

A Newsletter for Friends of SOS Community Services

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Mom and Baby Homeless After Dad's Death

Lisa has been through a lot: First, she was homeless. Then she became pregnant unexpectedly. Finally, right before the baby was born, her boyfriend died suddenly leaving her alone.

She and Mark became homeless when their landlord sold the building where they were renting. They bounced from place to place, including some short-term stays in hotel-based shelters.

They were able to stay with her parents for a while. But when Lisa's parents' health deteriorated and they needed nursing home care, the couple once again found themselves homeless. They began **couch surfing** again. Sometimes, they lived in their car.

Lisa then became pregnant. A few weeks before the baby was born, **Mark tragically died** in a car accident. Lisa was devastated.

She and her new baby alternated between sleeping a few nights here and there with friends and family and staying in her car. She was grieving deeply over the sudden death of her boyfriend.

When the baby was six months old, because of support from you and other caring people, Lisa was able to rent a new



Newborn baby (stock photo to protect family's identity)

apartment through SOS's Rapid Rehousing program. Her caseworker helped her find counseling for grief and loss as she grappled with life after her boyfriend's death.

Lisa's SOS caseworker helped her get a child care subsidy so she could find work and increase her income. She completed **cosmetology school** and rented a space to do hair and make-up. She and her case manager worked together to advertise her services on social media.

After a year, Lisa is able to **pay her lease entirely on her own** because she makes enough money from her cosmetology business. SOS's Rapid Rehousing program helped Lisa and her baby get back on their feet after a rough time. Through the support of donors like you, Lisa was able to get back on her feet and create a stable future for her baby.

Smiles & Excitement



Just like you, Justin loves to give during the holidays to make the season brighter for other children. Here, he shows off a toy truck he donated.



Can you feel the warmth radiating from that smile? You and fellow donors have ensured this sweet girl had a wonderful holiday.



You and other community members bring joy through your generosity. Your donations of gift cards and household goods made the holiday special for this mom during a difficult time in her life.

All Because of You!



Donations to SOS during the holidays help parents buy gifts for their children to celebrate the season. **The smiles and excitement are thanks to generous donors like you!**

These siblings are proudly showing off their new outfits. These clothes were purchased with **YOUR DONATIONS** to the Sponsor a Family program.



You Helped End Hunger and Homelessness Last Year. Thank you!

Thanks to your support, 78 families said goodbye to couch surfing and living in their cars through SOS's Rapid Rehousing program last year. Now, the 194 children in these families have a real home of their own. Thank you for helping these families secure housing and get their lives back on track.



As grocery prices soar, more and more people are finding they cannot afford to buy all the food they need. With support from volunteers and donors like you, SOS's food pantry is there to meet the need. Last year, SOS provided groceries to thousands of families. In fact, they pantry responded to 10,320 requests for groceries.

*Time period 4/1/22 to 3/31/23. For more information about SOS's program outcomes, visit soscs.org

Because of YOU, the matching goal has been met!



(Photo of a homeless girl.)

This fall, many of you made a gift to end homelessness for families and children in Washtenaw County. And we told you that your gift would be matched times four by the US Department of Housing and Urban Development up to \$202,430.

We are excited to tell you that today, we have exceeded the \$202,430 goal. Now, we will be able to draw down all the US Department of Housing and Urban Development funds to get more families and children into housing this year.

Now, we are able to post a position for an additional Rapid Rehousing case manager. This person will move even more families off the streets and into housing. Thank you so much!

Make Ending Homelessness Your Legacy!

People like you are making the decision to include ending hunger and homelessness in their lasting legacy. They are making the decision to leave a gift to SOS in their will. Contact Barbara Cecil at barbarac@soscs.org if you would like more information about leaving a gift in your will to help future generations of families.



Photo: Barbara Cecil