

The Anna M. Sample House Transitional Living for Families program demonstrates the dedication to strengthening families found nationwide among the affiliates of Volunteers of America, a national, nonprofit, spiritually-based organization. From rural America to inner-city neighborhoods, Volunteers of America reaches out to the vulnerable—at-risk youth, the frail elderly, abused and neglected children, people with disabilities, homeless individuals and many others. “We will be most effective in improving the lives of the children by serving their families as well,” explains Beth Poffenberger Lovell, national director for children, youth, and families. “For us, family strengthening is all about intentionality, about engaging the whole family in a deliberate way to improve outcomes of children and their families.”



VOLUNTEERS OF AMERICA DELAWARE VALLEY

VOLUNTEERS OF AMERICA, DELAWARE VALLEY

Award-winning Program: Anna M. Sample House Transitional Living for Families
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CHILDREN DO WELL WHEN THEIR FAMILIES
DO WELL, AND FAMILIES DO BETTER WHEN
THEY LIVE IN SUPPORTIVE COMMUNITIES

2005 FAMILY STRENGTHENING AWARDS

A FRESH START

A home base, a fresh start, someone who believes they can make it. Along with an array of services, these are the supports addicted parents want and find at the Anna M. Sample House in Camden, New Jersey, part of Volunteers of America, Delaware Valley's Transitional Living for Families (TLF) program.

At the Anna M. Sample House, the whole family can stay together and rebuild in a supportive environment, while parents work to change their addictive behaviors. A maximum of five families at a time ensures that a case manager works with each family and staff can respond to residents with immediate, personal attention.

Consider the homeless family with both parents addicted to drugs and a history of domestic violence. One daughter only recently had been returned from foster care, and a newborn baby was facing medical challenges. "The mom knew she had to get straight," says Ayanna Kornegay, TLF director. "Being away from negative elements helped her stay grounded."

INSPIRING STRENGTH

That first Anna M. Sample House family drew on all of TLF's resources. Today, they show current residents what a family working together toward a promising future can accomplish. Both parents received relationship counseling and enrolled in off-site substance abuse programs. They found practical help through life skills training, learning to balance a checkbook, give their children nutritional meals and manage stress. The Anna M. Sample House assisted them with a job search and then helped them find affordable housing. All the while, their children benefited from homework support and enrichment activities. TLF also arranged school transportation for the couple's daughter and immunizations for their infant son.

With both parents now sober, employed, living in their own home and guiding their children's growth and development, this family has become an inspiration to other families who are still struggling. They maintain close ties with the Anna M. Sample House staff and still attend regular counseling. Recently, the family returned from their first vacation ever.

When families leave TLF, they can call on Volunteers of America, Delaware Valley's many partner organizations. "Parents still receive drug counseling, and the family is still monitored to make sure the kids are in the best environment," says Kornegay. "When these kids leave, they say 'I love you.' When they first come, they don't even know what it means to have someone say that to them."

FAMILIES COUNT FAMILY STRENGTHENING AWARDS

Through a joint venture of the Annie E. Casey Foundation and Volunteers of America, the FAMILIES COUNT Family Strengthening Awards recognize Volunteers of America affiliates with outstanding programs that work to give children what they need most—strong, capable and economically successful families. Responding to the varied needs of the families they serve, these organizations improve the economic prospects of working men and women and create the services and networks of support that all families need to realize their aspirations for themselves and their children.



WHEN A WHOLE FAMILY TAKES CONTROL
OF THEIR LIVES, THEY CAN RISE ABOVE
ANYTHING AND SUCCEED.

—Daniel L. Lombardo, President/CEO, Volunteers of America, Delaware Valley