



Horses Healing Hearts Annual Report 2011

Changing lives—one at a time.

Horses Healing Hearts Mission Statement

Horses Healing Hearts exists to help children of alcoholics and addicts build self-esteem and confidence by working with horses.



Who We Serve

We serve children, aged 6-18, of alcoholics and addicts. One fourth of the children we serve have either one parent in jail or have lost a parent due to either suicide, overdose or disease resulting from addiction. They struggle with decision making and tend to trust others too much or not at all. They have an undervalued sense of self.



Scan this QR code to
access HHH website.



Who We Are, What We Do

Horses Healing Hearts is a 501c3 charitable organization designed to help children in families suffering from substance abuse. Through the magnificence of the human and horse relationship, the participants learn responsibility and confidence.

Our first goal is to maintain the kids' physical safety while allowing the kids and horses to work their healing magic together. Every weekend, groups of children meet at a local sponsor barns in Delray Beach and Lake Worth. During the two-hour

session, participants learn how to groom and tack a horse, followed by a 15-minute private riding lesson. While one group is riding, the others are led by a volunteer facilitator through a curriculum designed to teach coping skills for issues at home or at school.

The curriculum used this year, "Healing Together," was published by American Humane Association, written by Donna Sue Spear, MA., LPC., NCACII. We also teach concepts from the National Association of Children of Alcoholics.

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What We Teach

Coping skills are the backbone of what we communicate. To deal with parents' addiction and behavior, participants learn a very important concept, the 7 Cs:

- 1) We didn't **cause** it.
- 2) We can't **cure** it.
- 3) We can't **control** it.
- 4) We can't **change** it.
- 5) We can make healthy **choices**
- 6) by **communicating** our feelings and
- 7) **celebrating** ourselves.

Routine and structure are very important in the lives of children of alcoholics, as it is something they lack in

their homes. In keeping with the theme of the 7 Cs, the last Saturday of every month is "Celebrate Yourself" day, where we celebrate birthdays for all the kids in that month, and we do fun things like hand paint on the horses and put hair extensions in their manes. This gives the kids something fun and exciting to look forward to every month.

We use the horse as a vehicle to teach empathy, trust, boundaries and responsibility. Horses are amazing creatures and, being herd animals, have many social characteristics similar to humans.



New Chairman Named

Phil Diaz, M.S.W., was recently named chairman of the Horses Healing Hearts Board of Directors. Diaz was the deputy director for substance abuse at one of the largest community mental-health centers in New York State, where he pioneered work with children of alcoholics and the dual-diagnosed drug addicted person. He is also the former assistant deputy director for prevention in the Office of Demand Reduction with the White House Office of National Drug Control Policy. In this capacity, he was the lead federal official in the development of national and international drug prevention policy.

Diaz is a social worker with more than 35 years of experience in drug prevention, treatment, and child abuse and trauma; he is also a founding board member of the National Association for Children of Alcoholics, and the founding chairperson of the National Drug Prevention League. His work has appeared in *Women's Day*, *USA Today*, and *Focus on the Family*. Diaz is the coauthor of several recovery books as well as numerous articles in magazines including *Addiction Today*, *Counselor*, and *Recovery*. He has received numerous awards for his work including an honorary doctorate in law from Mercy College in New York.



Sponsor Barns: By Design

Many businesses and charities fail in the first two years. Add to the equation the expenses of horses, and you have a high risk of failure. Liz Olszewski, HHH founder, found a way to operate the program with little expense: sponsor barns.

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Humble Beginnings to Victorious Futures



HHH founder Liz Olszewski

In 2009, the founder of HHH, Liz Olszewski, started this organization as the first local chapter of what she dreamed would be a national program. Liz grew up in an alcoholic home. Caring family members, mentors and horses helped provide her solace. Her mother died of liver disease from alcoholism when Liz was 24. Liz grew up to have a successful life because of positive mentors and horses. She wanted to start a program to pay forward the blessings that contributed to her success.

Horses Healing Hearts is the only program in the nation using equine experiential learning for the sole demographic of children of alcoholics and addicts. Our goal is to take this program to a national level, providing HHH as a resource to the 28 million children who suffer from growing up in this atmosphere. This invaluable resource can teach participants coping skills and self-care techniques, ensuring bright futures, different than that of their parents.

HHHH - Controlled Growth

	2010	2011	2012
Volunteers	5	12	16
Children Served	11	18	30
Board Members	5	9	14
Total Funds	\$2K	\$12.6K	\$47.5K

"This program has changed my life. I now know if I can't show my true feelings on the outside that I'm feeling on the inside, the horse will feel threatened, and it's not going to feel safe around me. If I want to be close to him, I have to be honest with my feelings. It's hard, but I'm getting better every week." -HHH child

The Future

A permanent home

The sponsor barn design was intended to keep expenses low and allow our program to reach out into the community. Our founder modeled it after "Horses in the Hood," an equine mentor program in inner-city California for at-risk youth. We are very thankful to our sponsor barns, for they are the lifeblood of our current program. Without their generosity and hospitality, we would have no program.

The sponsor barn design is serving its function well in keeping costs controlled; however, our program is growing to the point where our kids need a home barn of their own—a place where they can hang their art work and develop structured programs where we don't feel like guests.

Full time staff

Currently all staffing is voluntary. Our number of children being served has grown to a level where a paid staff is now necessary.

Questions or comments?

Contact HHH President
Lizabeth Olszewski at
liz@horseshealingheartsusa.org
or 561.713.6133.

The Year in Pictures



From top: Samantha feeds a horse. HHH ambassador Karina Brez wins the title of Miss Florida. Board member Stephanie Mazer, Psy.D., works with HHH children during a riding lesson at Johnson's Folly Horse Farm in Delray Beach.



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Board Members

Blair Barone-Rice, Psy.D.

Karina Brez, *Honorary Chairperson & Ambassador*

Trudi Butler-Howley

Dawn Cotler

Phil Diaz, M.S.W., *Chairman*

Alicia Gale Windsor, Esq.

Randy Grimes

Daniel Hartwell

Nongae Johnson

Stefanie Mazer, Psy.D.

Lizabeth Olszewski, *Founder & President*

Mary Rosoff, *Youth Development Director*

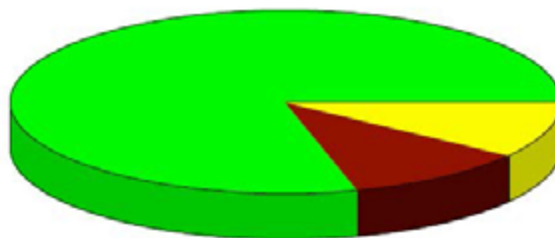
Kim J. Willard, *secretary*

Jennifer Williams

Pictured: Karina Brez, Sheriff Ric Bradshaw and Dorothy Bradshaw. Our White, White West Fund-raiser at the Players Club this year raised more than \$13,000. Sheriff Ric Bradshaw attended and auctioned away a "Sheriff for the day!" prize. Additionally, HHH received a \$15,000 Law Enforcement Trust Fund Donation Grant from the Sheriff's office.



Expense Summary
January through December 2011



PROGRAM	79.38
MGT-GENERAL	10.90
FUNDRAISING	9.72
Total	\$20,638.16

Nearly 80%
of funds
goes to
programs.

Contributions & Donations

Thank you to the following companies for making notable contributions and in-kind donations to Horses Healing Hearts in 2011. Your generosity has made a big difference in our childrens' lives.

HEARTLAND

Concetta R. Lupardo, CPA, PA

Silver Spur
EQUESTRIAN EMPORIUM

Cheney Brothers **C-B-I**



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