

Sarah

I am a former resident of the shelter and a participant in the Transition to Independent Living Program at Alternatives for Girls. I've been identified as a homeless youth since February 2008. I turned to AFG when I had no where else to go, when all my resources were scarce, and my emotional state was at its all-time low. I was struggling with a strained relationship with my parents and with myself.

Being the product of a birth mother who was a drug addict, a prostitute, and a father who was in and out jail, some say I've been flawed since birth. I had no support, out here in the streets only 16 yrs old. I hopped from shelter to shelter. My grades became deplorable and my self-esteem plummeted.

Since being a participant at Alternatives for Girls, I've grown into a leader in my community. I can honestly look someone in the eyes and say "Never give up when the road may seem rocky, and



A baby in our Shelter plays while her mother studies for AFG life skills courses.

never throw yourself a pity party if no one is going to attend." I know how to prioritize and respect people from all walks of life. My relationship with my parents is healing and the relationship that I have within is growing stronger day by day.

AFG has been a major support system in attaining my goals. In fact I recently completed my first year at Saint Augustine's College in Raleigh, North Carolina.

AFG has helped me realize that with faith, hard work and the correct resources nothing is impossible.



A Peer Educator meets with her team



CFC #39309

Natalie, AFG Peer Educator:

"I've been a part of Alternatives For Girls as a Peer Educator for two-and-a-half years now. I have made a difference in the lives of countless young women, and I wake up every day proud that I am impacting my community in a positive way."

Helping homeless and high-risk girls and young women

Growing Powerful Lives



AlternativesForGirls.org



Even in the midst of storms and rain, you need to realize that your trials are only temporary. You're going to come out of it, but it's up to you to make yourself a better person, because you hold your own power. -Giselle, former Shelter resident



Alternatives For Girls helps homeless and high-risk girls and young women avoid violence, teen pregnancy and exploitation, and helps them to explore and access the support, resources, and opportunities necessary to be safe, to grow strong and to make positive choices in their lives.

Prevention

AFG's Prevention Program serves girls ages 5-18 who are at risk of pregnancy, gang involvement, abusing drugs or alcohol and school truancy. We engage them through mentoring, after-school programs, a teen leadership program, and a summer camp.

- 70% of girls and young women participating in after-school workshops maintained a 3.0 gpa or increased their gpa by .5. last year
- 96% of girls and young women participating in after-school workshops report an increase in self-esteem
- 100% of young women old enough to graduate from high school not only graduated, but went on to college--10 years running

Shelter

AFG's Shelter Program provides a stable home, counseling, and life skills training to homeless young women aged 15-21 and their children. The goal is to empower them to lead productive and fulfilling lives.

- AFG sheltered 172 homeless young women and their children last year
- Last year, 7,607 nights of care were provided to homeless young women and children
- Last year, 64 residents obtained permanent housing; 17 obtained gainful employment; 19 residents enrolled in an educational program, and 7 residents were accepted into college

Outreach

AFG's Outreach Program helps teens and women engaged in high-risk activities, such as street-based prostitution, drug use, and gang involvement, to understand the risks of such activities and transition to safe choices and healthy lives.

- Last year, AFG's Outreach Program provided 6,128 youth and women on the streets and in the community with support and resources
- AFG's unique Peer Education program trains teens to reach out to other youth and educate them about the risks involved in sexual activity, violence, drug use, and more.

History

Alternatives For Girls (AFG) started in the mid-1980s as a grassroots effort by southwest Detroit community members who became alarmed at the increase in drug use, homelessness, prostitution and street activity by girls and young women. AFG started as a volunteer-run, five-bed emergency shelter for young women in a local church. AFG has since evolved into a multi-service agency serving over 5,000 homeless and at-risk girls and women each year. We have three programs: Prevention, Shelter, and Outreach.

Visit us!

Twice each month, we open our doors and invite the community to get to know us. For more information, visit www.AlternativesForGirls.org or call (313)361-4000 ext. 223.

Get involved!

Volunteer opportunities at AFG range from mentoring to street outreach. We will match you with the best opportunity for you. For more information, email volunteering@alternativesforgirls.org.