



# WWEN Connection

Wisconsin Women's Education Network

on Addiction, Recovery & Prevention



*What you do today  
creates your  
tomorrow.*

—Virginia M. Harper  
Ki of Life Learning Center

## Putting a Face to Recovery . . .

**H**i, my name is Sheli Jo Metzger and I am a recovering meth addict. I was born in Menomonie, WI in 1963. My family and I moved to Cedarburg, WI where I grew up in a middle-class neighborhood and attended a parochial school. In 1972 my family relocated back to Menomonie and I have lived there ever since.



Sheli Jo Metzger

My parents were loving; however, my father was an alcoholic and my mother was co-dependent. My father was rarely ever home and my mother was the main supporter of the family. I was never without anything and, all-in-all, my childhood was a simple and stress-free life.

In my teenage years, I learned that drinking with my father was a great way to manipulate him. I didn't like the taste of booze, but I drank it anyway due to peer pressure. My first job at 18 was tending bar, and this was a way to allow my drinking habit to continue. I got married when I was 23 and lived the "normal" married life for approximately 11 years. I started to drink heavily and, as a result, my husband and I separated. Soon after, I found my new best friend—cocaine. This was the beginning of a whole new world for me, leading to new drug friends and connections. My husband and I divorced, and I had started a new life in the drug world.

It was sometime in 2000 that I was introduced to methamphetamine. Meth enabled me to get things done, lose weight, and live fast. I quit drinking and nothing else mattered to me except using meth.

In 2002, I was arrested three times within three months and charged with nine drug-related felonies. I was sentenced to six months of jail time, three years of probation, and ordered to enter AODA treatment. While serving jail time, I was allowed to go to Arbor Place for outpatient treatment and eventually their inpatient program. While I was in jail, I realized for the first time that I was an addict. Treatment at Arbor Place gave me the tools and means to control and deal with my addiction, depression, and codependency. I truly believe in my heart that jail and treatment saved my life.

Today, I am employed at Arbor Place as a Residential Treatment Worker (R.T.W.) and secretary. I am clean and sober, living life as a journey, not a destination. The traditional 12-Steps of Narcotics Anonymous (NA) meetings and my new friends and associations in recovery are my stepping stones down the path of my new journey. I am proud of what I have overcome and the person that I have become. I will continue to struggle with this disease, but I will help carry the message of hope to addicts and alcoholics that are still suffering from the disease of addiction.

### WWEN Staff

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# Trauma Interventions for Women With Co-Occurring Disorders

## Research Summary and Comments

February 2008



Research has demonstrated a significant relationship between interpersonal trauma (physical or sexual abuse) and mental health and substance use disorders. This study, based on data from a national, multi-site trial, examined the impact of an intervention that integrated care for these disorders among 2,729 women with varying levels of symptom severity.

Integrated care, consisting of 12 to 33 brief group sessions that were not standardized across sites, was compared with usual care. Severity of post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) and substance use symptoms was determined with standardized instruments.

- In most instances, both the intervention and control groups showed improvements in their PTSD symptoms, alcohol and drug problems, and mental health problems over a year.
- Improvements were generally greater in the intervention group, particularly among women with the most severe PTSD and substance use symptoms.

However, the intervention had little effect on women with the least severe symptoms.

### Comments by Norma Finkelstein, Ph.D., LICSW

This study provides a valuable look at the issue of targeting trauma interventions and is particularly important because studies of trauma interventions for women with co-occurring disorders are rare. The impact of the intervention was similar to that reported in other PTSD intervention studies. But, given the preliminary and exploratory nature of the original study, the authors' conclusion to reserve integrated trauma-related interventions to women with the most severe symptoms seems premature.

Also, it is important to note that this study did not compare specific trauma interventions (sites were free to choose one from several models). The field would benefit immensely from additional well-designed experimental studies on this critical issue.

#### Reference:

Cusack KJ, Morrissey JP, Ellis AR. "Targeting trauma-related interventions and improving outcomes for women with co-occurring disorders." *Adm Policy Ment Health*. 2007; Epub ahead of print.



<http://www.jointogether.org/news/research/tprb/feb08/finkelstein.html>

# Arbor Place, Inc.

By Jill Gamez



**A**rbor Place, Inc., located in Menomonie, Wisconsin, was founded in 1975 with the primary purpose of providing transitional housing to women recovering from addiction and alcoholism. Over the past 32 years, the organization has retained its original purpose of helping and supporting women with the disease of alcoholism and addiction. In addition, Arbor Place has also been able to expand the scope of its services over the years.

Throughout 2007, over 150 women were served by a variety of treatment programs at Arbor Place. The treatment options available on an outpatient basis include individual counseling, couples counseling, intensive outpatient, and a continued-care program. Case-management services are available for women in need of assistance with housing, education, parenting, and other issues addressing the individual needs of the woman. Areas important to recovery addressed through the residential program include:

- relapse prevention
- 21-day primary treatment phase
- 10-day relapse prevention phase
- short-term crisis housing
- spirituality
- daily living skills
- anger management
- 12-Step education
- early recovery
- cognitive enhancement family education.

## *Our Mission*

**Arbor Place, Inc., provides quality alcohol and drug abuse treatment and prevention programs to the residents of the West Central Wisconsin Region. These programs include Prevention, Intervention, Residential Treatment, Outpatient Counseling and Educational Programming.**

**The programs of Arbor Place, Inc., promote a quality life-style for individuals and families, and a positive attitude about chemical dependency/addictions and their treatment.**



*Arbor Place, Inc.*

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A women's group is also offered to ensure that gender-specific issues can be addressed. On-site women's AA meetings are held every week to help connect women to the recovery community.

**Focus on Treatment**

SAVE  
THE DATES

July 21 & 22, 2008

National Conference on

**Boys & Girls at Risk:**  
*the emerging science of gender differences*

The Madison Concourse Hotel and Governor's Club  
Madison, WI



This cutting edge conference will present the latest information on adolescent brain development, highlight sex-based brain differences and will conduct workshops demonstrating how gender sensitivity can lead to better outcomes when used with existing

**Keynote Presenters**

**Dr. Susan F. Tapert**



Dr. Tapert, University of CA, San Diego, authored the well-known study comparing brain scans of 15-year-

old non-drinkers to 15-year-old heavy-drinkers. She will present her work on



adolescent substance use and abuse, highlighting gender differences.

**Dr. Andrew J. Petto**



Dr. Andrew Petto, University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee, a genetic anthropologist, will present basic information on differences in males

and females from a scientific perspective, and why there are gender variations vis-a-vis culture and biology.

**Don L. Coyhis**



Don Coyhis is a member of the Mohican Nation. He is the founder and president of White Bison, Inc. He will

present the closing keynote on *Keeping our Children Sacred*.

**Gender Focused Workshops will include:**

- Teaching Styles
- Trauma
- Clinical Assessment/Best Practices
- Managing Substance Use Disorders
- Juvenile Justice Issues
- Eating Disorders
- Self Mutilation
- AODA Treatment
- New Paradigms



**For more information on the conference:**

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**Presented by: University of Wisconsin-Madison**

**The Gender Studies Project**  
Flo Hilliard, Director

**Sponsors:**

Professional Development & Applied Studies  
Department of Health & Family Services  
**Project Fresh Light**