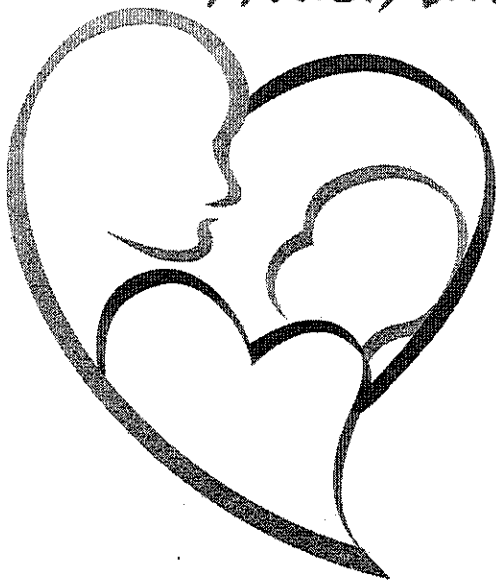


*Meta House, Inc.*



## Mother and Daughter Find Success Through Meta House's Families Come First Program

When she was eight months pregnant, Juanita came to Meta House, a drug and alcohol addiction treatment program for women located in Milwaukee's Riverwest neighborhood. She was addicted to crack cocaine for over six years and unable to escape the grips of her addiction. Driven by her love for her unborn child and encouraged by her boyfriend to seek treatment, Juanita arrived at Meta House's Residential Treatment Program in October of 2010.

One month later her beautiful baby girl, Danielle, was born. Though Danielle tested positive for drugs when she was born, Child Welfare allowed Juanita to keep her daughter because she was receiving addiction treatment at Meta House. This unification was made possible because of a pilot project at Meta House called *Families Come First*.

The *Families Come First* program was developed in collaboration among Meta House, the Bureau of Milwaukee Child Welfare, the Milwaukee County Children's Court, and the Behavioral Health

Division of Milwaukee County. It focuses on keeping children safely with their mothers. In the *Families Come First* program mothers like Juanita are offered the opportunity to enter treatment at Meta House, keep their children in their care, and receive the help they need to overcome their addictions while increasing their capacity to keep their children safe.

Patricia Aniakudo, Families Come First Project Coordinator at Meta House states, "What I love to see develop with this pilot project is the collaboration between the different systems in our community - Meta House and the Bureau of Child Welfare for instance. We better understand their needs and how they work and vice versa, which ultimately helps these families."

For Juanita, the results are simple, yet life-changing. "I'm stronger today," she states, "I thank God for Meta House and the Families Come First program. I am now living in recovery from drugs and alcohol and am able to care for my baby."

## Health Matters: Chronic Disease Can Respond to Therapeutic Lifestyle Changes (TLC)

by Dr. Anne K. Maedke, DC, DABCI

As a healthcare provider in the Riverwest neighborhood for more than twenty-five years, I have seen many concerns facing the community in the realm of healthy living. My focus recently has been on the issue of healthy aging. Chronic diseases related to altered body composition are plaguing our community. These diseases include cardiovascular disease, dyslipidemia (high blood cholesterol level), hypertension (high blood pressure), and metabolic syndrome - a combination of medical disorders that, when occurring together, increase the risk of developing cardiovascular disease and diabetes. Current public health surveys are

**Chronic diseases related to altered body composition are plaguing our community.**

**Now for the good news. These diseases are largely treatable through lifestyle changes and self-monitoring.**

producing disturbing findings. It is predicted that the current generation of children could have a shorter life span, primarily due to chronic diseases.

Now for the good news. These diseases are largely treatable through lifestyle changes and self-monitoring. In the 2010 "Surgeon General's Vision for a Healthy and Fit Nation" there is overwhelming support for health care providers and medical organizations to transform their current models to include lifestyle medicine in patient care.

The US Department of Health and Human Services educational programs for management of hypertension and altered cholesterol values suggests 12 weeks of "Therapeutic Lifestyle Changes" (TLC) as "first line" treatment. In most cases, it is recommended that drug therapy be used only if 12 weeks of TLC fails. Therapeutic lifestyle changes integrate a healthy balanced diet, moderate physical activity, nutritional support through medical food and dietary supplements and incorporate spiritual awareness when appropriate. The program also includes removal of toxic influences and stress reduction.

Maedke Chiropractic Center is a

certified "First Line Therapy" clinic providing professional monitoring to individualize the program for each patient, track progress and ensure success. Feel free to call our office to speak with our Lifestyle Educator, Cheryl.

The movement in our culture toward lifestyle medicine has brought me great hope that we can reverse this unfortunate trend and decrease chronic illness in our community, returning to a path of extended health.

Thank you to the *Riverwest Currents* for opening this column to the collective voice of Riverwest's healing community.

Dr. Anne K. Maedke, DC, DABCI, practices at Maedke Chiropractic Center and Riverwest Healing Arts, and is a member of Riverwest

Advocates for Wellness. RAW is a newly developing network of healthcare professionals who work in the Riverwest community and provide effective, affordable alternative approaches to health and wellness.

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