

## CUSD Cares

### Quail Run

Season: 3 Episode: 6 December 2, 2022

CUSD Director of Counseling & Social Services, Brenda Vargas talks with Tracy Thomas, Executive Director with organization **Quail Run Behavioral Health**. Quail Run Behavioral Health offers psychiatric care to adolescents, adults and older adults. With service excellence as a priority, we offer programs that are centered on providing outstanding care.

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Brenda Vargas: ([00:05](#))

Thank you, parents and community, for joining us on another edition of CUSD Cares podcast. Today we have the pleasure of having our partners in our community at Quail Run. I'm joined by the Executive Director of Business Development, Tracy Thomas. Tracy, welcome.

Tracy Thomas: ([00:23](#))

Thank you. Thank you for having me.

Brenda Vargas: ([00:24](#))

Well, we are delighted that you are here. We know you are a community resource in which our parents and community members have access to. Let's start off with who is Quail Run, and you know, the work that you do and where you're at?

Tracy Thomas: ([00:39](#))

Sure. Quail Run Behavioral Health. We've been in Arizona for over seven years, but we are part of a larger company called Universal Health Services that has been in behavioral health for over 40 years. And we are, UHS is nationwide. Quail Run, we are located up in North Phoenix. We have inpatient beds for adolescents starting at 12 years old to 17-year-old. They're on a floor by themselves. They are usually split up with age. So, we take the 12, 13 & 14 year olds. They program together. And then the 15, 16, 17 year olds, they program together. We offer crisis stabilization services. So, if anyone's ever in need or the fear of someone hurting themselves, hurting someone else, having a behavioral healthcare issue, we do no cost assessments. You can bring your kiddo in 24 hours a day, seven days a week. They will get an assessment done by a master's level clinician.

Brenda Vargas: ([01:48](#))

And how long do those assessments take?

Tracy Thomas: ([01:50](#))

Those assessments take a minimum of two hours. A minimum of two hours. It all depends on what's going on in the intake, and in the assessments department, if there's a lot of people, or if you're the only one in there. We always say a minimum of two hours. That's because when folks bring them in, their parent or guardian will have to complete some paperwork. Then they'll see the master's level clinician that takes about 20 minutes. And then they'll see a registered nurse that takes another 20 minutes, and the nurse will go over things like any past medications, any medical issues. They gather all that information. They meet with the adolescent and the parents separately and together they take all that information, and they give it to our psychiatrist. They call our psychiatrist. And then our psychiatrist will let them know if they need to be inpatient, which that average to stay for adolescence about five to seven days. Or they could meet criteria for not inpatient, but our outpatient service, which is our intensive outpatient program.

Brenda Vargas: ([02:55](#))

And where is your intensive outpatient program? Is it in North Phoenix as well or is it in a different location?

Tracy Thomas: ([02:59](#))

So, it is in North Phoenix, but we have a hybrid program. So, they are able to do it virtually, which is perfect for the Chandler area. If you don't wanna drive up to North Phoenix, because it is three times a week and it's three hours a day and it's after school, it's in the afternoons, like at 4:30pm it starts.

Brenda Vargas: ([03:18](#))

Well, it is certainly the way in which our youth are connected, which is in a digital platform. They're very much used to it. So, it's nice to know that they have those two options. You shared a little bit about the services. Can you go into more depth as far as the services and who's providing the services for the inpatient and/or intensive outpatient services?

Tracy Thomas: ([03:40](#))

Sure. For the inpatient services, they get to see a psychiatrist within 24 hours. They definitely see a psychiatrist within 24 hours. And usually, they're seeing a psychiatrist daily. Most times the units are staffed with registered nurses 24 hours as well as behavioral health techs 24 hours. Then we also have

social workers because what we like to do is when the adolescent comes in, the social worker will meet with them, they'll have family time, they'll meet with the families and then they'll go over with the psychiatrist. What is a good program for that particular person. So, everything's not cookie cutter. They have to gather a lot of information and then they find out a plan for that particular person. Each adolescent will have group therapy. There's a bunch of group therapy daily, where they're doing the therapy with their peers, which is why we like to keep them, with their age group as best we can. The social worker will also help with the discharge planning.

Brenda Vargas: ([04:46](#))

It sounds like it's a very personalized type of planning for each individual based on what they need. However, I think if a caregiver is listening to this, it's pretty safe to assume that there will be some type of group therapy that their child, if they do end up going to Quail Run will be participating in.

Tracy Thomas: ([05:06](#))

Yes, yes ma'am. The groups are read by the social workers and there are licensed social workers up there. There are some groups that are ran by the behavior health techs. There are psychosocial groups, there is goals groups. There are multiple different types of groups. We also have rec therapists up on the floor. They get to do music therapy, art therapy. There is outside therapy where they get to go out. We have a basketball court, we have volleyball, we have a splash pad out there. So, we definitely like to get 'em outside every single day a couple of times a day. We keep them busy. We keep them focused on their programming. They do have a little bit of downtime for themselves just to kind of relax cuz we all need that. We have visitation, in person visitation three times a week.

Tracy Thomas: ([05:57](#))

Their parent or guardians are more than welcome to come and visit 'em. They just sign up for it. So that's an hour-long visitation. They do have daily phone times, multiple times a day. We do want to keep them connected with their loved ones. We don't allow cell phones on the floor. We have phones for them to use that are on the floor so that they're monitored because the focus is, one for the privacy of other patients, we don't allow cell phones up there. We want them to be focused on their programming.

Brenda Vargas: ([06:24](#))

Well, that must be a change for most youth. It's an adjustment, I'm sure.

Tracy Thomas: ([06:30](#))

It's an adjustment. And some youth, they don't want to do that. They want to have access to their phones, but it's not like we limit them on access to the outside world because we have phones, but we

kinda wanna be able to respect other patients' privacy. And sometimes if you have a cell phone on a behavioral health unit, it could get a little tricky.

Brenda Vargas: [\(06:51\)](#)

So, tell me about your outpatient services.

Tracy Thomas: [\(06:54\)](#)

Sure, our outpatient services, it's an intense outpatient program. I'm so proud of it. We have Barbara Ventura, who's the director of our IOP program. She's been in the community for a long time. She consulted with Dr. Colefield who wrote a specific curriculum for us for our outpatient program. And it is called the Roadmap to a Peace of Mind. And what that entails is when our kiddos start our IOP program, they do markers. In IOP, we don't want them just to get better. We want them to be better. So, we try to focus on how they handle situations, how they respond to certain situations. And they found that that sometimes helps our adolescents be able to, once they're ready to get out of our program, the IOP program lasts six to eight weeks. They have some tools in their toolbox to be able to respond in a different way to things that happen in the outside world. Right. Because you can't change the outside world

Brenda Vargas: [\(07:55\)](#)

No, and stress is a normal part of life. Right. And so is change.

Tracy Thomas: [\(08:00\)](#)

Yeah. So, they need to be equipped with coping skills. I'm a lady of a particular age, so back in my day we kind of learned our coping skills on our own. You were free to go outside and play by yourself. Right. So, you kind of figure things out. But now our kids are mostly in structured sports and things like that. They're not on their own a lot of times. So maybe those coping skills, they need a little refresher on coping skills sometimes.

Brenda Vargas: [\(08:24\)](#)

Well, it's always good practice, right? Yeah. But yes, the strongest and most helpful way to problem solve is through play in young children. But we do have to admit that, fortunately and unfortunately because it is a great tool, we have our mobile devices that have changed the way we live and, for a lot of children and youth, right. We have to navigate this world with them and assist and support them so that they can learn how to play even if it's not outside. I appreciate that Quail Run recognizes that. That says a lot about your vision and mission. Share with us what that is.

Tracy Thomas: ([09:03](#))

At Quail Run Behavioral Health, we definitely want to take care of the community because behavioral health has such a stigma on it. And I think we've come a long way in a long time. I've been in healthcare for over 30 years and in behavioral health for 10. And just in those 10 years I've seen people not even want to talk about suicide or my kid has a behavioral health problem. Now they're running and saying, okay, yes, maybe they do, at least doing a no-cost assessment to see if there's something I can help my kid with because there's a lot of struggles for them. Our mission is definitely having compassionate care, meet people where they are. That's not our original mission statement, but that's kind of the vibe at Quail Run. We definitely wanna meet people where they are and have compassionate care and realize that people are individual and try to not do a cookie cutter thing but cater to what that individual needs.

Brenda Vargas: ([09:56](#))

Well, I appreciate that you guys do a no cost assessment. I know what we encourage our parents and caregivers' is don't wait till crisis happens before you seek help. It's so incredibly important and we want to always to be on that road to wellness. Right. And not wait till it is an acute crisis. I appreciate that you offer that to the community as an option and no obligation. I'm sure that you go over the certain parameters that your staff does with individuals that are seeking no cost assessment. How can families get in touch with you if that's something they're interested in? What does it look like and who should they reach out to?

Tracy Thomas: ([10:37](#))

Quail Run Behavior Health, our call center is open 24 hours a day, seven days a week. The direct number is 602-4 55-5694. And you call 'em, you let 'em know what's going on and just let the intake department, assessment department know that you want a no cost assessment. Parents can bring their kiddos in, or we take adults as well and older adults. So, they can come in, get the assessment, they'll fill out paperwork, get the assessment. They are not charged for that part if they need to be admitted. We take most insurances. We take Aetna, Cigna, Blue Cross Blue Shield, all Access plans for inpatient. There's a long list of insurances we take. Even if we don't take your insurance, still give us a call. Sometimes there's single case agreements. If you have to pay self-pay, we would give you the price for inpatient stay for the average length to stay that they're paying.

Tracy Thomas: ([11:35](#))

Even if you don't have insurance and you could possibly qualify for an Access plan, our business office will help you apply for Access and then we'll just bill the Access. We try to let people, for IOP we take most insurances that I said the Cigna, the Aetna's, we're providers not just taking them. Cuz some people say we take the insurance, but they're not a provider. We're providers for these plans, which means we can only charge you your copay or your deductible. You would be responsible for whatever

your insurance company doesn't pay. When you're a provider, the patient's only responsible for what is contracted with the insurance company. So, I just kind of wanted to make that clear.

Brenda Vargas: ([12:13](#))

Yeah, that's a good distinction to share with our parents and community.

Tracy Thomas: ([12:16](#))

So, be careful of that. For the intensive of outpatient, we are providers for most access plans like Mercy Care, Care First, Health Choice. Most Access plans, but not all of the Access plans. We are providers for Mercy Care, we are, and then you call the same number, the (602) 455-5694. Our website is a really good website too. Its Quail Run Behavioral.com. So that's Q U A I L R U N B E H A B I O R A I .com. If you go to our website, it'll show you all the services that we provide. And on our adolescent page, we have some really cool videos for parents and for kids, it talks about cyber bullying, how to look out if your kiddos suffering from anxiety. So, I would really welcome everyone to go and take a look at our website because I think that those videos are priceless.

Brenda Vargas: ([13:12](#))

Well, I think it's important for parents to have the resources at their fingertips. Right? Even if they're unsure, I think it's important that they at least become more informed. I appreciate that you have those resources and video clips and hopefully they're digestible so that folks can really take a look at a time that's convenient for them. And access them for free, it sounds like, so that they can take a look and determine whether or not it's time to seek additional help and possibly even get an assessment with no obligation. That's wonderful. Tracy, what is probably the most important myth, do you think? Maybe not so much about Quail Run, but just in general about receiving services that Quail run and your employees share with you that you think it would be important for our community to know?

Tracy Thomas: ([14:00](#))

I think once you take a look at Quail Run from just the way our facility feels when you walk in, it does not feel to me, and I've heard this from other people too, like a behavior health hospital. It is warm, it's inviting, it's not as scary as people think, or as you see on tv, you really do have people there that really genuinely care about people with the nice warm pictures on the wall, we have quiet rooms with music in them. It's not as scary as people think it is. And it's okay to get help. It's okay to say yes, I'm thinking about suicide. Yes. I'm thinking about, I'm depressed, I can't handle the stress. It's okay to say that. So just letting people know that it's okay. It's nothing to be embarrassed of. You can definitely live with a behavioral health problem. You don't always have to be on medication. And if you do have to be on medication, as long as it's regulated, you can have a great life. You really can, you really can. I'm happy that the services are available.

Brenda Vargas: ([15:08](#))

Well, I appreciate you recognizing that it could be a scary experience for our youth to go into a facility and really be open to receiving. I think a lot of times when youth are trying to navigate a difficult time in their lives, it's not only hard for them, but it's even harder on parents. And for the caregiver it's a scary, it could be scary. So, coming into a place that is unknown and anything that is welcome and warm and inviting, almost like a big hug, right? Is very much appreciated. So, thank you. You know that you are able to provide that kind of space, so that people feel comfortable and honoring each individual as they are. It's very important. And these are the kind of partners in our community that we like to highlight and share so that we know there are many different choices out there for families. We wanna provide all of the choices to our community so that they can determine the right fit and the right match for their child and their family and proceed with getting the help that's needed. Tracy, I appreciate your time and thank you to Quail Run and we look forward to working more with you. And thank you parents and caregivers and community for another addition of CUSD Cares.