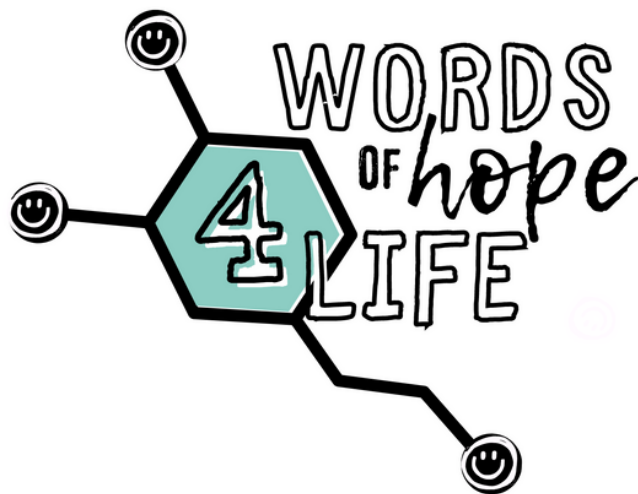


IMPACT REPORT AUG 2023



EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Making Meaningful Strides in 2023 - A Year of Impact and Growth

Greetings to our Board of Directors, valued supporters, partners, and members of the Words of Hope 4 Life community,

As we reflect upon the accomplishments of the past year, we are filled with immense pride and gratitude for the strides we have made in fulfilling our mission at Words of Hope 4 Life. The year 2023 has been one of unparalleled growth, innovation, and community engagement. We are thrilled to share with you the significant impacts we have achieved over the past twelve months, marking yet another chapter in our commitment to creating positive change in the lives of those we serve.

Our unwavering dedication to forging strong relationships within our community has led us to build impactful collaborations with esteemed entities in Oakland County and beyond. Our presence has gained recognition and respect, making us a go-to partner for vital initiatives. This year, we have cemented significant partnerships that not only amplify our reach but also showcase our ability to foster meaningful connections within our dynamic ecosystem.

Furthermore, our commitment to progress has materialized in the physical transformation of our location, a strategic move that empowers us to serve our community more effectively. The revamped facility facilitates enhanced collaboration among our team members, provides efficient storage for our event supplies, and, most importantly, extends an inviting space for community members to actively participate in our mission through volunteering.

We are proud to announce our affiliation with esteemed organizations like the Alliance of Coalitions for Healthy Communities and The Michigan Education Justice Coalition. These alliances have already borne fruit, with our first grant received through the Alliance, in addition to smaller grants from the Starbucks Community Fund and The Michigan Schools and Government Credit Union. These resources significantly bolster our capacity to bring about positive change.

Our annual Viewfest event, a hallmark of our advocacy, reached new heights this year with over 100 sponsors, a testament to the growing support from individuals and businesses that share our vision. Moreover, this year marked the unveiling of our groundbreaking initiative, "Vibe with Pride," aimed at fostering an inclusive and safe environment for our LGBTQ community members.

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We are elated to report that our Hope Hugline has been receiving a steady stream of calls, providing a lifeline of support to those in need. In line with our commitment to nurturing the voices of our youth, we have established a dynamic Youth Advisory Council that played a pivotal role in our participation in MTV's World Mental Health Day. Our partnership with Walled Lake Schools to deliver the Mental Health ICU program to all three high schools this fall stands as a testament to our dedication to shaping the future of our community.

As a proactive and engaged participant in our community, we have established our presence in seven Chambers of Commerce, actively participate in wellness events, and contribute to vital community planning discussions. These efforts have not gone unnoticed, culminating in the honor of receiving the 2023 Outstanding Community Award from the Lakes Area Chamber of Commerce.

In closing, we are deeply inspired by the progress we have achieved, the relationships we have nurtured, and the impact we have made throughout 2023. Our journey continues with renewed enthusiasm as we look forward to embracing the opportunities and challenges that 2024 holds. Together, we will continue to be a beacon of hope, positive change, and support for all those we serve.

With heartfelt gratitude,

Nikki O'Donnell, MA, LLP
Executive Director, Words of Hope 4 Life

Looking ahead to the promising year of 2024, Words of Hope 4 Life is excited to embark on a journey that encompasses our steadfast commitment to expanding our impact and further enriching the lives of those we serve.

With a shared vision of positive change, our goals for 2024 reflect our unwavering dedication to uplifting individuals and communities. Through strategic planning, collaborative partnerships, and a tireless commitment to our mission, we are poised to make the year ahead one of transformation, growth, and boundless possibilities.

OUR 2024 GOALS

1

Additional grant funding

A central focus of our goals for the coming year is securing a substantial grant that will serve as a catalyst for the growth of our organization. This grant will not only allow us to introduce additional transformative programs but also facilitate the expansion of our dedicated staff, enabling us to reach more individuals and communities in need.

2

Increase Viewfest engagement

As we strive to create a lasting impact, we are equally committed to enhancing community engagement. Our Viewfest initiative will take center stage as we passionately work to elevate its reach and impact, engaging a broader audience to champion our cause and amplify our message of hope.

3

Collaborative Programming

In our pursuit of innovation and collaboration, we are thrilled to explore partnerships with your esteemed institutions such as the YMCA. Through strategic collaboration, we aim to harness the potential of our remarkable physical space, aptly named The Rail, to develop new and exciting programs that not only align with our mission but also generate vital funds to sustain our endeavors.

4

Implement harm reduction efforts in WLCSD

Recognizing the importance of holistic well-being, we are resolutely dedicated to fostering safer and healthier environments for our youth. To this end, we have set our sights on implementing comprehensive harm reduction and prevention initiatives within Walled Lake Schools. By providing essential resources and education, we aspire to empower young minds and create a foundation for a brighter future.

OUR 2024 STRATEGY

By weaving together these collaborative endeavors and purpose-driven initiatives, Words of Hope 4 Life is poised to elevate its impact to unprecedented heights in 2024. We are confident that through partnership, community engagement, and youth empowerment, we will affect meaningful change, steering our community towards a brighter and more hopeful future.

1

ADDITIONAL GRANT FUNDING

To achieve our ambitious goals for 2024, Words of Hope 4 Life has crafted a comprehensive strategy that leverages collaboration, innovation, and community mobilization. Key to this strategy is the dynamic partnership of Nikki and Bekki, who will join forces to pursue the highly impactful Drug Free Communities (DFC) Grant offered by the CDC. This grant aligns seamlessly with our mission, empowering us to engage community leaders in identifying and addressing the unique substance use challenges within our locality.

By harnessing the power of local partnerships, we aim to transform the environmental conditions that contribute to substance use, ultimately reducing its prevalence among youth. With more than 700 community coalitions benefiting from funding of up to \$125,000 annually, this endeavor promises to strengthen collaboration among our local partners, laying the foundation for a resilient infrastructure that combats substance abuse head-on.

2

INCREASE VIEWFEST ENGAGEMENT

Our strategy encompasses an innovative approach to elevate engagement for our flagship event, Viewfest. Recognizing the pivotal role of sponsorship, we will restructure our sponsorship tiers to enhance value for our partners, ensuring they are an integral part of our marketing budgets from the outset. Proactive outreach to sponsors well in advance will secure their commitment and participation.

Furthermore, bolstered alliance participation and strategic collaboration with the local zoo will enhance the overall flow and appeal of our event, fostering a more enriching experience for attendees. By streamlining our marketing approach and enhancing the user experience through a revised ticket purchase platform, we will effectively amplify Viewfest's reach and impact, solidifying its role as a potent platform for spreading hope, awareness, and positive change throughout our community.

OUR 2024 STRATEGY

3

COLLABORATIVE PROGRAMMING

In our resolute pursuit of achieving our 2024 goals, Words of Hope 4 Life is embracing a multifaceted approach that maximizes collaboration and community engagement. A pivotal component of our strategy involves partnering with Lauren Savage, our esteemed YMCA contact, to create an innovative afterschool program and/or camp.

This collaborative endeavor is poised to offer crucial support to the diverse youth groups and locations served by the YMCA. By leveraging our respective strengths and expertise, we aim to provide a nurturing environment that fosters personal growth, resilience, and empowerment, catering to the unique needs of each participant.

4

IMPLEMENT HARM REDUCTION EFFORTS IN WLCSD

Expanding our reach even further, our strategic plan encompasses direct engagement with the Walled Lake High Schools. Through active participation in their registration days, we aspire to establish a meaningful presence, enabling us to introduce our mission and services to the student body. By delivering the Mental Health ICU program in each high school, we are committed to equipping students with essential mental health tools and resources, furthering our dedication to holistic well-being.