

A Newsletter for Friends of SOS Community Services

INSIDE

Pg. 2:

Your support keeps families fed during high inflation.

Pg. 3:

Save the Date for Road to Home!

Pg. 4:

Voucher program keeps dozens of families housed thanks to supporters like you.

Mother and son were living in their car.

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

Maya started in SOS's Parents as Teachers program in 2019. She was homeless and living in her car with her son.

After starting Parents as Teachers, she found housing in SOS's shelter and then in the Rapid Rehousing Program at SOS.

Her Rapid Rehousing apartment was tiny! She wanted better for her family.

She set educational goals for her son and financial goals for herself. Last year, she moved out of Rapid Rehousing into a rented trailer home, which gave her a little more space.

Then she sent a wonderful text message to SOS's Children's Services Director this spring..

Story continues on page 2...



A photo of Maya's new home

Mother and son live in car... continued from page 1

Read Maya's text message to SOS's Children's Services Director, Rana, below. She had great news to share!

Maya: Hey Mrs. Rana, I wanted to share with you.., I'll officially be a home owner in June!

Rana: Yayyyyyy!!!!!! Congratulations!!!!

Maya: Thank you :)

Rana: I am so proud of you reaching your goal!!! Well done!!!

Maya: Aww thank you. It took a lot to get here and you were a part of helping me... so I do truly appreciate everything you've done for us.

Rana: You did this for you and your son!

Maya: That's true, I did. I just cannot believe I'm here. I'm very thankful!

*If you hadn't figured this out,
I would have lost my home."
John, Rental Assistance
Applicant*

*Thanks to donors like you,
people get the help they need...*

Kimberly says the food pantry kept her from starving when the pandemic started....



*To protect the confidentiality of families served, example pictures are used.

"When I first came to Michigan with my husband in 2019 we had very little and not the best financial situation. Then, COVID hit. The first two years I lived here SOS food pantry, along with St. John The Baptist's pantry, kept us from starving. Sometimes we had to cheat and try to get extra so we could both eat.

The workers here were never rude of judgemental. I always felt welcome. It was a hike there on foot, and carting food back but somehow we did it. I am so glad that SOS and these workers exist. I am so glad this service was here. If you are in a similar situation and are looking for food, go here." - Kimberly Walker

A Simple Mistake Almost Cost John His Home

John fell behind on his rent during the pandemic. He needed help to keep his apartment. He applied for COVID Emergency Rental Assistance. His application was denied even though he was eligible!. When he applied again, SOS's office assistant, Emma, took a closer look at his application and realized that another person with the same name had already applied and been approved. His application was assumed to be a duplicate.

Emma called the landlord and rental assistance processors to explain the misunderstanding. Then John's application was accepted! He got rental assistance and stopped his eviction. John called back to say, "If you hadn't figured this out, I would have lost my home."



*To protect the confidentiality of families served, example pictures are used.

Join us for Road to Home 2022!



Helping people has always been first and foremost in the minds of both John and Kris. They have been impressed with SOS's 92% success rate of families staying housed after going through our programs. They are very excited about this year's event. Kris said, "We love that we will be face-to-face and having the event at Sesi is such a special venue."

"We love the support that SOS gives to the children, directly impacting their upbringing with the Parents as Teachers program." Kris Evangelista

The 13th annual Road to Home fundraiser will be in-person this year on Wednesday, October 19, 2022!

We are honored to have Kris & John Evangelista as our event chairs.

Tickets are on sale for Road to Home 2022!

Buy yours today. Use this QR Code or visit

soscs.org/road-to-home



Our shelters keep families together and thanks to volunteers like you, they feel like home...



Volunteers from Evangelista and Associates worked hard to clean up the yards at SOS's shelter homes (Photo left).

Hardworking volunteers give families a comfortable place to stay where their children can play safely this summer.



Your support keeps families housed in tough times!

The best way to end homelessness is to prevent it in the first place. Kayla, SOS's eviction prevention specialist, helps people with Section 8 or Housing Choice Vouchers keep those vouchers AND their housing when problems come up. Maybe the rent goes up, a lease is not renewed, or someone gets behind on their rent.

During the pandemic, PLENTY of problems came up for people with Section 8 that could have spiraled into homelessness.

But since the beginning of 2020, ALL of Kayla's families retained their housing or found new affordable housing without becoming homeless. Not a single client has lost a housing voucher in the last 18 months.

Thanks to donations from supports like you, this work is possible and has helped more than 145 local families stay housed during the uncertainty of the pandemic.

*To protect the confidentiality of families served, an archived picture has been used.

Volunteers Needed!

Inflation has made it harder for families to afford groceries and basic needs. You can make a difference in our community today by volunteering at our food pantry!

Here are three ways to get started:

- Scan the QR code below.
- Visit our website at soscs.org/volunteer
- Contact Jerissa Owens at volunteer@soscs.org.



Volunteers sort food at SOS's pantry