



SAINT LOUISE HOUSE

Build. Believe. Become.

OUR MISSION:

To empower women with children to overcome homelessness in Central Texas.

Letter from the Executive Director

Summer has its own distinct rhythm for the families at Saint Louise House. Young, energetic children are more often seen and heard laughing and playing on the property. Their mothers, in the longer daylight hours after school and work, visit with one another while they watch their children dart in and out of the garden hose or “race” down the sidewalk on a tricycle. These are not the same children who, before coming to live at Saint Louise House, often suffered from a variety of poverty-related illnesses. These are not the same families who, because of the lack of a home, suffered from stress and anxiety that prevented them from achieving their full potential. These children, along with their mothers, have become part of a thriving community of residents, staff and volunteers who believe in them and their future. Your support of Saint Louise House

helped these families find a home.

In this report, you will meet Jeremy. Jeremy’s story is a perfect example of what can be accomplished when children are given an opportunity to achieve their full potential. In his account of life at Saint Louise House, he mentions the “relief” he felt when his mother found a home for their family. We can only imagine his mother’s relief has been matched by the realization that her son is headed for great opportunity. These success stories... whether they be a life-changing milestone such as Jeremy’s, or simply a trip to the end of the sidewalk on a tricycle... are symbolic of the goodness that can come from having a place to call home. We invite you to join us in our mission to create more Saint Louise House success stories.

Asharan Buser

Executive Director



Starting a New Life: A Mother’s Story

It was a long journey to Saint Louise House for me and my four children. It started when I moved from Virginia to Texas after divorcing my ex-husband, who was in the military. I was new to Texas and I did not know my way around. I was completely lost. I had no idea how to get back on my feet, find a job, and get a roof over my head.

The long term ongoing violence in my home had also affected my children. Although it was not a life or death situation, I realized we were all suffering emotional damage. Others around me noticed the high level of violence in our home

situation more than I could, so I decided to go to the police. They helped me and my children go to a women’s shelter in Bastrop. I was later transferred to the Safeplace shelter in Austin.

At Saint Louise House... you get a bed, food to eat, flowers to smell and enjoy on your table...at first I felt it was too good to be true.

We had never been in a situation where we had to walk out of our home with nothing - ever. When we left home it was hard. I had to leave behind what I thought we were as a family, but I held on to my family values in order to keep us together. In the shelter we were exposed

to all different types of homeless families and it left a big impression on me. I started to look for help to see how I could get on my feet again. I resolved to bring security and stability into a real home for me and my children.

With a little bit of child support I qualified to be at Saint Louise House. Coming to our furnished apartment gave me hope and faith for a new beginning with my children. When we arrived there was a warm dinner on the apartment table; that was a big thing, and it brought tears to my eyes. You get a nice bed, food to eat, even flowers to smell and enjoy on your table. I felt it was too good to be true. I could not believe that there were people who would put a home together for families who lose everything.

The staff and the case workers have a great sense of humanity. They

have given us security and worked to create a peaceful, safe place for my family. The most rewarding part is that my entire family had the chance to recuperate. We had a place to heal our wounds and to become strong enough to move on, and to also help others.

I want to thank all of you who help mothers like me get back on my feet. You have helped me expand my educational background, find a career and become independent. Right now I am teacher for 12-18 month old children and I am proud to say that I was voted Most Valuable Teacher by my co-workers. I would also like to say thank you to the Saint Louise House partners that helped me go back to school to become a productive member of the community. It helped me show my children that we can be better and do better every day.

—Andrea, a Saint Louise House Mother

I want to thank all of you who help mothers like me get back on my feet. You have helped me expand my educational background, find a career and become independent.



Saint Louise House: A Home for Success

Living here at Saint Louise House has made life so much easier. Not only for my mom, but for the family. The hardships that we were going through affected me, my personality, and even my grades. There wasn't really a place I could study with peace and quiet. Simply, my grades were slipping and affecting me from being the best I could be in school.

Once my mom told me we were eligible to get an apartment at Saint Louise House, I felt so relieved. Because my family and I could finally have our own place again. Saint Louise made us feel right at home. They took us in and made sure we were all ok and provided us with anything that we needed. I had my own room again, which made me feel a lot more comfortable. I was able to study now because of the peaceful environment.

My grades started to rise back up, and I eventually made it to the top of the 2nd quarter of my class! I felt accomplishment simply because I thought I wasn't going to be able to achieve as much because of our situation, but after my family and I felt at ease, I realized that much more good will come our way if we just open the doors.

Every holiday was as special as ever. There wasn't a holiday where we weren't all smiling because of the help from Saint Louise. This is an example of how the world should be, helping each other out when someone is down. That's what creates success. I will be headed to college this fall, and in four years I will come back with a computer science bachelors degree.

I thank Saint Louise for all they have done and much more. My family and I love you all dearly.

—Jeremy, age 17

More than 5,440 volunteer hours were logged in 2012.



“It is extremely important that every woman, along with her family, feel connected to and supported by the Saint Louise House community while embarking on the next chapter of their lives.”

– A Saint Louise House volunteer

Saint Louise House volunteers go the distance

Michelle Hartnett Wand, a long-time Saint Louise House donor, is a runner. She has laced up her running shoes for races of all distances. But one of the most difficult challenges she faced didn't occur on the race course. Six years ago she found herself suddenly changing courses from stay-at-home mother of two young children to single motherhood after a divorce.

A physical therapist by trade, Wand had enduring support from family and friends during her divorce, but realized how dire her circumstances could've been without even one of those two things. “We never know what's around the corner,” she said. “I never expected to be forced into the terrifying insecurity and change of lifestyle that divorce brings.”

A community service project organized by St. Catherine of Siena Catholic Church introduced Wand and her children, Will and Laurie Grace, to Saint Louise House. She was inspired by the single women and children in similar circumstances as her own. Her pledge of monetary support was

immediate and has been long-lasting. “We are all God's children,” she said. “These families have such courage to move forward, often stepping beyond their comfort zone to make a better life for themselves.”

Today, Wand is remarried to Scott Wand. She still runs, though she jokes that her races are shorter these days. And she is committed to continuing her support of Saint Louise House. “God is calling us to stay connected. When we feel like we're coasting, it's time to connect with those who aren't. The work is never done.”

“These women were and continue to be an inspiration to me. I am inspired by the courage they have to take on challenges and learn the skills to have a better life for their families.”

“The beauty of Michelle's commitment to Saint Louise House is her compassion,” said Saint Louise House Executive Director Sharon Bieser. “She really ‘gets’ the work of rebuilding that the families are undertaking. Her sacrifice and generosity is inspirational and greatly appreciated.”



Michelle Hartnett Wand with her son, Will, daughter, Laurie Grace, and husband, Scott Wand.

“These families have such courage to move forward, often stepping beyond their comfort zone to make a better life for themselves.”

Interested in volunteering for Saint Louise House?

Contact 512-302-0027, or fill out an application online at saintlouiselhouse.org.

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“At Saint Louise House I feel happy and safe. There is no more violence in my life and I can truly enjoy time with my daughters.” – a Saint Louise House mom

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Signs of Success

42 MOTHERS
 and their families received housing and support services at SLH, including 1 grandmother and 90 children



31 FAMILIES (2011) → **34 FAMILIES (2012)**




100% OF FAMILIES have access to adequate and nutritious food



11 NEW FAMILIES found safety and support by moving into SLH



90% OF MOTHERS were working, in school, or both



100% OF FAMILIES increased their access to healthcare resources



100% OF FAMILIES have access to on-site employment services, case management and life skills training



8 FAMILIES achieved their goals and moved out of SLH into stable housing



Gift Dedications

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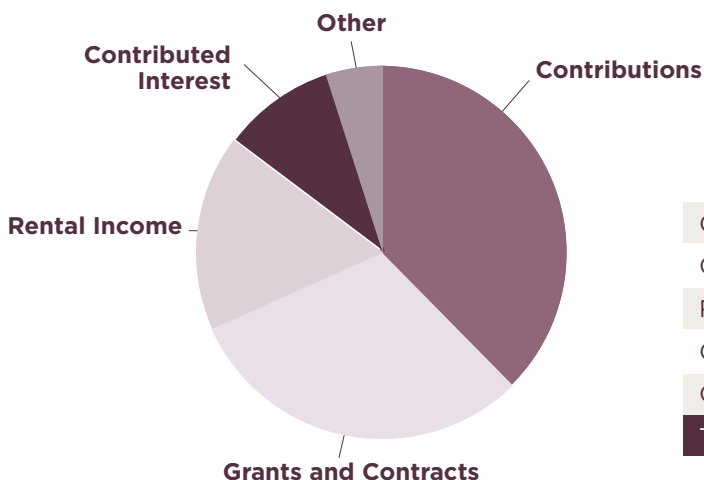
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Include Saint Louise House as a Beneficiary of Your Estate. Planned gifts, such as bequests, gifts of stock or other securities help us plan for the future while providing significant tax savings to you or your estate.

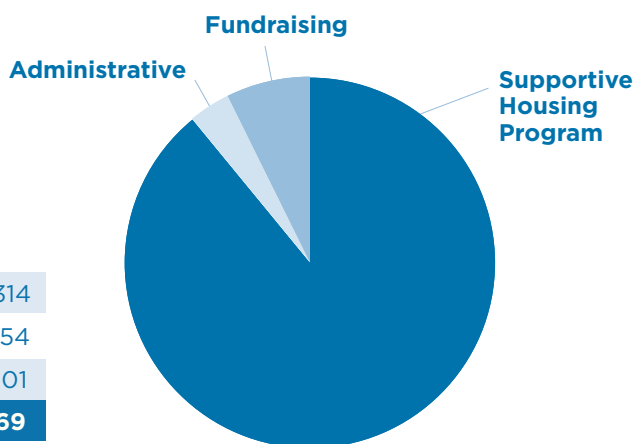


REVENUES



Contributions	\$313,310
Grants and Contracts	\$255,694
Rental Income	\$141,093
Contributed Interest	\$81,632
Other	\$41,097
Totals	\$832,826

EXPENDITURES



Supportive Housing Program	\$894,314
Administrative	\$36,454
Fundraising	\$73,401
Totals	\$1,004,169

DID YOU KNOW?

The average cost of supporting a Saint Louise House resident is \$22.22 per person, per day.

Faith-Based & Community Group Donors

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"When you contribute to Saint Louise House you are becoming a partner in the transformational journeys of mothers and children by demolishing boundaries to their success."

- A Saint Louise House Mom

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SAINT LOUISE HOUSE

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2026 Guadalupe Street
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Saint Louise House was founded in 2000 to provide affordable and supportive housing for extremely low income homeless women and their children with the goal of helping families develop long-term stability

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