



THE JOURNEY

A Publication of Friendship Home | Spring 2023

Empowering freedom from domestic violence

Gift of Hope

Amaya stood at the entry of her apartment, her hands shaking as she took the keys from her case manager. She started to cry. The keys were a symbol of freedom, safety, and a future she had been afraid to hope for.

As the new year begins, we are filled with gratitude for your kindness and support. Because of you, Friendship Home is able to serve survivors like Amaya and her children who are leaving a home with danger lurking around every corner. This is the hope that YOU provide.

The need for safe shelter, crisis services, and advocacy continues to grow in our community and the instability of public funding makes it challenging to plan for the future. Private support helps us bridge gaps in funding to ensure that we can continue to meet the needs of survivors for years to come. You can help us plan for their future by:

- Joining our Partners in Friendship giving society by making a multiple-year pledge to help provide sustainable funding for long-term planning.
- Remember to include Friendship Home in your will or estate plan.
- Make Friendship Home a beneficiary on a life insurance policy, annuity, or other financial accounts.

For more information on giving, please call Angie Hilsabeck, Donor Relations, at 402.436.2156 or angieh@friendshiphome.org.

The Silent Epidemic

March is Brain Injury Awareness month and Friendship Home is on the frontlines supporting survivors and raising awareness about the signs, symptoms, and prevalence of brain injuries impacting individuals experiencing violence at the hands of their intimate partners.

A survivor's life can be drastically changed by a brain injury, often in unrecognizable ways. Brain injuries can be a silent barrier to healing from trauma, impacting work, parenting, education, and relationships. Many survivors are often blamed for their own trauma that a brain injury leaves, like Carrie, a strangulation survivor.

"I felt as stupid as he always told me I was. Little did I know, my forgetfulness, my 'faults' he claimed I had, were caused by his hands. I didn't know a brain injury was an outcome that could occur from the violence that was inflicted on me. Friendship Home's brain injury screen brought me the answers I needed to move forward in my life and overcome the trauma." – Carrie, survivor

The head, neck, and face are most likely to sustain an injury in a physically violent relationship. From punching and kicking, to being hit with a blunt object or being slammed against a hard surface, all can cause a Traumatic Brain Injury. Strangulation, otherwise known as choking, is a common occurrence of violence perpetrated on a partner with the potential to cause Hypoxic Brain Injury. If strangulation occurs in a relationship, the abuser is *seven times* more likely to kill their partner.

At Friendship Home, every survivor receives educational information and is offered a brain injury screen to assess risk. The information is vital to survivors and includes signs, symptoms, and guidance on when and where to seek medical care. Building awareness and informing our community about the risk is critical for those suffering from brain injury to receive appropriate intervention and care.

From the Executive Director

The phone rings through to our crisis line. An advocate answers: the woman on the other end says her name is Sariah, and she is looking for shelter. Sariah, at first, is afraid to share her story; she said she had never told anyone this before and was worried that no one would believe her. The advocate was patient with Sariah, allowing for moments of tears and silence when needed. After a short time passed, Sariah began to open up. She told the advocate that her husband of 13 years had been physically abusing her almost daily. Sariah shared that the abuse started years ago with lots of name-calling, putting her down about her appearance, and not allowing her to spend time with her loved ones.

The week before Sariah called Friendship Home, her husband was furious because Sariah had been talking on the phone to her mom. He became escalated very quickly and began to assault her physically. Sariah said that for the first time, he put his hands around her neck, strangling her, she couldn't breathe, and at one point, she believed she had lost consciousness. Sariah told the advocate that she feared for her life and did not want her children to grow up without their mom.

During the last half of 2022, Friendship Home had 198 requests for shelter. When a survivor calls seeking refuge, there is a conversation that happens between them and the advocate on the phone. Every survivor is asked if their partner has tried to choke or strangle them. Of those 198 requests, 63% answered yes. There has been an increase in this number over the years, which is unsettling.

At Friendship Home, our services truly are life-saving for women such as Sariah. Thank you for your continued dedication and support of our mission!

Leah Droge

Leah Droge
Executive Director

CONNECT WITH US!

Follow us for updates on upcoming events and volunteer opportunities!

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SAVE THE DATE

Stuff the Bus

Friendship Home is excited to be partnering with Star Tran and Alpha Media for the 24th annual "Stuff the Bus Campaign." With the help of the Lincoln community, the event fills our shelves at Friendship Home with highly needed items our residents and their children need to rebuild their lives. **Many of these families enter Friendship Home's shelter with no more than the clothes on their backs.**

Please join us on Saturday, April 15th and/or Sunday, April 16th at the local Walmart and Sam's club locations. We encourage you to gather up your friends and family and come out to help provide items to support survivors and help empower freedom from domestic violence. Your support can be offered as a shopper or by volunteering just a short time to help us "stuff the bus". There are volunteer opportunities available for families, individuals, and organizations. We cannot do this without your support.

For more information or to become part of this event, contact Whitney at whitneyw@friendshiphome.org or call 402-434-0167.

Thank you!

Are you an Online Donor?

If yes, we encourage you to use Friendship Home's secure website, **www.friendshiphome.org**. Donations come directly to Friendship Home and we all benefit from lower processing fees. **Thank You!**



Holiday Thank You

Thank you to all our supporters who made the holidays a special time for the families that are rebuilding their lives free from domestic violence with Friendship Home. With the support of our community, 35 families, 120 individuals received gifts and holiday meals that brightened their season and provided hope for a new future. Over 75 organizations, businesses, churches, and community supporters donated gifts and meals that ensured everyone at Friendship Home would feel the holiday spirit. Thanks to you, each family in our emergency shelter spent the holidays with a warm bed and presents under the tree.

Each year, we are reminded that the work we do cannot be accomplished without the help of the Lincoln community. The generosity that we see during the holidays is a reminder that our community is committed to caring for others and supporting Friendship Home to be a hand to hold for those individuals fleeing domestic violence.



Supporters from Messiah Lutheran Church participated in a Giving Tree, allowing members of their congregation to purchase and wrap presents for Friendship Home survivors.

Partner Spotlight: Thank you to Muchachos

Friendship Home is grateful for supporters like Muchachos Restaurant and Food Truck! Muchachos began as a food truck and has grown to open a restaurant in the heart of downtown Lincoln. We are incredibly thankful for the generosity we have received from Muchachos. This past fall, they provided meals for Friendship Home's Getting Ahead class, for 12 weeks!

Getting ahead is a step-by-step financial class to help survivors evaluate their past money struggles and help them create a solid foundation to start building toward the future they want. This class helps

participants understand the struggles and barriers they have experienced, and how to overcome those barriers, allowing them to learn skills and change their future for the better.

Each week, Muchacho's prepared a meal of tacos/nachos for 30 individuals, week after week! They included an array of queso, salsas, chips, tortillas, and two different kinds of meat. The comforting food that Muchachos offered allowed our survivors to focus on the class they were taking and move forward in building their futures.

Muchachos is a staple in the Lincoln community, bringing in lines of individuals for their delicious food. Dedicated to tradition, Muchachos treats all its customers as family. Picking up the food each week, we felt the love and support that the Muchachos family has outpoured into the community. Friendship Home could not continue to support survivors of domestic violence without the help we receive from our community partners. Thank you to Muchachos!



Lives You Have Touched

January 2022 – December 2022



1,554

Survivors received shelter and/or crisis services



914

Survivors and their children requested safe shelter



648

Survivors of domestic violence were sheltered
(**231** adults &
417 children)



44,017

Bed nights



51,552

Meals were provided

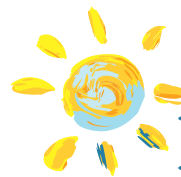
A sincere thank you to our recent contributors for your generosity. To maintain a level of commitment to being cost-effective, the donor lists are now published online at www.friendshiphome.org.

Introducing the 2023 Board of Directors

Friendship Home of Lincoln is pleased to welcome six new members to their 2023 Board of Directors. The new board members are Matt Ferris of Ferris Financial, Greg Mendoza of Mendoza Family Insurance, Crystal Meyer of Ameritas, Dr. Elizabeth Lau of Associated Anesthesiologists, and Miranda Soulliere of Union Bank & Trust. Not pictured is Peggy Friesen. Friendship Home thanks these new members for their generous service and commitment to survivors at Friendship Home.

The 2023 board officers are Denny Van Horn, president; Joel Bacon, president-elect; Tera Beermann, treasurer; and Marcy Haas, secretary.

Thank you all for your commitment to providing services to survivors of domestic violence in the Lincoln community. The gift of your time and talent is truly invaluable.



Friendship Home

Our Mission

Friendship Home exists to support, shelter, and advocate for survivors of domestic violence and their children.

Board of Directors

Denny Van Horn (President)	Perry Haralson
Joel Bacon (President-Elect)	Greg Mendoza
Tera Beermann (Treasurer)	Crystal Meyer
Marcy Haas (Secretary)	Beth Lau
Brady Bauer	Jill Miller
Pat Bennett	Michon Morrow
Brad Ewerth	Amy Mosser
Matt Ferris	Cecilia "Sissy" Ruley
Peggy Friesen	Brock Shelton
Lori Geist	Miranda Soulliere
Kathy Griesel	Crystal Wichita

"Friendship Home saved me. I received support from the moment I called the crisis line until we'll passed when I moved into my own apartment. They were there for me every step of the way, guiding me into my new life, free from domestic violence."

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Friendship Home

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402.434.6353

24-Hour Crisis Line: 402.437.9302 • In-Kind Donation Line: 402.437.9301

