



## Behavioral Health & Counseling Spotlight

Our Program Spotlight series concludes by highlighting how our **Behavioral Health & Counseling** program continues to provide services in this **Q & A** with the program's Directors, **Pat Carlson and Stephanie Barisch**.

**Q:** Counseling has moved to provide services via phone or video, correct? How has this transition worked for clients and for our therapists?

**A:** The Counseling program shifted, quite rapidly, to providing all services through virtual means, **video or phone**. This transition has been fairly smooth for most of our therapists and adult clients, but a little more challenging for some therapists and youth and their families. We've had some **resistance and challenges**

**Q:** Tell us some of your biggest wins during this crisis and the transition to provide services remotely- what are you proud of?

**A:** We are proud that **we** were able to **adjust** to telehealth and remote work as smoothly and as quickly as we did. Our staff and clients were impacted and disrupted – just like everyone else – but **rolled with the changes**, with therapists keeping focused on how we keep ourselves and our clients safe, while continuing to provide the services they need.

**Q:** What are your biggest obstacles in this delivery method, if any?

**A:** One obstacle is that many of our clients had **limited access to technology**, whether it was the actual physical device or an adequate data plan. In addition, younger children get bored very easily on video or tele-therapy so it takes a great deal of **energy and creativity** on the therapists' part to keep them engaged for more than a few minutes. Working with **multiple members of a family** at the same time via technology remains a challenge. Also, as time has gone on and we have welcomed new clients, the challenge has been to create engagement without ever having met in person.

**Q:** If someone reading this was interested in receiving counseling, but still had reservations, what would be the one thing you would want that person to know about the benefits of working with a professional therapist on his/her overall well-being?

**A:** We are going through and **extraordinarily stressful period**. All of the usual problems of daily living continue and on top of that we have to deal with a global pandemic and societal violence. Our therapists can offer a **safe environment** for people to sort out what they are experiencing and what they can to **live their most fulfilling life**.

*If you are someone you know is interested in having support as you sort out what you are experiencing, check out our locations and contact information [here](#).*

