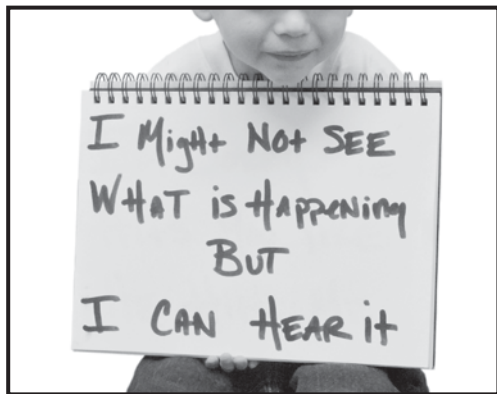




SHELTER HOUSE ANNUAL REPORT 2011-2012



## LETTER FROM THE ED AND BOARD PRESIDENT

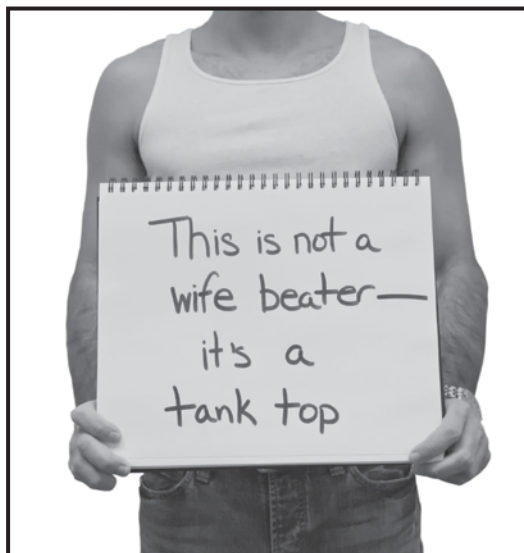
“Nothing is impossible. The word itself says I’m possible.” ~ Audrey Hepburn

Dear Shelter House Friends and Supporters,

Over the past few years Shelter House has grown its programs and services in ways we never thought possible. We learned that a community of collaborators can make the impossible possible. This year we focused on developing and increasing our core services. Our emergency shelter, which can house up to 26 women and children, stayed at or near maximum capacity. We looked at options of converting space, expanding the Shelter program to include pets and also refocusing our staff so we can spend more time with the women and children in Shelter. We focused on rebuilding a solid support group program and made great strides in providing services to the children living in our shelter. We led primary prevention classes for youth at three locations and offered numerous economic empowerment courses to adults and youth in the community. We continued to staff a 24-hour crisis hotline. We worked with women who are overcoming horrific and impossible situations. The work is endless, but so is our dedication to helping domestic violence victims.

Shelter House touches more than 5,500 lives each year through our programs, services and classes. That’s thousands of people who now know more about staying safe, recognizing the warning signs of abuse and cultivating healthy relationships. We gratefully acknowledge our donors, volunteers and community champions for your support throughout the year, year after year. This annual report and all the good news contained within it is a tribute to making things possible and your continuing commitment to Shelter House and all we serve.

Kindly,  
Roberta Holloway Board President  
Michelle Sperzel Executive Director



## BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Roberta Holloway, President | Wendy Clines, Past President | Bob Launch, Treasurer | Cindy Launch, Secretary | Don Hawkins | Dawn Hoffman | Summer Koons | David Pleat | Bridget Ragan | Monica Talley

## MISSION AND VISION

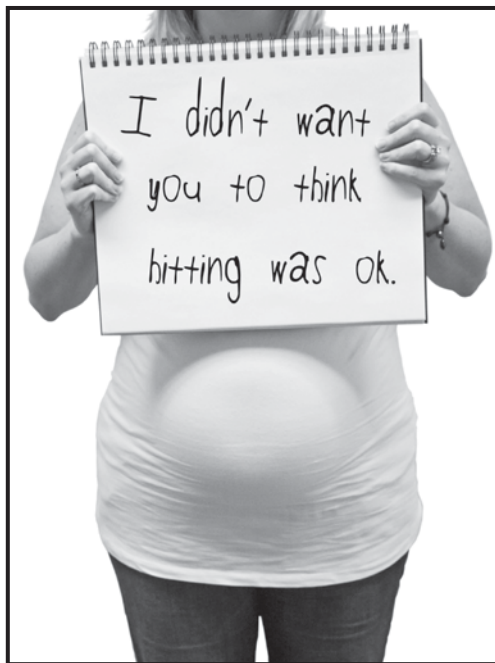
The Shelter House Mission: Supporting victims of domestic violence by providing shelter, intervention and primary prevention programs to the community through education, awareness and advocacy. We will achieve this by: • Creating a violence-free future for the residents of Okaloosa and Walton counties • Providing a full array of support services to victims of domestic violence through Emergency Shelter, Outreach and Primary Prevention programs • Empowering survivors to move toward economic and emotional self-sufficiency. Our Vision: All Relationships Violence Free

## PROGRAMS AND SERVICES

**24-Hour Crisis Hotline** Shelter House operates a 24-hour hotline for victims of domestic violence and those seeking information on center services or community referrals. Certified employees and volunteers staff the hotline and provide crisis counseling, safety planning, information, referrals and support to callers so that they will be able to make informed decisions concerning their individual situation. Hotline Numbers: 850-863-4777 or 1-800-44-ABUSE (22873).

**Confidential Emergency Shelter** Shelter House provides safe, confidential emergency Shelter to victims of domestic violence and their children. The facility is staffed 24 hours per day, 365 days a year and can accommodate up to 26 residents. Residents are provided with immediate needs such as food and hygiene products and are also assigned an advocate who can assess all other needs and provide services such as peer counseling, referrals, legal advocacy and safety planning. The maximum length of stay is eight weeks, however, extensions are granted on a case-by-case basis. Upon leaving the shelter, residents are encouraged to continue using services through one of the Outreach offices.

**Support Groups** Group counseling sessions occur frequently at each of the Outreach offices and are available to Shelter residents and Outreach participants throughout their time in the program. This includes domestic violence support groups and economic empowerment groups.

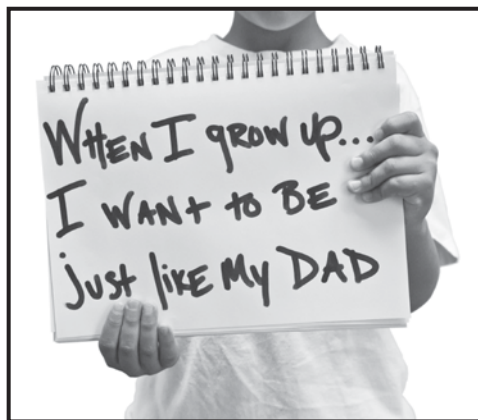


**Peer Counseling** Victim advocates provide services to participants as needed in person or over the phone. These services include: safety planning and crisis counseling; support groups; victim peer counseling; court assistance, court accompaniment and injunction assistance; referrals for child care, legal services and employment; and assistance filing for Victim's Compensation and Relocation funds. All advocates are certified and able to provide any and all services to participants. Shelter House also staffs a bilingual victim advocate to assist non-English speaking participants.

**Court Advocacy** Victim advocates provide legal advocacy for participants through the following activities: filling out applications for Injunctions for Protection; filing the applications; accompanying participants to court to obtain permanent injunctions; aiding participants in filling out Victim Compensation paperwork for financial restitution; acting as liaisons between State Attorneys' offices, Legal Services and/or private attorneys; and accompanying participants to hearings for civil or criminal matters connected to domestic violence incidents. Shelter House provides counseling, support, transportation, referrals and collaboration with legal services to facilitate this process.

**Children and Youth Programs** Shelter House is committed to making sure the needs of children touched by domestic violence are addressed and met. Each child that enters the emergency shelter is assessed for immediate needs with the permission of their parent/legal guardian. A victim advocate conducts an evaluation to assess each child's needs and exposure to any type of abuse. If necessary, referrals will be given to the parent/legal guardian to address specific issues. Each assessment will be conducted within 24 hours of admission into shelter unless the parent/legal guardian refuses. Shelter House also provides child therapy services to all our families through an independent licensed therapist who is available by appointment as well as youth support groups, interactive educational activities and youth economic empowerment workshops.

**Primary Prevention** Domestic Violence Prevention Enhancement and Leadership Through Alliances (DELTA) is Shelter House's primary prevention program and is funded through the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and the Florida Coalition Against Domestic Violence. The program seeks to prevent domestic violence by educating children and teens about how to have healthy relationships. The Okaloosa-Walton Domestic Violence Coordinating Council remains an important partner, giving Shelter House a voice and helping us educate community members who might never understand prevention and how to incorporate it into their own lives. The Community Action Team (CAT), led by Shelter House staff, is the core of this important campaign to educate our community.



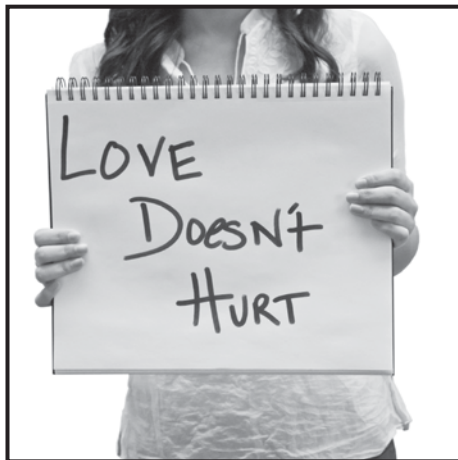
**Transitional Housing** Through the transitional housing program, Shelter House assists women and children who no longer need emergency shelter but are unable to secure housing on their own. Victim advocates work with participants to develop an individualized plan to put their lives back together and achieve independent living. These plans include obtaining employment, getting injunctions and utilizing Outreach services with the immediate goal of providing victims with a safe environment away from their abusers. The long-term goal is to empower the participants to go back to school, find sustained employment, achieve financial sustainability and heal while utilizing the resources available to them. The length of stay in the transitional housing program is up to two years; however, participants are encouraged to continue utilizing Shelter House services through one of our Outreach offices.

**Volunteer & Intern Program** Shelter House has seen its Volunteer and Intern programs grow exponentially this year. By developing a database of more than 700 dedicated volunteers, we have been able to staff events, keep the food pantry in order, sort donations, stuff envelopes for mailings and more. Shelter House has also benefited from the assistance of college interns. Most interns are social work, criminal justice or psychology majors. They work directly with domestic violence victims in Shelter in exchange for service hours and experience. Interns assist participants with paperwork, offer peer counseling, staff the crisis hotline, conduct program research, work on program development and lead domestic violence support groups.

**Economic Empowerment Program** The WAM! (Women and Money) economic empowerment program focuses on moving domestic violence victims and other community members toward financial freedom. Shelter House offers a series of free workshops on topics such as Eating Healthy on a Budget, Organizing Your Finances, Taxes, Investing 101 and Resume Building. Under the WAM! banner, Shelter House also holds an annual one-day conference featuring financial workshops and a nationally-known keynote speaker. WAM! is made possible through funding by The Allstate Foundation.

**YES!** (Youth Economic Strategies) teaches young people about money management, savings, education and other important financial information to ensure they have the tools they need to be successful in the future and avoid financial abuse. Shelter House offers workshops covering budgeting, savings, wants versus needs, banking, taxes, investing, credit and more for youth. YES! workshops are offered as part of Shelter House's WAM! (Women and Money) program, an economic empowerment curriculum aimed to help improve the financial lives of domestic violence victims and women in the community.

**The Allstate Foundation** Established in 1952, The Allstate Foundation is an independent, charitable organization made possible by subsidiaries of The Allstate Corporation (NYSE: ALL). Through partnerships with nonprofit organizations across the country, The Allstate Foundation brings the relationships, reputation and resources of Allstate to support innovative and lasting solutions that enhance people's well-being and prosperity. With a focus on teen safe driving and building financial independence for domestic violence survivors, The Allstate Foundation also promotes safe and vital communities; tolerance, inclusion and diversity; and economic empowerment. For more information, visit [www.allstatefoundation.org](http://www.allstatefoundation.org).



## HIGHLIGHTS

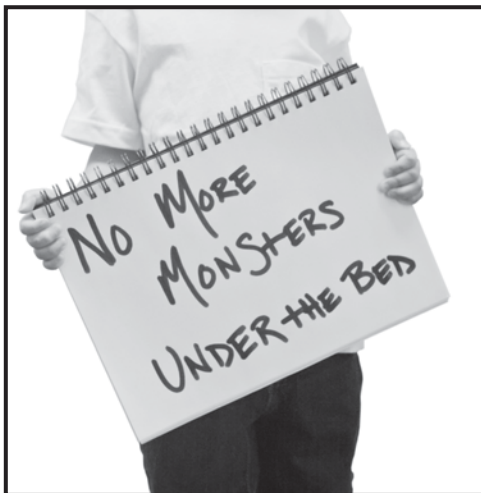
**Flash Mob** Shelter House's Primary Prevention department led the Community Action Team (CAT), the prevention committee of the Okaloosa-Walton Domestic Violence Coordinating Council, in producing a flash mob at Destin Commons. Shoppers were surprised in November when soft Christmas music was replaced by the blaring horns of Aretha Franklin's "Respect" as 30 dancers, singers and sign holders emerged from the crowd. The flash mob brought attention to the importance of respect in healthy relationships.

**Shelter at Capacity** The emergency shelter was consistently busy throughout the year, reaching capacity several times. The good news is this means more and more people in Okaloosa and Walton counties are aware of Shelter House and the services we have to offer. The bad news is that domestic violence is so prevalent and the need for our services is so great. The shelter can house up to 26 residents at once.

**Destin Charity Wine Auction Foundation (DCWAF)** Last year, Shelter House received \$40,000 from DCWAF to fund programs for children impacted by domestic violence. With this grant, Shelter House implemented more inclusive programs and resources for youth. The youth advocate started structured children's groups and began facilitating a teen dating violence support group in the community. The independent licensed child therapist provided 156 hours of play therapy to children who had witnessed violence in their homes. These children spent 3,012 nights worry-free and safe in the emergency shelter. All of this is made possible by the support of the DCWAF and other supporters of Shelter House.

**The Importance of Self-Care** Shelter House leads weekly support groups for domestic violence victims but decided to take that support one step further this year by adding a quarterly self-care night. During one of the regularly scheduled support group meetings, advocates and volunteers provide participants with an evening of luxury that many of them have never before experienced. Pampering professionals like hair stylists and aestheticians donate their time to spoil the women in group, and everyone leaves with a goodie bag filled with treats like chocolate, makeup and magazines. Rebuilding self-confidence is key to feeling empowered, and learning to love and care for themselves is an important step for domestic violence victims to take.

**ADDY Award** The poster designed to promote the inaugural Share the Shelter benefit concert earned a coveted Gold ADDY Award from AAF Emerald Coast. The ADDYs are given by the American Advertising Federation to recognize creative excellence in all forms of advertising. Rebecca Wagley of Wagley Creative was the graphic designer of the winning poster. Shelter House and Wagley Creative were recognized at the ADDY Awards Gala held in February.



**Strategic Plan** This past year Shelter House closed out the 2008-2012 strategic plan and developed a new four-year strategic plan to set priorities, focus energy and strengthen operations. The process was a community effort that included input and feedback from staff, volunteers, participants, donors, community partners and the board of directors. This collaborative process was used to ensure that Shelter House and community stakeholders are working toward common goals and establishing agreements around intended results. The plan also enables us to assess Shelter House's direction in response to a changing environment.

**Statewide Recognition** Shelter House had the prestigious honor of being invited to offer training to other domestic violence workers throughout the state through the Florida Coalition Against Domestic Violence (FCADV). Our advocates shared the innovative programming developed as part of WAM! (Women and Money) in train the trainer sessions for advocates and also presented at the Florida Economic Empowerment Institute.

**Luminaria Run** Shelter House presented its inaugural Luminaria Run to End Domestic Violence at Sandestin Golf and Beach Resort. The first-time event drew more than 260 runners who ran along 5K and 9K courses lit by 2,000 luminaria bags. The luminaries represented how Shelter House and its community partners light the way to a safer place for victims of domestic violence. The 9K distance reminded everyone that a woman is assaulted or beaten every nine seconds in the U.S. The Luminaria Run raised over \$7,000 for Shelter House.

**Transitional Housing Grant** Shelter House had a big first this year when we were awarded our first federal grant from the Office on Violence Against Women, a component of the U.S. Department of Justice. While Shelter House had previously received federal funding through partnerships, the \$250,000 grant to fund the transitional housing program was the first the agency won completely on its own. This critical funding is allowing Shelter House to transform the lives of abused women and their children by providing a pathway to independence.

**Share the Shelter Music Fest** Given the strong correlation of domestic violence and animal abuse, Shelter House teamed up with Alaqua Animal Refuge to present Share the Shelter, a concert to raise funds and awareness. The benefit concert brought more than 500 people to Gulf Place in Santa Rosa Beach for a full day of music, food and arts. Share the Shelter created significant buzz, raising Shelter House's profile throughout the community. The first-time event even scored a nomination for Best Music Event of 2011 at The Beachcomber Music Awards. The first Share the Shelter Music Fest raised more than \$21,000 to help keep people and animals in Okaloosa and Walton counties safe.

**Walk Her Way** Shelter House partnered with Rosemary Beach Foundation to bring a unique event to 30A. Walk Her Way is a one-mile walk in high heels designed to raise awareness of domestic violence. More than 100 walkers, including women, men, children and even dogs, participated in the walk. While the men in heels provided some comic relief, it was wonderful to see so many men bringing awareness to this important issue. We were also happy to extend our reach to the far eastern edge of our service area and introduce Shelter House and its services to new people. Walk Her Way brought in more than \$25,000 for the two organizations.



## COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS

**Opportunity Place** In addition to the support groups offered to Shelter House's Outreach and Shelter participants, the agency staffs two support groups per month at Opportunity Place, a family shelter in Fort Walton Beach. These support groups provide a safe environment to share and are often the first place a woman reveals to others her personal experience with domestic violence.

**Children in Crisis** Shelter House hosted a round of YES! (Youth Economic Strategies) workshops with a group of youth that were phasing out of foster care at Children in Crisis. This group of young adults, ages 18 to 23, were taught how to earn and manage their money and other important financial topics such as taxes, budgeting, banking, investing, savings, credit and more.

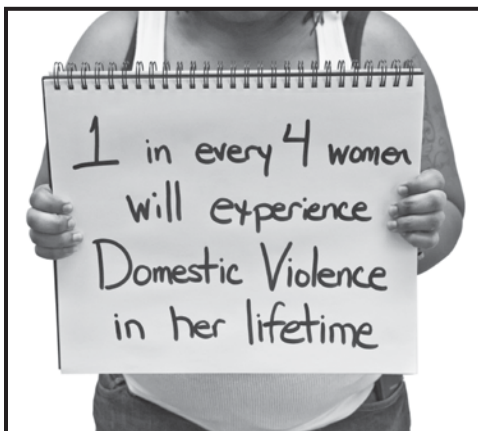
**Youth Village, Freeport High School & Crestview High School** Shelter House's Primary Prevention program brought education to Freeport and Crestview High Schools as well as an after school program at Youth Village. The curriculum focuses on topics such as how to listen and support each other, how to recognize domestic violence, what a healthy relationship looks like, how to handle anger and stress and how to prevent dating violence. Exposing youth to these taboo topics creates behavior change, which in turn creates an attitude change, fulfilling the purpose of the program of stopping the cycle of domestic violence in youth.

**Alaqua Animal Refuge & PAWS** Shelter House has had longstanding relationships with Alaqua Animal Refuge and the Panhandle Welfare Society (PAWS). Shelter House partnered with these organizations to house the pets of abuse victims coming into the emergency shelter. These partnerships are crucial because up to 50% of women stay in abusive relationships to protect their beloved pets. With Alaqua and PAWS, survivors can choose to temporarily house their pets until they are ready to move out on their own again or release them for adoption to a safe, loving home.

**Judge Ben Gordon, Jr. Family Visitation Center** Shelter House offered support to the Judge Ben Gordon, Jr. Family Visitation Center on its submission for a capital grant. The center is seeking funding for a new location in Crestview to provide supervised visitation and a safe exchange program to the northern end of Okaloosa County.

**Professional Training** Understanding domestic violence is crucial for professionals who work on the frontlines, Shelter House provided training to employees at Fort Walton Beach Police Department, Fort Walton Beach Medical Center and Westwood Retirement Resort. Law enforcement and medical professionals often encounter domestic violence victims. Shelter House teaches Domestic Violence 101, including an overview of our services, victimology and different types of abuse and how to spot them.





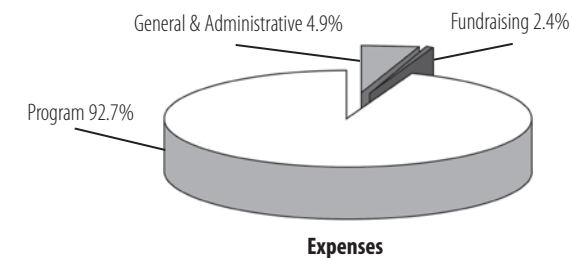
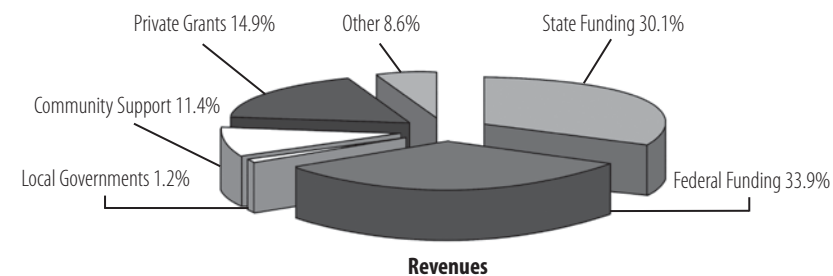
## NUMBERS

Lives touched: 5,562 | Hotline calls: 1,260 | Hours of counseling: 7,097 | Community referrals: 1,998 | Shelter nights: 8,656 | Shelter adult participants: 203 | Shelter child participants: 213 | Hours of child therapy: 156 | Children's groups: 45 | Transitional Housing nights: 4,751 | Transitional Housing participants: 17 | Outreach participants: 875 | Safety plans: 510 | Support groups: 165 | Primary Prevention groups: 101 | Children in Primary Prevention: 1,085 | WAM! groups: 42 | WAM! participants: 520 | Domestic violence trainings led: 244

## DONATIONS AND ASSISTANCE

Volunteer hours: 4,524 | In-kind donations: \$127,637 | Participant assistance: \$38,161 | General assistance: \$3,370 | Transitional Housing assistance: \$24,149 | Gift cards: \$8,277 | Gas cards: \$1,000 | Taxi vouchers: \$1,364

## FINANCIALS





Millions affected  
by it,  
Few talk  
about it.

## BE A SHELTER HOUSE SUPPORTER

Shelter House is extremely grateful for the ongoing support of its donors, board members and volunteers. We rely on the community to contribute financial and personal resources that help us serve victims of domestic violence and prevent future abuse. Your contributions help victims survive the odds. There are several ways you can help: • Donate money or resources • Donate your old cell phone for a 911 phone • Give your time as a volunteer • Serve on the Board of Directors or planning committee • Attend our fundraising and awareness events | If you would like to learn more about how you can support Shelter House and its mission, please email [info@shelterhousenwfl.org](mailto:info@shelterhousenwfl.org) or call 850-243-1201.

## BE KINDER CAMPAIGN DONORS

American Realty | Anonymous | Dorothy Blacker | Bonnie Cardow | Anonymous | Wanna Caverly | Anonymous | Anonymous | Jean Fowler | Don Gaetz | Joyce Goldstein | Anonymous | Mitzi Henley | Michael Kent | L&L Auto Service | Roberta Lohf | Margaret Luckie | Hulda Mahlum | Anonymous | Naylor Realty | New Zion Tabernacle Ministries | Professional Moving Services | Julie Ray | Janet Sasso | Anonymous | Anonymous | Anonymous | Tuesday Topplers | VFW Ladies Auxillary | Eloise Waters | Jan Williams | Dea Young.



Okaloosa and Walton Counties



Shelter House is the only certified Domestic Violence Center in Okaloosa and Walton counties. Shelter House provides confidential safe shelter, a 24-hour crisis hotline, counseling, emotional support and legal advocacy for domestic violence survivors and their children. All services are free and confidential. If you or a friend needs help, call 850-863-4777 or 1-800-44-ABUSE.

Shelter House, Inc. does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion, age, national origin, mental or physical disability/disability status, sex/gender, pregnancy, military status/status as a veteran, genetic information, citizenship, immigration status, marital status, sexual orientation, gender orientation, limited English proficiency, language spoken or other legally protected status.



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