

## **Testimonial Concerning the Value of Residential Facilities**

*Submitted by Mark Fisher*

I have worked as a resident advocate in a secured residential facility in Josephine County for nine years. I have seen residents of this facility transformed by the life skill training, medication, and therapy offered by our professional staff. One of our primary goals is to help build a behavioral, emotional and cognitive foundation for our residents that will allow them to live successfully in society for a lifetime. As an example, these clients have consistently behaved in a socially appropriate manner whenever they had their weekly outing to the community. Never have I seen any criminal activity by our residents during these times. This is due in part to the normalization of their lives while living in a secured environment as they are exposed to healthy, stable living conditions.

Basically, by the time we get our clients, they have had enough of the bad behavior and are mostly ready for help. I have seen many successful placements of our clients in the community into step down facilities, foster care placement and apartments that are designed for those living with mental health issues. In addition, clients are provided with supports as they move on, that will assist them for their continued growth as individuals. This includes medication management and supervision. These are now citizens who are prepared to live with an enhanced sense of self esteem and respect for a society that has proven to give them a second chance in life. That in itself inspires our clients, as it would anyone.

Mark Fisher