

COVID-19 Rapid Response Mini-Grant Letter of Request

April 14, 2020

Contact Information

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Bethany of GDV serves all of Chester County, along with Eastern PA, Southern NJ, and DE. Serving over 2,500 of the most vulnerable in our community annually, *Bethany demonstrates the love and compassion of Jesus Christ by protecting children, empowering youth, and strengthening families through quality social services.*

Currently, unaccompanied refugee youth are experiencing the greatest impact from COVID-19. Our Unaccompanied Refugee Minor (URM) program serves refugee youth who arrive in the U.S. alone, having been separated from their families abroad as they fled violence or disaster. Youth live in *specialized* foster homes or group homes, as they work toward independent living. Due to their **significant** trauma histories, COVID-19 has *triggered* acute stress responses in some youth, many who already suffer from PTSD. There has also been an increase in cognition and mood symptoms among youth. Continuity of trauma-informed care is of utmost importance as these issues can have a negative impact on the long-term mental health of youth.

While we are finding ways to conduct *essential* work from home, such as conducting all client visits and trainings via HIPAA compliant video-conferencing, many staff are unable to perform their work from home, creating a backlog of work during this “stay at home”/“shelter in place” period. These challenges are delaying processes for individuals to serve and be served.

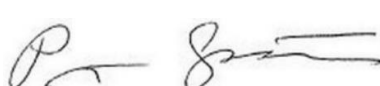
Due to the economic impact of COVID-19, we anticipate a significant loss of charitable giving this year. Concurrently, we anticipate a greater number of children and families needing assistance during this time, requiring additional funding. A **\$5,000** grant (2020 organizational budget: \$13,143,139) will mitigate the impact of COVID-19 and strengthen the organization and those it serves by facilitating *Together Facing the Challenge (TFTC)*: An Evidence-Based Model for Therapeutic Foster Care that takes a strengths-based educational approach with youth. TFTC utilizes techniques that *enhance* behavioral and/or mental health and produce an outcome of reduced attrition of foster families/caregivers. Agency staff that have completed the professional train the trainer model, are now prepared to train foster parents and URM staff in the TFTC model between May-December 2020, which will improve Bethany’s *capacity* to support the children, youth, and families it serves at this **tumultuous** time.

Thank you for considering a life changing contribution that will enable enhanced continuity of care that will meet the *complex* needs of refugee youth while fostering healing and well-being.

With urgency,



Heather Bert, MSW
Executive Director



Peter Gottemoller, MSW
Program Coordinator



Carol Hess
Grant Writer