

# Shared Blessings

## *You provided hope when Samantha had none.*

Last Christmas, Samantha and her young son were immersed in a cycle of physical and emotional abuse. [This Christmas, Samantha, her son, and her infant daughter are safe at Sheltering Wings.](#)

“I was afraid for my life. I felt afraid to get in the car with him. Depending on how late I got off work, I felt afraid of what would happen when I got home.”

Despite the threats to her own safety, Samantha was most terrified of what might happen to her children. Just before calling Sheltering Wings, Samantha’s abusive partner threatened to take her son and move away.

“In that moment, I felt like I was never going to see my son again. I could not do that. I love my children. You cannot take my kids from me. Do whatever you want with me. But my children, you can’t mess with.”

This threat was the peak of two years of emotional and physical abuse. Samantha was 18 years old when she met Ben at work. She had just ended a difficult high school relationship, and Ben—who was four years older—felt safe.

“At first it was really good. We enjoyed each other’s company. But there were red flags. He was really jealous of me going places or talking to other guys. His jealousy was really over the top. I should have just left then.”

But, when Samantha and Ben were alone as a couple, he made her feel loved. She stayed.

Names in survivor stories may be changed for their protection.

[24/7 HELPLINE \(317\) 745-1496](#)

Abuse started with emotional intimidation—name calling and insults—that lead to physical violence—even as she became pregnant.

Pregnancy can be a vulnerable time under the best of circumstances. For women who are pregnant and experiencing abuse, it can be deadly. Intimate partner violence is the leading cause of death to young women in the United States.

Samantha was lucky and gave birth to a healthy son. Four weeks after his birth, Samantha returned to work at a local convenience store to support herself, Ben and their infant son. Ben had trouble finding steady work.

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[“Sheltering Wings is the best healing place for me. Before, I was scared all the time. Here I don’t have to be scared anymore.”](#)

—Samantha



(Continued from page 1)

"I was literally trying my hardest to provide for us because Ben wasn't working. I was always working late. That made him feel mad and jealous. He felt like I was lying to him. I felt happier at work than at home."

Samantha's success seemed to make matters worse. She was on track to become a manager at just 20 years old. But that required commitment and long hours. Ben would come to the store at the end of her shift and watch as she finished. He insisted on driving her to and from work.

"He had complete control over my car – even though I bought the car and it was in my name."

One night, Samantha walked out of work with a co-worker. They were laughing. Ben was waiting.

"When we left, he punched me in my ear. My earring punctured me. He was screaming and driving crazy."

Samantha tried to end the relationship, but she felt guilty. She didn't want the father of her child to be homeless. She asked him to move to a second bedroom.

"I felt bad for him. I loved him at some point."

When Ben realized he was losing control of the relationship, he slashed his own arm with a knife, trying to manipulate her into changing her mind.

"He was very intentional about it. He cut himself so deep. He wanted me to feel bad. He wanted attention."



Now, at just 21 years old and mom to a toddler and baby, Samantha is working hard to build a good life for her young family. She's staying at Sheltering Wings while she works to rebuild.

It's a difficult path. Your support helps her move forward.

You provide the one-on-one support that helped Samantha find a job and encouraged further job skill development. Now, her next step is finding a home for her little family. Samantha knows the challenges will be great in 2026. But for now, she is thankful to be safe.

[Thank you for providing hope to families like Samantha's. You ensure she and her young children are not alone.](#)

**Domestic violence is most prevalent among young women (ages 18-24).**

Many have gone from unhealthy homes straight into unhealthy relationships. Young women like Samantha hope for a better life free from abuse. You help turn that hope into reality.

# Look what you've made possible...

Leaving an abuser is just the first step. The journey to stability and independence is long and hard. Your support is vital. Without donations, without volunteers, without prayers—none of this would be possible. Thank you for what you've done this year. Thank you for your continued support so that together we can do even more!

## A Safe Home for the Holidays

Housing is a vital building block to stability. For many survivors, finding affordable, safe housing is the first step to independence. Thank you for helping them take that step.

You are providing services to families who move into safe housing through your gifts. Each family is given help based on their needs but help could look like:

- Food and grocery support
- Rental assistance and eviction prevention
- Continued job search and educational guidance
- Ongoing therapy and support groups

Your impact doesn't end when families leave the Sheltering Wings building.

## 25 HOUSEHOLDS

Live in their own safe housing through the Rapid-Rehousing program. This grant, through the US Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), allows us to offer case management, support services, and rental assistance to clients fleeing domestic violence who would otherwise be homeless. 14 survivors and their children moved in 2025, while 11 survivors and their children (who moved in 2024) receive continuing support as they build self-sufficiency.



**13 UNITS** at Haven Homes are designated for domestic violence survivors and supported by Sheltering Wings through a Permanent Supportive Housing project. This allows us to offer case management, support services and rental assistance to clients fleeing domestic violence and who also have a disability.

This is an affordable housing partnership between Sheltering Wings, RealAmerica, and Cummins Behavioral Health. Haven Homes has a total of 52 units, and we work closely with management to give our clients first opportunity when additional units (beyond our 13) become available.

**Note: Not every survivor is eligible for rental assistance through these programs. Most struggle to make ends meet—especially when they first leave an abusive relationship.**

## \$22.18 PER HOUR

is what it takes to afford a 2-bedroom apartment in Indiana. Most Sheltering Wings clients earn just at or above minimum wage (\$7.25/hour). This is due to the young age and limited experience of most clients and the fact that 90% of domestic abuse includes financial control. Your support is vital to survivor stability while they rebuild their lives.







## Bigger Than Us Premier Event 2026

Mark your calendars for Sheltering Wings' 2026 Premier Event "Bigger Than Us" on **Saturday, April 18, at Hendricks Live! in Plainfield.**

This meaningful event features a benefit concert by My Yellow Rickshaw, Indy's self-proclaimed #1 pop, rock, bluegrass, and R&B cover band. Don't worry – the evening also includes food, favorite Premier Event traditions, and some new fun activities.

Our work is bigger than any single person, but every person matters. Together, we can build healing that starts with one and ripples outward—family to family, generation to generation.



Sponsorship opportunities and tickets are available now. To learn more, scan the QR code or visit [ShelteringWings.org/PremierEvent](https://ShelteringWings.org/PremierEvent). Seating is limited, and we expect this event to sell out.

Find all Sheltering Wings events at [ShelteringWings.org/Event](https://ShelteringWings.org/Event)

**FEBRUARY 17**  
**HOP 4 HOPE**



**MARCH 19** Men IN Action READ  
Register now at [ShelteringWings.org/Read](https://ShelteringWings.org/Read)



## Smart Charitable Giving

Dec. 30 final business day of 2025

Do you need to make a charitable gift before the end of this year? The last business day is Dec. 30.

Here are four quick ideas for ways to make a huge impact:

- Consider a Qualified Distribution from your IRA directly to Sheltering Wings
- Consider a transfer of stock (rather than selling it first)
- Include Sheltering Wings in your will or make us a beneficiary of your trust.
- Make a year-end gift that will be matched \$1 for \$1 up to \$20,000 thanks to Cindy Bailey and Bailey Trucking.



I'm here to work with you on your specific needs and wants for your gift and to provide information you need.

Paige Vanzo, Donor and Engagement Director  
[pvanzo@shelteringwings.org](mailto:pvanzo@shelteringwings.org) | 317.386.5049



Looking for a last-minute gift?

Searching for the perfect way to honor the hard-to-shop-for relative?

Want to represent Sheltering Wings in the community?

## Sheltering Wings Gift Shop

Sheltering Wings has the perfect option in our new Gift Shop.

**BRUMATE:25 oz.** available in four colors (while supplies last!): **Guava, Sage, Nightfall Blue, and Lilac.**

**SACKCLOTH & ASHES** throw blanket: available in two colors (while supplies last!): **Beige and Gray**

Apparel, bags, and more only available at our online Swag Shop.

- Monetary donation to fight abuse. Download a printable certificate.

Find all the details—or shop online—by scanning the QR code or visiting [ShelteringWings.org/GiftShop](http://ShelteringWings.org/GiftShop). Or fill out the form below and mail in the enclosed envelope.



Please return this form with your check or credit card information in the enclosed envelope

\$50 Brumate **I will pick up at Sheltering Wings.** Circle color: Guava, Sage, Nightfall Blue, Lilac Dusk

\$60 Brumate **Ship to me** Circle color: Guava, Sage, Nightfall Blue, Lilac Dusk

\$80 Blanket **I will pick up at Sheltering Wings.** Circle color: Grey, Beige

\$95 Blanket **Ship to me** Circle color: Grey, Beige

I would like to make a monetary gift of \$ \_\_\_\_\_  I've enclosed my check # \_\_\_\_\_

Please charge my credit card \$ \_\_\_\_\_  Visa  MC  Discover  Amex

CREDIT CARD NUMBER \_\_\_\_\_ Exp. Date (MM/YY) / \_\_\_\_\_ CVV \_\_\_\_\_ Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Print Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_ City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Phone(\_\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_ Email \_\_\_\_\_