

August 1, 2008

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

**SWFAS TRANSITIONAL LIVING CENTER
EARNS STATEWIDE “BEST PRACTICES” AWARD**

Southwest Florida Addiction Services (SWFAS) has earned a first place award for its Transitional Living Center from the Florida Department of Children & Families and The Florida Alcohol and Drug Abuse Association.

SWFAS’ Transitional Living Center was honored with the 2008 Substance Abuse Services Best Practices Award in the Innovative Program category, for creating a peer-supported, self-governing program at the Transitional Living Center, which provides permanent supportive housing for 34 individuals recovering from substance abuse and homelessness.

This award will be presented at the FADAA annual conference in Orlando August 21.

As a result of the self-governing program, the number of residents who relapse into substance abuse has dropped by 34 percent and those who returned to homelessness decreased by 65 percent.

“The most important change seen is the fact that community members are reaching out to each other and supporting each other. Relapse is not punished – the residents re-engage rather than banish or drive out residents who slip,” said Rosemary Boisvert, Transitional Living Center director. “Addictions are chronic diseases, and these changes reflect strides toward empowering individuals to manage their disease and take responsibility for their continued recovery.”

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The Transitional Living Center is housed in a series of duplexes between Dixie Parkway and Grand Avenue in central Fort Myers. Residents in permanent supportive housing may remain at the TLC as long as they live a drug-free lifestyle, obtain work, and pay monthly rent that is based on their income.

The Transitional Living Center also offers residential treatment for an additional 35 men and women with drug and/or alcohol problems in either a short-term residential program (one month) or in a four to six-month transitional living program.

SWFAS is the most comprehensive substance abuse treatment and prevention program in Southwest Florida, serving 6,000 people per year from ages 9 to 90. SWFAS offers outpatient and residential programs for both adults and youngsters from seven locations in Lee County and two in Hendry County. In addition, SWFAS provides detoxification services for adults, prevention programming, and an Employee Assistance Program for about 60 Southwest Florida businesses.

Fees are charged on a sliding scale, based on family income. In many cases, private insurance is accepted. SWFAS is a United Way agency.

For more information, contact Boisvert at 338-2977 or visit www.swfas.org.