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Safe Families, Safe Homes

For many, home is a place of love, warmth, and comfort. It is somewhere that you know you will be surrounded by care and support, and a nice little break from the busyness of the real world. But for millions of others, home is anything but a sanctuary. In fact, every 9 seconds, a woman in the United States is beaten or assaulted by a current or ex-significant other. In 2018 the Violence Policy Center, ranked Louisiana 2nd in the nation regarding the number of females killed by males.

One in four women will experience domestic violence in their lifetime. In our own area, each day at least 1 woman comes forward and enters The Haven's program. Every 3 days a new child enters the program. The average length of stay in emergency shelter is 91 days. Women are abused emotionally, financially, and physically in many of these situations. Abusers create an environment of fear and intimidation using verbal threats and physical violence, as well as controlling the financial resources. This makes it very difficult for anyone being abused to flee. The Haven helps women break free from their horrid conditions and offers an environment that helps them stay safe.

Having somewhere safe to hide from their abuser is VERY vital to women and children who are being abused. Many times, women leave quickly with their children while their partner is away. They take nothing more than the clothes on their backs in their desperate attempt to get away before being seen. While at The Haven they are provided food, shelter, clothing, and victim assistance including advocacy and counseling. But what happens after? How do the families we assist in shelter start over and continue to live without the threat of violence?

In 2020, The Haven is expanding its housing services to include transitional and rapid-rehousing. The expanded housing program will provide low-barrier, housing-related assistance to survivors to prevent homelessness and facilitate access to stable housing. Studies of similar programs in other states have found that access to immediate, flexible, and personalized housing assistance, combined with advocacy, is effective at reducing long-term homelessness, and most importantly, domestic violence re-victimization among participants. We recently helped Sandra, a mother of three children, move into a new apartment. She lived with her children in shelter for 12 weeks. During their time in shelter, she was able to get her children back into school, find a job, and save up for her first month's rent. Without your help, Sandra and her children would either have remained in an abusive home or continued to live out of their car. Today, they are safe, warm and self-sufficient. Every day, your support makes stories like Sandra's possible.

With Gratitude,





For sponsorship information, visit our website (www.havenhelps.org) or email Julie Pellegrin at julie@havenhelps.org





Since becoming the Executive Director of The Haven in 2001, Julie has embodied the values and mission of helping families find safety and live violence-free lives. She strives to inspire families and staff members to excel and achieve more in life. In recognition of her years of accomplishments at The Haven, Julie Pellegrin was nominated and received the 2019 ATHENA Award from the Women's Business Alliance of Houma. The Haven is fortunate to have such a dedicated visionary that will lead the organization to higher heights.

Giving Back During the Holidays

Christmas Donors

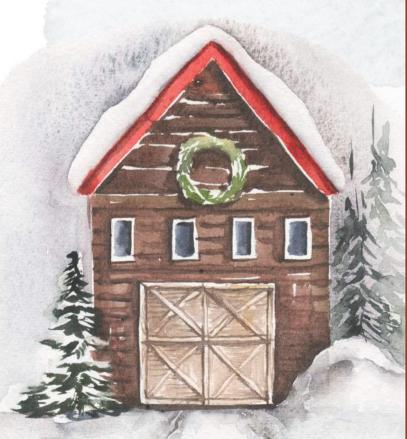
We would like to acknowledge and thank the many individuals, families, groups, and businesses who donated meals, treats, presents, and supplies to help make the holidays special for families plagued by violence. Their contribution allowed families, if just for one day, to forget about the realities of surviving violence and experience the magic of Christmas.

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"Generosity: the most natural outward expression of an inner attitude of compassion." Anonymous.

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A Healing Journey

Mrs. C, a 38-year-old Caucasian mother of two, reached out to The Haven using the agency's 24-hour crisis line. On the initial call, Mrs. C voiced that her husband, of 21 years, had recently physically attacked her resulting in her requiring medical treatment. Through further conversation, Mrs. C explained to the advocate that her husband had also sexually, emotionally, financially, and verbally abused her for majority of their marriage. Mrs. C stated that she has obtained a protective order and is searching for legal counsel to assist her in the divorce process and obtaining custody of her children. Mrs. C also expressed interest in the agency's counseling services to aid in processing her years of trauma.

Within the following week, Mrs. C attended her first individual counseling appointment. While providing a safe environment and establishing rapport with the counselor, Mrs. C began to feel comfortable and disclosed being a survivor of complex trauma. Her trauma began in childhood when she was sexually abused by a family member. Mrs. C then began to divulge the many controlling and manipulative tactics her husband used to gain and maintain power over her. He would often lie to her, blame her for the abuse, minimize the abuse, accuse her of infidelity and stealing money, threaten and intimidate her, use force to hold her down, hit her, kick her, and force her into unwanted sexual acts.

Reaching out to the agency, Mrs. C reported experiencing numerous trauma reactions including inability to sleep, increased vigilance, and intense upsetting emotions such as feeling fearful, helpless, powerless, broken, angry, and betrayed. Since her initial phone call, Mrs. C has participated in weekly counseling sessions. Mrs. C has outlined many goals that she would like to accomplish while receiving services at The Haven. Thus far, the counselor has aided Mrs. C in creating a safety plan, obtaining trauma education, normalizing her trauma responses, recognizing her trauma triggers, and practicing new healthy coping strategies, all of which are forward steps on her journey of healing.

Mrs. C has been offered to participate in The Haven's transitional housing program and has been referred to the agency's legal services team. The Haven has also assisted Mrs. C with obtaining clothing due to her abuser taking away some of her clothing as he left. Although, she's in the beginning stages of her trauma recovery, Mrs. C has shown tremendous progress in her counseling sessions. Adjusting to her new lifestyle of living without violence, Mrs. C has begun to take strides towards reestablishing her safety, self-power, and self-worth. Mrs. C has voiced that she looks forward to continuing her healing journey.





Give Today!

Ending violence in our community is possible but it requires a commitment from each and every one of us. We are asking you to support battered women and their children, victims of sexual assault, and our community education and awareness activities with your financial contribution. Your contributions support the upkeep and maintenance of our 24-hour safe, emergency shelter, as well as allowing The Haven to provide traumainformed counseling to women and children healing from trauma.

Mail form to: The Haven, P.O. Box 4279, Houma, LA 70361

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\$2500 + \$1000 \$500 \$250

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