

BETHANY



HOUSE



SUMMER EDITION 2004

PROVIDING A LOVING HOME AND SERVICES FOR SINGLE PREGNANT YOUNG WOMEN

BRINGING HOPE TO CRYSTAL

Hi, my name is Crystal and I have been living at Bethany House for three months. Unlike most, I was fortunate to be born and raised in a loving family, but like many teenagers, I decided to go out on my own and started using drugs at an early age. At the age of 16, I found myself pregnant, in an abusive relationship, and still doing drugs. As soon as

my child (a baby girl) was born, DHS took her into custody. Sadly, I continued in this abusive relationship and found I was pregnant again. At this point I realized that it was time to get serious: get off drugs, become a parent, and work on getting my daughter back. I needed desperately to get my life back on track. When I gave birth to my son, DHS was there again. This time, in order to keep my son, I went to live with the father's family. Soon, however, this was no longer a workable solution. When I sought advice from a domestic violence counselor, she told me about Bethany House. After the initial interview, I was

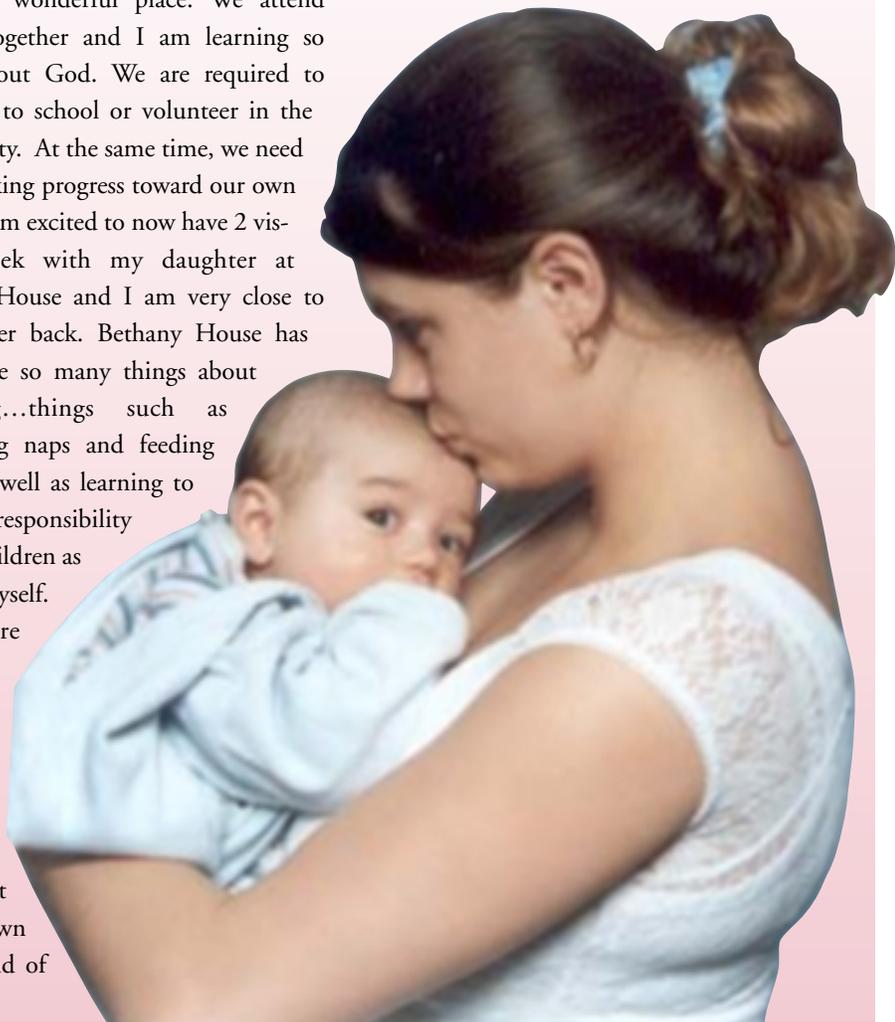


so grateful they welcomed me (and my seven week old son) into the Bethany House program. I quickly discovered that Bethany House is wonderful place. We attend church together and I am learning so much about God. We are required to work, go to school or volunteer in the community. At the same time, we need to be making progress toward our own future. I am excited to now have 2 visits a week with my daughter at Bethany House and I am very close to getting her back. Bethany House has taught me so many things about parenting...things such as scheduling naps and feeding times, as well as learning to take full responsibility for my children as well as myself. No more "passing the buck." My goal is to be ready to move out on my own by the end of

May, with hopes that my daughter will be joining us soon. Thanks so much for helping me get my life back.

— Crystal

— Crystal



New Arrivals

Damien Andrew Miller was born on May 4 (7lbs 6oz's and 19") to Ashley. MORE ON BACK



Oops!

Please forgive us. We made a mistake on our Mother's Day letter and forgot our non-profit stamp and many of you received letters that had postage due. We are sorry.



Did You Know...

You can pre-order tickets for the Oct. 23rd Banquet by calling us at 503-667-3259.



Special Feature...

Read the wedding of past Bethany House resident, Tara ...INSIDE

A WORD OF THANKS

I wanted to say a few words of thanks to Bethany House for the positive influence you've had on our family and home. I am Tara's Mom and would like to share our side of the story.

Prior to Tara's stay at Bethany House, there was constant dissension in our home. This was partly due to miscommunication between us and partly because of personal issues, which caused stress in her life. Tara was not getting along with members of our family and we realized a change was needed. That change came through the help of Bethany House.

When Tara returned home from Bethany House, there was a marked improvement in her patience and her willingness to try to improve relationships with her family members. Seeing Tara's improvement inspired all of us to work harder at effective communication and brought about greater understanding between us. Living at Bethany House required discipline and teamwork to accomplish the routines of daily living. Although this contributed to her success, the primary reason our relationships are now healthy, we believe, is that Tara renewed her relationship with God while living at Bethany House. She continues to grow in her faith and we are reminded daily of how grateful we are that Tara's life is headed in a positive direction. Thank you.



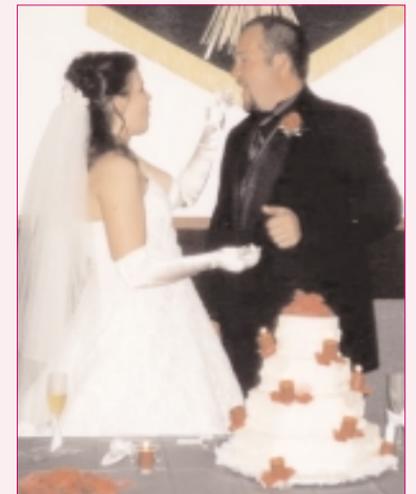
It has been 2 1/2 years since I was at Bethany House, but in the last year and a half, I have accomplished more than I thought I ever could in 10 years. About the time my daughter, Abigail, turned one, I graduated from the Medical Coding program at MHCC (June of 2003). There were times I was not sure if I could make it through that year. Abigail had chronic ear infections and was almost always sick. My mom and brother helped out so much. I was hired at a local clinic during my externship my last term at MHCC. I finally felt like I was providing for my daughter and I loved my job at the same time!

After Abigail was a year old, I wanted to start dating again, but I didn't really know where to start. Before Bethany House, I met guys through friends and usually ended up at a bar. Totally out of the question now! My mom told me about a Christian matching service she heard about...eHarmony. I was really leery because of the stigma that on-line dating holds, but I decided to try it anyway. I signed up for a six-month membership and it took me 3 days to fill out all of the questions. eHarmony matches people on 29 points of compatibility and there are about 75 questions for each point. I made a promise to myself not to jump into a relationship like I had done in the past. I had to think about Abigail, not myself. I prayed from the night I had Abbie that God would bring me the man I was to be with when He knew that I was ready. I thought I was ready, but I knew I had to be patient.

Well, five and a half months later, I received an email saying I had been matched with a guy in Idaho who was in construction. Since my dad is in construction, and I was a couple of years ago, it caught my attention. I read his profile, liked what he had to say about himself and was debating on whether or not I should go to the next step. I did, and after 2 days we went through the "Four Steps of Introduction." Esa and I were matched on December 27, 2003. When we started talking on the phone, it felt like I had known him for years. By January 12, 2004 we knew we had to meet, so I flew to Idaho on January 30. That same night we were engaged. I flew back to Idaho 2 weeks later knowing I was going to have to move there. He is part of a family construction company that builds beautiful hillside homes overlooking the lake. I knew he could not move to Portland, so I got a job at a medical office where everyone is a Christian; and they even pray together frequently. Even though I had a sense we would be married before the summer, I refused to live with him before we were married. Esa found a place for me to stay. On March 29, we were married privately by our pastor. On May 8, 2004, we had a formal wedding ceremony with family and friends. Not long after we were married we discovered we were pregnant—a surprise, but also exciting, as we are happy to have another child together.

Right now, I am staying at home with Abbie and planning on going back to school to get my degree in Health Information Technology so I can stay at home with Abbie and the baby. "Thank you" to everyone who has a part in Bethany House. I am so grateful for being able to get my feet back on solid ground..

Celebrating with Tara



United Way Donor Option –A Great Way To Give: Thanks to all of you who are supporters through the United Way Donor Option Program. Giving has increased as more employees realize they have a choice in directing where their contributions go. If you would like to select Bethany to receive your contribution please see Your United Way representative at work and ask for a Donor Option Plan card.

Volunteers: Volunteering can be one of life's most rewarding experiences. Simply, volunteering is about people helping people. The heart of Bethany House consists of willing volunteers. Each person has a different talent and gift that can be used to help others: from teaching sewing and crafts to offering friendship. A good way to offer friendship is through our Big Sister program, which offers an opportunity to reach out to a woman who can use a friend at a critical and needy time of her life. We need people to help in many areas within Bethany House. WE NEED YOU! Just call and ask, "How can I help Bethany House?"

Items Needed: Paper Towels, Toilet Paper, Dishwasher Soap, Laundry Soap, Liquid Detergent, Hand Soap, Large & Small Garbage Bags, Cake Mixes, Cookie Makings. Etc. Our home would also like a Kitchen Aid if you have one hanging around.

Baby Shower Given: Thanks to the women's ministry at Abundant Life Church (left photo) who blessed us with a baby shower of many fun things. Most of our girls do not have family or friends to give them a baby shower, so when a group of women give in such a generous way, it is very much appreciated! **Thank you!** Our young women volunteering their time to go through donations. (right photo)



ASHLEY'S UPDATE: In the last newsletter you read a story about Ashley who was working with DHS to rejoin her with her daughter. Since then Ashley made a very wise and unselfish decision to adopt her 2 year-old daughter to a wonderful Christian Family. She also made the decision not to see her daughter until she is 18 year. old so that she would not confuse her. Both of these decisions were very hard to make and tugs at the heart. Ashley gave birth to her new son Damien Andrew Miller on May 4 (7lbs 6oz's and 19"). Ashley will be staying with us for a time until she has employment and affordable housing. She will be taking her last two tests for her GED this week. We are very proud of her achievements and strides she has made in the program.

The Bethany House Newsletter is a quarterly publication written to inspire and inform you of the many wonderful experiences we have with our young mothers-to-be.

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