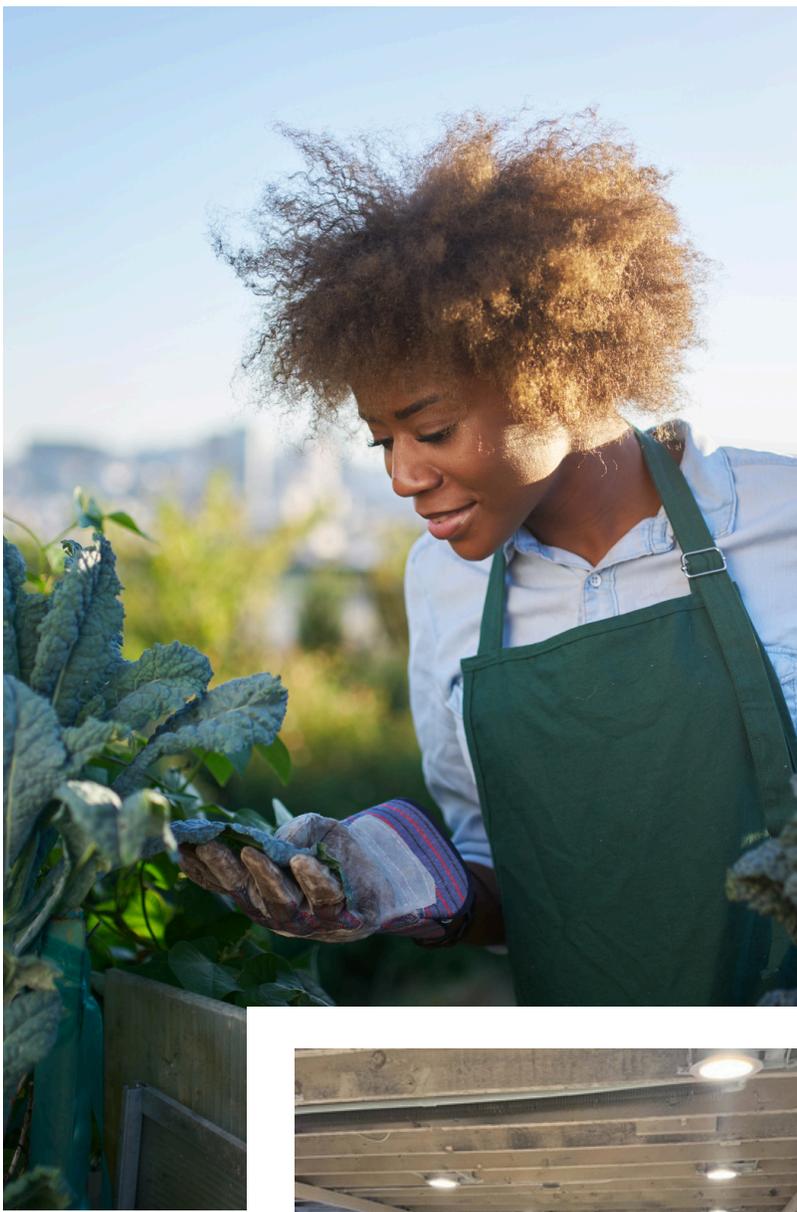


# Sheltered 91

2025





# PEACE

Dear Friend,

I am so excited to share this report with you! God blessed Sheltered91 more than we could have imagined in 2025. Guided by the theme of “Peace” and specifically the biblical vision of Shalom, our organization experienced a powerful reshaping as programs matured, staffing stabilized, and new outreach initiatives took root. We learned that praying for peace is a bit like praying for patience as God works in His own way and time to bring the outcome He desires, which is so much better than anything we would have created.

Despite challenges, our fourth year reflected God’s provision in unmistakable ways and resulted in meaningful progress across programs, fundraising, partnerships, and internal development. This year required adaptive leadership as Sheltered91 continued to grow into a more structured, mission-aligned organization. This report highlights that mission through the 4 C’s: Creating awareness, Connecting with victims, Caring for survivors and Counteracting trafficking through prevention. These four components have been part of our vision, born from prayer since the beginning, and this year, for the first time, the full vision is in place.

2025 saw the launch of the Enrich Prevention Initiative, the expansion of our outreach efforts through the use of Freedom Signal software, and a strengthening of the Reach Independent and Transitional Living program’s framework with clearer stages, scoring tools, and updated handbooks. God’s provision through personnel changes, financial gifts, and new partnerships provided confirmation that He was actively shaping Sheltered91’s mission and impact.

The best part of all? It’s the stories of lives changed. Last year, we celebrated the graduation of the first two participants from our Care programs. We had the privilege of witnessing these resilient women grow in confidence, independence, and faith as they bravely embraced new challenges and began again. For the first time, we were able to serve and house women and their children, helping them overcome barriers to recovery so they didn’t have to return to “the life” to support themselves.

Thank you for supporting Sheltered91 through your prayers and generous gifts. Your partnership makes this work possible and we are deeply grateful for each of you!

*Julie Ipema*

# TABLE OF CONTENTS

3

*Creating awareness.*

5

*Connecting with victims.*

7

*Caring for survivors.*

9

*Counteracting trafficking.*

11

*Volunteers*

13

*Opportunities for success.*

15

*Staff and Board*

17

*Financials*



# CREATING awareness

Sex trafficking is one of the darkest realities in our world, and one of the most misunderstood. It thrives in secrecy, silence, shame, and misinformation. Many people assume it's rare, far away, or only happens through dramatic kidnappings and international crime rings. But the truth is, sex trafficking is happening in cities, suburbs, and rural communities. It's hapening right here in Northwest Indiana and Chicagoland. It affects people of all ages, backgrounds, and income levels. And it continues largely because so many people don't recognize it when it's happening. That's why awareness matters.

Creating awareness about sex trafficking is not just about sharing statistics or scary stories. It's about shining light into places where exploitation hides, equipping communities to recognize warning signs, and building a culture that protects the vulnerable and supports survivors. Awareness is a powerful tool—one that can prevent trafficking, disrupt it, and help survivors find freedom.

Awareness isn't the end goal, it's the beginning.

When people learn about trafficking, many want to help. They start supporting safe housing programs, recovery services, counseling, mentoring, job training, and trauma-informed care. They volunteer, donate, advocate, pray, and speak up.

This matters because survivors don't just need rescue. They need long-term restoration. Freedom isn't just escaping exploitation, it's having the resources to rebuild a life. Awareness mobilizes communities to provide that kind of support.



“

*“This is such an important ministry,  
I’m so glad you guys are here.”*

*“Thank you for the work you do!”*

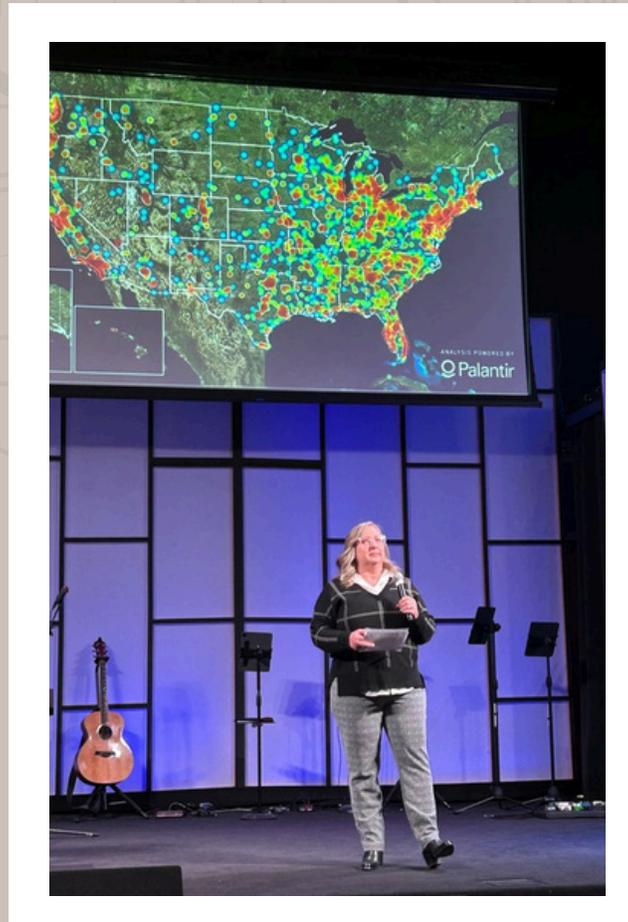
**Presentation Attendees**

”

5 college level  
classes

7 Churches

3 Events



25 Presentations

2000+ people  
reached in-person

3 law enforcement  
meetings

2025 brought many opportunities to share with our community about the reality of trafficking and Sheltered91’s solution. We started the year with an awareness event in February called For the Love of Survivors, held at Village Church in Dyer. Over 60 people attended and enjoyed wonderful desserts while learning more about this issue and how they can help.

Throughout the year, we continued to engage the community through additional events, including a Summer Supper at Locavore Farm and a Christmas Tea/Jewelry Party. The Christmas Tea was especially meaningful as we celebrated the official launch of our Ninety One Originals line of products, an exciting new way for supporters to partner with Sheltered91 while also helping create sustainable opportunities that support our mission.

We were also grateful for the support of Faith Church’s Mom’s Nation, which opened the door to five presentations with moms of children of all ages. These groups raised funds, donated supplies for outreach bags, and some even assembled the bags together. In addition, Julie was invited to speak in several classes at Olivet Nazarene University and Indiana University Northwest, giving students a deeper understanding of trafficking and how it impacts individuals and communities. These opportunities were a meaningful step toward educating the next generation of leaders, professionals, and advocates while equipping them to recognize exploitation and respond with wisdom and compassion.

One of the most exciting developments this year was the opportunity to build new relationships with Homeland Security and local law enforcement. We were thrilled to make these connections, invite them to tour, and learn about Sheltered91 and the work being done through our outreach and Care programs. These partnerships are incredibly important, as they help connect us to victims who need safe support, while also allowing Sheltered91 to share what we are learning on outreach with law enforcement. Together, we are strengthening the network of care and response in our community so that women can find help, safety, and a pathway forward.

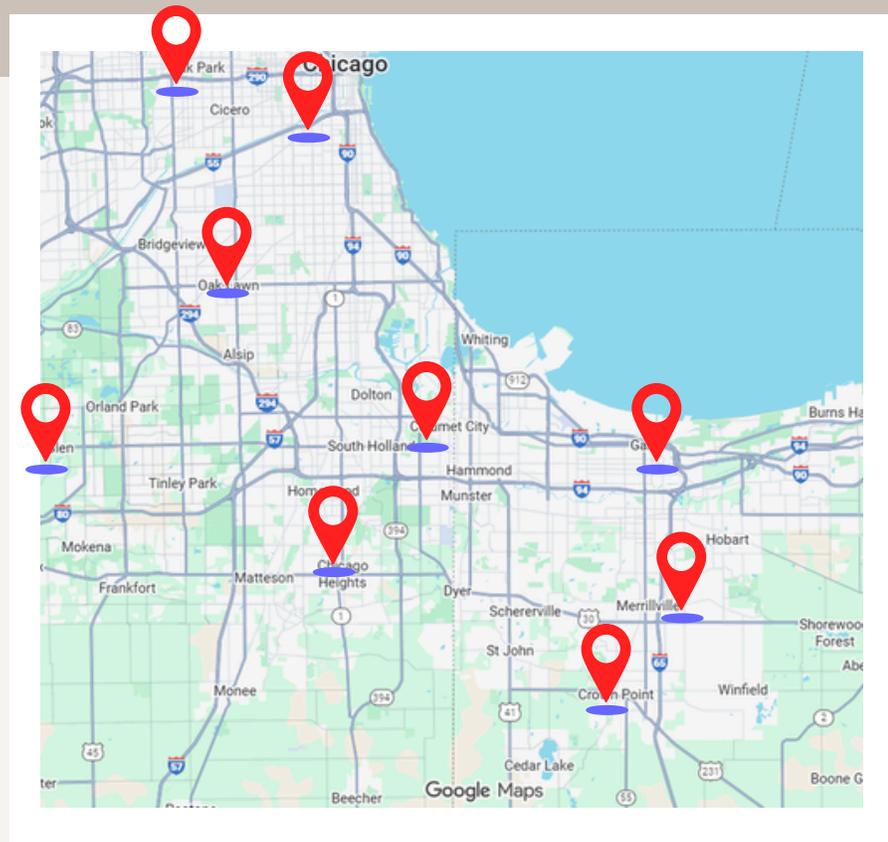
# CONNECTING with victims.

On the previous page of this report, the number 22,345 represents an estimated 22,345 women selling sex within a 50-mile radius of Munster, Indiana. Behind that number are real women. Each with a name, a story, and a future worth fighting for. Our goal is to find them and offer something many have never been offered before: the hope, dignity, and love of the gospel.

Our outreach team uses an online software tool called Freedom Signal to connect with women being advertised online. The team sends simple, compassionate text messages offering prayer and asking if she needs support or resources. When a woman responds and is willing to speak by phone, our team meets her in a safe, public place, often somewhere familiar like McDonald's.

These meetings are never just an exchange of items. They are moments of courage. Each woman who shows up is taking a brave step toward something different. Our team sits with her, listens, and learns her story so we can understand what she needs and how we can help.

Most importantly, we remind her of the truth: her current circumstances are not her identity. She is not defined by what has happened to her or what she has had to do to survive. We believe God has more for her—and that hope can begin with one small next step. At Sheltered91, we are honored to walk with victims and survivors as they choose healing, stability, and a new path forward. The red "You are here" signs below indicate areas where our outreach team actually met victims in 2025.



“

**Staff:** “I know it's kind of strange to get a random text asking if you need help or supplies.”

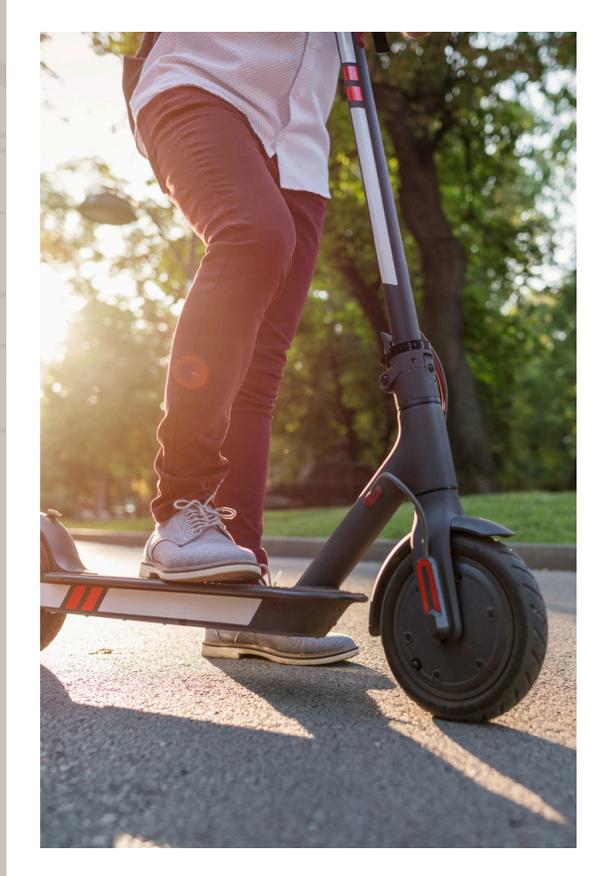
**Text Recipient:** “For me, this isn't a random text. I have a strong belief in the Father above and I have been asking God for things to change for me.”

”

In the last 6 months:

10 In-Person  
meet ups

34 trafficking  
victims identified



411  
Conversations

38%  
Request  
Prayer

Last fall, a survivor reached out through Freedom Signal with a simple, urgent request: food for herself and her son. She didn't ask for much, just enough to get through the day, but what she showed in that moment was something powerful: a determination to keep going, no matter what.

We arranged to meet at a McDonald's in the Chicagoland area. She arrived on her scooter, explaining that it was how she gets to work. Even in the middle of crisis, she was still showing up for her responsibilities and doing what she could to provide for her child.

As we talked, she trusted us with more of her story. She shared that she had been selling sex to make ends meet, another way she had been forced to survive in a world that hadn't offered her safe options. Still, she kept moving forward. She kept fighting. And she kept choosing her son.

When we shared Sheltered91's program application, she took the next step. She came in for her intake meeting, despite everything she was carrying. The moment she walked through the door, she began to cry. She shared that she had recently learned she was facing serious health issues and would need a great deal of support in the year ahead.

She also revealed a painful history of abuse and trafficking by a relative, trauma no one should ever have to endure. But what stood out most wasn't what happened to her. It was what she did next.

She showed up. She asked for help. She chose something different for herself and her son. Her courage and honesty opened the door to healing, and her story is a powerful reminder that survivors are not defined by what they've endured, but by the strength it takes to keep going and to begin again.

# CARING for survivors.

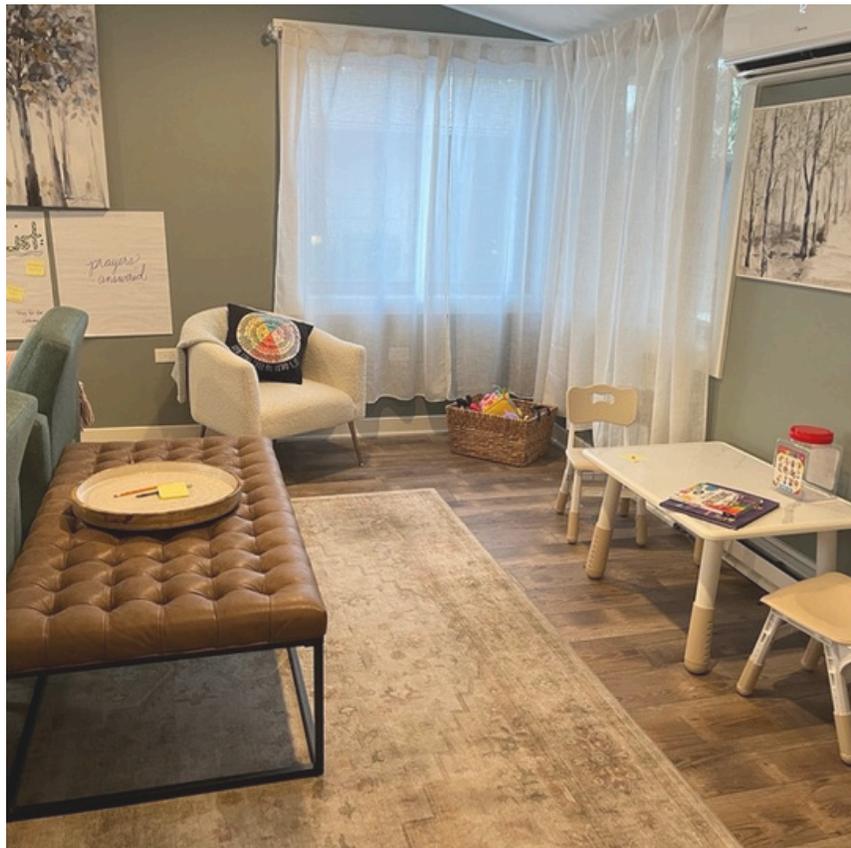
Sheltered91 offers two Care programs: Restore and Reach Independent and Transitional Living. Every woman enrolled in our services has the opportunity to receive group and individual therapy, case management, transportation support, help with basic needs, and bi-weekly access to a local food pantry.

Our Care programs are Gospel-centered, meaning we pray with participants and offer opportunities for Bible study. Care is also individualized. Each woman works alongside her case manager and the program director to create a unique plan for progress, one that reflects her goals, strengths, and next steps toward stability and healing.

Women enrolled in the Reach Independent and Transitional Living Program also receive a housing subsidy. Sheltered91 rents properties in the community, and survivors pay a portion of the rent while progressing through program stages toward personal and financial independence.

This year, we had the incredible opportunity to provide housing for women and their children. In the photo below, you'll also see our new children's play area which was made possible through your generous gifts.

The reality is that many survivors are mothers. By offering childcare support and safe housing for women and their children, we remove barriers that could otherwise hinder recovery, making it possible for survivors to take brave steps forward.





“I’ve never had someone believe in me, and help me and show me genuine love and support like Sheltered91. Thank you.”  
**Reach Program Participant**”

22 women served

9 women and 6 children housed

465 hours of therapeutic care

184 Lyft Rides

42 Groups

42 Community Meals

2 Graduations

\*Dana entered our program in urgent need of emergency housing, allowing her to escape a dangerous situation and find safety. Over time, she built trust with Sheltered91 staff and expressed a strong desire to remain in stable housing after her twin babies arrived. We were inspired by her determination to parent well and ensure her children’s safe arrival into the world. As a pro-life organization, Sheltered91 was honored to support her during this significant season.

\*Christine remained a powerful example of perseverance and transformation. She had been with Sheltered91 since the beginning—faithfully attending weekly sessions in 2023, even during construction when our offices were chaotic and there was no air conditioning. She worked hard to process her past and accomplish her goals. At her graduation, she shared, “My time at Sheltered91 has been life changing for me. At Sheltered91 I was able to heal from the past and find my voice again. Now I can speak up for myself and my life is moving forward.” Her words captured the heart of our mission, and we are excited to celebrate her progress and continued connection to Sheltered91. Today, \*Christine works to earn extra income by making products for the Ninety-One Originals line.

\*Donna came to us by referral in the fall of 2024 after surviving a lifetime of trauma and exploitation. She participated in weekly group and individual therapy until February, when donor support made it possible for Sheltered91 to provide additional care through safe, stable housing in the Reach Transitional Living Program. That was when we saw remarkable growth. Her confidence returned, she gained employment, renewed her faith, and faced challenges with hope. She even encouraged other women in the program through Scripture and prayer. By the following fall, \*Donna was preparing to move toward full independence because she was equipped with tools, hope, and a renewed faith in Jesus.

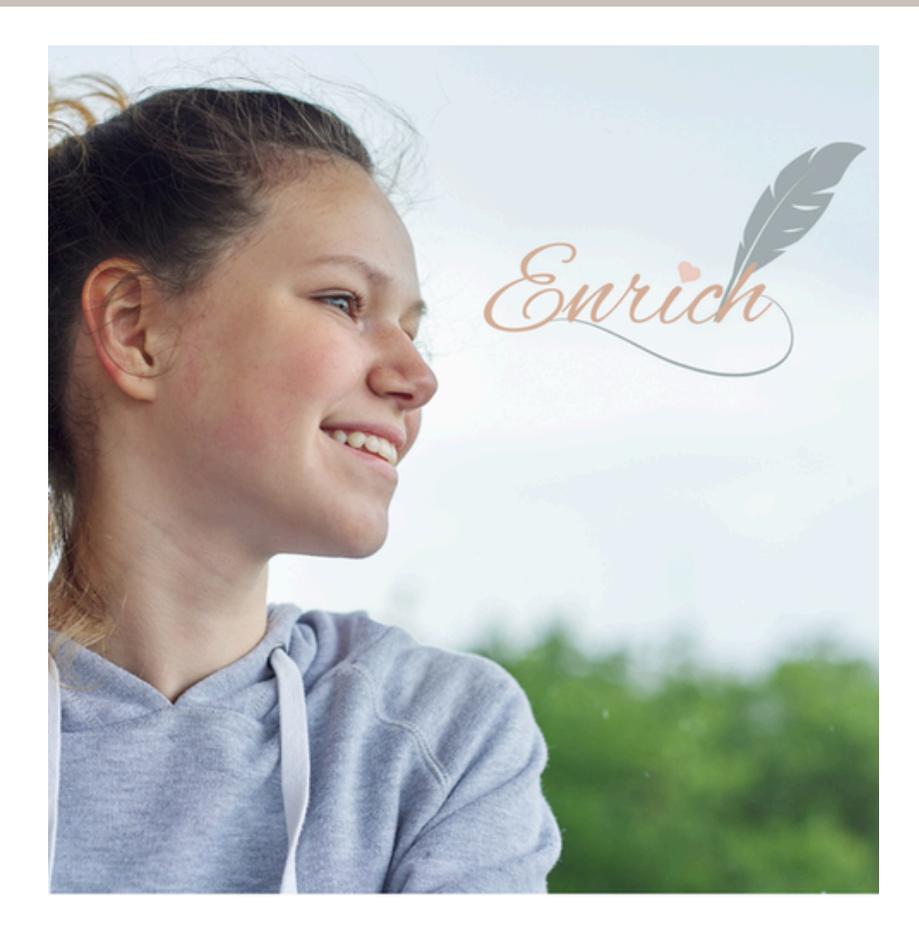
# COUNTERACTING trafficking through prevention.

Sheltered91 had a vision to create a prevention initiative that not only glorifies God, but equips teens with knowledge, confidence, and practical tools to stay safe in the digital and real world. That vision became Enrich, an initiative designed to educate youth and strengthen the safety of our community.

Enrich is a 6-module evidence-based curriculum that covers:

- Personal Rights & Responsibilities as Children of God
- Social Media Safety
- Self Esteem
- Healthy vs Unhealthy Relationships
- Boundaries
- Becoming an advocate

Enrich is equipped for after school and youth group settings. Each lesson involves scripture, biblical principles, and devotions to create a space of safety, trust, hope, and advocacy as we are called to have with one another. Lessons are flexible for time, and include parent letters, discussion questions, and activities.



FREEDOM

“  
“Now I know it’s okay to say “no” if I don’t want someone to touch me.”  
Enrich Prevention Initiative Participant”

150+  
Kids  
Educated

For Junior High  
and  
High School  
Students



Faith-Based  
Curriculum

Illinois  
Indiana  
Churches  
Schools

When teens find themselves in uncomfortable situations, not all know how to protect themselves in the moment. During an Enrich session, one high school girl courageously came forward to share her experience, an experience that is all too common in the digital world our teens navigate every day.

An older stranger from another town added her and a friend on Snapchat, initiating friendly conversations filled with compliments. Before long, the interaction crossed a line when he began sending unsolicited images. The student shared that he was doing this with multiple girls at her school. One in four teens have received explicit images they did not ask for.

But this is where the story shifts. These girls recognized the warning signs. They knew who to tell, what steps to take, and how to respond safely. Instead of feeling powerless, they acted with confidence and clarity; protecting themselves and each other.

An estimated 500,000 predators are active online every day. The FBI defines sextortion as a crime in which someone threatens to harm you, your friends, or distribute private material unless you provide sexual favors or money. Sextortion is an increasing concern for young people, especially boys, with 90% of financial sextortion cases involving adolescent males (Gitnux, 2025). In 2025, there were 23,593 reports of sextortion. Child sex trafficking cases also increased by 953% (Our Rescue, 2025).

Enrich exists because prevention matters. Every teen deserves to be protected and to have the knowledge, resources, and support to advocate for themselves and others.

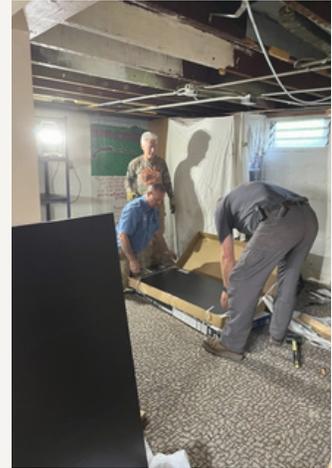
1,800+ HOURS



## DEDICATED

This year, volunteers served 3,000+ hours at Sheltered91! Areas of service included making weekly meals, leading groups, helping with mailings, assisting with demolition and construction, painting, laying carpet, and gardening. We laughed, we got dirty, we enjoyed donuts and each other's company—and we made a difference together.

Each one of our volunteers is a gift to the survivors we serve and to each of us on staff. Thank you!





## VOLUNTEERS

We are especially grateful for our sweet Dori Hoeksema, who faithfully serves every week as Sheltered91's controller. We are so blessed by her talent, dedication, and experience.

We are also especially grateful for Judy Boomsma (top left), who organizes and cleans our storage areas on a monthly basis and regularly helps with events.

The bottom left picture shows the transformation of our laundry area

Thank you volunteers, for creating beautiful spaces of hope and healing for survivors.



# OPPORTUNITIES FOR SUCCESS

Survivors of trafficking often live just above the poverty line. After years of being exploited, many have been unable to pursue education, build stable job skills, or develop a consistent work history. As a result, finding meaningful, sustainable employment can be incredibly challenging.

Many of our program participants work two jobs and still struggle to make ends meet. Even with determination and hard work, there are often gaps, unexpected expenses, childcare needs, transportation costs, and the everyday reality of trying to rebuild a life from the ground up.

That's why *Ninety-One Originals* was created: to help provide employment opportunities for women who are interested in making products, learning new skills, and earning extra income. Every purchase does more than buy an item, it helps empower a woman to support herself and her children with dignity, stability, and hope for the future.

*Ninety-One*  
ORIGINALS



# LOOKING FORWARD

During the second half of 2025, we received multiple referrals for victims of trafficking who urgently needed emergency housing. Tragically, we had to turn away 14 women, many of them mothers, because we do not currently have the staff, facility, or funding required to provide the 24/7 support necessary for survivors in immediate crisis. Saying “no” in those moments broke our hearts.

Our dream is to open a home where we can offer 30–90 day emergency stays for women and their children who need immediate safety and stabilization. To do this well, this home would require at least 12 additional staff members to ensure full coverage, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, and to provide the trauma-informed care, support, and structure these women deserve.

While there are programs in our area that offer long-term residential care, there are currently no options specifically providing emergency housing for survivors of trafficking. That gap leaves many women with nowhere safe to go when they are ready to leave “the life.”

This project would require at least \$300,000 in additional annual funding to cover operational expenses. If we were to purchase a property, that would add significant costs as well.

Please join us in prayer as we seek God’s direction, not only for how to raise the funds to launch this home, but also how to sustain a budget larger than anything we’ve carried before. We serve a great God who can do far more than we can ask or imagine, and He deeply loves every victim and survivor of trafficking.



# STAFF

*L.to R.*  
**Emilee Barnett**  
*Director of Enrich*

**Julie Ipema MSW MDiv**  
*Founder and CEO*

**Carol Barnum**  
*Director of Outreach and  
Volunteers*

**Dori Hoeksema**  
*Volunteer Controller*

**Molly Weaver LSW**  
*Program Director*



# THE BOARD



**KEVIN BOTMA**  
*Board Chairman*



**VON MATTHEWS MBA CFE**  
*Director*



**POLLY WEISS**  
*Director*



**REBECCA HAAN LCSW**  
*Director*



**SHARI KRAJEWSKI**  
*Treasurer*



**RENEE ARNOLD**  
*Director*

# RESPONSIBLE STEWARDSHIP

Because of your support, lives are being changed, and we want you to feel confident every step of the way. Sheltered91 is committed to financial transparency and responsible stewardship, with trusted oversight from our controller, board, and accountant.

That's why we're so excited to share that Sheltered91 is now ECFA accredited! Thank you for believing in this mission.



*Enhancing Trust*

**Platinum  
Transparency  
2025**

**Candid.**

Because your trust matters, Sheltered91 is committed to operating with the highest level of transparency and accountability. That's why we've earned Platinum Transparency on Candid (GuideStar), a recognition that reflects our dedication to openly sharing our leadership, financial stewardship, and measurable impact. Your generosity makes this work possible, and we want you to feel confident knowing your support is handled with care and integrity.

In 2025 Sheltered91 was also named as a mission of the Christian Reformed Church Classis Illiana and The Kingdom Network.

# FULFILLING THE MISSION

Since 2022, Sheltered91 partners have raised trafficking awareness, supported victim outreach, provided safe healing spaces for survivors, and now work to prevent trafficking through the Enrich Prevention Initiative.

TOTAL 2025 Revenue\* \$437,200

TOTAL 2025 Expenses\* \$409,400

\*Includes restricted revenue and expenses

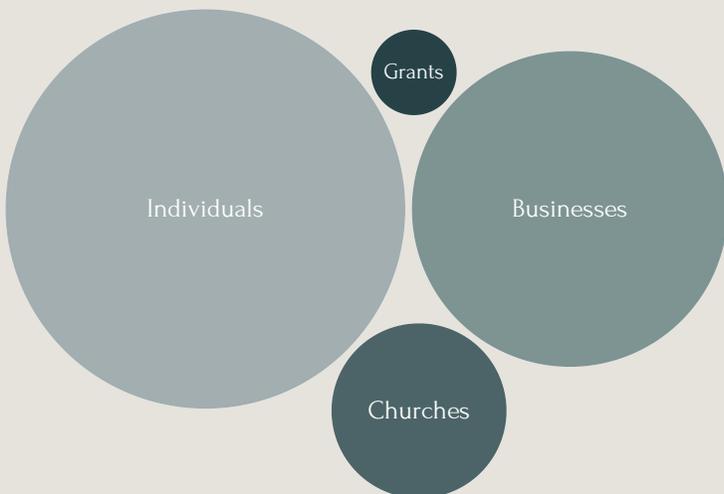
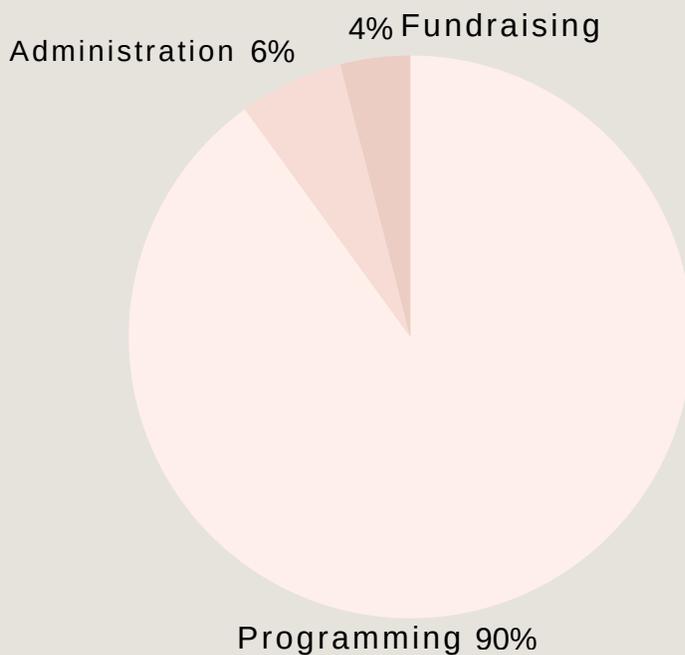
## YOUR MISSIONAL IMPACT

90 percent of every gift goes directly toward victims, survivors and teen trafficking prevention. Your missional giving drives the trauma-informed, Gospel centered programs that bring hope and healing at Sheltered91.

Programs | \$393,480

Administration | \$26,232

Fundraising | \$17,488



## OUR COMMUNITY PARTNERS

Here's how the community came together to combat commercial sexual exploitation in 2025.

Individuals | \$229,550

Businesses | \$150,437

Churches | \$46,213

Foundations | \$11,000



## GET INVOLVED



### Pray 9:14

Sign up to receive our weekly prayer text on Friday mornings and pray with us at 9:14am every week.



### Volunteer

There are many ways to volunteer with Sheltered91 from donating a meal, to help with gardening or administration.



### Give

Sheltered91 is a ministry, and we depend on churches, individuals and businesses for support.

219-730-2046 | [www.sheltered91.org](http://www.sheltered91.org) | [admin@sheltered91.org](mailto:admin@sheltered91.org)

P.O. Box 463 Schererville IN 46375