

NORTH HOMES CHILDREN AND FAMILY SERVICES

SUMMER 2018 NEWSLETTER



Summer Fun at Camp North Homes!

Camp North Homes provides opportunities for all programs within our continuum to have powerful, new experiences in an outdoor setting. Participants get to explore a wide range of wilderness skills such as fire and shelter building, garden lessons while picking fresh raspberries, and fishing. We also build in a variety of other experiential activities like nature scavenger hunts, woodworking, archery, and by challenging participants to reach new heights on our high ropes course.

One of our programs at Camp North Homes, Compass, enjoyed a successful and amazing second year in action. Compass is an extension of North Homes' CTSS school-based program, which allows youth who receive behavioral and mental health support services in the school year to continue to grow and build their skills throughout summer. Over 8 weeks of camp, youth in Compass have opportunities to form friendships and build community while learning and developing important life skills. We were proud to work with nearly 100 youth representing 12 area schools in grades K-12 each day!

Camp North Homes can also provide programming for local school, community, and business groups looking for team building and a place for all to experience healthy challenge and success.

For more information or to schedule an experience out at Camp North Homes, please contact Camp Director, Lindsey Lee, at 218-244-2304.



Residential Programs

The youth in our residential programs have been enjoying their summer break!

Youth have been active out at Camp North Homes - where they get to swim, learn archery, be challenged on the high ropes course, and appreciate other aspects of the outdoors while also developing essential life skills.

Youth have also been able to attend several events this summer through a new partnership with Tickets for Kids - a national nonprofit that provides free access for low-income and at-risk kids to attend the arts, cultural, educational, and athletic venues of their community.

This partnership has allowed us to bring youth in our residential programs to a Twins Game and to the Soul2Soul Tour featuring Faith Hill and Tim McGraw. Youth will also be traveling to see Taylor Swift when she is in Minnesota at the end of August!



Youth rocking out to Faith Hill and Tim McGraw at the Soul2Soul Tour!

SPARK - Inspiring Wellness

Youth within our Residential Programs have the opportunity to participate in Spark - an ongoing program where youth learn about the importance of and practice exercise and healthy eating skills, which have been found to support a number of both mental and behavioral health benefits.

What they've been up to this summer:

- Started a collaboration with a local physical therapist to implement exercises that help correct joint, tendon, and spinal imbalances in our youth
- Continued to partner with the Grand Rapids YMCA to bring youth on-site to use their equipment and facilities. Youth also get to try new, healthy snacks from Bixby's after their work out!
- Trained for the Tall Timber Days 5K in August. Five teen boys competed in what was their first ever race!



"The best thing about Spark is that I get to be active... It's fun and then I feel really good after."

- Residential youth, Spark participant



Adoption

North Homes works to support adoption efforts in Minnesota through several initiatives, one of which is Child Specific Recruitment. When routine efforts have not resulted in an adoption for a child or sibling group, workers may determine that Child Specific Recruitment would be a better approach. In this program, North Homes staff work directly with youth who are searching for their permanent home and family. Staff then recruits families who will meet the needs of the child. This can take months and sometimes years as the child searches for the right family.

No matter how long a child is waiting, a finalized adoption is a powerful and wonderful event. Adoption changes not only the lives of the youth, but also those families who decide to offer one of the greatest gifts - a permanent, loving family.

North Homes is thankful to receive many wonderful donations from different organizations and families in order to send each youth a celebration gift to bring to their new home. Pictured right, one of our Child Specific Recruitment youth wraps himself in his donated celebration blanket as dad gives him a "bear hug".



**Wrapped in layers of love!
Newly adopted youth snuggles with his
celebration gift as dad gives a squeeze.**



Foster Care

North Homes' Foster Care teams have enjoyed a summer of celebrations!

In May, all of our North Homes Foster Parents were invited to and honored with a luncheon and afternoon of DIY crafts. Foster parents got to make their own fairy garden, ice fishing bucket, or inspirational sign to take home. They also won a variety of great prizes in a raffle. The event was full of smiles as parents relaxed and connected.

Foster Care staff held annual summer BBQ picnics for the Bemidji, Grand Rapids, and Duluth area Foster families. This year, the Grand Rapids and Duluth area families also had the opportunity to attend a Duluth Huskies baseball game!

North Homes has been able to partner with the nonprofit, Adoption is Love Fund. Adoption is Love supports many projects, one of which grants "wishes" to foster kids right here in Minnesota. Several North Homes' families have had their wishes granted, including all expenses paid for camp, tickets to attend the state fair, and more. North Homes also looks forward to supporting Adoption is Love for their annual Fostering is Love Walk at the Mall of America, October 6th.

"I got into [foster care] because I get to make a difference in someone's life, and see the difference, every single day."

- Dad, at Foster Parent Appreciation

New Duluth Area Director!

North Homes is excited to announce our new Duluth Area Director: Jessica Winkels-Hagerl!

Jessica has been with North Homes since March of 2016, and is looking forward to taking on a larger role with the agency. In her new position, Jessica will oversee all North Homes mental health services provided in the Duluth area, which have continued to grow and expand since we first began services in May of 2011.

The Duluth office has a great team of 14 mental health staff who work primarily within Wrenshall, Carlton, and Cloquet schools providing Children's Therapeutic Services and Supports (CTSS). They also provide individual, group, and family therapy.

Jessica along with Tierney Garver, Clinical Trainee, both provide out-patient mental health services (including therapy and assessment services) for youth, adults, and families out of our Community Mental Health Center located in the Medical Arts Building in downtown Duluth.

While the Duluth office has long had a Foster Care and Adoption Case Manager in its office along with our agency grant writer, North Homes has recently added a Foster Care and Adoption Licensor, and has hired on a Child Specific Recruiter for the area.

Please call our Duluth office for any questions regarding services. And again, join us in welcoming Jessica to her new position!



**New Duluth Area Director,
Jessica Winkels-Hagerl**

North Homes' First Blood Drive!

North Homes partnered with Memorial Blood Centers from Duluth to host its first ever blood drive on August 9th at the ITASKIN Center in Grand Rapids.

North Homes staff and community members donated 18 units of blood - which has the potential to save up to 54 lives!

With 1 in 3 people needing blood during their lifetime, North Homes looks forward to supporting another drive in the near future!



Megan, NH staff, flashes a thumbs up as a first time blood donor!



www.northhomesinc.org

Grand Rapids 218-327-3000 * Bemidji 218-751-0282 * Duluth 218-733-3000

Providing a community-based continuum of quality care to children and families