt that our children are at a safe and loving place.

How has this impacted your child?

Both our children get so excited to go to daycare now. They no longer cry when we drop them off or get sad in the morning when it's time to go. Our youngest child's language skills have drastically improved during her time at Fraser.

Family can often be described as a foundational support system. Do you feel like the team at Fraser helps to create that foundational support for your child and your family?

Absolutely. The communication we get from Fraser, whether it be a good day or a bad day, allows us as parents to either reinforce their behavior or correct it. We love that they care enough to tell the truth instead of allowing behaviors to happen and not inform us.

What do you feel are the biggest things Fraser does to provide that foundational support?

Communication and interaction with the children. I always feel that the staff is in tune with the children and paying attention to them throughout the day.

What are some of your child's favorite things to experience at Fraser's childcare?

Both kids absolutely love the water days during the summer. We started pretty late during the summer, but our oldest child is already looking forward to next summer and getting to do more field trips and activities.

What is the No. 1 thing people should know about Fraser's childcare services?

They care. Coming from a childcare facility where we felt our children were ignored, this was incredibly apparent. From the classroom staff to the director it's apparent that the kids come first. To us, hearing how our kids talk about the teachers and watching their interactions during dropoff and pickup is spectacular.



Transitioning From Fear to Family

Erica Markle, TYS administrator, discusses how Fraser becomes family to homeless youth in our area

A family means having the loving support and encouragement of those closest to you. It's the people who cheer you on at the basketball games and the shoulders you can cry on when life gets challenging. For homeless youth in our community, their experience of family is very different. Fortunately for many, Fraser becomes their family. Our Transitional Youth Services gives homeless youth, ages 16 to 26, access to life's necessities, provides mental health services, and offers temporary and permanent supportive housing—all with coaching, guidance and support every step of the way.

"Being a homeless youth in our community comes with many challenges aside from obtaining life's basic necessities," said Erica Markle, Transitional Youth Services administrator. "Many struggle in school because they may also need to help provide for their family by working, making it difficult to complete their school work. They also may have to deal with ongoing mental illness, being bullied at school, or taking care of their younger siblings."

On the social front, homeless youth often don't have opportunities to engage in social activities and developmentally, they're forced to "grow up" faster than their peers. They've experienced trauma and had to focus on surviving, which doesn't leave room for developing positive peer relationships, respect and care for one's self, education, and character development.

"These individuals come to us with little to no support system," Markle said. "The idea of family is often associated with hurt and misunderstanding. They feel alone in the world and have a difficult time trusting others and opening up about their feelings." These unique challenges can have a lasting and detrimental impact on youth. Adolescence and young adulthood is a developmentally critical part in an individual's life as they're beginning to see themselves in the context of society. Many homeless youth have low self-esteem as well as poor social relationships and have never felt safe enough to focus on these areas. Their focus has been on meeting their basic needs, such as finding a place to sleep for the night and making sure they eat.

Fraser's Transitional Youth Services offers the support system that helps homeless youth meet their basic needs and focus on growth.

"You will hear both the youth and the staff talk about our 'Fraser Family," Markle said. "That means our staff ensures individuals know they are cared about and that they matter. We go to their important events and cheer them on. Many times, we are their only guests in attendance."

The team also attends graduation ceremonies, helps individuals move into their apartments, celebrates their birthdays, hosts their baby showers, and hosts holiday events such as Thanksgiving dinner.

"They know they are always welcome at the table and that we truly care and that has an incredible impact," Markle said.

Markle added that youth learn to celebrate their accomplishments, that they deserve to be celebrated, and that they matter. Through this growth youth get to experience some big accomplishments and milestones, including graduating high school, getting their GED, going to college and becoming parents. Many also give back by becoming advocates and offering support to their peers in the program.

"We see many youth go on to become more financially secure and donate to Fraser," Markle said. "They also take time to share their stories with the new youth, giving them hope."

Many also come to Fraser for additional support, such as asking a Fraser team member to go to events like Pride in the Park, when they are scared of going themselves.

"It's really exciting to hear from people who no longer need our services. They share photos of their pets and children and give us updates on their life and milestones they have made."

For many homeless youth, Fraser is the only family they have.

"One client told me they never had a family before and that they were passed around the system," Markle said. "They experienced suicidal ideation and felt like life didn't matter. Eventually, they learned to trust us and understood that we truly are there for support."

Family doesn't always include those who raised you. It includes those who care about you, who you can count on, and who want the best for you.

Unfortunately, there are many homeless youth in our community who don't have this. Last year Fraser served 171 clients in our seasonal shelter, 100 youth in our housing programs, and more than 800 individuals in our drop-in center.

"The youth in our housing and seasonal shelter are coming from homelessness or unsafe living situations," Markle said. "Without our housing and shelter, you would see more families on the streets or in their cars with nowhere else to go. Without our drop-in center, you would see families and individuals without access to their basic needs. We have to seek medical attention for many of the youth we receive in the winter months due to the harsh climate outside."

Without services like ours, it's likely many of the clients we serve would not be here.

The Art of Humanity Sock & Glove Drive V

Fraser, Ltd. will be accepting donations of new adult *warm* socks, and adult *warm* gloves this holiday season. They both will be distributed to homeless youth and young adults utilizing Fraser, Ltd.'s services.

Drop off your donation at **The Art of Humanity: Empathy Tree** during our 22nd Annual Festival of Trees, taking place Nov. 11th - Dec. 2nd at the Fargodome or at Fraser, Ltd. 2902 South University Drive, Fargo.



FESTIVAL OF TREES

Now more than ever, donations are needed to help keep youth, and their children safe, and warm during Fraser, Ltd.'s Extended Hours program. Visit our website to donate and learn more.



NOVEMBER 28TH - DECEMBER 9TH



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Living Independently Through Ups and Downs

Our Independent Living team strives to be a guide for adults with intellectual disabilities while allowing their independence to thrive, from community involvement to making medical decisions. Tom, one of our individuals supported by the Fraser team has been part of his support system for almost 30 years, helping with finances, independent living skills, and ongoing medical needs. Today, that support has been more important to his success than ever.

"We've pretty much been like family for Tom throughout the years," said Kris Baumann, Fraser health services administrator. "And when things get really tough, that's when family becomes everything. Tom is facing kidney failure but has a medical plan and the support of our team to help him navigate this journey."

When Tom received his kidney failure diagnosis, Fraser nursing was there to help him understand the severity of the situation. They attended every appointment with him and helped educate and support him in making difficult medical decisions. He asked good questions and had to make life-changing decisions to improve his quality of life such as which type of dialysis would best fit his lifestyle. He also had to commit to strict diet changes, get his diabetes under control, and decide if he wanted to have a kidney transplant.

"It was a lot for anyone to deal with, but our team did a great job ensuring Tom understood the situation and all of his options," Baumann said.

Tom had many appointments and surgical procedures as well as meetings with several medical professionals to attempt to qualify for a spot on the kidney transplant list. After a year of appointments and tests, Tom was denied, but he did not give up.

He continued going to dialysis and following doctor recommendations, then after almost three years, Tom got a second chance. Tom was referred to the University of Minnesota Fairview for a kidney transplant! He and Fraser nursing met with the transplant team and it was determined he'd be a good candidate for a kidney transplant.

Tom has a long journey between pre- and post-transplant and will need education and support from the Fraser team to make informed decisions about his medical care. The nursing team, along with Tom's family, will be with him during and after his transplant to ensure he has the support he needs. Tom is close to his family, but they do not live in town, so when needed, Fraser steps in and provides support for his ongoing medical needs. The Fraser team takes him to visit his parents regularly and speaks with them daily. Fraser nursing also provides emotional and health needs as well as updates Tom's family regularly.

"Fraser has caring and supportive staff throughout the agency," Baumann said. "The people we support are very important to us and they are the reason we come to work every day."

In October of this year, Tom visited the U of M medical center for a full day of medical tests and to meet the transplant team in person. The plan for Tom's transplant will be determined when he completes the onsite evaluation.



Holiday Cheer or Holiday Fear Managing Complex Feelings During the Holiday Season

The holidays are supposed to be cheery and bright, right? But, let's be honest, a great deal of us also fear the holidays. We fear it for an endless amount of reasons. whether it be that one family member you can't stand to be around; you feel pressured to provide presents for everyone even though you don't have the budget to do so; the travel time alone is more than you get to spend with the people you love; reminders of lost loved ones or tragedies; or it's your turn to host but you hate the idea of people invading your space. Whatever your reason for fearing the holidays, it's completely valid. You have every reason and right to feel that way.

So, what now? What can we possibly do with these complex feelings of wanting to be cheerful but also being fearful of the holiday season? Everyone's initial thoughts are to just 'suck it up and deal with it,' to 'put on a happy face,' to essentially put your feelings aside for everyone else's. What if we didn't have to do that? Is it possible to make it through the holiday season without the fear, frustration, and stress? It is absolutely possible.

Be open and honest with yourself

We can make it through the holiday season by being completely honest and open with ourselves and others about our feelings and needs. Identify your feelings and any reasons why you could possibly feel that way. Let yourself know that it is completely okay to feel whatever it is that you're feeling (e.g. I am feeling overwhelmed with having to attend so many holiday events, and it's okay I feel this way). Validating that feeling By Abbie Anderson, LCSW

alone can relieve a lot of the intensity associated with that feeling.

Identify your needs

Needs are the things that will make your life easier and relieve any of the feelings that you have. For example, if you feel pressured to buy everyone presents, but just don't have the budget for it, your need might be to not buy anyone presents or just a select few. After you have identified what your feelings and needs are, you can open up to those around you and begin to set boundaries.

Be open and honest with others

Now, be honest with those around you about your feelings, let them know that you try to be cheerful during the holidays, but you also feel sad because of a significant loss you've had over the holidays in the past. Let those people know what you need, which might mean you have to miss out on their event this year or only attend for a short time. People are a lot more understanding than we tend to give them credit for.

Set boundaries

By letting those around you know what your feelings and needs are, you are setting a boundary. Say you are feeling that dread of having to travel hours away with a car full of kids to attend one event. You can set the boundary that this year you won't be traveling and want to have a quieter holiday season with your immediate family. This will let those you tell know not to invite you to any events or not to expect you to show up. By letting people know what your feelings and needs are, you can get your needs met while also setting a boundary for everyone else.

The holiday season can be a great time of year but incredibly stressful and accompanied by many complex feelings. It's okay that you have these complex feelings. Just remember to relieve some of that holiday fear, identify your feelings, validate them, identify your needs, and set boundaries where you need to. This will set your holiday season up to be less stressful and more successful.



Valley Hope Counseling

For Appointments Call 701-232-3301 www.fraserltd.org





NOVEMBER 11TH - DECEMBER 2ND AT THE FARGODOME

FESTIVAL OF TREES

Over 160 beautifully decorated artificial Christmas trees will be on display for your viewing pleasure during day hours and Fargodome events.



Proceeds from this event support our diverse programs all with one mission, children, at-risk and homeless youth, and adults with intellectual disabilities.

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