



INTERFAITH
Family
Shelter

June 2021

Summer 2021 Newsletter

Uniting in service to families,
with children, facing homelessness

From Our Executive Director:

Dear Friends of Interfaith,

Tonight, Snohomish County emergency shelters will only be able to house about half of all families experiencing homelessness. Of the remainder, some may find temporary shelter in local motels paid for by faith groups and agencies. But many other families will be forced to sleep in their cars, in tents at campgrounds, and on vacant land.



Family homelessness is very different from the individuals you see on streets throughout our County. Parents are skilled at concealing their families from the public eye while they experience homelessness. But still, they are there. And we will strive until no child sleeps outside because of homelessness.

Now we are taking two more steps to make this a reality. Together with the congregation at **Hope Church** in Everett, we are opening a **second Cars to Housing Program** that will provide more safe parking spaces for families living in their cars.

We also launched our new **Homeless Prevention Program** in mid-March, that seeks to keep families housed and healthy. Through effective support, coaching, and minimal monetary aid, early intervention can help families avoid becoming homeless. And this well-timed program launch coincides with the end of the eviction moratorium. We will continue to keep you posted on its progress.

Sincerely,

Executive Director

Save the Date

Families Together 2021

Our annual **Families Together fundraiser** will remain virtual this year! Join us on **October 20** for an informative and inspiring event. Details coming soon.

Follow us for updates!

Website: www.interfaithwa.org/

: @InterfaithFamilyShelter

: @FamilyShelterWA

: Interfaith.Family.Shelter



Thank you to the **32 donors** who gave generously through May 04–05 when we were all asked to Give Big.

The Interfaith Family Shelter and its programs received **\$10,414.58**

We continually remain humbled and appreciative of the generous support that you extend to help families overcome homelessness.



108 families experienced homelessness last night...



...and only 53 family shelter units were available last night.

What Happens When Families Leave the Shelter?



We don't often think about "what's next?" for families who have been with us at the shelter, but are now moving out into an apartment of their own.

A family that stayed at the shelter for a few months worked very hard to find an apartment. Our staff helped them complete all the necessary inspections, paperwork, and interviews. Then, they patiently waited for an apartment to become available through a Project Based Voucher (PBV) that provides permanent support to a family. Only a few of our clients qualify for PBVs and the apartments are seldom available. So it was an amazing coincidence when former Interfaith clients vacated one such apartment and moved into a house in Marysville—which, in turn, enabled this particular family to exit the shelter.

Backing into the new apartment with a queen mattress, we paused to survey their new home. It was clean and well maintained, despite no apparent living room or dining room furniture. And the Mom was extremely proud of the bunk beds that she had bought and assembled herself in the children's bedroom. It was only as we added mattresses to this set, and I lowered the queen mattress onto the master bedroom floor, that I realized the family had been sleeping on bare carpet for the past three nights. We do not always think about "What Next?"

Unfortunately, Interfaith is not equipped to collect or store the large furniture items that clients need to set up their new homes. But our friends at Hopeworks: Renew and Housing Décor and programs through St. Vincent de Paul often provide furniture and beds for transitioning clients. Few things bring as much pride and joy as watching a family set up their new home in their own apartment!

Faith Group Support

We are proud to welcome a new faith partner in the effort to overcome family homelessness. The **Sri Sathya Sai Center of Sammamish** is a part of Sri Sathya Sai International Organization (SSSSIO), a spiritual and humanitarian organization founded by Sri Sathya Sai Baba that has been active for over 50 years globally. Its goal is to help people realize the innate divinity in every human through selfless service, and achieving self-transformation by practicing Truth, Right Conduct, Peace, Love, and Nonviolence.

Members of the Sammamish center regularly engage in human service activities, including meal preparation, clothing drives, hygiene kit distributions, planting trees—and providing Saturday meals at the Interfaith Family Shelter.



Board Member Spotlight



We are honored to have **Deanna Bashour** join the Interfaith Family Shelter's Board of Directors. A lifelong Snohomish County resident, Deanna has worked in the K-12 school system since 2004. Her recent work with the Marysville School District focuses on

supporting families and students experiencing homelessness. She has evolved this program to create valuable wrap-around support to benefit the entire family: access to a facility that has clothing, a food pantry, hygiene kits, showers, and a laundromat. Families are also connected with agencies that can help them access housing, shelter support, mental health resources, and state benefits.

Deanna and has long admired Interfaith's efforts to address family homelessness. She is currently a board member of the Community Services Advisory Committee, Co-Chair of the Marysville Together Coalition, and cultivates relationships with community stakeholders. We are excited to have her passion and experience represented on our Board!

Interfaith Association of NW Washington

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