WE ARE ANDRUS

NEWSLETTER | WINTER 2022 EDITION

The ANDRUS Mission—And The Vision For the Future

A Message From Our President & CEO

The ANDRUS mission is to nurture social and emotional well-being in children, families and communities by delivering a broad range of mental health services. Primarily through its Sanctuary Institute, ANDRUS also provides research, training, and innovative program models of social and emotional health that are used by all types of organizations across the globe.

Driven by a vision to establish One System of Care that is responsive to the Social Determinants of Health, unencumbered by artificial service siloes, we will continue to secure strong, promising futures for our clients by integrating mental and physical health services with community support services, providing help with financial planning, navigating immigration issues, finding housing and seeking out opportunities for physical fitness.

Today, we are focused on addressing in new, more comprehensive and effective ways the issues that have existed before, but that have been exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic. Issues such as loss, violence, social isolation, substance abuse, depression, financial hardship, falling behind educationally, tensions from living and quarantining together in small spaces both day and night, etc. can be the source of unprecedented stress and trauma. Our vision is support our clients with an array of services from in-home help to telehealth to community support services.

We also envision expanding our services to include those families who are uninsured or underinsured, who otherwise receive insufficient care and services. In 2021, we provided services and supports to 3,700 young people and families at 35 locations in Westchester and Putnam Counties as well as the Bronx where 85% identify as either Asian, Black, Latinx, or mixed-race; 52% as female and 48% as male; approximately 20% as LGBTQIA; and 75% who prefer languages other than English. However, we estimate that there are more than 500 additional families we could serve with the additional resources we hope to garner in the next few years.

Tis' the Season!

This holiday season was a joyous one here at ANDRUS. Our residential team was able to adapt traditional events in celebration of the holidays, while keeping our community safe.

This year we celebrated on campus by hosting our Annual Tree Lighting Ceremony with horse drawn carriage rides for our youth, our Annual Residential Christmas Dinner, and of course, a Christmas morning celebration. Our Health and Wellness Centers were able to provide families in our programs with holiday dinner groceries, toys and gifts, and winter coats.

We are looking forward to a happy and healthy new year!

Celebrating Gifts We've Received

We received so many meaningful financial gifts from an array of donors, from individuals who donated at whatever levels they could, to state and local governmental organizations, to foundations and corporations who share in our mission. Our thanks go out to all of our donors who participate in the meaningful change we strive to be.

This year we are especially proud to announce a commitment we received from the Surdna Foundation, which has helped to support our operations over many years and which will, with this new gift, defray a portion of our annual expenses for the next six years. We are truly grateful for this wonderful new gift and pledge to all of our donors to continue the important work we do in support of vulnerable children and their families.

Digital Transformation Project

As a part of the ANDRUS new Strategic Plan, we are repositioning the organization to be more responsive to individual and family needs by becoming "One System of Care," responsive to the social determinants of health impacting the lives we are committed to serving.

To achieve this aspirational vision ANDRUS is taking steps to develop a digital transformation strategy that will support our needs well into the future.

Winter 4 Kids - Ski & Snowboarding Program

My favorite part of the ski program is the fresh air, open space, and all the snow. I had a great time with my friends and staff. Even though it was hard to get the hang of, I had lot of fun practicing. Staff helped me to manage my frustrations while learning and it paid off in the end!
-ANDRUS Residential Student

Last winter, ANDRUS' Therapeautic Recreation team launched a Ski and Snowboarding program for our residential students.

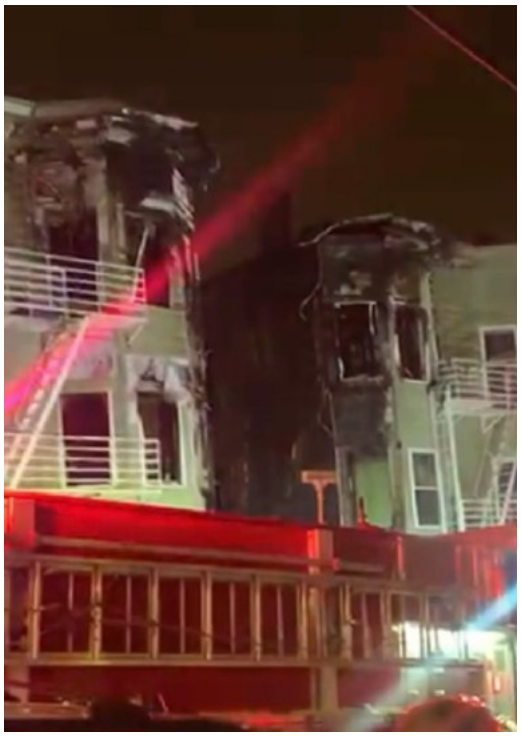
Through a partnership with Winter4Kids, a non-profit ski mountain designed and designated entirely for at-risk youth in Vernon, NJ, our children have the opportunity to partake in both downhill and cross-country skiing, as well as snowboarding.

Learning these challenging new winter sports can build coordination, balance, and core strength, as well as self-control, patience, risk management, and self-esteem.

We are excited to see how our children are able to build their skills this winter!

ANDRUS Downtown Yonkers Center Helps Victims of Fire

Every year ANDRUS Health & Wellness Center staff demonstrate an extraordinary level of commitment as they impact the lives of thousands of families throughout Westchester County. Families enrolled in our programs receive therapy, clinical interventions, care coordination, parenting support, advocacy assistance and much more, from staff who have a calling well beyond their job descriptions.



One example of the level of commitment ANDRUS staff have to our clients occurred last November when a devastating fire was reported in an apartment building in downtown Yonkers. One of our family support specialists, Nenosca Ortega, was at home watching the evening news and recognized the apartment building as the address of her parent client, Blanca, and her four children, three of whom were enrolled in ANDRUS programs.

Nenosca reached out to Blanca that same evening to offer help. Nenosca was relieved to find out that Blanca and her children had escaped the fire. Unfortunately however, the family did not have time to collect any of their belongings. Nenosca quickly found and brought Blanca and her family coats, food, diapers and other necessities to get them through the night.

The very next day the Yonkers team got to work to provide additional support to Blanca's family as it was experiencing emotional trauma at the loss of its home, its belongings and its sense of safety. To help restore the family's sense of safety and emotional well-being, ANDRUS staff came to the rescue. Graciana Castellanos and Jordalyn Melo put in an emergency request to Sharing Shelf for clothes and supplies. They connected Blanca to the Yonkers Community Action Program for help her with food and other basic needs. They accompanied Blanca to the Department of Social Services for support with translating and filling out paperwork to get the help the family needed. They worked with a local real estate agency to secure a new apartment for the family. They requested furniture for the family at the Furniture Sharehouse. And Graciana donated two bags of groceries while the family waited for emergency food and supplies to arrive. Meanwhile the clinical team's Sheila Nazario responded with the full range of mental health services that helped the family deal with the loss and trauma of the fire.

But the support didn't end there; following up nearly a month after the fire, the ANDRUS team arranged for the family to receive a Christmas tree to help celebrate the holiday season in their new home. Blanca was so touched by the unexpected gift that she sent a note to ANDRUS saying:

Thank you for filling our home with hope for Christmas.