



A Home Where Women Can Grow

ANNUAL REPORT 2023

Building Kindness

FROM THE BOARD



Big things happened in 2023, made possible by your collective kindness. Fresh Start kicked off a huge capital campaign to address building upgrades, revitalize spaces, and retire debt. I am in awe of generosity of our neighbors. The Lincoln community has really stepped up to help Fresh Start with this project, and also to support our regular programming. I am so appreciative of the staff and board and their hard work, and everyone who has supported us across our 33 year history. We are excited to invite you all to an Open House when the renovations are done to see the new areas and celebrate our program and participants.

Kindness matters. Life is too short to spend your energy being mean, when you could instead lift people up and make our community stronger. Poet Maya Angelou said, "I've learned that people will forget what you said, people will forget what you did, but people will never forget how you made them feel."

Michael Reinmiller
President of the 2023 Board of Directors



Kindness takes many forms. Sometimes it shows in small actions, like a smile for a stranger, holding a door for someone. Sometimes kindness manifests in much larger gestures like monetary contributions or services provided to those in need. Kindness at its core involves caring and consideration. Or, perhaps it's better described as acts of acknowledgement. We acknowledge each other's worth, and show compassion by assisting as we are able.

We experience acts of kindness both big and small at Fresh Start. The person on a limited budget who donates one bottle of dish soap and the person who gives a major gift to the capital campaign. The person who volunteers one day a year to spruce up our patio area with her service group and the person who volunteers every week to help at the shelter. The people who aren't in a position to do either, but advocate for our participants every day by using their voice to call attention to their situation and address stereotypes around it.

Each action builds on the one before, creating a program, a home, a community, that is built on kindness. Thank you for building kindness through your involvement with Fresh Start.

Monica Zinke
Executive Director

2023 Board of Directors

Officers

Michael Reinmiller, President
theAVDude

Seth Hansen, Vice President
Employers Insurance

Tam Lawson, Secretary
Fiserv

Amy Archuleta, Treasurer
NEBCO

Nikki Gohring, Past President
UNL

Members at Large

Amber Bogle
Mueller Robak

Rachel Brendan
FORVIS

Katy Farrell
Nelnet

Sara Hernandez
Union Bank & Trust

Melinda Kentfield
Nebraska Methodist Health System

Sarah Quimby
NEBCO

Hannah Schmidt
Ameritas

Kristi Wamstad
Institute for Sustainable
Infrastructure



ALUMNA SPOTLIGHT: BEV

Before Fresh Start, I didn't have a home. I was living in a hotel that I could not afford, about to enter Drug Court program, and I reached out and told them I had nowhere to go, asked if they could help me. They told me to come to Fresh Start. So I did.

Honestly, it was frightening. I was overcoming addiction. It was overwhelming. When I came to Fresh Start, I was scared. I was nervous. I have not been in transitional living places, never communal living or nothing like it before, not treatment or anything. When I entered, the staff and other residents were there with open arms, they gave me a big welcome.



It was a lot of working one-on-one with my case worker, setting goals, and getting to know myself. I set up self-sufficiency (savings) when I got a job. They helped me look for housing. There was a lot of growth that I did in the 8 months I was here. I made it my own home, you know? One where it's not necessarily about having to come and go as I want, it's more that I can be self-sufficient. I'm able to pay my bills, I'm able to maintain a job. I'm able to use resources and have those goals that I really didn't have before I entered Fresh Start. Each of us here, we all have our differences and we all have trauma, but we all manage to get along and pitch in. And the staff, they are just like a mother or sister. It's a place to call home for a time. And it feels very nice here.

We all came here to Fresh Start with almost nothing. Some of us came with just the clothes on our back. If it's donated here and you don't use it someone else will. It's homey. You make your own home cooked meals. The churches and groups that come on Sundays with supper, they're all home cooked meals and they do it to support the girls here. A lot of the skills that I learned from here and a lot of the advice that staff gave me, and that the other residents gave, I take it and it's really helped a lot.

Coming to Fresh Start gave me the resources but once I left I am still able to call home and get advice. If I'm having a rough day, the staff is still there and still willing to listen. They offered me community support. It's like me holding on to a piece of Fresh Start, and I love that.

If you are donating, you are helping someone's mother, someone's sister, somebody's family member. That's how I look at it. It could be your daughter or your granddaughter and it's all worth it.



Guiding Statements

Mission Statement

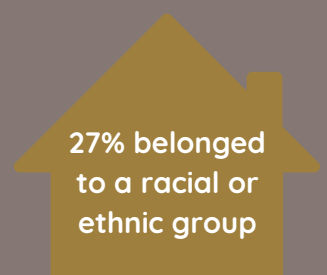
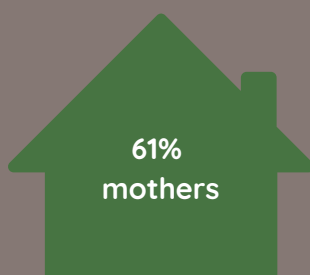
Fresh Start is a transitional shelter that empowers women experiencing homelessness to change their lives by recognizing and using their strengths to overcome barriers to self-sufficiency.

Vision Statement

Fresh Start is a proactive agency focused on eradicating homelessness for women through quality services and expanded partnerships.

Fresh Start Core Values

Respect
Accountability
Individuality
Stability
Empowerment

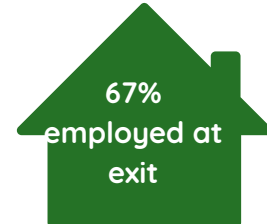
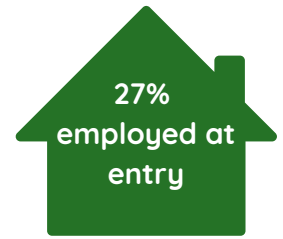


PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS

Residential Shelter Services

The core service of Fresh Start is to provide a safe, secure, and positive home environment where women can change their lives. Residents develop an individualized goal plan with a case manager who then advocates for them, holds them accountable, and celebrates successes with them. Staff is on-site 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, to provide assistance and support.

In 2023, the challenges faced, including those that caused or contributed to their homelessness included mental health (82%), substance use (61%), legal issues/reentry (44%), and domestic violence (44%). There were several (9%) who received disability. In regards to income, 80% were at or below the federal poverty level and 100% were at or below 80% of the local area median income.



Community Support Services

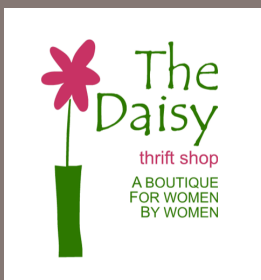
Community Support is offered to residents who successfully complete the residential program. This service involves ongoing support which includes monthly home visits, continued goal planning and assistance, baskets of food and household supplies, and telephone support. In 2023, 13 women participated. Others did not participate fully, but maintained contact and reached out as needed for support, referrals, food, and supplies.

The community support case manager participates in the Homeless Voucher Committee of the Lincoln Housing Authority.

The Daisy

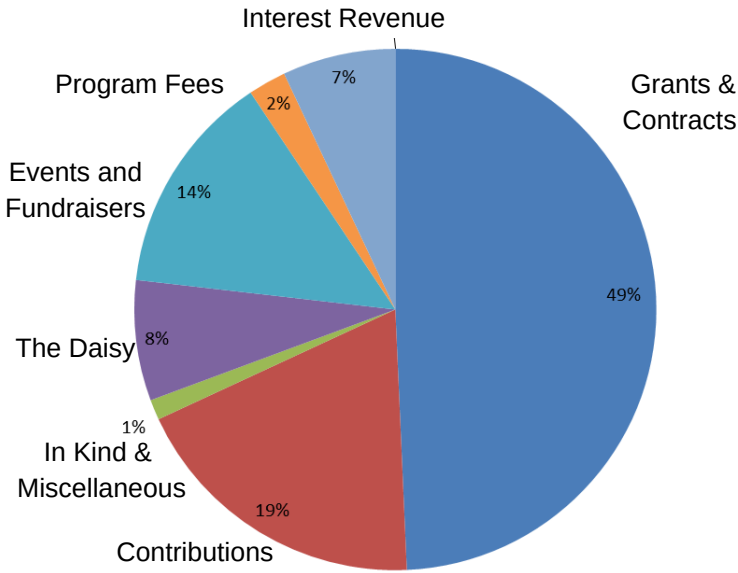
The Daisy is completely run by volunteers and has a small management committee, most of whom are pictured below. In 2023, shop manager changed from Cindy Piester to Lina Bostwick, with Karen Lenzen continuing as co manager. In 2023, volunteers donated approximately 2,300 hours of their time.

In 2023, The Daisy raised \$52,461 through shop sales and consignment, a new record!. Since it opened, the Daisy has raised \$594,178 for Fresh Start! Expenses (not including sales tax) have been just \$24,551.

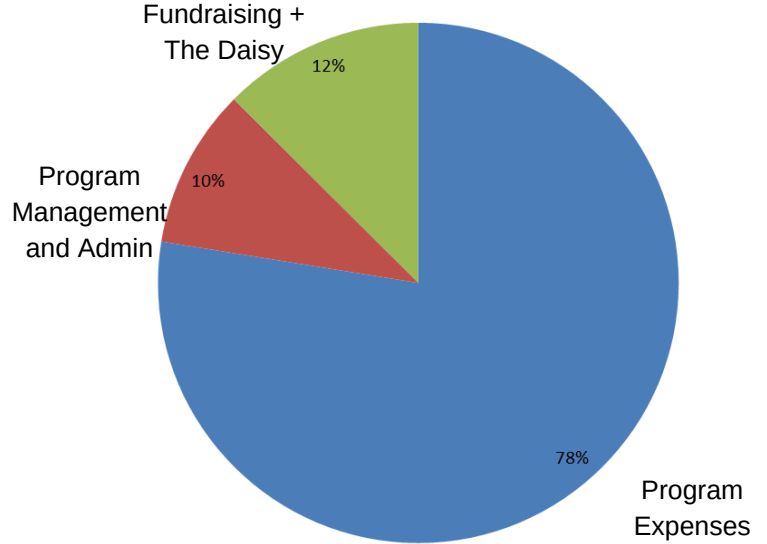


FINANCIAL OVERVIEW

Operating Revenue



Operating Expenses



Fresh Start received operating grants or contracts from:

ECHO Collective * Emergency Food & Shelter Program * Hampton Family Foundation * Joint Budget Committee of Lincoln & Lancaster County * KENO funds * Kohl's * Lancaster County Community Corrections * Lincoln Housing Authority * Nebraska Dept. of Corrections * Nebraska Presbytery Foundation * Nebraska State Probation * United Way of Lincoln & Lancaster County *

Fresh Start received special projects/ campaign funding from:

Abel Foundation * BVH Architects * Cornhusker Bank * FORVIS * May Flanagan Foundation * Miriam Moeller Charitable Trust * Raybould Family Foundation * Rogers Foundation * Sid Dillon * Sunderland Foundation * City of Lincoln/Lancaster County ARPA Funds



Fiscal Notes

Per person and per meal costs have been higher over the past few years. This primarily is attributed to reduced occupancy due to the COVID-19 pandemic health and safety measures. While occupancy was lower, many of the expenses remained the same (i.e. staffing) or increased (i.e. food costs). The cost per person per day in 2019 was \$75, five years later in 2023 it increased by 25% to \$100 per day.



Goals for 2023 included to maintain a three month operating reserve while beginning the capital renovations. This goal was accomplished. Goals for 2024 include to complete the campaign fundraising and renovations, and to continue to add back pre Covid programming.



Please remember Fresh Start in your charitable giving and estate planning. Fresh Start is a 501(c)(3) organization and contributions are tax deductible.



6433 Havelock Avenue
Lincoln NE 68507
(402)475-7777
www.FreshStartHome.org

Volunteer Highlights

Volunteers continued to support Fresh Start in 2023 through one day service projects, Sunday night suppers, sidewalk sales, events, and more! The Daisy also continued to operate with volunteer power, and many served on the Board of Directors and leadership committees. Approximately 50 volunteers provided over 4,200 hours of service in 2023, not counting one day projects or supper. This is the equivalent of \$133,560. Thank you!

Photo Highlights

