

Coming Saturday, September 10th  
**NSO's 5th Annual  
RiverRun and Walk  
featuring Handlebars  
for the Homeless**



Shake off the cobwebs from your sneakers and tune-up your bicycle. It is time for NSO's 5th Annual RiverRun and Walk. Making its introduction at this year's event, scheduled for Saturday, September 10, is "Handlebars for the Homeless," a non-competitive 13-mile bike tour, beginning at 8 a.m..

Registration begins at 7 a.m. The 5K (3.1 mile) run and walk starts at 9 a.m. Until September 2, registration fees are \$25 for individuals and \$100 for teams of five people. After Sept. 2, registration fees for individuals is \$30 and \$125 for a team. All proceeds allow NSO to carry out its mission to be "Always Within Reach" for Metro Detroit's most vulnerable citizens.

All activities will start and end at Rivard Plaza, located on the beautiful Detroit RiverWalk. Parking is available nearby.

Sponsorship opportunities are still available. For more information or to register, please call 313-961-4890 ext.1069/1031 or visit [www.nso-mi.org](http://www.nso-mi.org).

## NSO Brings Life Back to the Michigan Bell Building

Renovations on the NSO Bell Building, formerly the Michigan Bell Building, have begun after several years of planning. The historic building is located at 882 Oakman Boulevard in Detroit.

Recently, more than 300 people came to support NSO at the groundbreaking. Detroit Mayor Dave Bing; Wayne County Executive Robert Ficano;



Detroit City Council President Charles Pugh; William Jones, Jr., CEO of Focus: HOPE; Burney Johnson, Deputy Director of the Michigan State Housing Development Authority (MSHDA) office; Andrew Gatewood, Program Officer at the Kresge Foundation; and David Campbell, President of the McGregor Fund, were among the featured speakers.



Latoshua Goggins, an employee of NSO Tuminai Center, moved the crowd with her remarks about her personal journey from being a homeless consumer at the Center, to receiving services and housing, and, finally, employment.

"The renovation of the NSO Bell Building is the result of government, private, corporate, and nonprofit stakeholders working together to end homelessness and help revitalize the city of Detroit. We are proud to help restore lives and be part of this effort," said Sheilah Clay, NSO's President and CEO.

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## Willie "Sandman" Edwards — Turning His Life Around



Detroit's very own Willie "Sandman" Edwards, was an International Boxing Federation light heavyweight boxer who competed in the 1970s.

Sadly, a series of life-changing events resulted in Willie taking some wrong turns. The prize-winning boxer ended up homeless and a consumer at NSO's Tuminai Center, an emergency walk-in shelter that provides crisis intervention, mental health assessments and referrals, psychiatric services, case management, housing placement, substance abuse treatment, limited

primary healthcare, meals, and shower and laundry facilities.

Willie is not alone. He is among more than 18,000 homeless Detroiters.

With the support of NSO's Tuminai Center's dedicated staff, Willie is making a successful transition to a more productive lifestyle.

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*Thank You for Helping Us Reach Our Goal!*  
**The Community  
 Foundation Challenge —  
 Emergency Food and  
 Shelter Campaign**



The number of people living in poverty in metropolitan Detroit has grown by an estimated 21 percent in the past five years.

Unfortunately, due to the economic downturn, an increasing number of those living in poverty, and who become homeless, are the working poor. Low-wage jobs do not enable them to keep their families in permanent housing. To help combat the problem in our community, the Community Foundation for Southeast Michigan, with funding from the Max M. & Marjorie S. Fisher Foundation, launched its yearlong Emergency Food and Shelter Challenge.

For every dollar donated to NSO, the Community Foundation matched the donation at the rate of 1-to-2, or \$1 for every \$2 raised, to a maximum of \$20,000. The Challenge grant helped NSO raise \$60,000 in new donations to benefit three Homeless Services Unit programs:

- The Road Home, a mobile outreach program serves people who do not traditionally visit shelters;
- The Tumaini Center, a crisis and respite center for homeless that provides a wide range of clinical and support services;
- Supportive Housing, a program that places chronically homeless persons into permanent supportive housing and provides intensive case management services.

NSO's fundraising efforts are not over. We still need you to continue recruiting your family and friends to help support NSO and our efforts to positively impact the lives of individuals who face significant adversity. For more information, to donate or to volunteer please visit our website, [www.nso-mi.org](http://www.nso-mi.org).

## NSO YOUTH INITIATIVES PROJECT



NSO Youth Initiatives Project (YIP) has been hard at work this year, planning events that provide local youth leadership and advocacy training focused on violence and substance abuse prevention.

In May 2011, 15 teens from the Osborn community graduated from YIP's first five-month Leadership Institute. The Institute is an interactive program that teaches teens violence prevention strategies and the benefits of attitudinal and behavioral changes related to conflict resolution, peer leadership, healthy eating and academic excellence. Held every second and fourth Saturday of the month, this program was presented in collaboration with the Detroit Police

Department (DPD). The police department helps youth with problem solving, race relations and leadership advocacy.

All fifteen graduates obtained paid internships with NSO in a variety of NSO Units as part of City Connect's Summer Youth Program. "I am so proud of the young men and women who graduated from our first Leadership Institute," said Frank McGhee, YIP Program Director. "I have received nothing but great reports from the NSO units where my young people are interning."

Two new Leadership Institutes, one in the Osborn Community and the other at NSO's Harper-Gratiot Multi-Service Center, began in June and will end in August. The next Leadership Institute will begin in September in the Osborn Community. For more information, contact YIP at (313) 965-6924.

The annual **YIP Teen Summits** were recently held, creating an opportunity for both males and females to address solutions to challenges they face everyday. The Female Teen Summit was held Saturday, April 9, with State Representative Lisa Howze featured as the keynote speaker. Ken Harris, Detroit Charter Commission Member, delivered remarks for the Male Teen Summit on May 7. Both events were held at Brenda Scott Middle School in Detroit.

During May, YIP celebrated the metro Detroit Hmong community at the **Hmong Festival** at Osborn High School. The program's youth participants provided an overview of the history of the Hmong community in America and Detroit, performed a traditional Hmong dance, a skit, rapped and held a fashion show. Guests also enjoyed a traditional Hmong meal.

*The mission of the NSO Youth Initiatives Project is to provide youth leadership and advocacy training focused on gun violence and substance abuse prevention. Training and technical assistance provides youth leaders the skills they need to plan and organize activities that promote non-violence and substance abuse prevention.*

Visit our Facebook page for YIP updates, happenings and events:

<http://www.facebook.com/posted.php?id=200386734062>

<http://www.nso-mi.org/yip.php>

### NSO Youth Initiatives Project

9641 Harper Avenue  
 Detroit, Michigan 48213  
 (313) 965-6924

## NSO Life Choices Helps Metro Detroit's Children with Autism Spectrum Disorders



**In addition to the PLAY Project, Life Choices also offers programs including Art Therapy.**

The Center for Disease Control (CDC) estimates that one in every 110 children in the United States has been diagnosed with an Autism Spectrum Disorder, a group of developmental disabilities that can lead to significant social, communication and behavioral challenges.

Thanks to the PLAY (Play and Language for Autistic Youngsters) Project, a program offered through NSO Life Choices, two parents are thrilled to see the social and emotional progress of their five-year-old son Tommy, who was diagnosed with autism spectrum disorder. The family's participation in the Project has taught them more effective, hands-on ways to help their child.

The PLAY Project is an intensive, home-based intervention program for children 18 months to six years old who have an autism spectrum disorder. Developed in 2001 by Dr. Richard Solomon, the project emphasizes intensive social and emotional development education through focused playtime between parent and child.

The PLAY Project is relationship based, encouraging stronger, more effective parent/child relationships while working on a warm and nurturing basis with the child. A specially trained and licensed therapist visits the home at least three hours a month to observe and guide the parent/child interaction. As part of the PLAY Project, Tommy's parents are involved in direct, fun play, including getting down on the floor with him and following his lead, rather than correcting his movements. Because of their work together, Tommy was recently transferred from a special education program to a general classroom. He can now identify and verbalize his emotions, using words like "angry" and "happy."

Life Choices is delighted that at the end of one year in the PLAY Project, two-thirds of children, like Tommy, demonstrated significant improvements in their social interactions.

*Life Choices provides services and support for children and adults with developmental disabilities, and for their extended families, ensuring that those served remain in the least restrictive and most integrated community setting possible. Our staff also advocates on behalf of individuals, secures resources and provides intermittent lifelong support services so individuals may live as independently as they can.*

**NSO Life Choices**  
**8600 Woodward Avenue**  
**Detroit, Michigan 48202**  
**313-875-7601**

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The new 253,000 square foot facility will provide permanent supportive housing using the Housing First Model which has been successfully implemented across the country. This approach helps individuals quickly access and sustain permanent housing. The facility will house single adults who meet MSHDA's definitions of homeless and chronically homeless in 155 one-bedroom modern and comfortable apartments. Residents will pay rent based on their ability to pay and receive assistance from MSHDA.

Shared amenities include a computer lab, fitness center/gym, sundry shop, vending café, laundry facilities, art and music workshops, chapel, and classrooms. Mental health, addiction treatment, intensive case management, financial literacy and nutrition classes will be provided by NSO.

NSO is partnering with Focus: HOPE, and local colleges and universities to provide employment, education, and vocational training. "We want to provide the best opportunity for our residents to improve and restore their lives," said Clay.

NSO also plans to have a federally qualified health care center on site. The building will house NSO's administration offices and additional NSO programs such as: Older Adult Services, Emergency Telephone Services/Suicide Prevention Center, Problem Gambling Treatment and Help-Line, and the organization's Training Department.

"We look forward to turning this vacant historic building into a beacon of hope, and to serving as a major partner in the overall community development plans for the area," added Clay.

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"NSO has adopted the Housing First Model," said Reggie Huff, Unit Director of Homeless Services. "This model aims to end homelessness by providing people with housing quickly, and then supporting them with the services they need to live stable, productive lives."

## Suicide Prevention — Caring and Intervention

The crisis call came into NSO's Emergency Telephone Service/Suicide Prevention Center (ETS/SPC) from a local mother deeply concerned about her teenage son's emotional state. A trained counselor assessed the call and advised the mother to take her son to the hospital emergency room. The next day, the woman called back, saying her son had calmed down, so they had not gone to the ER.

A specialist at the Center continued to follow-up with the family and a short time later learned the mother was even more

distraught about her son, whose girlfriend was hospitalized as a result of her own suicide attempt.

The specialist and counselors again encouraged her to take him to the ER because he was at high risk for suicide. This time, she took their advice. When the counselor checked back with her, the mother said her son was doing better and was scheduled for counseling. He was glad she had contacted ETS/SPC for help.

According to the American Association of Suicidology, suicide ranks as the third leading cause of death for young people, ages 15-29.

"For millions of people, life's challenges lead to hopelessness, depression, pain and misery; for some it leads to death," said LaNeice Jones, vice president of NSO's Community Services.

"Suicide is the 11th leading cause of death in the U. S., claiming more than 30,000 lives annually. For many individuals, severe emotional, psychological and

physical trauma can lead to an increase of risk level for suicide, the major life-threatening complication of depression. It is a desperate attempt to end the pain of life's challenges. Suicide occurs across all ethnic, economic, social and age boundaries...it is a 'cry for help.' Many suicides are preventable and having knowledge about suicide prevention could save a life...even your own!", according to Jones.

Our free and comprehensive telephone counseling services are available 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

- **1-(800)-273-TALK** — a national suicide prevention helpline
- **(313)-224-7000** or **1-(800)-241-4949** — a crisis intervention, suicide prevention and information and referral helpline for Wayne County. (Calls referred to NSO via Pioneer Behavioral Health)
- **1-(800)-270-7117** — a Statewide helpline for individuals experiencing a gambling problem



**NSO**  
Neighborhood Service Organization

*Always within reach*  
**Contact us at:**  
220 Bagley, Suite 1200  
Detroit, MI 48226  
Phone: 313-961-4890  
Fax: 313 961-5120  
[www.nso-mi.org](http://www.nso-mi.org)

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