

2025 Holiday Gift Guide

Happy Holidays

Dear Friends,

2025 has been a year of transition. Uncertainty and change have caused feelings of stress and anxiety, even for the most regulated personalities among us. That's where our work begins.

Since 1963, we have been a beacon for those in our community who struggle with the challenges that life brings. We have also been an active community advocate for more compassion, understanding and education surrounding the issue of mental health. But hope and healing are possible and West Bergen Mental Healthcare and our dedicated team are here to help.

For over 60 years, we've been helping children, adolescents and adults navigate the sometimes rocky terrain of day to day life. Our programs and services continue to be a lifeline to those in need, and we are proud to be providing our communities with the highest quality and affordable mental healthcare possible. We also believe that income limitations should never be a barrier to treatment, so over 30% of our clients qualify for a reduced fee through our sliding scale structure. Your donation helps us provide that financial support.

Your gifts also fund free community outreach initiatives. Whether in a library, church or school, you can access information to help you live your best life.

Our goal this year is to raise \$150,000. These critical funds will help us continue to meet the needs of our communities, and provide the programs and services so many need now.

Please consider giving the ultimate gift this holiday season. The gift of mental health.

With gratitude,

Michael

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The Gift of Light

Blake, 14, called a suicide prevention hotline last year. She'd always been a "good girl", who never caused trouble and never expressed any needs. But she'd bottled up feelings of sadness and isolation for years. As the oldest child in her family, her job was to take care of everyone else, including her parents, who were often at odds. She had always tried to make everything better. For everyone else.

The crisis counselor conferred in Blake's parents who sought advice from West Bergen's school based therapist Danielle. Danielle knew Blake from school, and immediately

intervened. Blake was assigned a therapist at West Bergen's Center for Children & Youth who specialized in adolescent depression and suicidality.

Danielle worked with Blake, slowly getting her to open up about her feelings and fears. She wanted to make everything ok for her parents so they wouldn't fight. In essence, Blake took on responsibilities that weren't hers to carry. Her job was to simply be a kid.

Danielle met separately with Blake's parents to let them know what was going on in her 14 year old head. The parents, who were well meaning, parents, had no idea how their issues were affecting Blake and the rest of her siblings. Danielle suggested several sessions of family therapy as well as continued individual therapy with Blake. All affordable for the family because of West Bergen's sliding scale fee payment system.

Slowly but surely, Blake began learning how to express her emotions in a healthy way.

Her parents began working

with Danielle separately

on their own issues.

Today, Blake feels

happier and lighter

and can concentrate

on school, friends,

and being a teenager.

The Gift of Belonging

Jean, 59, has lived in West Bergen residential homes for 30 years. Jean first came to West Bergen after spending a decade at Greystone Park State Psychiatric Hospital where she was admitted at age 19. Childhood was traumatic; her childhood was traumatic. Her single mother was unstable and unable to protect Jean from her brother's sexual abuse.

After 10 years at Greystone, Jean was considered for placement in a less restrictive, community setting. With her mother now deceased, she had no place to go. Fortunately, the hospital referred her to West

Bergen.

Her initial months

at West Bergen's

Summer House (where residents have 24/7 supervision) were difficult. Suffering from frequent hallucinations, staff worked with her in individual and group therapy sessions and transitioned her to newer medications. Within months she became calmer and began integrating into the community, eventually joining West Bergen's Adult Day Treatment program. Consistent structure and boundaries made her feel safe and secure.

Jean now lives in one of West Bergen's minimally supervised homes. She is part of a family, loved and nurtured by residents and staff.

And she is happy.

West Bergen Residential and Adult Day Treatment Program

YOUR DONATION SUPPORTS:

Supervised residential settings for individuals whose lives have been disrupted by severe mental illness. Comprehensive treatment and support services that help residents:

- Improve interpersonal communications
- Develop lifestyle and vocational skills
- Participate in social and recreational activities
- Understand and manage symptoms of illness
- Psychiatric evaluation and medication management.

Fred, 74 and a recent widower was referred to West Bergen from his family doctor.

Despondent and depressed after the sudden loss of his wife. Fred was struggling. After a successful business career, he finally made the decision to retire at 72. It was a difficult decision, but his wife had planned for them to travel, take dance lessons, learn bridge – all the things he never had time for during his working years. And in their early 70's, they both thought that they had plenty of time to pursue these goals. So Pat's diagnosis of stage 4 pancreatic cancer shortly after Fred's retirement seemed particularly cruel and unfair.

West Bergen is designated as a Center of Excellence by Columbia University for the successful completion of advanced training in the areas of depression and behavior disorders.

A full spectrum of Adult Counseling Services designed to alleviate the symptoms of clients who experience depression and related mood disorders.

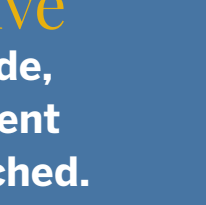
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his fear of life on his own. Jane also made suggestions about opportunities for Fred to connect with others who had lost life partners, and he joined a grief group at a local church.

Today Fred has joined a retired men's group that Jane suggested, and has found a network of friends that embrace him. His beloved wife is never far from his thoughts, but he knows that she would want him to live. And so he does.

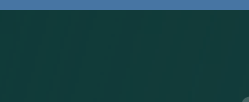
With profound gratitude, West Bergen Mental Healthcare, Inc. thanks Inserra Supermarkets, Inc. and the Inserra Family for their ongoing support, and for underwriting the entire cost of this publication. Please support those who support our communities.

Help us meet our Goal of \$150,000. Your gift supports a full spectrum of therapeutic treatments for children, adolescents, adults and families suffering from trauma, depression, anxiety and other mental health issues.



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