

Capital campaign
to improve living conditions for
Erie's abused women and children



Shelter
Begins the End
of Abuse

SafeNet
Hospitality House

Overcrowding Prompts Building Project And \$2 Million Campaign

When SafeNet began over 30 years ago, we never imagined how the need for our Hospitality House shelter would grow. Our shelter is a house that was originally built for a family of five. Today, it houses as many as 28 abused women and children at the same time for weeklong stretches or more.

In the kitchen, there's an old white stove we have to cook meals on. That's one stove to cook breakfast, lunch and dinner for 28 women and children of different cultural backgrounds—Asian, Middle Eastern, African American, Caucasian, and Eastern European—and ranging in age from two months to 75 years old.

In our dining room, families must eat in shifts because there's not enough chairs for everybody to sit down. In our living room, there are only two couches and a single TV for 28 people. When it's time to sleep, the bedrooms upstairs, which are small by today's standards, often have to be shared by two or three unrelated families.

The overcrowding in our shelter, which on any given day may include as many as 20 children who have been uprooted from their homes, impacts on our ability to provide the best service and crisis resolution we can for each family member.

Heartbreaking Story

A few years ago a woman had to flee home because her husband was so violent. She came to our Hospitality House emergency shelter. It was August; it was hot; the shelter was full of other women and children and the air-conditioning had broken. So she chose to go home rather than stay in our overcrowded rooms. Two days later she was dead. Her husband had killed her.

Did you know inmates at the Erie County Prison have more individual living space than what we can offer Erie's abused women and children?

Turning Victims Away

Offering shelter to abused women and children is our frontline defense and most basic service. Our Hospitality House shelter is the "emergency room" of our "hospital". When it comes to domestic violence, until a woman and her children are safe, nothing else matters.

Unfortunately, last year we had to turn away over 120 battered women and children because we just didn't have enough room to accommodate them.

Helping Kids Cope

Children who witness their mother being beaten are actually more traumatized than if they were beaten themselves. **Fifty percent of the victims of domestic violence at our shelter are children.** We make it a top priority to help them cope with their fear and anguish. Our children's program, which is a state model, helps children feel safe and as if they have some measure of control in their lives.



Safety 24/7

Abused women and their children are admitted to our shelter 24/7. About 40% are brought to Hospitality House by the police after a violent incident has taken place at home. Many others are referred by doctors or come directly from the hospital.

Once at our shelter, we provide sanctuary and help victims resolve their present crisis. We help them see how the affects of abuse go far beyond the actual physical assault.

Domestic violence shelters are the only kind of shelters in Erie County where **the identity and location of victims are kept completely confidential to insure their personal safety.**

Shelter is vital in the range of supports needed to get free from abuse. Depending on the situation, we also offer legal help, relocation and housing help, referrals for children, medical referrals, and even drug and alcohol assessment.



Our Campaign To Raise \$2 Million

The renovation and expansion of our Hospitality House shelter is critically needed to ease overcrowding and better serve the victims of domestic violence.

Severe cuts in government funding have taken their toll in recent years and put a strain on our resources. Even so, **domestic violence is a problem that is not going away. It's a community issue with dire and deadly effects. We must do all we can to comfort and lessen the damage to women and children's lives.**

Already we've raised a substantial portion of our \$2 million goal. Your gift today will truly help victims of violence young and old. It could even save a life.



What Improvements Will Be Made?

Phase 1 of our plan to renovate and expand our emergency shelter will focus on the construction of a building adjacent to our current shelter. The new building will have five bedrooms, a family room, and a large multipurpose room, which will be used for study, support groups and classes. The needed **additional space will alleviate overcrowding in our current shelter** and give families more quiet time and privacy throughout their stay with us.



Phase 2 of our plan will be to **renovate our existing shelter**. The interior redo will include expanding the kitchen and updating the appliances as well as remodeling the bathrooms, replacing

windows, and freshening up the paint and furnishings throughout the house. A comprehensive security system also will be installed.

Phase 3 will create a **beautiful outdoor green space**, which will include play areas and a tranquil garden where women and their children can think, relax, play and safely spend time together in the sun and fresh air.



*Capital Campaign
Planning Committee*



From left: Community Chairpersons Walter and Joan Harf; Board President Shirley Williams; Peggy Richardson; Treasurer Ed Whitbred; Ruth Burton; Jim Herr; Executive Director Linda King; Planning Committee Chairperson Joe Conti

***B**y renovating and expanding our emergency shelter, we will greatly improve living conditions for Erie's abused women and children who come to us for help. We will create a true sanctuary, where victims, young and old, rich and poor, will have the physical and emotional space to work through a difficult time and begin to heal. We will make a brighter place that inspires hope and confidence because it will be a visible symbol of how much we care; and a better reflection of how much we have achieved from where we started 30 years ago. Together we will build upon all that has gone before to create a refuge of a size and scope that answers the unique needs of battered women and children in their quest to survive and make a better life.*





SafeNet's Mission

SafeNet is committed to ending domestic violence, affirming human dignity and delivering comprehensive direct services to victims of domestic violence. SafeNet provides sanctuary, support, education, advocacy, and promotes changes in legislation and social policies. We believe every individual has the right to be respected and to live a life free from abuse.

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