

SHARED BLESSINGS

WINTER 2016 NEWS from SHELTERING WINGS

Train up a child in the way he should go. Even when he is old he will not depart from it.— PROVERBS 22:6

Director's Discussion *Cassie Martin, Executive Director*



I HAVE A BOLD PROPOSAL: we should celebrate Christmas in November and Thanksgiving in December. It seems backwards that we spend a Thursday in November expressing gratitude for life's blessings, and just hours later, we're celebrating consumerism at Black Friday sales to kickoff the Christmas season. Shouldn't it be the other way around?

Of course, it's tough to change traditions. And when those traditions don't make sense, we just shrug our shoulders and accept them. Most of the time, that's harmless. But for some families, what has become traditional is unhealthy and downright dangerous.

I think about that each time a child comes to live with us. What have they seen at home and how are they processing it? What unhealthy attitudes about relationships have become normal? What patterns do they repeat because they've been modeled at home? I vividly remember one little boy looking at his mother and saying, "I'm going to hit you in the head and you will die." He wasn't being angry or malicious. He was simply repeating what he had heard the adults in his home say.

That's why our work with children is so critical. If we can break that cycle of abuse and prevent little boys and girls from growing up in homes where domestic violence is a way of life, we'll achieve a true victory.

This holiday season, I hope you'll create wonderful memories (and maybe some new traditions) with your family. And I'll spend my family's traditional Thanksgiving thanking the Lord for you and our many other partners who bring hope, security and healing to the families who call Sheltering Wings home.

The need continues to grow

As this issue was being prepared, Sheltering Wings was housing **26** women and **34** children. Since January 1, we've handled **1,238** crisis calls.

Dear God
Thank you God that
I am still alive. Thank you for
the things that you give me. I hope
that my family comes like a whole
family. I also hope that
this year is a great!

— WRITTEN BY A CHILD AT SHELTERING WINGS

CALL OUR 24/7 HELP LINE AT
317-745-1496

Become a friend and role model

“We all need someone who inspires us to do better than we know how.” – ANONYMOUS



Most of the children who stay at Sheltering Wings are assigned an adult mentor as part of our efforts to teach character development, emphasize the importance of family, and create a community environment.

Over a 20-week period, children meet with their assigned mentor once or twice weekly, depending upon each child's needs. Each of the sessions focuses on specific areas. The first series emphasizes self-development, including

areas such as self-concept, self-interest, and personal care. “If you can't learn to love yourself, how can you love

others?” asks Jan Smither, Children's Case Manager, who created the curriculum with co-worker Children's Activities Coordinator, Jackie Guthrie. The sessions go on to explore topics such as friendships, respecting authority, resolving conflict, and finding constructive ways to respond to anger.

Our volunteer mentors are carefully trained to ensure that they understand all of the activities and the need for each, are aware of the time commitments, and know how to establish proper boundaries with the children. The lessons are planned out in advance, with different lessons for younger and older children.

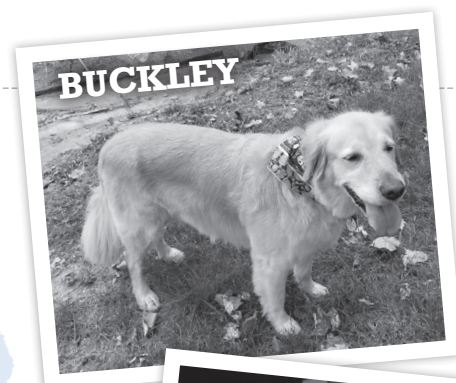
Do you have an interest in helping children through this important program? **You'll find more information and an application at shelteringwings.org/volunteers.**

Going to the dogs

Whether you're 3 or 83, nothing can put a smile on your face quite like a friendly dog. Twice a month, the children at Sheltering Wings get to spend time with Wyatt and Buckley, our two therapy dogs.

We love to bring them in, because they're non-judgmental and kids sense that the dogs just want to be their friends. The emotional connection and the unconditional love and affection make the kids feel less lonely, takes the edge off depression, and can even help with the PTSD that affects many of them. If they had pets at home, the dogs take them back to the comfort and fun they remember.

After time with Wyatt and Buckley, we see a change in the kids. They're calmer and more comfortable. The dogs also provide sensory development for the younger ones, letting them feel their soft fur and bathe in their warmth. Watching the children interact with the dogs is also good for the moms, because they get to see their kids enjoying one of life's simple pleasures. And every time the dogs head out the door, the kids want to know when they'll return!



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

Special
thanks
to...

- **Ed Furnas** for his help with fence repairs, **Mark Wagner** for assisting with van repairs and transportation, and **Ken Steinborn** for taking care of our women's and children's bikes.
- **The Flyer, WHMB TV 40, the ICON, Fox 59, WTHR, Hank FM,** and our **Hendricks County Chambers** for helping us promote domestic violence awareness events.
- **Washington Township Parks and Recreation, our local law enforcement agencies, government representatives, speakers, and attendees** who participated in our Domestic Violence Awareness month events.
- **Plainfield Christian Church** for spotlighting Sheltering Wings and raising money for items for our special project.
- **The Toth Family** for storing donated furniture for resident aftercare.
- **Mary Kay Foundation** for a grant award and to **Lisa Nesbit**, Independent Sales Director, who wrote to the foundation on our behalf.

SPOTLIGHTING VOLUNTEERS

Meet Carol Fields and Chelsea King

Carol and Chelsea are longtime volunteers for our Children's Program, spending time each week playing with, encouraging, and supporting kids while their mothers attend our Thursday evening Embracing Empowerment support group.

"The kids bring us joy, as we know they just want someone's love and attention," they tell us. When asked what they enjoy most about working with the children, they say, "We feel like we're kids at heart! We love to sing songs with them and see what their imaginations dream up during playtime." And if you're not sure you have the energy to be a volunteer, Carol and Chelsea say that the kids will inspire you. "They will enrich your life by their creativity and energy."

Recognizing those who take action

As part of our activities for Domestic Violence Awareness Month during October, we recognized an organization and an individual from Hendricks County for their willingness to step up and take action against domestic violence during the past year.

Our **TAKE ACTION ORGANIZATION AWARD** went to the law firm of Oliver and Cline LLP. Attorneys Eric Oliver and Fred Cline have represented many of the women at Sheltering Wings on a pro bono basis. They are always willing to take phone calls from our case managers about legal advice and provide caring counsel as women seek justice to end domestic violence in their lives.

The **TAKE ACTION INDIVIDUAL AWARD** went to Rebecca Pitzer, a Family Case Manager for the Department of Child Services. Rebecca is constantly seeking out resources so she can better serve families affected by domestic violence. She shares her passion for educating parents, caregivers, and children with a sweet, patient spirit.

Congratulations to both of our winners for everything they do to support our women and children!

A child's Christmas at SHELTERING WINGS

You might think spending Christmas in a domestic violence shelter would be sad for children, but for many, it's the happiest holiday they've experienced. You see, it may be the first Christmas they've had in a safe environment, without anger or fear.

Our families are "adopted" by other families and community organizations. Each family creates a wish list of Christmas gifts, from the typical toys and fun stuff, to winter coats and other needs. Last year, one of our moms excitedly said, "This is the first Christmas that I've been able to give my kids things that were on their list!"

We have our own holiday traditions, such as our annual Cookie Bake for Law Enforcement. "My kids and I have never baked cookies together," another mom said. "Starting this new tradition is a blessing for our family." This year, the kids will also create cards and sing carols for a local retirement home, learning that even though they're being helped, they can still serve others.

Our staff loves Christmas Eve. That night, after the little ones are in bed, the staff and volunteers place the gifts outside each family's door. When the kids open the door the next morning, their smiles, laughter, and absolute joy are contagious. Christmas is about love and giving, and you'll find both in abundance here at Sheltering Wings.



Our website is a community resource

Want to know more about domestic violence? Know a victim who needs help? Interested in how you can help Sheltering Wings? You'll find the answers to these questions and a tremendous amount of other helpful information at our recently updated website, shelteringwings.org.

Help us out

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

- Helping with administrative work in the office
- Providing child care at the Shelter
- Inviting a Shelter rep to my church or group to share an update
- Becoming a monthly prayer partner
- Organizing events
- Helping with the Shelter's events and outreach efforts throughout the year
- Serving on the Youth Council
- Sponsoring a room
- Learning more about planned giving (wills, bequests, donor advised funds)

Name _____

Address _____

Phone _____

Email _____

Look for
us on



Facebook, Twitter,
Instagram and Pinterest!

Volunteer



Support our work

Yes, I want to end the cycle of domestic violence and help children grow up to be loving adults. Please accept my tax-deductible donation of:

- \$25 \$50 \$100
 \$250 \$ _____

- Monthly One Time

To make an easy donation online, visit www.ShelteringWings.org and click **DONATE NOW.**

- I've enclosed my check # _____

- Please charge my credit card

\$ _____

- Visa MC Discover Amex

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SIGN YOUR NAME: _____

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Phone _____

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Double the Difference! Double your Dollars!

Does your employer match your donations to organizations like ours? Check with your employer to find out!



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TRIM OUT AND RETURN TO SHELTERING WINGS

Giving

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

What's on our Wish List?

When you provide items from our Wish List, we don't have to spend money to purchase them. That turns generosity into savings of thousands of dollars every year! Our current wish list is at shelteringwings.org click on Get Involved and find out how you can help with these ongoing needs.

- Postage stamps
- Large paper clips
- 13 and 39 gallon trash bags
- Gift cards (gas stations and Lowe's)
- Neosporin, Advil and Tylenol, Cold Medicine (adult and baby/children)
- Disinfectant spray
- Dryer sheets
- Copy paper
- Black Sharpies
- Ziploc bags (gallon)

