

Volunteer Reflections: "The Stairs"

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Anyone who has been to Pregnancy Center West knows the stairs. They are steep and long.

The staircase seems to be a gaping hole in the center of our waiting room. If Development Director Bill would ever receive a windfall of donations, I vote to install an elevator.

Some long-time volunteers have a "one up- one down" policy and that's fine because they've done their time and given so much service to the Center. Let the younger ones run back downstairs to receive those donations!

For those who say "I hate those steps!" please let me redirect your thoughts.

I have come to see the stairs as a symbol of all we try to do here.

Imagine this scenario: the doorbell rings and you, dear volunteer, are busy with clients or phonecalls. Immediately you will notice that Office Manager Karen has let someone in and she is at the top of the stairs greeting someone with her kind voice "Do you need help?" Up the steps comes a very pregnant woman, or a mother with little toddlers by the hand, or a donor carrying bags of clothing and a carseat. The purpose of our ministry is coming up those steps.

Imagine that you are scheduling another appointment for an Earn While You Learn client when suddenly her toddler breaks for the waiting room. Quickly the other client advocate safely draws the child back with the words "Wait for mommy. Don't go near the steps!" With a parent's instinct, you demonstrate your willingness to care.

Imagine the doorbell rings and you buzz in a young woman. You go to the top of the steps to greet her and immediately you can see the weight of the world in her eyes as she looks up at you. What obstacles has she already faced just to get here? What worries burden her? You, dear volunteer, look her right in the eyes, smile, and introduce yourself saying "How can I help you?" She's reached the top of the stairs. Like a runner nearing the finish line, may she feel assured that she has arrived in the right place.

Sure, it would be easier to have a simple door, hallway or elevator through which our clients could enter. However my message is "Embrace the stairs!" They are the symbol of your service, your vigilance, and your dedication.