Domestic violence is the number one cause of homelessness for women and children in the state of Washington, so housing is a major priority for us at New Beginnings.

In this newsletter, we’re focusing on our Home Safe program, which prioritizes getting survivors and their families into safe, affordable housing. Survivors can heal, process, and decide their next steps in the privacy of their new homes.

In the rest of this newsletter, we will cover the process of a survivor coming to our Bridge apartment units, as well as a few Home Safe updates, successes, and partnerships. We hope that you know just how important housing is to our participants, and that we could not do this work without the invest of community members like you. Thank you, and we look forward to sharing more soon!

Stay tuned for more anniversary updates and follow us on our Facebook and Instagram pages @newbeginningsendingdv!

We could not have had this longevity in our community without passionate partners like you.
Welcome Survivors Home

We take great care to make our apartments feel like home because when families move into our Bridge housing apartments, they often do not have their own furniture or other home items. So before they arrive, our staff outfit their apartment with everything they may need, including beds, furniture, linens, bedding, kitchen utensils and supplies, toiletries, blankets, and pillows. And for a survivor’s first day in their new place, we also have fresh flowers and basic groceries waiting for them so they feel welcome and like they belong.

In every Bridge Housing apartment, there are two never changing stalwarts: a rocking chair and a full-size bed. This is to honor former leadership, who decided that a rocking chair makes a space feel cozy and lived in, and a full-sized mattress makes an adult feel more respected and empowered.

While staying in our Bridge housing, survivors have regular check ins with their survivor advocate, a youth and family advocate (if a survivor has children), and a housing advocate. This team of New Beginnings advocates work together to accommodate the individual needs of the survivor and their family. And when participants are getting ready to leave our housing, our housing advocates will help them find new housing through the many connections we have with landlords and property managers in the area so participants can find a location and type of house that is right for them and their families.

Housing First

In 2017, New Beginnings made a drastic change: we joined the Bill and Melinda Gates’ Foundation pilot project to prioritize permanent housing for survivors of domestic violence. Shifting away from providing emergency, short-term shelter, New Beginnings’ created our Bridge Housing program that provides 6-9 month stays in one of our 17-unit apartment building. Combined with mobile advocacy (meeting survivors physically where is best for them), DV housing first drastically improves the number of survivors who feel more safe, stable, and able to maintain permanent housing.

Using the “housing first” approach, we prioritize getting participants into their own permanent housing so survivors can have their own place to call home. There they can heal, process, and be in a space that is private and secure for themselves and their families to decide their next steps. To make sure we can accommodate our participants’ needs, we have multiple housing options, including:

• our 17-unit apartment building (Bridge housing),
• rental assistance for current homes,
• or new housing secured by our survivor advocates.

By providing several choices for survivors, we hope to accomplish this goal by allowing survivors to decide where they will feel most safe healing.

New Cabinets for Three Apartment Units for Survivors!

One of our main priorities is to provide a fresh, inviting home for survivors of domestic violence and their children. This Spring, we were granted funding from Employee Community Fund of Boeing Puget Sound for our Bridge housing apartments. These funds will be used to purchase and install new kitchen and bathroom cabinets for three units in greatest need of repair. New cabinets will not only improve the functionality of the apartments, but also enhance the overall feeling of the living spaces for survivors, particularly while we are all still at home during the pandemic. We want to help survivors feel at home, and this will be another step towards accomplishing our goal. The project will be finished this fall, and we can’t wait to show you the beautiful results. Thank you to the Boeing Employees for making this possible!

Birthday Dreams

When a family comes to our Bridge housing with children, parents’ (and our) priority is to provide a sense of stability for their child and to maintain a sense of normalcy. One major touchstone in a child’s life is celebrating their birthday, but sometimes a survivor parent doesn’t have the resources to buy presents, a cake, or host a party. To help with the cost of providing birthday celebrations, we have partnered over the last several years with Birthday Dreams, an organization dedicated to bringing hope, joy and sense of self-worth to homeless children with the gift of a birthday party.

Birthday Dreams provides cupcakes or a cake, decorations, balloons, juice, presents, and much more depending on what the child and family would like or need. Birthday Dreams allows a child to pick their birthday theme and to suggest what kind of gifts they would like. Their presentation is always outstanding, and themes can include Paw Patrol, Sharks, Minnie Mouse, or even Unicorn! As our advocates said, “One of the beautiful things about Birthday Dreams is that they support families in what meets their needs at the time...if I could I would write them an ode!” Thank you so much Birthday Dreams for making the kids in our program feel so special, celebrated, and loved.

To learn more about Birthday Dreams, go to their website at www.birthdaydreams.org
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. In addition, stock photography is used in most cases to further protect the ongoing safety of our current and past participants.

**DVHopeline Launching This Summer**

The DVHopeline—a county-wide joining of New Beginnings’, DAWN’s, and LifeWire’s helplines—has concluded hiring, training, and will begin serving our community this summer. The DVHopeline’s mission is to provide pathways to freedom from domestic abuse. The intention behind combining these three helplines is to make sure that survivors in our area have the most holistic care and support. Now, when our community members need resources or information, they only need to call one line to see what organizations have availability to serve participants, provide housing, etc. We also hope in the future to provide support for smaller organizations who are unable to have a 24/7 helpline due to capacity issues, and in the fall look to have a chat function on the DVHopeline website to provide multiple ways for survivors to get in touch.

**Support Survivors in our Community**

While all forms of investment in our survivors are wonderful, one format that survivors themselves really enjoy receiving are gift cards. Rather than simply receiving clothing, home goods, or other items, gift cards enable our participants to both be able to pick out exactly what they want and also have the experience of shopping themselves! If you’d like to contribute to our survivors in this way, please send gift cards from Target or Fred Meyer (our staff find that survivors appreciate those the best) to P.O. Box 75125, Seattle, WA 98175-0125.

Want more information on how to empower survivors and mobilize our community?

Follow us online to learn more here!

- www.newbegin.org
- www.facebook.com/newbeginningsendingdv
- www.instagram.com/newbeginningsendingdv

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**The Housing Justice Project**

provides free legal assistance and interpreters to low-income renters (tenants) facing eviction in King County, Washington.

www.kcba.org/For-the-Public/Free-Legal-Assistance

@hjpkingcounty

@housingjusticeproject

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In June, our staff received a training about the pending eviction crisis facing our community from the Housing Justice Project at the King County Bar Association.

Consisting of 9 staff attorneys and 6 non-attorneys, the Housing Justice Project provides eviction defense for low-income tenants in King County, as well as policy work to help strengthen tenant protections across the city, county, and state. They can also help respond to eviction paperwork, negotiate with landlords, provide representation at eviction hearings, and give referrals or resources. For help with current eviction issues, email hjpstaff@kcba.org, or call (206) 267-7069.