

# SHARED BLESSINGS

WINTER 2015 NEWS from SHELTERING WINGS

*Religion that is pure and good before God the Father is to help children...*

## Directors Discussion *Cassie Martin, Executive Director*



I was talking with a toddler at a recent church bonfire. Every question I asked resulted in the same emphatic response: "I am Rachel and this is my mom." When I asked about her friends, she replied, "I am Rachel and this is my mom." When I complimented her boots, I heard, "I am Rachel and this is my mom." I laughed all evening and smiled on the drive home, touched by her pride in her mother and family.

Few things are as important as being part of a strong, nurturing family. That's a blessing, but it certainly isn't a given. The children who walk through our doors have grown up in homes where the dynamics are terrifying and where they witness power struggles that leave them fearful and confused. There are many days when my drive home from the shelter is filled with prayers to help youngster's families become more loving, safe and life-giving.

Fortunately, we can (and do) break the cycle of abuse. We teach parents what proper discipline and support look like. We help children create safety plans at home. We show teens healthy dating relationships so they can establish patterns for healthy adult relationships. With your support, we create new habits built on trust, respect and love.

This newsletter focuses on serving those children. As you read the stories, I hope that you find inspiration and see the great opportunity to invest in creating healthier, happier futures for them. It's never too late.

## The need never ends

As this newsletter was being printed, Sheltering Wings was housing **27** women and **28** children. Since January 1, we've handled **558** crisis calls.

### LETTER FROM A TEEN SURVIVOR

*The best thing about Sheltering Wings* has been having a roof over my head, and not being with our [dad]. I like going into the gym to play soccer and on the gymnastic mats. We can watch movies, crafts, or be in the teen room alone playing video games. I love the older guys who volunteer, because they're funny and easier to talk to (but not many guys come around).

My family is healing. We won't be broke when we leave because we get food donations and have help getting other things we need. I am less angry at my [dad], and my attitude is improving. I feel safer and happier since coming to live here. My one wish is to go back to my hometown and visit my best friend.

My advice to other kids or teens in a domestic violence situation is to think about things in your life that make you happy and push out all the negative things. — "Chad" (age 13)

## Breaking the generational cycle



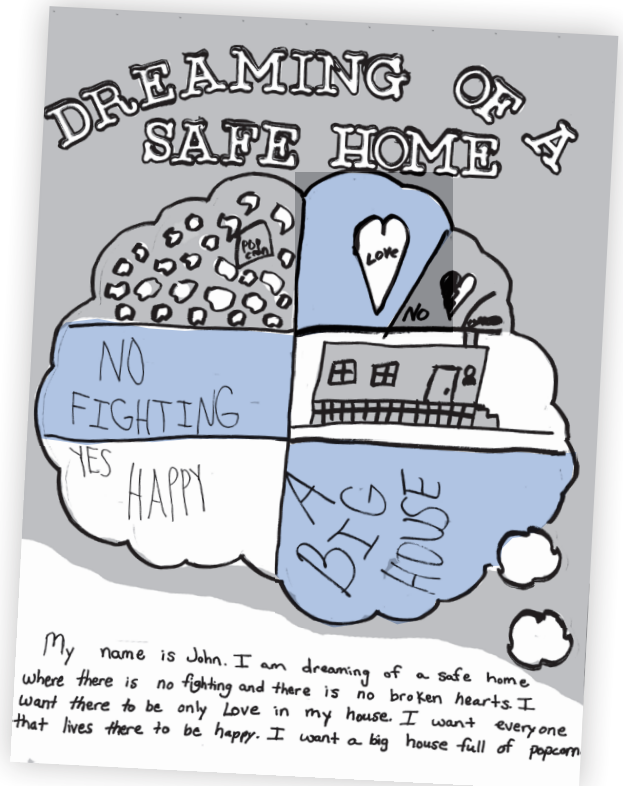
You became who you are today and do what you do in large part because of the adults who surrounded you when you were a child. Your parents, your relatives, and your neighbors probably didn't realize that the behaviors they modeled would shape the adult you've become.

So what would have happened if those behaviors were inappropriate and abusive? You would have grown up believing that abuse is a normal part of a relationship, that some people have a right to abuse others, and that their victims deserve that abuse.

That's why we refer to the one in 15 children who are exposed to domestic violence as the silent victims of domestic violence. Even if they aren't a direct target of an abuser's actions, they suffer lasting emotional damage. Abuse follows a generational cycle, from parents to children, by example and exposure. A child who witnesses his father engage in abusive behaviors is far more likely to be abusive in his own relationships (or become a victim).

We've made breaking that cycle a priority. We do that by involving children in positive, encouraging, and healthy relationships. Strategies such as learning coping skills, talking with a counselor,

confiding in a friend, and pursuing goals that make them feel good about themselves all help. So does learning that abuse is never appropriate and never their fault. By helping them break free of the control the abuse had over them, we can help them live adult lives that are happy, full, and free of violence.



## Fairway to success

Our inaugural "Fairway to Haven" golf outing was a resounding success! More than 118 golfers enjoyed fun and fellowship on the links at West Chase Golf Course. Afterwards, everyone gathered for a dinner to support our programs.

If you were among the participants, the sponsors, the donors, or the volunteers, thank you for being part of what we hope will become an annual tradition for Sheltering Wings. **Special thanks to our hosts from West Chase and Sertoma** for their support. If you couldn't make it, we hope to see you next time—and at our Premier Event in February!



### OUR GOLF OUTING EVENT SPONSORS

#### GOLD SPONSOR

Ray's Trash

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Ping's Tree Service

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## PREPARING YOU AND YOUR CHILD FOR SAFETY

### FOR YOURSELF: Create a safety plan

If domestic violence is part of your life or that of a loved one, it's important to develop a safety plan. Your plan should include safe places you could go if you left your home and people who might help you when you leave (for example, by providing money or keeping a bag for you). If you don't already have a bank account or credit card just in your name, open one now.

Think about how you may be able to leave safely, perhaps by doing something that allows you leave the house, such as going to the store or walking a pet. Practice your plan so you'll be ready when the time is right. It's also a good idea to pack a bag that will make it easier to leave when you have the opportunity. You may want to include:

- money
- pay-as-you-go cell phone
- keys to car, house, and work
- a change of clothes
- address book, with numbers of friends, relatives, doctors, and lawyers
- driver's license and car registration
- emergency medicine
- copies of important papers, such as birth certificates, Social Security cards, credit cards, personal protective orders, divorce papers, and custody orders

If you have children, be sure that your plan addresses their safety. You'll want to pack:

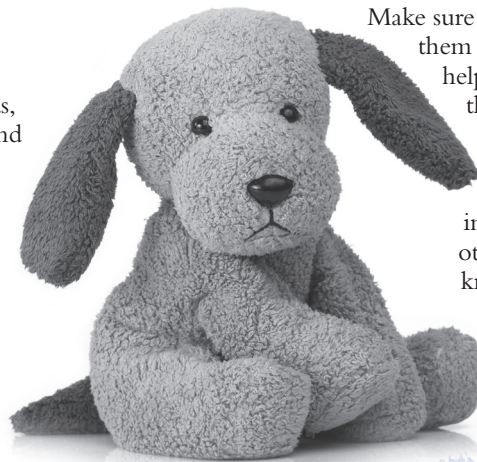
- favorite comfort items (blanket, stuffed animal, toy etc.)
- birth certificate, Social Security card, and medical records
- change of clothes
- school documents and contact information

### FOR YOUR CHILD: Staying safe around violence

If you are in an abusive relationship, your safety plan should address your children's safety when violence occurs. Avoid running to them when violence escalates, because your partner may hurt them as well. You can take these steps to assure their safety:

- Teach them when and how to call 911.
- Instruct them to leave the home when things begin to escalate, and identify safe places to go (such as a trusted neighbor).
- Come up with a code word that you can say when they need to leave the home in case of an emergency (and make sure they know not to tell others about it).
- Identify a room in the house where they'll be safe and something they can think about when they're scared.
- Tell them to stay out of the kitchen, bathroom and other areas with items that could be used as weapons.
- Teach them that although they want to protect you, they should never intervene.

Make sure your plan includes steps to take with them after you leave. For example, you can help them make a list of people in whom they'd be comfortable confiding. You'll also want to alert school authorities such as the counselor, receptionist, teachers, and principal; coaches and instructors from their activities; and any other caretakers. Make sure everyone knows who is and isn't allowed to pick up your children.



## Serving the silent victims

*"If I can help one child excel and be successful in school and teach them to stay focused, that is what is important to me."*

—MARY HUGET,  
Volunteer Mentor

Our children's program serves the silent victims of domestic abuse with 24-hour crisis intervention services, support groups, and age-appropriate classes focused on restoring normal daily life, rebuilding relationships, and modeling healthy relationships. Our program includes many elements, among them:

- **Mentoring** performed by volunteers who model healthy behavior through activities such as homework assistance, constructive bonding time, and encouragement.
- **Tutoring** to help students with general homework and specific subjects.
- **Kindermusik.** Longtime volunteer and teacher Loraine Hudson leads this playful and nurturing activity where children sing, move, play instruments, and hear stories while simultaneously developing social skills, problem-solving skills, pre-math skills, and a foundation for reading.
- **Tummy Time** provides play and interaction for babies through age one.
- **Animal Tales,** conducted by McCloud Nature Park, brings animal stories and crafts to the children each month.
- **Therapy Dogs** give our children comfort and confidence. Volunteers help the kids interact and play with trained therapy dogs Romeo, Buckley, and Wyatt.
- **Operation Fit Kids** teaches about the importance of healthy lifestyles.
- **Bible Group and Story Time,** conducted by longtime volunteer Miss Eva, is one of the kids' favorite activities.
- **Free to Be Me** is an age-segmented support group in which children learn about healthy relationships in a safe environment.
- **Christmas Party.** We celebrate with Santa arriving on a fire truck, a Christmas story, a special gift for each child, and a yummy dinner. (Some of our kids have never experienced Christmas in a safe and loving environment.)

# Support our work

**Yes, I want to ensure all victims have the resources they need. Please accept my tax-deductible donation of:**

- \$25     \$50     \$100  
 \$250     \$ Other \_\_\_\_\_

- Monthly     One Time

To make an easy donation online, visit [www.ShelteringWings.org](http://www.ShelteringWings.org) and click **DONATE NOW!**

- I've enclosed my check # \_\_\_\_\_

- Please charge my credit card  
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TRIM OUT AND RETURN TO SHELTERING WINGS

Giving

# Help us out

I'd like to volunteer.  
I am interested in:

- Providing child activities at the Shelter
- Helping with administrative work in the office
- Inviting a Shelter rep to my church or group to share an update
- Becoming a monthly prayer partner
- Organizing events
- Joining the 2016 Premier Event planning committee
- Serving on the Youth Council
- Sponsoring a room
- Learning more about planned giving (wills, bequests, donor advised funds)

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_

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Look for  
us on



Facebook, Twitter,  
Instagram and Pinterest!

Volunteer





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West Hospital Thank you to IU West for sponsoring our newsletter.

## We appreciate those who have helped us in special ways, including:



- **Tim and Teresa Bryan**, for their faithful Chapel service participation every Sunday. The women and kids enjoy having this special couple share the gospel with them. Teresa looks after the little ones while Tim preaches.
- **Attorneys Jeremy Eglen and Travis VanWinkle** have gone above and beyond in providing legal advice to our residents and local women.
- **Avon High School Junior Class** for coming here for their Day of Caring.
- **Distinguished Young Women of Plainfield.**
- **Mission Indy.**
- Special thanks to **Our Dine Out Against Domestic Violence supporters: The Coachman and The Bread Basket** (June), **City BBQ** (July), **Monical's** (August), **Papa Joe's Jr. and Los Patios** (September), and the **Cunningham Restaurant Group** (October).



## SAVE THE DATE: 2016 PREMIER EVENT

# Boots and Bling

**Saturday, February 13, 2016**

The Shops at Perry Crossing  
Special Guests: Jim, Deb & Kevin  
of 95.5 WFMS