

Shared Blessings

Teen victim goes from ashamed to empowered

Thanks to involvement in Sheltering Wings Youth Council and YOUR support

Kate met Tom at a football game. She was 15; he was 17. Kate recognizes now that she was vulnerable. Due to an injury, she had just stopped dancing, a life-long hobby and passion. She was struggling with her parents' divorce.

Kate had time to fill and low self-esteem. Tom filled the void. Initially, the relationship was good. But red flags quickly emerged.

Within weeks, Tom was sneaking into Kate's home. Sex was aggressive, often leaving bruises. Tom became jealous of Kate's male friends; then he isolated her from girlfriends. He demanded Kate's social media passwords and began "love bombing" with gifts.

Sadly, Kate's story is not unique. 1 in 3 teens are verbally, emotionally or physically abused by a dating partner. But, thanks to you, they are not alone.

After eight months, Kate found the strength to end the relationship. Within days, the stalking began. Daily, Tom overwhelmed her with texts and calls. Kate had to change her number. Tom stalked her on social media — creating dozens of fake accounts to circumvent Kate's efforts to block him. He sent threatening messages to Kate's parents, siblings, and new love interest. Letters started arriving. He repeatedly drove by Kate's house, honking so that she knew he was there. Tom threatened self-harm.



"I was scared for my life," Kate remembers. "He told me I would find him one day dead, and it would be my fault."

Finally, police involvement and a restraining order slowed — and eventually stopped — the stalking; but, the impact was great. Today, Kate is in therapy and has hope. She is proud of herself for her strength and resilience.

"It was a big life lesson," Kate says. "Now I know I can trust my instincts and take care of myself." Being a member of the Sheltering Wings Youth Council has empowered Kate to share her experiences with her peers and spread awareness about teen dating violence.

"I love being involved with Youth Council and being part of this team, It helps me not to feel ashamed." — Kate

Your support makes the Sheltering Wings Youth Council and teen outreach and education programs possible. Thank you for supporting teens like Kate.

Names in survivor stories may be changed for their protection.

Daughter and a desire for impact led Christy Paddock to Sheltering Wings

A teenager led Christy Paddock — licensed CPA and entrepreneur — to become a Sheltering Wings supporter.

“My oldest daughter volunteered to do child care when she was in high school.” Christy says. “I could see how much the children looked forward to seeing her. She had a direct impact on the children. I was so proud of her.”

Back then, Paddock’s ever-increasing work hours meant less time with her three children.

“My husband, Bob, and I were praying on it when a sermon in church was about being overstressed and how your job is not your life. I realized God had another path for me,” she says. “I kept coming back to the idea that smaller organizations could benefit from high-level CFO (chief financial officer) support even on a fractional basis. I felt strongly that God told me to take a leap of faith.”

Eight years later, “We’re up to 13 team members and 40-50 clients a month. We’ve seen the impact we can make on smaller organizations by helping them use financial information in a more meaningful way.”

The Paddocks had another epiphany about five years later about their charitable giving.

“Instead of giving small amounts of money to a lot of organizations, we decided to be more intentional and have more of an impact on



just a few organizations,” Christy says. “We’re very faith-driven, and we give in anticipation of blessings rather than in appreciation afterward.”

This philosophy allowed the Paddocks to increase their giving to Sheltering Wings personally and through Christy Paddock Advisors LLC. She is one of the Presenting Sponsors for the 2025 Premier Event and also supports the shelter in many other ways.

“We’ve seen the remarkable impact Sheltering Wings has on families and in the community. I’ve really enjoyed our relationships. In fact, I wish I had more time to spend.” — Christy

Charitable giving has strengthened the tie between the Paddocks and their children.

“We’ve talked about why we give and how we change the organizations we support,” she says. “I hope we are preparing them to be good donors to do God’s work.”



My job is to help you help survivors

I just sat with a couple who care about our mission and were exploring ways to give. We talked options, and they landed on a qualified charitable distribution through their IRA. No need to count that gift as a part of their income, and no one has to pay taxes. They’re including a gift in their will, too.

My role? Listen. Share how Sheltering Wings would use their gift. Write a document to add to their files and ours.

I’d love to talk with you no matter where you are in your process.

Paige Vanzo, Donor and Engagement Director
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FEBRUARY IS TEEN DATING VIOLENCE AWARENESS MONTH

Teens are not immune from domestic abuse. The statistics are grim:

1 in 3 has been verbally, emotionally or physically abused by a dating partner

1 in 10 high school students report being hit by a dating partner

1 in 11 Indiana high school students report being physically forced to have sex

The Sheltering Wings Youth Council – thanks to your support – is working to fight teen dating violence. Student volunteers raise awareness in their schools, plan social media campaigns, and host fun (and educational!) events like Hop 4 Hope — where healthy relationship education is combined with trampolines, dodgeball tournaments, and free pizza.

Youth Council also offers support for teen dating violence survivors, like Emma, who faced emotional abuse from her former boyfriend.

“It was very manipulative behavior,” Emma remembers. “He was trying to get into my head constantly and belittle me. If anything didn’t go his way, it was my fault.”

The experience increased her anxiety, leading to panic attacks.

Through therapy and sharing with her mom and friends, Emma regained self-confidence. She now knows the red flags and understands what a healthy relationship should look like.

Joining Youth Council added an extra layer of support.

“I know I’m not alone.” — Emma



10 Things Teens Wish Their Parents Knew From Sheltering Wings Youth Council

1. We don’t always see red flags. Sometimes we need you to (gently) point them out. We’ve never experienced this before.
2. Sometimes you just need to let us make mistakes. How are we going to learn without personal experience?
3. Try to be more understanding and less critical when we make a mistake. Listen before offering opinions.
4. Don’t diminish our problems. They may not be a big deal to you, but they are to us.
5. Don’t shame us for what might have happened.
6. Don’t be offended if we seek advice from other trusted adults.
7. Timing is important. Don’t bring up a difficult topic at a bad time — or when we’re tired.
8. Stay neutral. We need to speak freely without judgement or punishment.
9. Don’t compare your experiences to ours. Dating is different today.
10. Respect our decisions.

Learn more about teen dating violence and how to start a conversation with your teen at shelteringwings.org/is-this-abuse/teendatingviolence/.



LOOK WHAT YOU MADE POSSIBLE

Preventing Teen Abuse

Your support makes a difference in the lives of teens and their families in all corners of Hendricks County. Because of you, teens in every public school district learn about healthy relationships, healthy communication, and teen violence red flags. Thank you for helping the next generation break the cycle of abuse.

1,844 HIGH SCHOOL & MIDDLE SCHOOL STUDENTS received healthy relationship classes from our prevention staff — armed with candy and information. They're listening! Thanks to you, these teens are on the path to a healthy future.

6 of 6 ALL SIX HENDRICKS COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOL DISTRICTS hosted Prevention programs, impacting families in every local community.

109 STUDENTS FROM 5 DIFFERENT HIGH SCHOOLS attended the Hop 4 Hope in 2024.

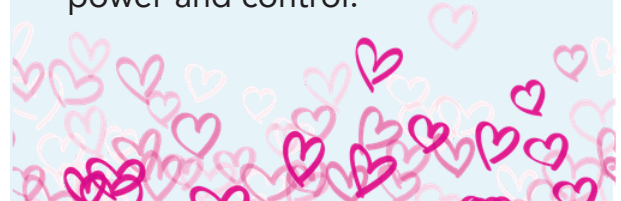
12 FOR THE PAST 12 YEARS Youth Council has engaged Hendricks County teens to raise awareness about teen dating violence and help stop the cycle of abuse.

WHAT IS LOVE BOMBING?

Expressing love is a good thing, right? But too much of a good thing — love bombing — can be a red flag. What can love bombing look like?

- Lavish gifts
- Constant attention
- Excessive compliments
- Gestures of love and affection in front of others

Both Kate and Emma experienced love bombing — but it's not unique to teens. They describe being overwhelmed by the attention, feeling pressure or guilt to respond. Simply put, their abusers used "too much of a good thing" as a way to exert power and control.



Your gift helps teens **BREAK THE CYCLE OF ABUSE**

Use the enclosed envelope to mail you gift or scan the QR code to give online. You can support teens like Kate, Emma and the Youth Council break the cycle of abuse!



UPCOMING EVENTS

FEBRUARY 18

HOP 4 HOPE

MARCH 13
Men IN Action
READ

APRIL 11
Premier Event
"Standing in the Gap"

