

“Germaine Lawrence offers innovative, trauma-informed programming for commercially sexually exploited girls. The staff are well-trained and invested and truly understand the dynamics of pimp control and “the Life”. This is an incredibly important resource for young women as they recover from the degradation and violence of exploitation.”

LISA GOLDBLATT GRACE
DIRECTOR,
MY LIFE MY CHOICE



Germaine Lawrence offers New England’s most comprehensive continuum of care for commercially sexually exploited girls ages 12-18.

Our clinically sophisticated programs include a highly structured residential education program, an intensively staffed group home (BTR) for those girls who need the structure of a residential program but are able to attend public schools, and a group home that exclusively serves girls who have been commercially sexually exploited. We apply the Stages of Change protocols developed by GEMS in NY to define the level of service delivery that is appropriate for each girl and addresses her safety and treatment needs.

Specialized Services Led by Survivors of Sexual Exploitation

Girls that are commercially sexually exploited are victimized by their pimp and often experience severe trauma in the form of sexual, physical, mental and verbal abuse. Girls are also isolated from those that love and support them.

We recognize the different levels of trauma experienced by these girls and assist girls in recognizing their trauma, rebuilding their self esteem, and connecting to healthy and accessible resources in the community.

Survivors of sexual exploitation are uniquely positioned to help girls engage in treatment, receive the support that they need and help them leave the people and conditions of their exploitation.

At Germaine Lawrence, survivors provide special groups and mentor girls individually. We offer the My Life My Choice (MLMC) group, a 10 week psycho-educational group that incorporates a great deal of survivor testimony and helps girls better understand their exploitation to prevent revictimization. This group is co- led by Audrey Porter, a woman who is a survivor of sexual exploitation, and two clinicians.

After girls complete the MLMC group, they participate in a “Recovery from Sexual Exploitation Group”, also led by Audrey Porter and a clinician. This group engages girls in on-going reflection and recovery in ways specific to sexual exploitation. The 10-week group helps girls recognize trauma bonds, rebuild a new identity, and develop relapse prevention skills.

Audrey Porter and other survivors offer one-on-one support and mentoring for our girls. By sharing their experiences, survivors help girls develop healthy relationships, understand high risk behaviors and establish a healthy self-esteem and new identity.

Clinical Services

Cognitive/behavioral programming, including DBT, is woven into the daily routine to help build social and emotional coping skills. A masters-level clinician is designated for each student and provides therapy services, case management and collaboration with any outside providers. In addition, crisis management staff are available to support students as needed.

Individual therapy. We offer weekly individual therapy. Our clinicians target interventions based on the Stages of Change so as to meet each girl where she is at in her treatment. Using role plays, skill coaching and a directed nurturing approach, they teach students new skills to manage difficult feelings and trauma symptoms, as well as how to begin to develop and navigate healthy relationships. They also work with girls to develop Relapse Prevention Plans to decrease running away by identifying triggers, warning signs, and alternative behaviors.

Group therapy. Using role plays, expressive arts and facilitated discussions, the groups are a safe forum for girls to learn about high risk behaviors, and practice skills so they can better manage their emotions and build constructive relationships. In addition to MLMC, groups include Healthy Relationships and Sexuality, DBT Skills, and Women's Empowerment. Girls with substance abuse problems attend self-help groups, such as AA and NA. We offer access to these groups on campus and in the community.

Family Therapy and Support

Clinicians provide family therapy, including on-going support, communication, feedback and skill development for families of every student. Families have many opportunities to be involved, including family dinner nights and parent support groups.

We help families understand the trauma and issues associated with sexual exploitation, and coach the family as they develop and adhere to a household plan to ensure their daughter's safety and emotional needs are met.

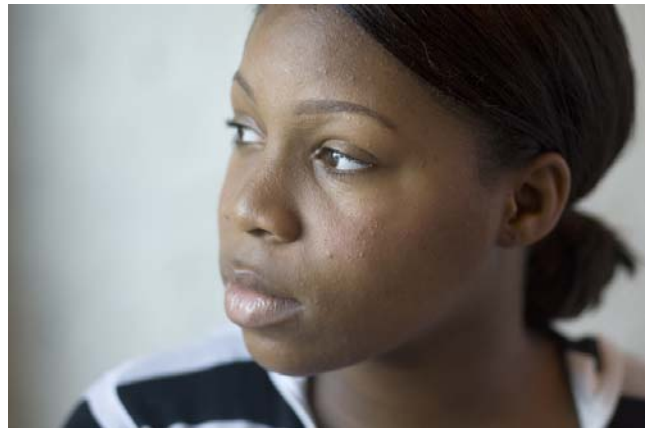
If a girl does not have an involved family our clinicians work with the girl and involved collaterals to identify past or potential connections that can be developed and strengthened.



Academic Services

The Germaine Lawrence school curriculum is based on the content and skill requirements outlined in the Massachusetts Curriculum Frameworks. Core subjects are supplemented by art, physical education and life skills classes. We manage a broad range of academic abilities through an individualized approach to learning. Extensive support and structure in a small classroom setting help students develop the confidence that will allow them to achieve academic advancement.

Girls who are ready to attend a public school benefit from our innovative partnership with Arlington Public Schools. Our staff are in the classroom supporting the teacher and providing the personal support girls need to become successful students. Marrying our therapeutic expertise to a mainstream school has proven to be an effective strategy. Our girls are staying in school, experiencing academic success, integrating better into the social environment and gaining skills to become lifelong learners.



Social Skill Development

Our milieu is successful in helping girls engage with their peers and staff. We give close, intense and nurturing attention to meeting the girls' needs. To help girls develop social skills and improve their self esteem, we provide an array of activities that are fun and build on the girls' strengths, including art, drama, yoga and sports.

As girls progress in treatment, we help them expand their community connections through off-campus jobs, volunteer mentorships and community based activities. We also help them develop relationships that will provide continuity and on-going support after they leave Germaine Lawrence.

For further information, contact Kristin Vander Els at kvanderels@germainelawrence.org or 781-648-6200x127.



18 Claremont Avenue · Arlington, MA 02476
Phone: 781-648-6200 · Fax: 781-646-9106

www.germainelawrence.org