



Family Promise of Waukesha County Family Resource Center Overview

Family Promise Mission, History and Capacity

Family Promise of Waukesha County was founded in 2012 through a collaborative effort of local pastors who wanted to serve the needs of families experiencing homelessness. In November 2014, after two years of preparation, we opened our doors to two families. Since 2014 we have served 101 families, 330 individuals, by utilizing the facilities and volunteers of 28 Waukesha County congregations. 90% of families who complete the program remain in their homes for at least one year.

In March 2020, due to Covid-19, Family Promise of Waukesha County, Inc. suspended the congregational model of shelter. To provide assistance to families in need, our organization began the Family Homelessness Prevention Program. In 2020 Family Promise was able to provide rent relief, utility assistance to 30 families. For those families the resource center will be a place that will offer case management, support for those who have lost a job, skill workshops on how to navigate the trauma of financial difficulty, budgeting skills and resources for parents. Additional workshops and resources would be provided as needed by the families we serve.

Collaborating with churches and utilizing volunteers ensures a significant level of community involvement and support. The volunteers are the foundation of Family Promise. They make and serve meals, tutor the children, listen to stories of heartache, and walk with the families. Volunteer involvement is the Waukesha County community saying, "We will not tolerate the devastating effects of homelessness." We are proud of our ability to motivate the community to action. It is also what allows us to follow through on our goals. Our ability to bring together churches, train and orientate 1,300 volunteers, provide 18,000 warm meals and nights of shelter over five years speaks to our qualifications to help families overcome homelessness and achieve independent housing.

Our staff includes two full time and one part time staff member. The Executive Director, Joe Nettesheim started at Family Promise in November 2019. Previously he served as Executive Director of Inspirio Youth Ministries, Inc. and the Adult Literacy Center of Ozaukee County. The focus of Joe's role

is to collaborate with the board of directors to establish the mission and vision for the organization and then to execute that vision by managing the day-to-day operations of Family Promise. Joe has extensive experience in providing leadership, fundraising, and communicating the purpose of the organization.

Our Certified Social Worker brings an expertise to this endeavor that is invaluable to families. Christina Perkins, BSW began at Family Promise in May 2019. Her role is to work directly with families to find employment or job retraining, search and apply for apartments and navigate social service agencies that can offer additional support. Her responsibilities include case management for each family for one year after they have departed the shelter. Previously Christina worked both in Milwaukee and Waukesha Counties with families with children.

PROJECT

The Family Resource Center is not a drop-in center. It is designed to ONLY serves families who are in our program. Our capacity is four families or fourteen individuals. For those families, the Resource Center provides our guests a home base during the day. Families utilize the resource center for showers, washing and drying clothes, storing personal effects, a mailing address and phone number. It is here where they meet with our case manager who works with them to create a plan and identify ways to meet their individualized goals.

Family Promise of Waukesha County purchased the facility on 139 E. North Street in Waukesha July 31, 2020. Due to Covid-19 most of our Case Management services have been offered virtually. In December 2020 we began providing family shelter in an apartment. It is our request to be use the second floor of this facility as a residential space. This presents a significant opportunity for Family Promise to maximize its potential in assisting Waukesha County families to regain and retain their independence.

Using the second floor for residential purposes allows us to support families and keep them safe during the pandemic. Utilizing Congregations and their volunteers is simply not a viable option now. Yet the need remains. One family would live on the second floor and have their own sleeping space and bathrooms. This might be a temporary arrangement, until we can return to the Churches. However, we also would like to have the option of having a family stay in the facility periodically even when the pandemic ends.

OUTCOMES

Outcome #1:

Family Promise will establish a resource center for low-income families and families who are experiencing homelessness, in the city of Waukesha, for the purpose homelessness prevention and stabilization or empowering homeless families to regain their independence and homes.

Outcome #2:

The Family Promise Resource Center will provide workshops with collaborating agencies, in the areas of financial literacy, career planning and job seeking, job loss support, mental health issues, parenting, and other opportunities.

Outcome #3:

The Family Resource Center will bring assist in helping families experiencing homelessness to live independently for a minimum of twelve months.