Karen's Almost Home

No one would guess Karen was living in homelessness. She came to work on time, dressed professionally and had the best attitude. Co-workers knew she was divorced. She didn’t talk about her ex-husband. No one knew she struggled to make ends meet. “I didn’t want to rely on anyone else after Brian left,” says Karen. “Seattle’s just such an expensive place to live.”

A year ago, Karen’s savings would have supported her for two months. Unfortunately, her husband racked up bills in her name. Brian cleared out their accounts and ruined her credit before he finally left. When she couldn’t pay rent, Karen stayed at a hotel. Then she slept in her car for a few nights. Brian managed to find her, wherever she stayed.

When she called New Beginnings, Karen was embarrassed and desperate. She had always earned her own money. It seemed that her five-year marriage had ruined everything. She was worried about losing her job. She needed help finding a home she could afford. She asked how to stop Brian’s stalking – and whether any laws could keep him from her office.

With your support, a New Beginnings Advocate went to meet Karen during her lunch break. They talked about options for financial assistance and which landlords might look past her credit scores. Her Advocate connected her with legal help for protection orders. With financial help from New Beginnings, Karen was able to pay off enough debt to be eligible for housing. She’s now on a waitlist for an apartment near her work.

Thanks for giving survivors like Karen the support they need to overcome years of abuse.

- A third of the survivors entering our Home Safe program come in from the street, a car or hotel.
NAZIHA IS FREE THIS SUMMER

Naziha and her son, Amir, are both happy to be done with school for the summer. They're looking forward to playing at the park near their Home Safe apartment. Their life is so different than it was six months ago.

Naziha immigrated to Seattle in 2013. At first, her new husband was so kind and thoughtful. He seemed to anticipate everything Naziha might need. Things changed quickly when she started spending time with new friends. His jealousy and threats turned into ugly fights. One morning, Naziha’s neighbor took her to the hospital with a broken arm. After the x-rays, she didn’t know what to do or where to go.

“I couldn’t go back to him,” says Naziha, “but I had never lived on my own. My husband always made our arrangements.” The questions felt overwhelming and the fear of being deported was terrifying.

A social worker at the hospital connected Naziha and Amir with New Beginnings. Today, they’re living in a two-bedroom Home Safe apartment. While Amir plays in the kids’ area, Naziha joins a support group where she speaks through an interpreter. When Naziha mentioned an interest in learning more English, an Advocate helped her register for an ESL (English as a Second Language) class at a community college. Her Advocate also helped enroll Amir at the local elementary school for the last three months of second grade. Naziha’s legal advocate thinks her papers will be ready so she can apply for a job in the fall. In the meantime, Naziha and Amir are going back to the park.

CHANGE IS ALWAYS POSSIBLE

Shelley lived with domestic violence for 22 years. Her husband was always controlling, but only sometimes physically abusive. She didn’t want to make a change while her kids were still at home. When the kids were in college, splitting finances didn’t seem possible.

After her 55th birthday party Shelley’s daughter finally asked, “Don’t you ever get tired of Dad telling you what to do?” That comment prompted Shelley to call New Beginnings. She was surprised how helpful the support group has been. She’s starting to understand the patterns of domestic violence. And she’s sharing the information, so her daughter will recognize abuse.

Shelley was one of 52 new survivors who joined support groups at New Beginnings in 2018.

THANK YOU!

“Everything and anything is possible through the safe passage that New Beginnings has helped move my family through gracefully . . . I am seeing my kids happier and healthier than ever.” – New Beginnings’ client
Green Flags
(of a Healthy Relationship)

When a partner:
- Encourages you to spend time with friends and family
- Asks for your opinions
- Never puts you down, especially in front of others
- Is willing to compromise
- Stops doing things that make you uncomfortable
- Supports your decisions
- Treats you as an equal
- Doesn’t force anything physically
- Respects your boundaries
- Trusts you, doesn’t check in or check up on you

“Teens Are Gaining Knowledge Too
“My commitment [to making a change] is to not judge anyone by what they look like. I will ask for consent and set boundaries of any relationship I’m in. I know the signs to stop, go or pause and I will look for them.” – middle school student in New Beginnings’ Owning Up class
Domestic violence cuts across all identities, genders, races, ages and relationships. Thank you for helping to ensure EVERYONE has access to the resources they need to thrive.

New Beginnings empowers survivors and mobilizes community awareness and action to end domestic violence.

Remember to vote in the King County primary election on August 6th!

Did you know?

- **52% percent of survivors in our Home Safe program have refugee or immigrant status.**
- **Our Home Safe support groups use up to three interpreters at a time, providing translations to Russian, Spanish and Arabic.**

Our 24-Hour Helpline is always here to help!

**206.522.9472**

Visit www.newbegin.org or facebook.com/pg/NewBeginningsEndingDV/ for more discussion and support.

*Due to the sensitive nature of this material, all names and identifying details have been changed to protect the confidentiality of survivors; these blended stories represent the challenges and successes of many survivors who have used our programs.*