

PROJECT GOLD

GIRLS OWNING THEIR LIVES AND DREAMS

THE DROP IN CENTER

WHAT IS IT?

THE DROP IN CENTER is home to Project GOLD, which welcomes all commercially sexually exploited girls and those at risk for commercial sexual exploitation.

At the Project GOLD Drop In Center, girls are empowered to find their strengths in a non-judging, healing environment supported by Advocates, Therapists and Coaches.

The Drop In Center was developed based on national best practices as well as Kristi House's experience since 2007 working with girls escaping exploitation.

Project GOLD is shaped and directed by survivor input, reflected in the program name created by founding clients: Project GOLD=Girls Owning their Lives and Dreams.

WHO IS IT FOR?

Girls who have been affected by sexual exploitation are welcome at the Center any time we are open. A counselor is always available to talk, or girls can just relax or study in the home-like setting. Food is always available and casual, family-style suppers where staff and clients eat together are provided during evening groups.

The Center is open on weekdays. Special after-hours accommodations can be made by calling the 24-hour Project GOLD hotline. The Center is located in a residential neighborhood close to Midtown.

Call the Drop In Center at 305-547-6850 for address and directions.

We encourage girls to consider membership in Project GOLD in order to take full advantage of the program's incentives. The program is client-informed so classes and enrichment activities vary based on client needs.

Project GOLD also encourages referrals from public and private agencies, law enforcement, parents/caregivers and the judiciary. Referrals should indicate CSEC or CSEC at-risk behaviors and services needed.

There is no charge for Project GOLD services. Transportation is available.



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PROJECT GOLD HOTLINE: 1-877-GOLD-916

HOW DOES THE PROJECT GOLD DROP IN CENTER WORK?

While Project GOLD works as a team for each girl, we do believe that one-to-one relationship-building is essential to healing. Therefore, each girl who becomes a Member at the Drop In Center will be assigned specific staff members based on their needs, such as Mentor, Therapist, Youth Advocate and/or Career Coach. Each girl who becomes a Member will have the opportunity to earn monetary rewards by accomplishing individual goals. Additional incentives are available in the educational initiative and through part-time internships and fellowships. **These pages describe the types of groups offered at the Center.**

PROJECT GOLD DROP-IN CENTER PROGRAMS

NEW MEMBERS' ORIENTATION

Orientation is designed to welcome new Members and to help them get a better understanding of the organization, the program, staff and all services available.



PARENT ORIENTATION

This Orientation is designed to help girls' parents/legal guardians get a better understanding of Kristi House and Project GOLD, the program, staff and all services available.



LIFE SKILLS GROUP

This group is designed to help promote the mental well-being and competence in girls as they learn the necessary skills to deal effectively with the demands and challenges of everyday life. The group empowers girls to master essential life skills needed for problem solving, critical thinking, effective communication, decision-making, creative thinking, interpersonal relationships, self-aware-ness, empathy and coping with stress and emotions.



MY LIFE (TRAUMA-THERAPEUTIC GROUP)

This group is designed for members to have the opportunity to discuss traumatic situations and/or events that have occurred in their lives. Clients learn psycho education, feelings identification and regulation, and cognitive coping and processing. They will also be able to incorporate relaxation techniques such as controlled breathing, guided imagery and progressive muscle relaxation.



SURVIVOR SUPPORT GROUP

This group provides a safe environment for survivors to share their experiences while gaining insight and support. It is also designed to empower survivors to make healthy decisions and avoid self-destructive behaviors. The group is led by a survivor-mentor "Success Coach."

ART THERAPY

The creative process involved in expressing oneself artistically can help girls resolve issues as well as develop and manage behaviors and feelings, reduce stress, and improve self-esteem, insight and awareness. This group will enable girls to use different media to express themselves creatively and non-verbally, while discovering new talents and enhancing existing ones. It will also develop artistic skills, craft abilities, fine motor skills, hand/eye coordination, analytic skills, color coordination and creativity, fostering individual creativity and providing a sense of hope for the future. Participants make art to explore their feelings to improve their physical, mental, and emotional well-being.





YOGA & FITNESS CLASSES

Partners provide classes that empower girls by addressing the symptoms of trauma through the practice of yoga, movement and mindfulness. Girls will learn techniques for grounding, calming, and centering both their bodies and their minds. Yoga, Fitness classes, Boot Camp and Dance have been past favorites. The fitness program is designed to help girls release stress through exercise, feel better and develop healthy habits.



COOKING & BAKING CLASS

In this hands-on Life Skills class, girls will expand their palettes and talents with a variety of food. This class is designed to help clients learn cooking and baking skills that last a lifetime and that can also help them develop healthy eating habits and increase self-esteem, life skills, and perceptions of abilities. Led by cooks and chefs from the community.



HEALTH AND SEXUAL EDUCATION

This comprehensive program covers human development, human reproduction, sexual health and sexual behaviors, sexual expression, sexual identity, and sexual orientation. It provides opportunities to help girls develop relationship and communications skills to explore their own values, goals and options. Members learn about healthy and positive relationships, how to protect themselves and make healthier decisions, including the choice to abstain from sex. They will learn about the importance of STD testing and condom use, bacterial and viral STDs, and the consequences and treatment of each. They will also learn to identify key aspects of practicing safe sex, as well as proper use of condoms.



FINANCIAL LITERACY

This group is designed to help girls learn about all matters relating to personal finances, money management and banking from experts in the field, Regions Bank. From opening a checking account to planning for the future, Regions specialists know how to make the complex subject of finance understandable and relevant for young people. Members will learn vital skills for surviving financially in our material world and how to make sound financial choices and decisions to last a lifetime.

Transportation is key to the program and essential for our client base. We provide transportation by van in both the north and the south parts of Miami-Dade to bring the girls to the Drop In Center for afternoon programs, individual therapy appointments, etc.

Outreach is conducted at key venues, such as at the juvenile detention center and at youth shelters, where Project GOLD advocates meet girls, build rapport and provide counseling and support.

Community & Professional Education & Training is available for school staffs, law enforcement, community-based organizations and others. Trainings can focus on the basics or provide an in-depth examination of how to start a CSEC response. We focus on ID of victims, risk factors, impacts, psychosocial needs and engaging the youth. The emphasis is on shifting perception of the child and examining ways to help them overcome trauma. Outreach presentations are also conducted for at-risk youth.

INDIVIDUALLY-BASED SERVICES

YOUTH ADVOCATES provide one-on-one mentoring to girls on their goals and the progress they are making. They help link girls to other services needed.

THERAPISTS provide evidence-based trauma therapy for youth and their caregivers to help them heal and grow from their traumas.

MENTORS Project GOLD offers group mentoring programs led by trained volunteers in community organizations and by Success Coaches on staff. Community mentor volunteers also provide individual mentoring for those who are unable to participate in the group experiences.



PROJECT GOLD

BRIDGES TO THE FUTURE
KRISTI HOUSE

Bridges to the Future is Project GOLD's newest program, launched in 2019 with major grant support from the U.S. Department of Justice. *Bridges to the Future* is designed to help girls find their path out of trafficking through educational support, vocational training, job skills development, paid internships and career planning. The program is designed to give girls the vital tools they need to thrive with economic independence and forever change the trajectory of their lives.

Bridges to the Future was conceived and developed by Kristi House leadership based on more than a decade of working with and learning about trafficked girls. We recognized that the Drop In Center is effective at keeping girls out of the reach of traffickers, however, that's only the first phase of the girls' healing. Like all young people, they need guidance and tools to find their vocational strengths, finish their education successfully, establish goals and have the right support system in place so that they can achieve their aspirations.

A Faculty Team of university experts is assisting Project GOLD on an in-kind basis as educators, vocational trainers and mentors to the *Bridges* program. They come from years of working with at-risk youth in the South Florida university community. They are providing invaluable guidance to this project.

The program will also enable Kristi House and its partner agency, Ark of Freedom, to provide education and outreach programs, including programs focused on raising awareness of male and LGBTQ victims of trafficking. *Bridges to the Future* is supported by the U.S. Department of Justice, Office of Victims of Crime, award # 2018-VT-BX-0010. Individual, corporate and foundation donors are providing local match support.



KRISTI HOUSE, INC.

CHILDREN'S ADVOCACY CENTER

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