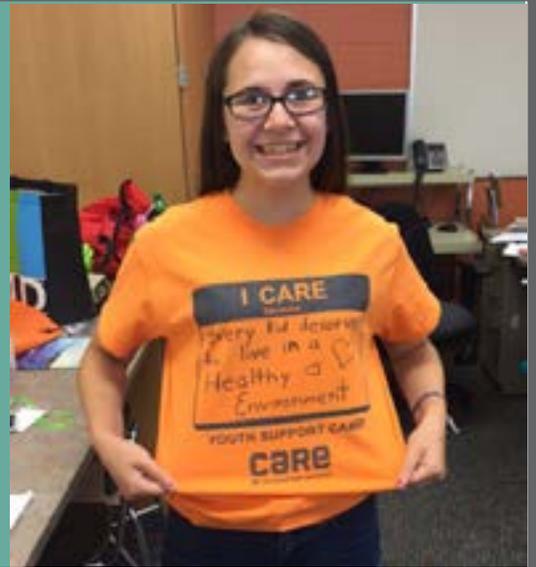


MEET SHALYNN



Teens Talking Truth at CARE

CARE's Teens Talking Truth program seeks to empower teens to develop leadership skills and encourage one another to stand strong against unhealthy behaviors.

Teens Talking Truth connects local teens, who have made a commitment to "Live Safe, Live Strong, Live Sober."



WWW.CAREOFSEM.COM

The Reason I Want to Be A Social Worker

School Essay by Shalynn R. Age 17 - High School Senior

Being a senior in high school means making huge life decisions. One of those decisions is my college major and future career. I decided I want to be a social worker. Social work is not something I've always wanted to do, or ever thought of doing in my future. It was a gradual process over the past 3 years that helped me discover that this is what I want to do for the rest of my life.

July 27, 2013 my dad overdosed on heroin and died in his sleep. It's been difficult for me to process his death and accept it. For a long time I had nothing but anger for my father. I'm mad at him for doing that to himself. I'm mad at him for not telling anyone and getting help. I'm mad at him for making me so embarrassed that I lie to almost everyone, even my closest friends, about the way he died. But mostly, I'm mad at myself for being so mad at him.

These past 3 years have been a constant battle with myself and my grief. As time goes by, I'm learning to forgive my father for leaving me the way that he did, but it hasn't been easy. Having to watch my younger sister grow up without him has made it even harder to not be mad at him. Thinking about all of the milestones that my father has, and will, miss because of his actions have also made it all the more difficult.

When my dad passed away, I tried many things to get through the pain and anger. But I'm incredibly proud that I never stooped to masking my pain with drugs or alcohol. I finally found something that worked for me. My mom came home from work with an opportunity for me to volunteer at a camp ran by a non-profit organization called CARE.

continued on next page

Your gift means - more people will learn about the dangers of alcohol and drugs; more people will achieve recovery; more student leaders will emerge from CARE's youth programs.

- \$30 provides 8 week parenting classes for a struggling caregiver.
- \$50 pays for a family to attend "Teen Intervene" for teens suspected of experimenting with substances.
- \$100 sends a child struggling with a loved one's addiction, to summer camp.
- \$150 provide an 8 weeks "Paper People" prevention program to a local early childhood classroom.
- \$200 provides a pregnant mother with necessary items for her baby.
- \$350 helps with treatment costs for a low income adolescent suffering from behavioral health issues.
- \$500 covers the cost of a Peer Recovery Coach for 12 months to help a person seeking sobriety.

The camp was for kids coming from high-stress situations. After volunteering, a person from CARE asked me to join their teen group called Teens Talking Truth, or T3. T3 is a group of teens, like myself, who made the commitment to remain alcohol, tobacco, and drug-free; a group who felt the same way that I did about drugs.

I continue to volunteer for CARE, and I have loved every second of it. I cannot pin point exactly where, but at some point throughout all of this, I decided that the feeling I get while working with CARE is the feeling I want to have for the rest of my life. It clicked..., a social worker is what I want to be when I grow up.

Working with CARE helped me realize how important it is to not only forgive my dad, but to forgive myself. I don't deserve to live the rest of my life looking down on my dad for what he did. His memory doesn't deserve to be looked at in that way either. In order to be at peace with my dad's passing, I need to forgive. I thought that by volunteering at CARE I would be helping others, but really, I was helping myself.

CARE helped me to find a huge part of who I am. I love everything that I do with them, and I can't wait to have a career where I get to do that sort of thing every day. That is the reason that I want to be a social worker.

- Shalynn R. - High School Senior

WHEN A YOUNG LIFE, LIKE SHALYNN'S, IS CHANGED,
WE BELIEVE MORE LIVES WILL BE TRANSFORMED
FOR GENERATIONS TO COME.

2016
SNAPSHOT



6000

YOUTH
PROGRAM
PARTICIPANTS



1800

CONNECTED
TO RECOVERY
SERVICES



8000

ADULT
PROGRAM
ATTENDEES

20,000

NUMBER OF PEOPLE
SERVED ANNUALLY