



Annual Report

*Fresh Start:
A home where women can grow*

On My Own

Karen, a 51 year old Nebraska native, came to Fresh Start like so many women, looking to find a way to start over but not knowing how to start. She had several physical health needs in addition to her mental health and addiction recovery needs.

During her time at Fresh Start Karen became stronger in her recovery. She began building a healthy support system and reuniting with family. She addressed her health conditions and learned about resources in the community for those. Karen also improved several life skills, including budgeting, healthy eating, and positive relationship and communication skills. Karen was the recipient of a used car from a local charity, which provided the freedom to secure a part time job that isn't dependent on the hours of the bus system. She started to save money and work on repairing her credit. Fresh Start also assisted her with an application for a housing subsidy through Lincoln Housing Authority.

After 9 month, the time came for her to move out of Fresh Start and into her own apartment. Karen found herself living alone for the first time in her life- and loving it! She participated in Fresh Start's Community Support services for ongoing assistance and support from staff. Karen has created a warm safe haven for herself.

"Thank you for allowing me to live at Fresh Start so I could finally get my life together!!"

- Fresh Start Alumni

Karen's ongoing success does not come without road blocks. The car has required repairs and maintenance as well as insurance and gas. She still often needs a little help, like groceries from local food pantries. However, she knows she can do it, and We have faith in her too. Karen has achieved what we hope for all our women: she is self sufficient, stronger, and has more confidence and belief in her own abilities.

Fresh Start Honored As 2016 Agency of the Year

The Lincoln Homeless Coalition recognized Fresh Start as the agency of the year for 2016. Fresh Start is actively involved in this membership group of 45+ agencies that are working to address housing and homeless related issues in our community. According to the nomination, Fresh Start is valued as an important part of Lincoln's safety net for women and is involved in community wide efforts to both strengthen our own services but also to make Lincoln a stronger and healthier community. Fresh Start participates in many initiatives of the Lincoln Homeless Coalition through serving on several committees, including Executive Committee, Public Awareness, and Project Homeless Connect Lincoln. Executive Director Monica Zinke has been the Secretary for several years and the Chair of Project Homeless Connect since its beginning in 2009. Fresh Start 's collaborative spirit was also praised in the nominations. Of particular note was our involvement with the Human Services Federation, Lincoln Housing Authority Homeless Voucher Committee, and the newly formed Trauma Informed Task Force. The award was dedicated to all of the women who have come through Fresh Start's doors on their path out of homelessness and back to economic stability. Also recognized during the 2016 Homeless Coalition event for their service and dedication were Meg Damme, Program Coordinator and Monica Zinke, Executive Director.



Pictured from left to right are Monica Zinke, Denise Robeson, Deanna Jaynes, and Meg Damme.

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Message from the President

Lina Bostwick 2016 President of the Board of Directors



As I reflect upon my second term as president of the Board of Directors for Fresh Start, I have a strong appreciation for the strategic focus Executive Director, Monica Zinke, and the Board continues to have. The plan not only guides us on the daily operational responsibilities of services for the transition of homeless women to self-sufficiency, but also has led us to examine more broadly the policies that leave too many disadvantaged people sidelined from access to mainstream systems and support. Another collaborative effort we as a Board undertake involves the identification of vulnerabilities experienced by these women and, therefore, to respond to these matters in order to resolve such social issues where women find themselves homeless. I know you will enjoy reading more from Board member Alex Cowsky who shared this about her time on the Board, and her involvement in these efforts.

“My term on the Fresh Start Board of Directors was one of the most valuable experiences of my life. I was fortunate to serve with and learn from very passionate, talented individuals from various backgrounds and professions, including the hardworking staff of Fresh Start. Moreover, it exposed me to issues of which before I was unaware, such as the under-served population of homeless women in the Lincoln community; the barriers many face with housing, healthcare, and transportation; and how quickly a person's stable, dependable situation can turn upside down. As a Board member, I listened to stories of both resident successes and failures, of both happiness and sadness. The "bad" was difficult to hear, but I think it was necessary because it pushed the Board to fight that much more for Fresh Start's mission, to work that much harder for the "good." I have a special place in my heart for this organization, not only for what it gave to me, but also for the empowerment it provides to women who walk through those doors on Havelock.

As a Board we are of course focused on Fresh Start and how we can continue to be a strong organization. It's about more than that; it's also about celebrating the successes of resident, and of the organization. And, it's about identifying how as an organization, a Board of Directors, and a community can work together to address social issues that cause homelessness.

Making My Own Choices

Fresh Start has partnered with Voices of Hope for a temporary program involving housing assistance case management and advocacy for women feeling domestic violence, sexual assault, dating violence, or stalking. Services are available due to a grant from the Department of Justice: Office on Violence Against Women. Participants find their own housing, and staff from both agencies provide various kinds of support. Success have included women being on their own and beginning to rebuild their lives. Challenges have included finding landlords with affordable/low income housing who will rent to them, and securing employment.

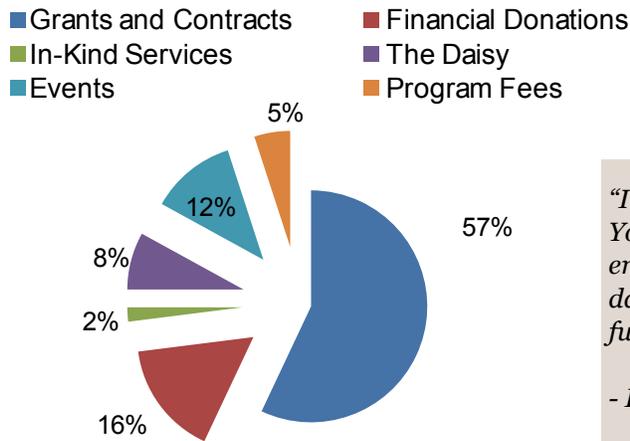
One participant shared, “I lived three years being controlled emotionally, physically and mentally. The day I stepped into the program of Fresh Start gave me the motivation to continue and see how many more choices I can make on my own. I'm grateful and thankful about life. I know there are people that never met me or don't even know me that believe in me and are willing to help me fulfill my life goals and dreams without judgment or assumption. They are very understanding and willing to listen no matter the situation.”

“Having somewhere to call home helps me. What I love about Fresh Start is the tendency to help to build on one's strengths and not their weaknesses.”

- DOJ Program Participant

Revenue and Expenses

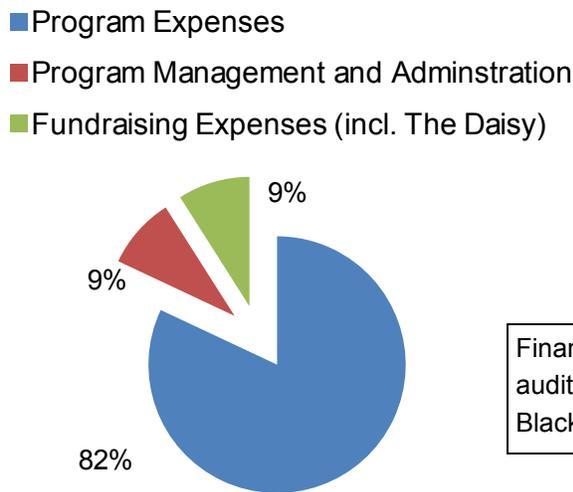
Revenue



"I'm thankful for all of the staff! Your time, honesty, and encouragement help me every day to have hope for a new future."

- Fresh Start Resident

Expenses



Financials reported are based on the audit conducted by Thomas, Kunc, & Black.

Grants and Contracts

The following organizations provided grants or contracts to Fresh Start during 2016:

- ◆ Black Hills Energy Foundation
- ◆ Community Health Endowment
- ◆ Cooper Foundation
- ◆ Joint Budget Committee of Lincoln & Lancaster County
- ◆ Lancaster County Community Corrections
- ◆ Lincoln Housing Authority
- ◆ Nebraska Homeless Assistance/ City of Lincoln Urban Development
- ◆ United Way of Lincoln & Lancaster County
- ◆ U.S. Department of Justice's Office on Violence Against Women Transitional Housing Assistance Program
- ◆ Woods Charitable Fund

"Thank you so much for the warmth and acceptance of this home."

-Fresh Start resident

2016 Statistics

- 83** Residential stays
- 81** women received shelter services (unduplicated count)
- 41 years** - Average age of residential clients
- 12 years** - Average education level attained
- 73%** of the residents were mothers
- 24%** racial/ethnic group
- 57%** involved with legal system
- 83 %** reported substance addiction
- 57%** reported history of domestic violence
- 63%** reported mental health conditions
- 18%** received disability
- 17%** physical health issues
- 7,313** nights of lodging
- 21,943** meals available
- 918** case management meetings
- 573** instances of clothing or personal care items
- 607** offerings of workshops or recovery meetings
- 5** women participated in community support
- 11** women participated in community housing



A home where women can grow

6433 Havelock Ave
Lincoln, NE 68507
402-475-7777
www.FreshStartHome.org

Return Service Requested

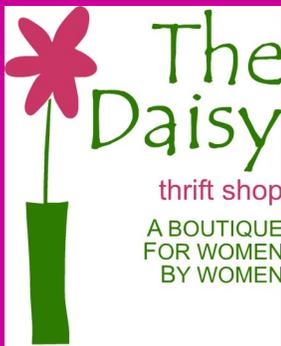
Fresh Start is proud to partner with the



Nonprofit org
presorted

US Postage
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*High on
Quality,
Low on
Price*

The Daisy offers high quality women's clothing, accessories and home décor. Proceeds from The Daisy benefit Fresh Start.

The Daisy is open:
Fridays & Saturdays
10AM – 4PM

Third Thursday of the month
4-7PM

Clothing donations received are first made available to residents of Fresh Start. Donations are accepted Mondays & Thursdays, 10AM–1PM, and by appointment.

The Fresh Start Program

Fresh Start is a transitional goals program for women who are homeless and without children in their custody. A hybrid of a community shelter and a transitional program, Fresh Start offers a stay of up to one year, in a communal living setting. Women may be homeless for any reason, and typically are addressing multiple challenges such as substance abuse, physical and mental health conditions, domestic violence, and employment. While at Fresh Start, a caring team of staff assist them with their efforts to make positive changes in their lives. During this time, all basic needs are provided, along with advocacy, case management, and support. Staff is onsite 24 hours a day, 7 days a week to offer help and guidance. Community support services are offered to women who complete their residential stay and who would like ongoing support. The home visits, food pantries, and telephone support are geared towards helping each woman maintain her self-sufficiency and are available for up to two years.

Helping Hands

In 2016, volunteers provided approximately 3,742 hours of service to Fresh Start. We couldn't do it with you! In addition to serving on the Board of Directors, these community members assisted with running The Daisy, providing Sunday night suppers, one day service projects, and event planning. IndependentSector.org states an hour of volunteer service is worth \$23.56, signifying a value of \$88,162 for the time donated. If your church, business, or organization is interested in supporting Fresh Start, please call 402-475-7777.

Find more information about Fresh Start, The Daisy, and upcoming events visit www.FreshStartHome.org, the Fresh Start Lincoln Facebook page, or call us at 402-475-7777.