

## A Newsletter for Friends of SOS Community Services

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### ***Mom and Children Live in their Car for a Year***

***But thanks to great SOS  
supporters like you, they have  
a permanent home now.***

Char didn't want to live in fear anymore. When she finally left her abuser, she wanted a safe, happy place to raise her children.

But her options were few. Sometimes, her sister could take them for a night or two.

But most of the time, Char and her kids slept in their car.

Char knew about shelter programs for families. But she was afraid. If people found out her kids were living in a car, would they take them away?

Char could not take that chance. She has four children ranging in age from 18 months to 11 years. Her son has ADHD. Char's children need her and count on her.

**Story continues on page 2...**



We would love to share a photo of Char's family with you. But we must protect their safety and privacy. This photo from SOS's archive shows a family like hers.

*Mom and children live in car...  
continued from page 1*

After a lot of talking, SOS's children's services supervisor finally convinced Char to call and get on the waitlist for shelter. She sat with Char in a local park while Char made the call.

The timing was perfect! A house was available the same day. It took a few months, but Char's housing supports coordinator at SOS helped them get birth certificates and get the children back in school.

SOS staff helped Char get her children clothes for school too. Char has a Section 8/Housing Choice Voucher, which is a long-term subsidy. This will help her maintain permanent housing now that she has completed SOS's Rapid Rehousing program.



With your support, SOS provides thousands of pounds of groceries to more than 500 families each month.

## Two Moms Find Housing and Help Thanks to Support from People Like You

You Gave Claudia Hope When she had no place to live and a baby on the way...



Claudia had two young boys. And she was eight months pregnant when she fled from her violent boyfriend. They lived in her SUV for a few weeks. Then, she called for shelter. SOS helped her find an apartment. She was able to deliver her first daughter knowing she had a home for her new baby. Now, Claudia and her children are happy, healthy, and safe in their new apartment. Claudia is planning on going back to school!

Thanks to you, Althea and her son have a place to sleep at night.



\*To protect the confidentiality of families served, changed names & example pictures are used.

Althea lost her job when her company downsized due to the pandemic. Like 40% of families in Southeast Michigan, Althea lives paycheck to paycheck. So when she lost her job, Althea and her 8 year old son were suddenly homeless. Thanks to our generous supporters, SOS was able to help Althea and her son get housing! Althea received a permanent housing subsidy shortly after moving into her new apartment. Now, she is looking for a new job. She no longer worries about where she and her son are going to sleep at night.

## Emergency funds prevent pandemic evictions!

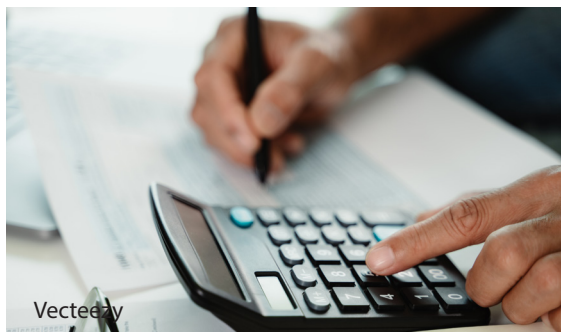
SOS has distributed \$8.7 million to prevent eviction and utility shut off for 1,326 families who have experienced financial hardship during the pandemic.

People who qualify for COVID Emergency Rental Assistance may visit [ceraapp.michigan.gov](https://ceraapp.michigan.gov) to apply.

Thanks to support from people like you, SOS is here to provide relief funds at a critical time.



# For Maria, the Future Looks Brighter....Thanks to You!



Before the pandemic started, Maria got overwhelmed by bills and got behind on her rent. Then she was evicted and became homeless. She is a single mother with a three year old child.

Maria found housing again with the help of SOS's Rapid Re-Housing program. She used the Rapid Re-housing program for a year. She works at the University of Michigan and worked from home during the pandemic. She was able to earn a steady income but was not good at managing money.

Many people like Maria use their time in SOS housing to improve their credit and develop a budget to help them pay for housing long-term.

With the help of her SOS housing supports coordinator, she learned to manage money better, paid down her debts, and improved her credit score. Maria is now housed independently and pays her own housing cost each month without a subsidy.

## Volunteers Offer Help and Hope to Families in Crisis

*It was clear to me that there were a lot of people in our community who were falling through the cracks...who didn't have basic needs like housing, jobs, and food.*

*One SOS volunteer, Mary, shared her thoughts after spending time answering phone calls at SOS.*

*If you would like to volunteer to help families in our community, contact Regen Stahl at [volunteer@soscs.org](mailto:volunteer@soscs.org)*



## On-Site Vaccination at SOS's Food Pantry

SOS partnered with Washtenaw County Public Health to provide a COVID vaccine clinic on-site at the food pantry.

# Thanks for Being a Big Helper!



With the help of community members like you, SOS started a new diaper pantry during the pandemic.

A baby needs 50 diaper changes each week to stay clean and dry.

But one in three local families can not afford to purchase diapers regularly.

With your help, 150 babies are receiving fresh, clean diapers every week. Thank you for keeping the new diaper pantry so well stocked.

***Each Month,  
1,500  
Diapers are  
Distributed!***

***Thank YOU!!***

To organize a diaper drive to help babies in need, contact Regen Stahl at [volunteer@soscs.org](mailto:volunteer@soscs.org).



## ATTENTION HOCKEY FANS!!

You can cheer on the **Detroit Red Wings** AND help local families in need!

Buy your ticket for the April 23 game where the Red Wings will take on the Pittsburgh Penguins. A portion of your ticket purchase will be donated to SOS.

Tickets are on sale now at [bit.ly/3thknfL](https://bit.ly/3thknfL)

Make sure you stop by SOS's table during the game to say "Hello!" pick up some awesome swag!

## Thanks to You, a Record Number of Families Received Holiday Gifts

Because of generous people like you, this mom and 325 others received gift cards and housewares to help them celebrate the December 2021 holidays. Thank you!

