



The structure includes space where kids can log on to computers and take part in arts activities

space. Here, youth learn how to seek a job, write a résumé or use a computer.

Just as important, they learn how to maintain steady employment. Sometimes this is as simple as advice on how mainstream employers might react to tattoos and piercings. Other times, it's a look at how to manage anger and resolve conflicts. For a few, it's about how to make a positive transition from a job that isn't working, rather than just quitting.

Last year, 246 kids participated in the employment resource center; of those, 84 enrolled in intensive services. A total of 63 kids entered unsubsidized employment, while 14 others were working full time and another 49 found part-time jobs.

For many, however, simply finding a place to call home is the first priority, and Outside In's transitional housing program perhaps benefits the most from the organization's relocation. Until now, the agency maintained a variety of housing opportunities, but they

were spread around the city and often not available on a long-term basis.

Now, the top two floors of the new building are devoted to housing and can accommodate 30 residents. One floor features studio apartments with a few one-bedroom units for couples or mothers with babies. The other floor features supervised, dormitory-style housing, including space reserved for HIV-positive kids.

Clients in transitional housing can stay up to two-years. Most generally leave within a year, and six months is typical.

Last year, Outside In housed 47 youth, split nearly evenly between boys and girls, most 18 to 20 years old and white. A total of 30 kids exited the program that year, and the agency reports positive outcomes for 24 of them, including 14 who now are off the street and living independently.

Others are staying with family, with friends or in other transitional programs. Of the

remaining six, four have returned to the streets or are "squatting," while another two have resorted to emergency or short-term shelter.

Staying healthy when there's no place to stay

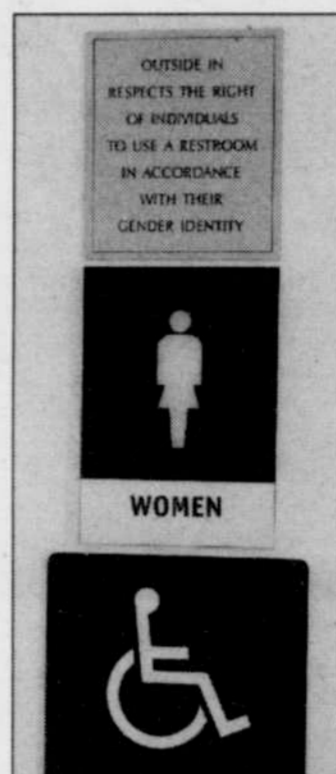
Another mainstay program of Outside In during the past 33 years has been its clinic and health services department. The medical facility occupies most of the new building's first floor, and its design is intended to increase accessibility. For example, the treatment center is strategically located at the primary entrance to the building and adjacent to the needle exchange program.

Staff believe this type of arrangement can increase the kids' opportunities to interact with counselors, other clients and programs, hopefully engaging them in higher levels of risk education. And just as for the whole organization, the expansion will help better utilize the agency's pool of volunteers because now they will have the space to accommodate the ever-increasing number of individual supporters.

The focus of the medical clinic is on teenagers, but the service is available to all ages and operates as a teaching site for the National College of Naturopathic Medicine and Oregon Health Sciences University, among other programs. The clinic blends naturopathic, traditional Western, acupuncture and Chinese herbal medicines. Some dental and chiropractic care also is provided through volunteers and the Northwest Medical Teams Dental Van.

Many common conditions among the homeless population come from sleeping outdoors, including upper respiratory problems, colds, pneumonia and skin problems.

Oliver notes Outside In's health care providers also see a



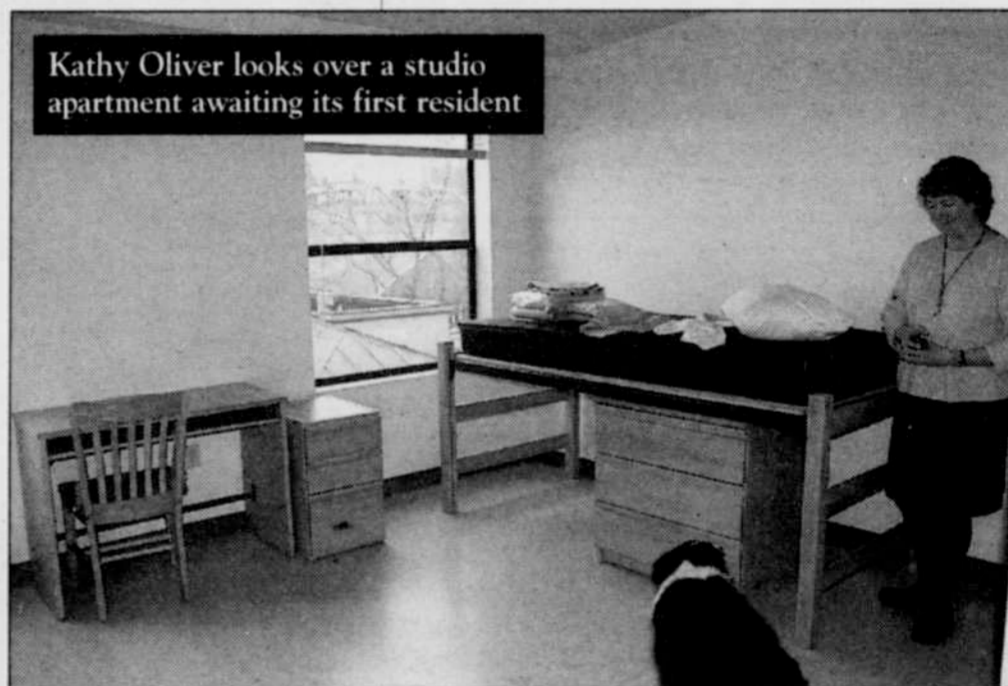
lot of pregnancy among Portland's homeless youth and offer a great deal of HIV counseling and safer-sex education. Issues regarding alcohol and drug abuse, nutrition and other educational topics are promoted at each visit.

During the past three years, the number of people seen at the clinic nearly has doubled, providing clear evidence of a need for larger facilities that can handle patients more efficiently and effectively. Last year, for example, almost 3,000 individuals accessed medical services, visiting a total of 8,000 times. Two-thirds of the patients were female, and more than half were 21 to 30 years old. The medical clinic also helped 316 people to enroll

in the Oregon Health Plan.

Getting the message across

Outside In's HIV program recently changed its name to the risk education department in order to reflect how it now encompasses a variety of concerns. Risk educa-



Kathy Oliver looks over a studio apartment awaiting its first resident

tion involves harm reduction, behavior change and strength-based intervention, the organization says, and often that means simply being there when young people are ready to make changes.

Staff and client volunteers reach out to at-risk youth and adults, providing them with information and engaging them in a dialogue about a variety of serious issues. The goal is a simple one: to teach young people about the options and

choices they have and to help them take one positive step at a time.

Probably the most recognizable activity of Outside In's risk education department is its needle exchange program. Although



Even animals find shelter at Outside In

Building blocks made of big bucks

John Warner of the Portland Development Commission worked with Outside In to secure a \$1.77 million grant.

The award includes \$500,000 thanks to the Community Development Block Grant funds from the city of Portland's Bureau of Housing and Community Development. The balance is in the form of urban renewal funding from PDC.

"BHCD and PDC are pleased to be part of the extensive public-private partnership that helped Outside In achieve its vision for its new building," Warner says. "The building design is edgy and inviting, consolidating Outside In's previously disbursed operations to offer its clients one-stop access to critical services. Outside In has been at the forefront of homeless youth advocacy and service in Portland for over 30 years. Its new building will help assure the continuation of this legacy into the future."

The Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation was another major supporter, awarding the organization a \$1 million grant. According to Jaime Garcia, senior program officer for Pacific Northwest giving, the foundation is interested in funding services and programs addressing homeless youth. He says the comprehensive continuum of services that Outside In offers, complemented by its new facility, provides Portland street kids with an opportunity to break the cycle.

"Outside In is an outstanding program," Garcia adds. "We chose to fund this project because of the need in the Portland area and the fact that service providers in Portland have created a system for referring homeless youth to the appropriate services."

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