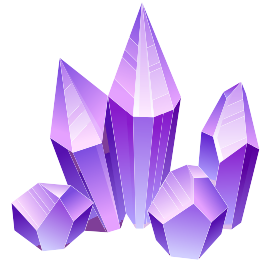


The Meaning Behind "Amethyst" Place



Amethyst is the sobriety stone. Ancient goblets made of amethyst were believed to hinder inebriation. This beautiful healing crystal represents calm, inner peace, and protection from harm.



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Our Noble Cause

After two decades of transforming lives and healing generations, we believe our work is more than a mission; it's a *noble cause*.

At Amethyst Place, we inspire transformational healing and empower generations of women and children to achieve recovery, reunification, and resilience. We touched the lives of 198 women and children in 2020, helping them navigate an unprecedented challenge with their recovery, housing, and family in tact.

We live out our noble cause by:

1. Reuniting, stabilizing, and healing mothers and children;
2. Removing barriers and individualizing services to promote sustainable recovery and healthy living; and
3. Building the capacity of mothers to achieve economic success and overcome generational poverty.

Our three core programs are designed to help families overcome the interconnected cycles of trauma, substance use, and poverty:



Supportive Housing

provides safe and stable housing through 37 apartment units and access to basic needs

Family Empowerment



supports educational, career, financial, and health and wellness goals to help families overcome generational poverty and lead healthy lives



Therapeutic Services

helps families heal from past trauma, stabilize mental health, improve parenting skills, and build resilience



OUR TWENTY YEAR *history*

They saw a community need and they filled it. The visionary founders of Amethyst Place laid the foundation of what is now a very successful program that heals generations and transforms lives. You can read the full story, as told by one of the founders, below.



By Penny Clodfelter

The Metropolitan Task Force on Drug Exposed Infants (MTFDEI) became a reality in 1989 when the Kansas City, Missouri, community came together to solidify a concerted focus on substance use issues impacting the lives of parents, children, and all too often, infants. During the late '80s, crack cocaine in Kansas City became a primary substance of use, which urgently required coordination of services, collaboration, and communication in order to meet this community challenge. Barriers to achieve success in maintaining recovery from substance use were a frequent topic of discussion. One specific barrier moved solidly to the forefront of discussions: housing.

“One specific barrier moved solidly to the forefront of discussions: housing.”

It became noticeably clear that housing, and not just any housing, was needed to specifically address the needs of mothers who were homeless and recovering from substance use who had children in their custody or reunification was an achievable goal. Thus, a committee was formed consisting of Alice Kitchen (Children's Mercy Hospital), Bonnie Rosen-Cowherd (Mid America Assistance Coalition), Carla Ingram (NorthStar – now known as ReDiscover), Kimberley Davis (Operation Breakthrough), Molly O'Neill (Catherine's Place and Friendship House), Oneta Templeton (Team for Infants Exposed to Substance Abuse), Pat Brown (Missouri Department of Mental Health, Housing Specialist), Penny Clodfelter (Family Drug Court Program), Sister Berta Sailer (Operation Breakthrough), and the late Tammy Moore (Division of Family Services).

This committee began meeting on Friday afternoons in the basement of Save, Inc. in the spring of 1999 and began to conceptualize what a housing program might look like for

homeless mothers in recovery and their children. Private living spaces with oversight, case management, accountability, modeling behavior, advocating for services, engagement, screening, eligibility, consequences, length of stay, day to day operations, and monitoring were but just a few of the broad topics of consideration as the design and creation of what would eventually become Amethyst Place began to take shape. The meetings were spirited with passionate discourse on what this type of program could or should be for families who needed a unique housing program. What to name the program became a source of consternation until Molly O'Neill simply began perusing the dictionary. “Amethystos,” the Greek derivative, means not intoxicated and the stone allegedly had special protection against drunkenness. Also, “amethystus” (Latin) was linked to the purple stone or gem. Hence, both the name of the program and our favorite color were intertwined. There is speculation by some people that the amethyst stone has healing powers. How perfect for the program's design, and what a great story to recall for years to come.



Pictured from left to right: Pat Brown and Kimberley Davis; Penny Clodfelter, Bonnie Rosen-Cowherd, and Oneta Templeton; Sister Berta Sailer and Kimberley Davis.

The housing committee became the first Board of Directors, with Alice Kitchen as the Chair. Basic programmatic policies and procedures were written, which outlined who could refer a family to Amethyst Place and basic rules for resident conduct and expectations. Pat Brown's connections with housing resources in Kansas City made all the difference in securing a building and a landlord willing to take a chance on this fledgling program.

David Ross, Spence Heddens, and Sister Jeanne Christensen were instrumental insuring financial support was available in the early days of Amethyst Place, as well as specific state housing funding available for this population, which essentially created a very lean budget. Bettye Vaughns was our first Executive Director (2000 – 2008). Miss Bettye was a no nonsense, dignified woman who gained trust by telling the truth, offering comfort, and often using just a

“look” to make a point. Her role was vital as this fledgling new program began. And so, 20 years ago a need was defined, and a dream began to take shape. This dream changed lives – not only the lives of the families served, but the lives of those who would not give up trying to find a solution to the need, the lives of those who responded in kind or with financial support, and the lives who made a commitment to help grow the program in large and small ways...so, we will just keep dreaming because there may always be a need.

On May 1, 2000, seven families walked into their fully furnished, two-bedroom apartments at 11th and Benton in Northeast Kansas City. This building had fallen into hard times, but the landlord insured each apartment was cleaned up, repaired, and painted. Volunteers then lovingly decorated each apartment according to which family was going to occupy it. The tables were set with matching dishes, towels hung in the bathroom and packaged toothbrushes were in a cup, and beds were made. Pictures on the walls, a couch and a chair, dressers to hold clothes, and food in the refrigerator welcomed these seven families to a new beginning. Operation Breakthrough's warehouse and many calls to friends asking for donations created homes for families who often had limited exposure to a semblance of safety, continuity, or basic comforts in a private living environment. On that hot day in May, tears were shed by many who were witness to a dream coming true.



Pictured above: Amethyst Place's first location at 11th and Benton.