



LIFE *Lines*

Newsletter of Mother Seton House, Inc.

Mother Seton House

PO Box 673, Fryeburg, ME 04037

www.mothersetonhouse.com

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Our Mentors: Women of Wisdom and Heart

A valuable part of a mother's experience at Mother Seton House (MSH) is the opportunity to work with a mentor, a woman of heart and experience, to help her set goals, check progress, adjust and celebrate successes. The mentor also communicates with the director, sharing questions and concerns. Walking beside the woman, as she sets the agenda, is the ideal.

Jessica Hart and Trish Irwin are wonderful examples of such companions, each having already guided one of our mothers, following a series of mentor training sessions. Jessica is working with another mother and Trish is ready.

Jessica recalls that when she met Cyndi about ten years ago, "We talked about the opportunities that could be offered to women and their children. It was exciting to share her enthusiasm then and wonderful to see that dream being fulfilled now!"

Trish has been associated with us for about two years. In her words, when she stopped teaching, "It left a hole in my life. I'd been looking for some way to help people. When I heard about MSH and I met Cyndi, I felt like I'd found a home for my restless soul."

When Trish's grandparents came to this country, life was difficult for immi-

grants. "My parents were very bright but uneducated. There was a lot of prejudice against Italians and the poor. I lived that. So when I began my teaching career I gravitated toward programs with heart."

Jessica knows the challenges of raising

newborn. When I see her talk to the baby, smile at her, or rock her, I feel like that young mother is going to be wonderful."

Both Jessica and Trish have suggestions for others taking on this role. They

mention taking a positive and patient approach with the mothers, listening to each story, helping to see the possibility that their lives hold, helping them stay focused along the way. Jessica also mentions the importance of helping young mothers manage their own stress and take care of themselves as they do their best to take care of their babies. From Trish, "If I can help the mom figure out her steps to independence, then I feel like I'm on the right road. (We) need to establish a trust and a bond just like the new baby and mom. Once that happens, together we work out a plan on how to get to where she really wants to start fresh."

Does that sound familiar? There is the attitude of our ideal mentoring relationship.

When asked whether she wanted to add anything, Trish's reply was, "I want to thank you over and over." Clearly, Trish and Jessica, we need to thank you both for sharing your time and talent, your wisdom and your open hearts.



children when the family has plenty of support and realizes how much greater they would be without the support needed to be successful. Trish adds, "Everyone needs help. One of the high points is when I see a new mom delight in her

A letter from the director

Dear Friends,

When I arrived at the House for our weekly meeting, there in the kitchen was visiting mom Kayla, and her five month old son, donating outgrown baby clothes. In the dining room a mentor and a new mom were meeting. The house managers were going up and downstairs to the

basement, putting away more donations.

After our meeting, Jahan arrived to lead mommy and baby yoga. I climbed to the third floor to get a peek. The three of them were laughing and giggling on the carpet, getting a great workout and relieving stress at the same time.

We ate dinner together in the dining room, enjoying food and company. The best fun was watching mom feed her baby in the high chair, keeping up a stream of sweet talk and encouragement throughout.

Your support has made this magic possible. Our house has become a home, a place of comfort and learning and growing. We serve many women in need in the community, and in a special way, we



serve our guests at the House. And the moms and babies at the House, they fill our hearts with joy. You are in my mind and heart each time I witness these little miracles, and I am deeply grateful to you for helping us to continue our work.

In Faith, with Hope,
Cyndi Broyer
Director

Thank you

Many thanks to Store Manager Michael Lariviere, and Sarah Buckman, of the Lowes North Conway Heros Project, for the donation of a washer, drier and three storm doors.

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Time
&
Talent

Our Volunteers

Barbara McAllister is such a valuable volunteer for Mother Seton House. She shares her time and talent in the kitchen, but she also fosters involvement and community among our "family."

Residents at MSH are responsible for providing their own food, but Barbara periodically gathers the group with home cooking, prepared with skill and love. That brings everyone to the table at the same time, warming tummies and hearts, and providing a real family atmosphere.

Barbara is widely known in the area. She worked in many hotels and restaurants in North Conway and in Lovell before starting at Fryeburg Health Care Center, where she met both Joanne and Charlotte, two of our MSH House Managers, who introduced her to the work of MSH. She now lives in the same neighborhood with them, and they bring their friendship into the house.

Barbara says that she wanted to be helpful and do something worthwhile. We say she has exceeded her goal and see her involvement as a wonderful gift. She plans meals that are tasty and wholesome and can be made with reasonable cost. For many of today's young



mothers, perhaps more familiar with prepackaged meals, the home cooking provides an important example of what is possible on a careful budget. To quote of our mothers, between bites, "This is crazy good!"

To save steps, Barbara is now planning to prepare meals in our MSH kitchen rather than her own. This will also provide a chance to share her skill and include others in helping. We think that would be the frosting on the cake!

Celebrations

Sunni and Breyden

At Mother Seton House, we exist to support mothers and infants in need. Seeing a young mother succeed after many small steps of hard work is a real cause for celebration. Sometimes the daily need often blocks the view to the next step, running out of diapers or food, needing a crib or a home. Getting past a diaper-to-diaper existence can be overwhelming, so we are jubilant when we hear from mothers who have benefitted from our step up and gone on to build their own stairway.

Sunni Tainter is just such a cause for celebration. In our first days, before we even had a house, beyond the immediate needs of caring for her baby, Breyden, Sunni expressed the desire to go to college and to work in day-care. With Cyndi's encouragement, she enrolled in Granite State College.

Despite some turns and bumps in the road, Sunni kept her

eye on the prize. Today, she is Site Director for the Rochester Child Care Center at the Noblemen School, which Breyden, now six, attends. Sunni loves her work, so many of her facebook posts are about things she wants to try with kids, or stories about how she "loves her kiddos."

In January, she sent a photo of her diploma, awarding her an Associate Degree in Behavioral Science. "It came today! I couldn't have gotten it without your help. I wouldn't be where I am today without everyone believing in me and knowing that I could do it even when I didn't know myself. I am so excited and proud of myself and it has been a long time,

longer than I expected and there were many ups and downs but I stuck with it and succeeded! It's a small step towards a Masters (my ultimate goal) but it is a step." There is no stopping her!

She is also enthusiastic about her role as "Mom." On Breyden's birthday, she shared, "Today he is 6yrs old and he is so smart, funny, sweet and just overall amazing! I am so happy and proud to be his mom and see him grow. Everyday he amazes me." THAT's what it's about. Thank you, Sunni!



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*All donations are gratefully accepted. Mother Seton House is a 501(C)3 corporation
supporting pregnant women, new mothers and infants in need.*

in the **spot**light

One Foot In Front (OF THE) Other; Both Feet on the Ground

Jasmine, a new guest at Mother Seton House (MSH), is already adept at setting and reaching important goals. While she gave seven month-old Amelia the attention she was asking for, massaging her feet and making happy faces, we chatted about her plans.

A graduate of Kennett High School, Jasmine will have become a Licensed Nursing Assistant (LNA) by the time this newsletter is printed. In addition, she has completed nearly all the core courses for her Associates Degree at Granite State College, and can complete her degree in less than a year. She plans to return to that program when Amelia is older and become a Regis-

tered Nurse.

Originally she had considered Early Childhood Education as a major, but is now looking for jobs in elder care. "I just love elderly people," she explains. "I adored my grandparents. I lived with my Nana at the end," helping with errands and cleaning. Jasmine remains close to her grandfather and enjoys hunting and walking in the woods with him.

At this point in our visit, Jasmine took a little break to talk with Amelia, who lit up in smiles when her mother's voice was directed at her. About her beautiful little daughter, Jasmine says, "I like her personality. She is happy



almost all the time. She is silly and makes people laugh. She has lots of personality.

It is our observation that Amelia is so happy and personable because of the wonderful interaction from her mother. In addition to being a wonderful and natural mother, Jasmine is driven to improve her circumstances and is a good communicator, all strengths that will carry her and her daughter into a bright future.



Thoughts from a *Donor*

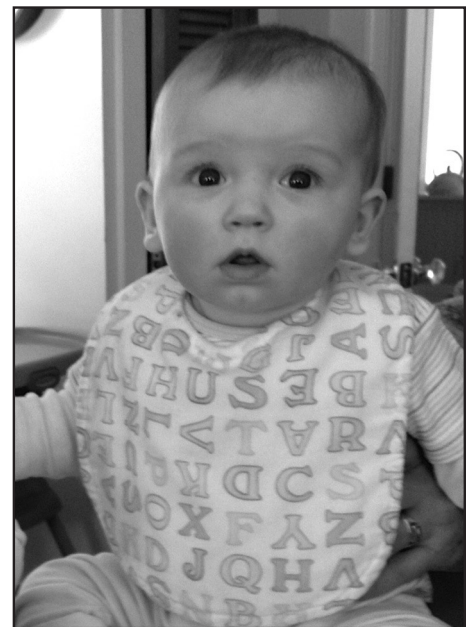
We enjoy supporting Mother Seton House, we think it is a wonderful resource for mothers who need some additional support in their lives and perhaps a bit of a resting place to get themselves ready for the future.

I was born at the Lutheran Home for Unwed Mothers in St. Paul Minnesota in 1953, so my husband and I feel a special connection to your Mother Seton House. There was a home available to my birth mother which allowed her to safely and comfortably provide a warm

and loving start for me. They helped to place me into a loving home and I am ever so grateful that they were there.

We consider this just a little bit of paying it forward. We will continue to support Mother Seton House as we can, and you are always in our prayers. Bless you for all the good work that you do, and bless all the mothers and babies. Every person is a blessing to be valued and loved, and that is what you do.

Friends of Mother Seton House



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Drawing by Thomas Merton. Used with permission of the Merton Legacy Trust and the Thomas Merton Center at Bellarmine University.



*Every Baby
Deserves
A Good
Start!*