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IMPACT REPORT

Return on Investment to North Carolina Taxpayers

Testimony of
William Shelton, Executive Director
Summit House North Carolina



Presented to
Honorable Members, Appropriations Subcommittee on Justice and Public Safety
North Carolina General Assembly
Raleigh, North Carolina
February 15, 2011



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Summit House

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Prepared Remarks from William Shelton, Summit House

Mister Chairman, members and staff of the Joint Appropriations Subcommittee on Justice and Public Safety and fellow North Carolinians, good morning from Summit House.

My name is Bill Shelton. I serve as executive director of Summit House.

Thank you for the honor and opportunity to present the Impact Report on how Summit House returns savings to taxpayers on the investment of public funds.

What is Summit House? Our mission statement says it all:

The Summit House program strives to break the multigenerational cycle of crime, poverty and substance abuse . . . by intervening in the lives of mothers who have committed non-violent crimes and strengthening the bonds between those mothers and their children.

Ladies and gentlemen, what we do every day, all year long at Summit House is important work that bears repeating:

For 23 years, Summit House has saved taxpayers millions of dollars by breaking the cycle of crime, poverty and substance abuse.

Since 1987, Summit House has been providing comprehensive, therapeutic and rehabilitative services to female nonviolent offenders — the mothers — and their children age 7 and younger.

Did you know, Summit House is more demanding and rigorous than prison?

Summit House's mothers serve time where they are needed most with their children.

Summit House serves all 100 North Carolina counties, with regional residences in the Piedmont and Charlotte and in the Triangle where plans are underway for a residence.

Our intense program changes the lifestyle of mothers through tough love nurturing and intervention. With a healthy dose of community collaboration, Summit House transforms lives within a positive structured context.

For more information about Summit House, please refer to later pages of the materials provided.

Summit House is grateful for the public funds received over the years from our state.

In the past fiscal year, 2009-2010, total funding from state and other sources totaled \$1,431,632.





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Of that amount, the State of North Carolina appropriated \$1,108,165, with the balance of \$323,468 coming from the Department of Health Human Services plus grants and fund-raising.

State funding accounts for 77 percent. You deserve to know how Summit House returns savings on the State's investment.

Conservatively, that return on investment is 33 percent. Let me explain how it happens: During this period Summit House served 23 mothers and 26 children.



Comparatively, had those mothers been in prison and their children in foster care, and not residents of Summit House, the costs to state would have been \$1,470,000, and that is a conservative figure.

Those are costs for only one year. Many of those residents would have been serving longer prison terms. Their children would be in costly foster care, and the cost to the state would be greater than its investment in Summit House.

Let me explain it another way. During the past three years, Summit House graduated seven residents.

After accounting for their time served at Summit House, had those mothers served their time in prison and their children placed in foster care the added costs to the state would have been closer to \$400,000, which can be considering a savings.

The savings are even greater when you factor in that Summit House graduates leave as self-sufficient citizens and good mothers.

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Only about 10 percent of Summit House graduates need to enter prison. That dramatic reduction in recidivism is a significant achievement.

The key performance measures in evaluating Summit House's success can be attributed to a dedicated staff of competent case managers and counselors. They constitute a team of great teachers.

Our core measurable outcomes include intense intervention in Substance Abuse Treatment and Education, Life Skills and Parenting Skills.

Substance Abuse Treatment and Education

- Completion of intense Substance Abuse Treatment and Education.
- Addiction Recovery.

Parenting Skills

- Successful completion of Individualized Parenting Goals.
- Improvement in understanding age appropriate behaviors.
- Consistent progress in parenting skills through ongoing training.

Life Skills

- Completion of mental health and therapeutic interventions.
- Completion of job training and skill development.
- Completion of General Equivalency Diploma, if necessary.
- Completion of Community Service Hours.
- Nutrition, accessing health care, building healthy relationships, anger management, impulse control, budgeting and financial management.

I will be pleased to respond to any questions, in addition to providing more detailed written responses, if you wish.

In closing, again thank you for the opportunity to reinforce how Summit House is a good steward of public funds and how Summit House transforms lives that save taxpayers' money.

If Summit House did not exist, the cost to our state would be in the millions of additional dollars.

Children need their mothers and their mothers need you.

Thank you.



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Summit House Statement of Activities Twelve Month Period Ended June 30, 2010

Operating Revenue

	<u>Total</u>	<u>State Funding DOC</u>	<u>State Funding DHHS</u>	<u>Other</u>
<u>Public Support</u>				
United Ways	63,347			63,347
Foundations	36,000			36,000
Business and community organizations	25,213			25,213
Individuals and Summit House board members	43,214			43,214
In-kind donations	2,700			2,700
Total public support	170,474	-	-	170,474
<u>Government Support</u>				
State government - DOC	1,108,164	1,108,164		-
State government - DHHS	100,000		100,000	-
County government	-			-
In-kind government support	1,492			1,492
Total government support	1,209,656	1,108,164	100,000	1,492
<u>Other Revenue</u>				
Fundraising events, net of expenses	20,390			20,390
Client Room and Board	24,599			24,599
Other revenue	6,513			6,513
Total other revenue	51,501	-	-	51,501
<u>Total Support and Revenue</u>	1,431,632	1,108,164	100,000	223,468
Net Assets released from restrictions	-			
Total Unrestricted Support and Revenue	1,431,632	1,108,164	100,000	223,468
Operating Expenses				
Payroll related expenses	1,044,113	803,967	78,308	161,838
Occupancy	179,401	138,138	5,568	35,695
Specific assistance to mothers and children	65,584	56,144	4,919	4,521
Depreciation	84,448	-		84,448
Professional fees	22,041	16,971	2,181	2,889
Travel and transportation	41,481	31,941	3,111	6,429
Communication expenses	30,590	23,555	2,294	4,741
Other expenses	16,983	13,077	1,274	2,632
Equipment rental and maintenance	23,522	18,112	1,764	3,646
Office supplies and postage	7,745	5,964	581	1,200
Conferences and meetings	2,954	295		2,659
Printing	274	-		274
Total Operating Expenses	1,519,137	1,108,164	100,000	310,973
Income (Loss) from Operations	(87,505)	-	-	(87,505)



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ABOUT SUMMIT HOUSE

Governance

An involved Community Board of Directors has fiduciary responsibility, providing direction, advice and consultation on operations, finance, administration, programs and resource development.

Meeting regularly, the Board and its active subcommittees address and monitor facility operations and maintenance, resident programs, fund-raising activities and financial oversight.

Board members represent a diverse perspective of the community: social work, law enforcement, commerce, professional services, real estate, finance and education.



Our fully vested Board supports the program with their personal financial contributions, strong community contacts and generous time in support of the program's mission.

Fund-raising is a major Board responsibility. Successful activities include an annual golf tournament, Mother's Day event, holiday drives and other opportunities to raise community awareness.

Individually, Board members serve as community ambassadors. They speak to a variety of service clubs and organizations, religious groups, corporations and businesses.

Overview

Summit House provides comprehensive, therapeutic and rehabilitative services to female nonviolent offenders and their children age 7 and younger.

The program's primary objective is to change the lifestyle of mothers through nurturing, yet tough-love intervention, with community collaboration, to transform their lives within a positive structured context.

Elements of the program promote drug-abstinence, eliminate anti-social (criminal) behavior, develop employable skills, discerning perspective and acquisition of positive attitudes, beliefs, and behavior reflecting honesty, respect, nonviolence and self-reliance.

Children of Summit House mothers receive individualized services, including mental health assessments/treatment, speech/hearing assessments, developmental evaluations and academic tutorials, based on individualized needs.

Narrative

Summit House is a Presidential Service Award-winning rehabilitative alternative to prison for women convicted of nonviolent offenses and their children. Incorporating recognized best practices (see attachment). Since 1987, the community program empowers mothers to overcome the impact of traumatic events in their history to make a better life for themselves and family.



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Typically, many Summit House mothers suffered abuse in childhood and adolescence. In response, they coped with self-destructive behavior, often criminally resorting to drugs and alcohol to escape their environment. From that jarring trauma and dysfunction, our clients have not learned how to be responsibly independent to make better and healthy choices for themselves or their children. As a result, The Summit House rehabilitative program provides a system of recognized behavior modification rewards and consequences to achieve our mission of breaking the self-destructive cycle of crime, addiction and other aberrant behavior.



Summit House maintains residences in the Piedmont, Charlotte and plans to rebuilding in the Triangle. Our highly structured 24-hour, 7-days-a-week program incorporates comprehensive treatment and professional case management services in a pleasant residential setting.

For families, mothers and children reside in their own furnished rooms, with adjacent community lavatories and bathing facilities. In-Summit House, residents have access to laundry facilities-folding room,

large dining room attached to a commercial kitchen, recreation room (library, television) and playroom for children. A placid courtyard encourages reflection and meditation, and a playground helps children release energy in a safe area.

Summit House serves mothers who are pregnant and have no more than two children up to the age of 7 or both. Mothers are referred to the program by a judge, probation officer, or an attorney. Also, ministers, parents and community members can make referrals.

After the initial screening criteria are met, Summit House conducts a lengthy and comprehensive assessment with the mothers prior to accepting them into the program. Most importantly, the rigorous assessment addresses the reasons, responsibility and remedies for the nonviolent crime(s) for which the prospective client has been convicted. This assessment helps us evaluate mothers' life experiences, family background, substance abuse, if any, education levels, mental health functioning, and ability to live in a community with other families. The assessment determines whether mothers can successfully complete the program.

Qualified mothers must be committed to Summit House's mission. They need to exhibit a realistic and authentic desire to change their lives for the better. As a resident, they need to possess a steadfast willingness to attend and participate in all training and treatment activities. After the family is accepted, the judge orders mothers to complete the Summit House program as a condition of probation. Summit House is an alternative to prison for mothers, who have made the thoughtful choice of changing their lives instead of serving time in prison.

The length of the program for residents depends on the mothers' ability to meet their goals. It can be accomplished in as few as 12 months. Institutionally, Summit House's objective is to admit highly motivated residents capable of completing the program in two years or less. A probation officer is assigned to mothers to assist in monitoring and motivating. Because Summit House is a court-ordered program, mothers failing to comply will be rearrested and incarcerated.



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Summit House is more rigorous, demanding and self-actualizing than prison. The process of surrendering to the program is one of the most critical first steps a client must take to succeed in the program. The surrendering process includes trusting Summit House staff, frequent and honest reflection, consistently placing their child first and exhibiting honest self-appraisal. Complying with our zero-tolerance program is the only way mothers can effectively incorporate healthy lifestyles returning them to the dignity of self-sufficiency and responsible parenthood.

Summit House provides mothers and their children with every service necessary to help them examine their lives and reset their priorities. Each family is assigned to a professional case manager who assesses needs and tailors an appropriate treatment-rehabilitative plan. Individually and collectively, Summit House mothers perform assigned tasks, prepare meals, launder clothes and other instructive “chores” as part of their intense rehabilitation.

We provide needed instruction, support and guidance to help mothers transition successfully into productive and independent lifestyles. Case managers help clients develop a comprehensive treatment plan. The needs-based treatment plans incorporate a phased motivation system, staff observation and mothers’ input. It is an 11-phase motivation system constructed on a “building-block” model. Each new phase requires mastering and demonstrating skills learned in previous phases.

The treatment plan enables mothers and children to attain a level of success, creating a comfortable transition to the community. This transitional phase is as intensive and rigorous as each preceding phase. It ensures each mother has mastered the skills necessary to be successful. Additionally, the children are assessed across all developmental domains, permitting the staff to adequately provide needed services. Individual treatment plans are based on the results of the screening and assessment, as well as clinical observations of mother-child interaction.

One of our strongest benefits to society is the positive impact on children. Typically, they face myriad cognitive and behavioral challenges as a result of negative exposure to drugs, violence, poor nutrition and other forms of neglect. Living at Summit House is often the first time these children experience a safe, dependable, consistent routine with their mothers.

The bonding between mothers and children fosters a sense of trust, allowing children to learn their primary needs will be met. Summit House children receive comprehensive evaluations and interventions to address any developmental and behavioral issues leading to criminal activity, personality disorders and any ongoing sense of low self-esteem and self-devaluation.

Core programing includes: Parenting Skills, Life Skills and Substance Abuse Education

Parenting Skills

The main goal of our parenting program is to strengthen the bond between mothers and children. Mothers who successfully complete the parenting curriculum will be able to demonstrate more effective and appropriate parenting. Key elements of the program include:

- Weekly parenting classes: disciple versus punishing, appropriate developmental stages, secure attachment and bonding.



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- Weekly individual parenting sessions: Addressing major issues or concerns and discussing progress toward treatment goals.
- Reflection assignments to apply learned skills.
- Observing and monitoring parent-child interaction to determine progress.
- Child developmental screening and development.

Life Skills

Mothers who successfully participate in and complete the Life Skills curriculum will learn appropriate coping techniques. They will demonstrate improved social skills necessary to be a productive, well-adjusted member of society. The Life Skills curriculum includes:

- General Equivalency Diploma studies, if applicable.
- Budgeting and financial management.
- Anger management and impulse control.
- Building healthy relationships.
- Nutrition and health care.
- Job training.
- Mental health and therapeutic intervention.
- Community service projects.

Substance Abuse Education

Mothers maintaining sobriety is critical to success in life and the protection of their children. Key components of the program include:

- Substance abuse education/treatment
- Addiction recovery and 12-step group
- Random drug testing



Summit House fosters personal responsibility. Mothers are required to pay rent when they secure employment, as well as paying restitution as defined in their sentences and establishing a savings account of at least \$1,500 prior to graduating from the program. This “seed money” helps during this transition to establish a fresh start and a new life with their children.

Again, if mothers fail to meet the program’s requirements, they can be incarcerated. Following graduation from the program, Summit House provides a minimum of six months of Aftercare: the transitional phase back into the community.

During Aftercare, mothers receive random home visits, monitoring of work site attendance, and continued drug screening.



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Children need their mothers and their mothers need you!

Summit House 'gifts' change and save lives

Just ask Willie "Dee" Pickens about "the gift of a second chance" that Summit House delivers with loving firmness. In response, she will explode in delight, saying the program delivers gifts of humility, responsibility, honor and a fresh perspective for a better life.

"The gift of Summit House is the opportunity to change yourself and help others do the same," she says as an energized graduate who mentors current residents.

"I help the ladies (residents) understand why it's necessary to be honest with themselves and own up to the reasons why they are here. It's necessary for the day you walk out because you have developed the strength and skills to cope in the real world," Dee explains.

The Summit House gift benefits many people, she says, "starting with the ladies and their children, as well as the community and our state."

During the past two decades since her empowering graduation, Dee has been a role model for residents, serving as a part time case manager. She enjoys sharing her familiar story.

"When I came to Summit House, I felt like there was nothing left for me. My family had turned their backs on me and this was the last resort. I was at Summit House because it was do this program or do time," she says.

At first, like many new residents, Dee struggled then adjusted to the life-changing demands of the Summit House program that helped her change her life and outlook.

Dee explains, "I thought that it would be easier to actually do the time (in prison), than to make all the changes in my life. It took me a while to figure out that Summit House was helping me not hurting me, and that it was best for me and my children."



PICKENS

Thanks to Summit House, graduate Jennifer Shook more clearly sees "red flags" that could be injurious to herself and child.

"I learned that if I paid attention to them, I would not do anything to hurt myself or my children," she says. "My pattern had been to enter relationships to please others without thinking about how it would affect me or my children."

The "tough love" Summit House program helped Jennifer transform her life, to learn new patterns of personal responsibility and integrity.

As evidence, Jennifer is a self-sufficient mother with a stronger bond with her youngest child.

Summit House helped Jennifer develop positive coping skills and confidence to open new opportunities. She has a full time job, and is in school to become a machinist.

The added benefit: Her changed life instilled greater personal responsibility which has given strength and inspiration to her children.

The discipline of Summit House provided new perspectives for Jennifer. She says the constant attention

from case managers helped ground her, providing a foundation of greater self-esteem that gives her confidence and assurance.

Simple actions work, providing there is a personal commitment to change. Now Jennifer can set achievable goals for success.

"Summit House helped me reach a personal Summit to rise to the top in my life," she shouts with joy.



SHOOK

Volunteer Ginger Doherty enlists family, friends

Ginger Doherty is an active Charlotte board member whose volunteering caught the attention of her employer, SPX Corporation, in a big way: A \$10,000 grant to Summit House. At SPX, Ginger serves as manager of financial planning and analysis at the global manufacturing and industrial equipment supplier.

Seeing a need to help Summit House, Ginger requested help from corporate executives and staff to work on a repair and beautification project.

There's no doubt about her positively contagious commitment to Summit House mothers and children.

When a need arose, Ginger joyfully enlisted her parents to help a Summit House staff member and his sons move a donated washer.

There's no doubt about Ginger's commitment to Summit House's mission to change lives, with a big heart and a helping hand.



DOHERTY

DONATE NOW TO SUMMIT HOUSE

Since 1987, Summit House has been providing a structured residential alternative to prison for women convicted of nonviolent offenses and their minor children. In the Piedmont, Charlotte and Triangle (in development), the award-winning rigorous program helps break a multigenerational cycle of poverty, violence and substance abuse. Summit House nurtures dedicated mothers become self-sufficient, saving taxpayers nearly \$1 million in unnecessary costs of incarceration and foster care. For more information: www.summithouse.org



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