



413-658-0060

Jessie's House News

VOLUME 1, ISSUE 1

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Letter from the Director

We have moved to Amherst and we love our new home! As many of you know, Jessie's House and Grace House switched locations during three of the hottest days this summer. This exchange has ensured the continuation of two vitally important and necessary programs in the community.

Since the inception of Jessie's House 25 years ago, we have been dedicated to meeting the needs of homeless families in Hampshire County. Our relocation to Amherst will not alter our mission, or the commitment to the families we serve, in any way. We will continue to serve and guide homeless families towards a future of hope, good health and a safe place to call home.

There is very good news to report regarding income eligibility and sheltering services. This year the legislature increased the income eligibility guidelines to 130% of the federal poverty level; this allows more families in need of shelter to access this vital service. Since the cost of living in our state is one of the highest in the nation, this change was drastically needed.

The change in income eligibility is critically important for families who are homeless or on the verge of becoming homeless. Shelters that had vacancies before this change occurred are now at capacity and serving more families who have been without homes.

Increasing the eligibility guidelines not only benefits families but also helps communities statewide. When families cannot access shelter, communities struggle to find places for families to live and to provide support services. They are often faced with the reality that many families are living in cars, campsites or doubled and tripled up in apartments, often jeopardizing other families housing. The higher income eligibility helps alleviate these strains.

Gift Cards Are the Best Holiday Gift for Our Families

Each year, we receive queries from individuals and organizations about what they can donate during the holidays to the families at Jessie's House. Our answer: gift cards.

Why are gift cards the best present? For these important reasons:

- Gift cards enable the parents at Jessie's House to select the appropriate holiday presents for their children instead of having others make these choices for them. Just like other parents, this is important to them.
- Also, buying presents for your children is part of what makes the holidays a special time of year for parents. It's a treat that a donation of gift cards enables the parents at Jessie's House to enjoy.
- The new Jessie's House facility has much less storage space than our previous location. So we don't have room to store presents during the holiday season.
- Gift cards to grocery stores help our families stretch their always-tight food budgets.

So please, if you wish to do something special for the families of Jessie's House this holiday season, consider donating gift cards. It's the kindest and best thing you can do. For suggestions on what kind of gift cards are needed, please contact us at 413-658-0060.



Shelter Wish List

Because we have a large turnover of families, we are always in need of kitchen supplies.

Commercial grade cookware

Flatware sets

Dishes

Children's Dishes

Plastic Bowls

Sippy Cups

Here is a list of miscellaneous supplies we need

Gift Cards from Walmart, Target, CVS,

Big Y and, Stop and Shop

Books of Postage Stamps for resident use

Business size Envelopes

Heavy Duty Trash Bags

PVTA Bus Passes

Last year we served 52 children under the age of 6. We try to have on hand supplies for babies (newborn through 5 years)

Diapers

Baby Wipes

Baby Lotion

Baby Shampoo

Often times families enter the shelter without personal hygiene products or if they run out of something, they cannot afford to replace it

Shampoo and Conditioner

Bar Soap

Body Lotion

Deodorant

Feminine Products

Disposable Razors

Shaving Gel or Cream

Adult Toothbrushes

Dental Floss



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Dear Friends,

Last year Jessie's House was honored, for the second year in a row, to receive affirmation of our standing in the community through a grant from the Florence Savings Bank Customers' Choice Community Grants program. This wonderful program allows Florence Savings Bank customers to vote to allocate funds to a charity of their choosing.

Florence Savings Bank has generously decided to continue the program for a third year and the voting has begun! We are enclosing a ballot for your convenience and asking donors who are customers of FSB to please vote for Jessie's House.

We appreciate your commitment, and that of Florence Savings Bank, to partnering with us to help families in crisis survive and flourish. The budget to maintain Jessie's House is significant. One simple way to help us secure the funds necessary to continue to provide this invaluable service is to mark your Customer's Choice ballot for Jessie's House and help make us number one this year!

Giving Made Easier

Don't forget you now have the opportunity to support the work of Jessie's House in a whole new way by becoming a monthly donor. As a monthly donor, you will help the program save time and administrative costs, get your donations to work faster making a difference in the lives of homeless families, and make giving easier at the same time. By authorizing your bank or credit card to automatically transfer your gift is easy; just fill out and return an authorization form indicating the amount of your monthly gift, and we will take care of the rest. It's that easy. Please call 658-0060 and we will be happy to send you a form. We hope that you will extend the power of your support by joining us soon as a new monthly donor.

SAVE THE DATE

Comedy Night at The Blue Bonnet Dinner

Featuring Jerry Caruso, Co-founder of "Comics for a Cure" and other up and coming comics

December 8, 2005 8-10 pm Admission \$10.00 per person • All proceeds to support Jessie's House



CHDA Program of the Center for Human Development