



THE JOURNEY

A Publication of Friendship Home | Summer 2024

Empowering freedom from domestic violence

Community Involvement During Domestic Violence Awareness Month

Understanding Domestic Violence Awareness Month requires a deep dive into the significance of this observance and its impact on communities. October is dedicated to raising awareness about domestic violence, a pervasive issue that affects countless individuals regardless of age, gender, or socioeconomic status. This month serves as an important reminder of the ongoing struggles faced by survivors and the critical need for widespread education and support.

Throughout October, various organizations and communities engage in activities designed to shed light on the realities of domestic violence. Events such as Safe Quarters, an event hosted by Friendship Home each October, provide tangible ways for community members to contribute positively and support those affected. This one-day event, taking place on October 13, expands Friendship Home's reach, spreading awareness to individuals unaware of the services Friendship Home offers.

We are searching for volunteers to participate in Safe Quarters! Lincoln is a large city, and we want to reach every household within its limits. Registering a team in your neighborhood will include more than just collecting donations. As a volunteer, you will receive the proper materials to accurately spread information about Friendship Home and domestic violence. Over 500 volunteers mobilize annually across neighborhoods, engaging with residents and collecting donations directly benefiting Friendship Home. This



SAFE QUARTERS SAVE LIVES

collective effort highlights the importance of a united community response to domestic violence, ensuring that survivors have access to safe shelter, counseling services, and other vital resources.

Safe Quarters has achieved great things for Friendship Home over the last 22 years, none of which would have been possible without the incredible support of our community, donors, volunteers, and dedicated staff! This event's mission and purpose are deeply rooted in compassion and community solidarity, aiming to provide critical support for survivors of domestic violence and their children.



COMPREHENSIVE ADVOCACY SERVICES RECEIVED AT FRIENDSHIP HOME

Friendship Home offers safe shelter, transitional housing, rapid rehousing, and supportive services to empower survivors of domestic violence, sexual assault, and stalking. Our trauma-informed, survivor-centered approach focuses on safety and resilience, recognizing and building on each survivor's strengths. By providing comprehensive, knowledgeable care, Friendship Home supports survivors' overall health and well-being as they take steps toward safety and stability.

From the Executive Director

Lincoln is a city brimming with potential and opportunities. Yet, we continue to face significant challenges in providing safe and confidential shelter to those in urgent need. Friendship Home serves an average of 128 survivors daily, including their children. Despite our efforts to expand services, the demand for our support continues to grow.

Friendship Home recently participated in a community Survivor Needs Assessment to better understand and address these needs. This assessment, which took place from January 2023 to February 2024, was facilitated by Dr. Toni Jensen and supported by Lancaster County Human Services, Woods Charitable Fund, and the Lincoln Community Foundation.

Based on the assessment findings, we actively collaborate with community partners to implement several key recommendations. These include improving domestic violence-specific housing resources to meet state and national standards, enhancing staff resiliency, securing sustainable funding, and fostering ongoing collaboration and communication. By focusing on these areas, we aim to reduce barriers and elevate the experiences of survivors in our community.

Our commitment to these goals reflects our dedication to ensuring that every individual in need has access to safe and confidential shelter when needed. As we continue to work towards these objectives, we are optimistic about the positive impact we can achieve for survivors in Lincoln.

Leah Droge
Executive Director

Friends of Friendship Home

We are so grateful to the **Friends of Friendship Home** for giving their time, energy, resources, and compassion to support those served at Friendship Home.

Cathy Parker

For almost 8 years, Cathy has volunteered weekly at Friendship Home. She is full of compassion, enthusiasm, and kindness, working tirelessly transporting items from the attic to the basement of our Service Center, organizing donations, and sorting daily essentials for survivors to grab when visiting the boutique. Cathy is a light at Friendship Home; her dedication is inspiring, and we are so lucky to have her as a volunteer.

Alpha Chi Omega

The Alpha Chi Omega Foundation has spent years pledging their organization's philanthropic efforts to domestic violence awareness and prevention. The University of Nebraska-Lincoln Alpha Chi Omega Chapter has spent countless hours volunteering for Friendship Home. The AXO members have worked to spread awareness about domestic violence and Friendship Home services to UNL students, participated in our Safe Quarters fundraiser by creating multiple teams, and hosted donation drives supporting the survivors served. The current chapter members will spend multiple days volunteering at Friendship Home cleaning shelter this fall. Thank you for all you have done!

Bright Hope Family Farm

You can almost guarantee that you will visit the Sunday Farmers' Market at College View and see Bright Hope Family Farm stationed selling their beautiful bouquets. Operating out of Frith, Nebraska, they partner with Friendship Home in a Blooms for Hope Program, often donating \$1 from every bouquet they sell at the farmers' market. We are so thankful for their support!



CONNECT WITH US!

Follow us for updates on upcoming events and volunteer opportunities!

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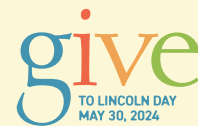
Thank you for STUFFING the Bus!



Thank you to our Stuff the Bus Sponsors and all those who volunteered, purchased items, and spread the word. With your help, we STUFFED four StarTran buses over a two-day period in April. For 25 years, Stuff the Bus has been a vital event to Friendship Home, providing highly needed items to be used throughout the entire year.



We are grateful for the generous support we receive from individuals, families, and local organizations through Give to Lincoln Day and the entire year. This past May, Lincoln's yearly Give to Lincoln Day, organized by the Lincoln Community Foundation, raised over \$8.5 million for local nonprofits. Friendship Home is proud to have raised **\$192,625** during Lincoln's largest day of giving. Your donations are more critical now than ever. Funds raised during Give to Lincoln Day allow us to continue helping those fleeing a violent home find safety. Thank you to all who made this day so successful!



Friendship Home Staff Wellness Retreat

To be a good advocate, you must also focus on yourself, prioritizing mental and physical health. Self-care can help build up emotional resources and assist in making healthier choices in the future. A healthy advocate can think clearly, make good decisions, and analyze each situation critically. If your brain is overwhelmed by stress, you can't do that properly.

Friendship Home's board members are strong advocates for protecting the well-being of staff members. Over the summer, after a peaceful day at Rock Creek Retreat Center, staff members were met with lunch, a chocolate fountain with various treats to dunk, and self-care activities.

During the wellness day, staff members had designated time to sit with each other and talk about our lives outside of work while relaxing through various activities planned by the board. We colored pages and potted plants, ate delicious snacks, and grounded ourselves through yoga and stretching, which Peggy Chesen, a certified Pilates Instructor at Firethorn Resort, provided. We thank every board member for participating in the wellness retreat and ensuring our staff can put themselves first to give the best advice.



Lives You Have Touched

January 2024 – June 2024



856

Survivors received shelter and/or crisis services



413

Requests for Safe Shelter



287

Survivors were Sheltered
(121 adults & 166 children)



21,471

Meals were provided



23,333

Bed nights

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.

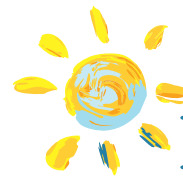
Thank You South Lincoln Sam's Club

For many years, Friendship Home has utilized the support of local Lincoln stores, such as Walmart and Sam's Club. Lincoln Walmart and Sam's Clubs have worked with Friendship Home for over 20 years through Stuff the Bus, an event where shoppers can easily purchase items to be donated directly to Friendship Home.

The staff members at the South Lincoln Sam's Club (8480 Andermatt Drive) went above and beyond this year to help us during Stuff the Bus. Their unique skills were tested when they arrived at the shelter for a day of volunteering and were faced with a mountain of donations from Stuff the Bus. In two hours' time, they worked strategically to organize and sort two buses' worth of donations.

While working with Club Manager Caleb, he offered Friendship Home the opportunity to apply for a grant that would extremely benefit Friendship Home. Thanks to his help, we received a \$10,000.00 grant from Walmart Stores to support Stuff the Bus and our work.

Connections like these are important to our organization, especially as we face challenges due to VOCA funding cuts. We are so grateful to the team at Sam's Club for their willingness to give their time, energy, and talents. Your support of Friendship Home allows us to continue fulfilling our mission of empowering freedom from domestic violence.



Friendship Home

Empowering freedom from domestic violence

Our Mission

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

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"At Friendship Home, I found help securing housing for me and my four kids. We have a roof over our head and food in our cabinets because Friendship Home was here for us."

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Friendship Home

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

