



# Stuck In The Middle

# JOURNEY

Quarterly Newsletter

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**Co-Founder-Executive Director**

I am eager to present the first issue of our JOURNEY, a newsletter created to inform, inspire and affect positive change within ourselves, our families, and our communities. WELCOME to our Journey!

As someone affected by multiple adverse childhood experiences (ACEs) and now a divorced single parent, I can personally relate and speak from various lenses. If you didn't know, ACEs are preventable traumatic events that occur before a child ages 18. The National Center for Injury Prevention and Control states ACEs are common, unfortunately. Through their research, "about 61% of adults surveyed across 25 states reported they had experienced at least one type of ACE before age 18, and nearly 1 in 6 reported they had experienced four or more types of ACEs". The first ACE study, conducted by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and Kaiser Permanente in 1995-1999, surveyed 17,000 adults about childhood experiences, including emotional, physical, and sexual abuse; neglect; challenges of parental separation, substance abuse, incarceration, violence, and mental illness. The study learned that almost two-thirds of its participants had at least one ACE, and more than 1 in 5 noted three or more. The research further found a link between ACE exposure and a higher likelihood of adverse health and behavioral outcomes later in life, such as heart disease, diabetes, and premature death.

Mental health challenges such as stress, anxiety, depression, and suicide ideation are just a few traumatic effects youth may experience due to separation, divorce, parental incarceration, and other traumatic experiences. As parents, we don't intentionally set out to harm our children, but we need to be intentional and consistent in our goals of parenting emotionally healthy human beings. Sometimes, it may require us to do our internal work to prevent ACEs in our children, thus, reducing generational traumas. I encourage families to get support during or immediately after a separation, divorce, the loss of a parent, and any other traumatic experience. But, you do not have to do it alone. Through our Journey, we aim to provide relatable stories, educational and professional resources, fun and unique events, and experiences that reflect and encourage youth and their families to be resilient, self-sufficient, and mentally and emotionally healthy. Since the pandemic, we've aligned ourselves with some great organizations and can't wait to share what good things will come out of these new relationships. Please subscribe to our newsletter, and you'll be the first to know.

If you have any suggestions, recommendations, or an inspiring story you'd like to share, please send us an email. Additionally, please let us know if you would like to volunteer, donate, make an in-kind donation, or partner with us.

*April Payne-Hughes*

It's About Us. Not Between Us.  
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## Workshops

"Just For You"

Dr. Valerie Travis-Reese, Miracle of the Mind, LLC, leads an honest discussion with parents about unpacking traumas and developing a self-care action plan, followed by an interactive conversation with Ebony Williams, Founder & CEO of Everyday Transitions.

A yoga session by Audrey and a craft activity for both parents and children proved to be therapeutic.

"Becoming UnStuck"

Letting go of the past or ending a relationship is never easy. Sometimes we need extra support to help us move forward. Another tremendous mental health workshop facilitated by Mary E. May, MFT, and Dr. Angela Clack, a licensed psychotherapist, discussed strategies to become unstuck and focus on our vision.



## Education & Awareness



We partnered with the Mental Health Association in New Jersey to bring mental health awareness, Mental Health First Training, and QPR suicide prevention training to our families and community. Participants who completed the training became Certified in Mental Health First Aid.



The Education and MisEducation in Mental Health" is a series of critical conversations with mental health professionals about various mental health challenges that impact our daily activities.

## Community-Impact-Support-Teamwork



One of our partners had to pull out of the outreach collaboration. But that didn't stop us from distributing our hygiene kits. We pooled our resources with the remaining partner, All Saints Evangelistic Movement, and delivered our hygiene kits directly to the homeless community in Camden, New Jersey. Their backpacks were loaded with toiletries, clothing for the cold winter, and treats donated by members of our Winslow community. Special Thanks to Jeff and Linda Fortune for donating several toiletry items.



While at a community fair hosted by the Orchards Family Success Center in Sicklerville, Founder Teah Hughes speaks with Sicklerville residents about our programs.



Teah and George distributed toys to local families who attended our "Becoming Unstuck" workshop.



Crocheting plastic bags to make sleeping mats for the homeless was an excellent community project to help the homeless stay dry during cold and wet weather. Unfortunately, the spread of CoVid terminated our project, and the bags had to be discarded in fear the mats would help spread the virus. Many thanks to Forged Soul Fitness and their members for always supplying us with grocery bags!

A friendly game of Family Feud at our Family Game Night ended with both sides being winners!



# How you can support us



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