



MIDLAND

MAS MATTERS

A Quarterly Newsletter for Midland Adult Services



HEART OF MIDLAND

**Congratulations to
Meredith
Lindsay and
Gail**

For demonstrating the principles of
Midland - positive outlook, integrity,
collaboration and support to peers.



From the desk of Shawn M. McInerney President/CEO



I hope this note finds you and your family doing well and in good health.

Midland is a Division of Developmental Disabilities/Medicaid approved provider organization. Midland's residential programs operate under a Medicaid waiver agreement with the federal government. This agreement is in two parts: the Community Care Program (CCP) and the Supports Program (SP).

Individuals who reside with a provider, in a licensed setting, must be on the CCP.

Midland also operates and provides services to individuals on the Support Program. People who participate in the Supports Program (SP) can also reside in provider residences also. Midland currently operates one such setting. These types of residents do not require an annual inspection from the Department of Human Services, Office of Licensing (OOL).

OOL conducts inspections of Midland's group homes and supervised apartments. For Midland, these inspections typically occur in early May. This year our inspections commenced May 7, 2024, and twelve (12) residences were inspected.

The OOL has the regulatory authority and responsibility, under N.J.A.C. 10:44A, to conduct annual inspections. The licensing standards cover a host of domains, including organization and administration, advocacy and rights, service delivery, health, and safety. Delving a little deeper into this process, the inspectors examine a wide array of items, including but not limited to staff/personnel records, staff training, staff coverage, house rules and self-advocacy, admission processes, general health records, prescriptions, over the counter medications, food, clothing for individuals, vehicle safety, fire evacuation, hot water temperatures, along with many other program, health, and safety measures.

Midland views our annual inspection process as an effective and objective way to evaluate services and measure quality program outcomes. OOL and Midland held an exit conference on May 23, 2024. Our inspection went exceedingly well, with a few minor deficiencies noted. Since our first licensed residence opened in 1999, Midland has met OOL's standards. This is another measure of our on-going commitment to uphold our organizational values and culture.

Thank you for your continued interest and support of Midland and our critically important mission.

If you are interested in learning more about Midland's residential services, please reach back to me at mcinerney@midlandnj.org.



EXPLORES

All mothers will agree that spending time with their child, regardless of age, is the best gift you can give your mother on Mother's Day. On May 10th, program participants enjoyed "Muffins with Mom" and quality time together.

What a perfect way to express their love! Thank you Mom and Dad's for taking the time out of their schedules to spend time with their loved ones!



EXPLORES

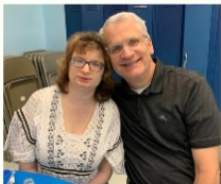
muffins with MOM



EXPLORES



DONUTS WITH DAD!



Explores hosted this significant day to celebrate the amazing Fathers of our program participants. It was a day filled with love and appreciation, a perfect prelude to Father's Day. The saying, 'The way to a man's heart is through his stomach' only captures a fraction of the truth. The true essence of this event lies in the shared moments between fathers and their adult children. These are the moments that truly matter, the ones to be cherished with the ones you love.

Meet Program Manager Qaadara COLEMAN



My Career:

Before working at Midland, Qaadara Coleman was a Chef. She also worked as a Substance Abuse Counselor for Women for 11 years and as a photographer for 10 years. In 2017, Qaadara was seeking a new career, and when she saw the opportunity to work with individuals with disabilities, she felt a strong urge to follow her heart. In July 2017, she started part-time as one of Midland's Direct Support Professionals in the Residential Program. When Midland opened Explores, Qaadara accepted a full-time position as a Community Specialist. Unsurprisingly, Qaadara was promoted to Assistant Program Manager at Explores in 2019 and then Program Manager in 2020. Chief Operating Officer Natalie Swiatek adds, "Qaadara has developed so much in her years here and is an incredible asset to Midland, the adults she supports, and the families behind them."

About Me:

Family is essential in Qaadara's life. She has been a widow for four years, raising her son, Qadir, and her 10-year-old daughter, Zoey, alone. During the pandemic, she adopted a ten-week-old toy poodle, Amber. Today, at age 3, Amber is a beloved member of the family. Qaadara also has one sibling, a sister she talks to every morning.

In her spare time, Qaadara loves to be around water and likes to go to the lake and beach and spend time with her family.

Working at Explores:

Qaadara explains her job responsibilities as follows, "My position as Program Manager is to ensure that the individuals are involved in various daily activities with their staff. My job is to incorporate activities throughout the month for individuals and the staff to do hands-on activities daily and make it enjoyable for them."

Qaadara shares that her favorite thing about working at Explores is the diversity and support from the Administrative Team. "I feel very supported in my position, says Qaadara. I have never worked for an organization that is so family-oriented instead of just taking a job. That makes it worth coming to Explores daily because I know the staff cares about the individuals and everyone". She also loves the day to day aspects of her job, "I look forward to coming in, knowing each day brings fun and the staff and individuals have a good time together."

Motto

Her motto is "Live my life, one day at a time."

Fiddler's Elbow



The individuals in Employment Services began seasonal employment on June 10th at Fiddlers Elbow Country Club in Bedminster. Ryan, Amy, and Employment Specialist Audrey are working on washing, drying, and folding towels in the laundry room two days a week.

SEASONAL EMPLOYMENT

Employment Services News

Since early 2022, Robert has been a regular visitor to our Adult Employment programs, bringing his vibrant energy and enthusiasm each time he visits Midland. He has made some real connections and knows many individuals by name. We have learned about many aspects of Robert's job and other jobs at the ball field.

A highlight of Robert's involvement came this past January when he organized a behind-the-scenes tour of the Somerset Patriots Stadium for one of our Prevocational Classes. The group enjoyed visiting the team's training center, players' locker rooms and lounge, as well as the press and announcer's box. This unique experience offered invaluable insights into the workings of a professional sports venue.



Midland spotlight's Robert Crossman, Senior Merchandising Director of the Somerset Patriots. We are grateful for Robert's ongoing support and positive impact he has on our community over the past few years.

Robert's dedication to our programs was further demonstrated in a custom Patriots T-Shirt Design session. During this seminar, he collaborated with three individuals to create personalized T-shirts based on their favorite animals or activities. His commitment didn't stop there—Robert went the extra mile and had the T-shirts made. He then presented the individuals with a personalized letter linking their unique design to the recipient's personality. The moment he presented each person with their T-shirt was truly special and heartwarming, reflecting Robert's genuine care and creativity.

We are grateful for Robert's ongoing support and the positive impact he has on our community. We look forward to Robert's next visit, knowing his presence brings a unique and valuable perspective to our programs. We encourage everyone to take a moment to visit the Patriots store and personally thank Robert for his ongoing support of Midland in his own special way.



MEET Briar Moroney

Board Certified Behavior Analyst



My favorites:

- Animal: Elephant
- Season: Fall
- Movie genre: Horror, scary
- Activity: Painting
- Vacation: Disney (50+ times!)

About me :

I started in January 2024 as one of two BCBA's employed through Midland Adult Services. I attended Caldwell University for my undergraduate (B.S. in Psychology) and graduate pursuits (M.A. in Applied Behavior Analysis). I decided to pursue a career in ABA after having first-hand experience of the positive impacts of ABA on my brother's life. My brother, who has a primary diagnosis of pervasive developmental disorder not otherwise specified, engaged in severe challenging behaviors as a child. Through behavior-analytic interventions, my brother's challenging behaviors reduced tremendously in frequency and intensity. For the first time, I finally saw my brother happy. Because of this, I knew I wanted to change other people's lives the way I saw my brother's life had changed.

One of the most significant moments in my career was the opportunity to present my thesis (Using Contingency Management with a Deposit Contract to Increase Toothbrushing Accuracy with College Students) in May at the prestigious 50th Annual Applied Behavior Analysis International Conference. This platform not only allowed me to share my research but also to contribute to the ongoing advancement of ABA, a field I am deeply passionate about.

My work is not just a profession but a passion. I am deeply committed to helping the individuals we serve live their best lives, discover their sources of happiness, meet their needs, and enable them to lead fulfilling lives.



EMPLOYMENT SERVICES



Volunteer opportunities



The program participants look forward to and are pleased to be helpful to others in the community. Stephanie and Ryan assist the residents of Foothills Acres Rehabilitation and Nursing Center with program activities such as games, entertainment, and guest speakers.

Every Monday, our individuals can explore what it is like to work in a restaurant. Sabrina, Richard and Darren assist in rolling silverware, wiping down menus, and replenishing condiments at the Stoney Brook Grille as part of the Employment Services Career Exploration program.



BEHAVIORAL STRATEGY TIPS

Tantrums are the behavior we come across the most in this field. They can also be accompanied by self-injury and aggression. Our Midland Behavioral Team knows how scary these kinds of tantrums can be, so today, we're discussing some of our best, ABA therapy-based tips and behavioral strategies to manage tantrums in the moment and prevent tantrums before they begin.

Here are some common reasons why tantrums occur:

- 1. Communication/Social Reasons:** A tantrum can serve as a form of communication and/or social interaction. Some people with autism or other developmental challenges may have limited communication skills might engage in tantrums to indicate what they want, get attention, or express refusal to a request.
- 2. Stopping or Refusing a Preferred Activity:** A tantrum may also result when a preferred activity or favorite item is removed.
- 3. Physiological/Medically Related:** In some instances, tantrums can be the result of pain, discomfort, or other medical issues. It is best to consult a physician to determine if there is an underlying medical reason that might be causing a tantrum.

Tips for Managing/Preventing Tantrums

- 1. Offer Choices:** Tantrums can often occur when an individual feels like they have no choice. When appropriate, offer your loved ones choices. Choices can be small, like letting your them decide what activities they want to do, or what food they would like. Many times, offering choices works best when YOU present the choices to your loved one. Offer choices for both preferred activities and non-preferred activities, since it gives your loved one some control over the situation.
- 2. Deliver Instructions the Right Way:** Sometimes you want to give your loved one a choice, and sometimes you want to give an instruction. Make the difference between the two clear by stating directions clearly. For example, instead of saying, "Will you close the door?" say, "Close the door." This will help your loved one understand when you're giving a directive and when you're providing a choice for them to make.
- 3. Prepare for Transitions:** Asking your loved one to stop their favorite activity is a common trigger for a tantrum. To avoid a meltdown, be sure to provide your loved one with a warning before their favorite activity ends. A visual timer can also help your child understand how long an activity will last, making it easier for them to transition to something new.
- 4. Give Frequent Breaks:** We all get frustrated when we do tasks we don't love, and people with developmental disabilities are no different. Let your loved one take breaks often, especially when they're doing a non-preferred activity. By giving breaks, you can prevent problem behavior before it occurs.
- 5. Break Tasks Down:** Giving too many instructions or too complicated of a task can lead to tantrums, particularly in people with developmental disabilities. Prevent this by breaking down tasks into easy components. Then, give instructions for each small task one at a time. Remember to use directive language rather than choice language.
- 6. Give Positive Reinforcement:** Praise and attention are great ways to reinforce desired behaviors. Be sure to give your loved ones lots of positive reinforcement when she practices behaviors you want to see, especially if they tolerate something that typically results in challenging behavior.

By following these best practices, you can minimize the likelihood of a tantrum. The important thing to remember about these tips is to do them before a behavior occurs, not during or directly after a tantrum or meltdown.

EVENTS



The 9th Annual Move for Midland Sponsored by PVH Corp. "Out of this World" space themed event was held on June 1st and raised over \$80K for Midland's programs and services! More than 350 people joined us for a community day full of dancing, demonstrations, games, food, face painting, sand art and best of all, a Splash the CEO contest that resulted in President McInerney covered in green alien water! Special thanks to all the incredible volunteers, sponsors, participants and donors who made it all possible.



Wellness Corner

Michele Casey, RN

Is it allergies or illness?

As we get into the summer months, seasonal allergies become prevalent due to the increase in pollen in the air. It is important to understand the difference between seasonal allergies and illness, such as the common cold. Correct diagnosis of either is crucial in receiving prompt care and treatment. Below is a guideline to help differentiate the difference between the two diagnoses.

Seasonal Allergies:

- Symptoms develop immediately after exposure to allergens
- Nasal discharge is clear, runny, and watery.
- Symptoms can last more than two weeks or be recurrent
- Nose and eyes are often itchy
- Symptoms often appear at the start of the season

Common Cold:

- Symptoms develop slowly and are milder at the beginning
- Nasal discharge starts clear and becomes thick and colored (typically yellow and/or green)
- Symptoms last 7-10 days
- Fever is possible
- Throat is sore
- Mild body/physical discomfort is present

RESIDENTIAL

The individuals living in a Midland Residential home go on a summer vacation each summer. This year, they stayed in the Greater Philly area. They enjoyed swimming in the hotel pool, eating out, spending time with each other, and visiting the Camden Adventure Aquarium and Sesame Place. The trip was a great success, with beautiful weather and fantastic company! Thank you to all the staff who planned and went on the vacation this year; you make these smiles possible!



2024 Summer Vacation

EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATION IN THE WORKPLACE

Here are some strategies to enhance communication:

- 1) **Active Listening:** Pay attention to what others are saying, listen without interrupting, and ask clarifying questions to ensure understanding;
- 2) **Be Clear and Concise:** When communicating, be clear about your message and avoid unnecessary phrases. Keep your message short to avoid confusion;
- 3) **Choose the Right Medium:** Use appropriate communication channels for different situations. For example, face-to-face meetings may be best for sensitive discussions, while email or messaging platforms are suitable for quick updates;
- 4) **Feedback Culture:** Foster an environment where giving and receiving feedback is encouraged. Constructive feedback helps improve performance and strengthens relationships;
- 5) **Empathy:** Understanding the perspective of your colleagues' perspectives and consider their feelings and viewpoints. Empathy can promote trust and mutual respect in the workplace;
- 6) **Clarity in Writing:** When sending written communication, such as emails or reports ensure clarity in your writing. Use bullet points, headings, and formatting to make the information easy to understand;
- 7) **Non-Verbal Communication:** Consider your body language and facial expressions during conversations. Non-verbal cues can convey as much information as verbal communication;
- 8) **Respect Differences:** In diverse workplaces, be mindful of the differences in backgrounds and worldviews in communication styles and preferences. Adapt your approach to accommodate people's differences;
- 9) **Timely Responses:** Respond promptly to messages and requests from colleagues. Timely communication shows respect for others' time and helps maintain momentum on projects;
- 10) **Understand Perspectives:** Try to understand the perspective and feelings of others to communicate more effectively;
- 11) **Conflict Resolution Skills:** Learn how to manage conflicts effectively through open dialogue, active listening, and finding mutually beneficial solutions;
- 12) **Continuous Improvement:** Regularly evaluate communication processes and seek feedback from team members to identify areas for improvement.

Open positions with Midland

- Strategic Planning and Compliance Specialist
- Support Counselors, Residential
- Community Specialist, Explores





SUMMER
JULY BIRTHDAY'S

STAFF

Mr. Masciola	Mr. Tobin
Ms. Agyemang	Miss Moroney
Ms. Joshi	Ms. Sanya
Ms. Reevey	Mrs. Burgos-Zamora

INDIVIDUALS

Peter
Tyra
Wanda
Ryan



AUGUST
BIRTHDAY'S




STAFF

Mrs. Sheriff Tarawalie	Ms. Mba
Mr. Donahue	Mr. Dormon
Ms. Osuagwu	Ms. Greene
Mr. Darko	Ms. Afonso
Mr. Bangura	Ms. Nwakaihe
Ms. Emile	Ms. Bass
	Ms. Ramaglia
	Ms. Antwi Boasiako



INDIVIDUALS

Joan	Glenn
Jason	Jon
Michelle	David
Sabrina	



Community members



Thank You

Guest speakers and Community volunteers

- Popcorn for the People
- Top Safety
- Kathleen Quigley Photographer
- Johnson & Johnson IT
- Disability Rights
- PVH
- L'Oreal



We are grateful for your willingness to give your time, energy, and talents. Your support of Midland's programs allows us to continue fulfilling our mission and supporting the individuals we serve by introducing them to various careers and opportunities they may be interested in learning more about.

Mark your calendar

Upcoming Events

SAVE the DATES!

September
30th

Golf
Outing



November
24th

Magic
at the
Museum



February
23rd

Basket
Bash



May
31st

MOVE
FOR
MIDLAND



Are you following us across all social media channels?



Facebook: @TheMidlandSchool

YouTube: Midland NJ

X (formerly Twitter): @MidlandMessages

Instagram: Midland_School_NJ

LinkedIn: school/the-midland-school