

CASTLE AT MEADOWBROOK

Clean And Sober Teens Living Empowered



Stepping Up to Meet the Need

CASTLE has been a very busy place in the past few months!

We have started to see many more referrals for kids coming from DYS and juvenile drug courts, which aligns with our mission to TREAT patients, instead of incarcerating them. The hope is that we are able to teach kids

the skills they will need to remain sober, so they can avoid further legal involvement and move forward with their hopes and dreams.

Interestingly, we have also seen quite a few patients from Martha's Vineyard recently. It's good to know that kids and families are able to access the help

that they need... even if it's a boat ride away!

Our Community Support Program (CSP) continues to grow as well! We now have six CSP employees, who are working with our youth in the community to maintain sobriety after leaving CASTLE.

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April 2014



Not the Spice of Life

By Dr. Joseph Shrand
CASTLE Medical Director

I got paged late at night by a mom whose kid was "going insane. He's trying to kick down all the doors in the house. He's got a crazed look. I'm not even sure he recognizes me. I think he's tripping."

Within a few minutes the police had arrived, but the boy was so out of control he needed to be pepper sprayed to even restrain him. He started screaming, terrified that they



were not the police at all but some type of gang trying to kidnap him. He began whimpering, begging them not to kill him. His fear filled the room, and the police tried to comfort this boy who, the moment before, they had

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Reflections on Our Work Here

By the "Original Five"

Sitting here reflecting on our five years as original CASTLE nurses, we would like to share our thoughts about our experience. As our journey began at the isolated brick building on Meadowbrook Road, who would have imagined how much this experience would change all of our lives? From the beginning, we brought a wide variety of experience and became a strong nursing team. We are "The Original Five."

As I reflect on my

career as a nurse, I am truly pleased my path led me to CASTLE. I questioned myself as to how this had happened to me, who had retired from nursing, and why? As I now approach my sixth year, I understand that this destiny was meant to be.

I can honestly say that I can remember the majority of patients who have come through CASTLE's doors. I remember talking in the parking lot with Linda B.

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We have had about 20 clients in the program since the beginning of June 2013 and continue to be so proud and encouraged by their strength and progress! Not only are the clients engaging in NA/AA, but they benefit from the “fellowship” of the CSP program and others like themselves who are chasing sobriety.

Because the cli-

ents know all of the workers (they all have another role at CASTLE as well) and get to know the other CSP clients at meetings, they have truly formed tight, supportive bonds with each other. It can be very isolating to be 15-years-old, attempting to remain sober in a world where teens are using substances at record rates.

Relapses do hap-

pen; but, with the right help and support, they can be shorter, less risky, and allow clients to get right back on track. We really believe in this extension of CASTLE and the potential in all of our clients!

On a more somber note... We are gravely concerned with the number of overdoses and deaths in the past few months from heroin in

this state, which unfortunately has made international headlines. Many of these were youth and young adults.

The CASTLE family would like to extend our condolences to the loved ones of those who lost their lives to this struggle and want to stress that help is there... reach out. Don't wait!

-Kimberly Fisher,
Program Director

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been fighting off to save their own lives. The police waited for an ambulance as the boy was clearly drugged on something.

His mom tried to come close to comfort her son, but the police warned her off. She could speak to him from a distance, but he was too unpredictable to allow her any nearer. They were right. When the

EMTs arrived, they put the kid on a stretcher, but by this time his mood had shifted, and he screamed as if possessed that he was going to kill everyone if they didn't let him out of the restraints and off the gurney.

They didn't, instead giving him a strong sedative, then another when the first one didn't calm him down, until finally, his breathing set-

tled, and he began to cry hysterically, saying he wanted to die. His mother watched in powerless horror as her son was hurtled to the closest Emergency Room.

Within hours, he was rushed from the Emergency Room to the ICU. He had stopped passing urine, and his kidneys were shutting down. He started to have uncontrollable tremors that led to frantic sei-



zures. His blood pressure soared as his heart began to race. He could have had a stroke, and only with heroic effort were the medics able to

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stabilize him. As if we didn't have enough trouble with kids smoking weed, we have also to manage kids smoking *synthetic* weed. Until recently, a kid could walk into a gas station or other local convenience store and pick up a bag right off the shelf.

Most commonly known as “Spice” or “K-2,” this dangerous and uncontrolled drug is marketed as incense and designed to target kids with brand names like Blaze, Blueberry Haze, Dank, Demon Passion Smoke, Genie, Hawaiian Hybrid, K2, Magma, Ninja, Nitro, Ono Budz, Panama Red Ball, Puff, Sativah Herbal Smoke, Skunk, Spice, Ultra Chronic, and Voodoo Spice.

Marketed as “incense,” it has made me pretty incensed!

Spice is really just a bunch of random

herbs that have been sprayed with a powerful artificial chemical called a cannabimimetic, a drug that mimics marijuana but does a lot, lot more. This synthetic weed is extremely dangerous and addictive. As with our patient, some of the health effects can be life-threatening and include

- * Severe agitation and anxiety
- * Racing heart beat and high blood pressure
- * Kidney failure
- * Nausea and vomiting
- * Muscle spasms, seizures, and the shakes
- * Hallucinations and psychotic episodes
- * Suicidal thoughts or violent thought or actions
- * Death

Because synthetic marijuana is labeled as “not for human con-



sumption,” manufacturers are able to jump right over the Food and Drug Administration. No surprise then that the chemicals found in these products have never been tested for safety. But, these chemicals are not safe.

More than 5,000 people in 2012 were treated in Emergency Rooms after being exposed to synthetic marijuana (that's double the number treated in 2010). But it is legal!

Thankfully, more and more stories of kids dying or having really horrendous experiences on Spice are getting around. At CASTLE, you can hear kids talking

with each other; many who have tried Spice say they never want to try it again, but couldn't stop because it was so available, so cheap compared to weed, (just a few dollars for several ounces), and so very, very addictive.

Many kids have said they are glad to be in the program, so they have a chance to quit. “I never want to do that again,” has been a very common theme. This really is not the spice of life, but could very well be the spice that leads to a nasty, painful death.

For a good article in which I was interviewed on the subject, go to this link:

[http://
yourteenmag.com/2013/10/
synthetic-marijuana-dangers/](http://yourteenmag.com/2013/10/synthetic-marijuana-dangers/)

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on so many occasions and we would say, “I love them all.”

The memories of the patients are both happy and sad; I’ve laughed with the kids, danced with them, and cried with them. I can only hope I have touched their lives in the same special way that they have touched mine. Working with the incredible nurses and CASTLE team is how I was to meant to end my nursing career. So, I understand why my path led me to CASTLE’s kids. I’m so proud to work with my fellow nurses to care for the kids of CASTLE.

-Tina Anastasio RN,
Nurse Manager

I still remember seeing the “nurses wanted” ad for an adolescent drug and alcohol stabilization unit. I looked at my husband and said, “This would be my dream job.” I decided to

take a chance and sent in my resume and application, keeping my fingers crossed that I would get a call.

I was elated when that call finally came. I wondered “What would I have to offer these children?” Little did I know how much they would offer ME. We began our 3-week training with Dr. Shrand at Stonehill College. We learned so much about the adolescent brain and how it works.

We learned that we are not here to judge; we are here to care for our patients in a kind, compassionate, and helpful manner as nurses. And that is what we have done from Day One.

Our patients have taught me so much. They have touched my life, and I have touched theirs. Close bonds are formed as trust develops. I have watched our patients grow, and I like to

think I’ve grown a bit as well. This has been the most rewarding job I have had in my 17 years as a nurse. I feel privileged to have been a part of this program from the beginning.

-Christine McMaster, RN

Working at CASTLE has been such an amazing experience. Working here for 5 years has been so very rewarding. I have learned more about life, reality, heartache, and hope. It has been a pleasure to have walked this journey with all our patients.

There are so many memories and stories and tears that the children have shared. I feel so blessed to be a part of such a wonderful team and supportive nurses.

I have learned so much from children, more than I ever expected. Their strength to overcome life struggles

just inspires me every day. This was one of the smartest decisions I have made in my career. When I am at CASTLE, I feel at home.

-Linda Belanger, RN

Being a nurse at CASTLE has been a wonderful experience. I feel privileged to work with these adolescents. This has been my most rewarding job thus far. We have changed many lives of patients and their families.

Unfortunately, we have suffered several losses. That said, I feel even more motivated to continue my career at CASTLE. It’s a privilege to work with the adolescent population. We have seen many children come and go from this program.

Over 2,000 kids have walked through these doors, and I feel

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honored to have genuinely cared for them.

-Kathleen Cushing, RN

I describe the way I came to be a nurse at CASTLE as “tripping and falling into my position and then firmly planting my feet.” Prior to working at this program, I had little knowledge about substance abuse or mental

health.

Thankfully, Dr. Shrand gave us a 3-week long introduction to the adolescent brain and behavior, and the way substances impact the developing brain.

We were now on our way to caring for the very first of many CASTLE patients. Little did we know, not only were

we providing compassionate care for this special population, but these kids would affect our lives so much as well.

They have taught us about respect, strength, loyalty, resiliency, and hope. As nurses working in this field, we have all had our share of challenges; but making a difference in the

lives of some of these kids has been the most rewarding experience of my nursing career.

-Melissa Hughes, RN



Congratulations Are in Order

CASTLE would like to give a huge shout-out to staff for some BIG accomplishments:

LORI KOSTAS for receiving an “Employee of the Year” award and **KIM FISHER** for receiving a “Manager of the Year” award from High Point Treatment Center!

DR. SHRAND for winning “Best Psychology Book” in the *Books for a Better Life Awards* for his book *Outsmarting Anger: 7 Strategies to Diffuse*

our Most Dangerous Emotion.

The following staff were given their 5-year tenure awards from High Point this year: Melissa Hughes, nurse; Dr. Shrand, Medical Director; Steeve Maxi, recovery specialist; Tina Anastasio, nurse manager; Christine McMaster, nurse; Kathleen Cushing, nurse; Linda Belanger, nurse; and Rashad Hill, recovery specialist.



Welcoming New Staff

Recovery Specialist:

Rob Harvey**
Eddie Ulick
Claudia Miranda**
Tayla Farley**
Joe Ferrara
Sarah Elsmore**
Matt Keene
Rosita Id-Deen
Kristyn Kerivan

Community Support Program Coordinator:

Kristyn Kerivan
Travis Merritt
Consuelo Fierros*
Tayla Farley**

Recovery Specialist Supervisor:

Travis Merritt*

Clinician:

Kelly Broderick**
Colleen Mulcahey
Alycia Buchheit
Lori Kostas*

Aftercare Coordinator:

Jestica Pereira*

Nursing:

Erin Cautillo

* Promotion within CASTLE
** Transfer within High Point