

SHEFFIELD PLACE

**REFLECTIONS ON 20 YEARS OF SERVICE TO HOMELESS
MOTHERS AND THEIR CHILDREN IN KANSAS CITY**



Sheffield Place is Promise

A message from Kelly Welch, Executive Director



For the homeless women and their young children that the program serves, Sheffield Place is *promise*. Promise is defined as:

1. Declaration that something will be done.

Sheffield Place provide services that address homelessness, trauma, mental health and substance abuse. Through our groups, individual therapy, and supportive housing, our families receive declaration that something will be done to address the many issues that have resulted in their current situation of homelessness and despair. Our promise to our families is that if they engage in services, they will acquire self-sufficiency, housing, income, and improved health.

2. An express assurance

All of the services provided by Sheffield Place focus on identifying and addressing trauma—abuse, violence, homelessness— so that our families can improve their health to move forward. Trauma informed care recognizes that while everyone experiences trauma in their lives, the sheer volume of trauma that our families have experienced is overwhelming to the point of being unable to function. Sheffield Place provides safe, secure, supportive housing for families. Often it is the first time they have been in a place where safety is assured.

3. Indication of future excellence or achievement

The vast majority (90%) of families that complete the program are successful in becoming self-sufficient, strong families. Sheffield Place helps families to visualize and reach a promising future.

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Sheffield Place is a different kind of shelter because the emphasis is put on permanent change, rather than a bed to sleep in just for the night. When a woman is ready for a change in her life and the lives of her children, the people at Sheffield Place are there to support her through shelter, counseling, medical help, parenting guidance and support, education, and training. So the role of Sheffield Place in the community is not just a homeless shelter, but a support unit that encourages permanent change for women and their families, giving them the tools to thrive after leaving Sheffield Place and entering life outside of the shelter.

I've been a volunteer at Sheffield Place for approximately three years. I come to Sheffield Place with a group of my co-workers at Zurich every third Tuesday evening of the month to spend time with the children during their time at Project Hope. We've gotten to know the children and have seen them go from children who have outbursts or tantrums, who are unable to share, who are very shy to children who burst through the door with smiles and hugs and are implementing the changes that staff counsel them on.

One boy who I am particularly thinking of was very withdrawn and angry when I first met him. He would cry often, hit and kick. He has become so much calmer, listens much better and hasn't had an outburst in quite some time. He is smiling and excited to participate in all activities. He is interested in learning. The staff's work with him and his mother is very evident to me and will positively impact their future.

As we go through these hard economic times and homelessness rises, the need for Sheffield Place is greater than ever. I hope that Sheffield Place will continue to adapt to the times and continue to provide a variety of services to the families calling it home. I also hope that others will become involved in volunteering and have the opportunity to get to know the mothers and children of Sheffield Place. They are wonderful women and children who respond to care and love and have hopes and dreams that deserve to be fulfilled.



- **Nadine Horst, volunteer**



I got involved with Sheffield Place years ago after seeing how excited a child was to be able to pick out a gift for their mother at Sheffield Place's annual Holiday Store. As joyous as it was, it was sad to know that so many children have experiences that give them little hope for the future. Since then, I served on the board of Sheffield Place and continue to be an advocate for the organization.

I believe Sheffield Place's role in the community is to provide assistance and be a place of change for mothers and their children in the Kansas City area that need to break the cycle of violence, homelessness and addiction. Throughout the years, Sheffield Place has continued to impact lives. Slowly, Kansas City is beginning to know the name, yet there is still so much to do. While government funds continue to be short and competitive to receive, I feel the board will need to step up marketing and fundraising efforts. It's a constant battle.

To me, Sheffield Place's biggest impact is shaping future generations. Shaping how they live and how they view the role of being a parent is vital.

-Vincent Basso, former Board Member



What stands out to me about Sheffield Place is the depth of comprehensive services. It is unique in that women and families can not only call Sheffield Place home, but they can receive therapy, case management, parenting guidance, medical assistance, attend adult and children's groups and gain overall support in that home. The length of stay is paramount, too. So many families have not one or two issues to address while living at Sheffield Place, but multiple issues that take time and patience to overcome. Giving families a solid two years of support helps to provide a foundation in which to thrive after they leave Sheffield Place.

One child in particular stands out in my mind from Sheffield Place. She was three years old when she and her mother moved in. She had survived inexplicable abuse, yet her young mind did not have the coping skills to deal with it. Very slowly and with lots of hard work, she made progress. Her mom made progress, too. She learned how to recognize and address issues her daughter was having, helping to make them both stronger. By the time they moved out, the scared little girl who moved in was hardly recognizable.

Homelessness, and the many factors that contribute to it, is certainly a community and cyclical issue. I believe the support that women and children receive at Sheffield Place helps to break this cycle and teach families to live to their fullest potential. The children of Sheffield Place are able to see their mothers succeed, which speaks volumes to them and shows them that they, too, are capable of success. The community as a whole becomes stronger through each and every family that graduates the program.

-Sarah Carlew, former staff member

I was a single mother with no help, living in the projects and going to Job Corps. I was trying to better myself, but it just wasn't enough. I felt lost and hopeless. Moving into Sheffield Place marked the beginning of a new and better life for me and my children.

Through my work at Sheffield Place, I learned responsibility, ownership, parenting skills and self-sufficiency. I learned to not be afraid and that I have the power over my own life that no one can take away. The one-on-one counseling, classes on empowerment and groups with other women gave me my self-respect back. I learned skills to help me be a better and stronger parent and skills to change the cycle of abuse that I endured. I learned the importance of saving money and having a nest egg. Most importantly, I learned to never give up on myself and to not let anyone steal my power. I'm thankful for those lessons to this day.

Sheffield Place helped my children by empowering me and making me a better parent. My children now know that no matter how rough life gets, you don't give up. It showed them that we are not alone. Sheffield Place helped me to demonstrate all of these things to my children.

Since moving out of Sheffield Place, I now work full-time and was my company's Employee of the Year in 2010. I have had some setbacks, but I'm still standing strong. My oldest son is 20 and attending college, and my two younger children are in high school. We are a very strong family. While not perfect, our bonds are strong and help us to make it through each day.

- Jennifer R, former resident





I grew up fast in St. Joseph. As an adult, I lacked appropriate coping skills and the ability to make healthy choices due to my history of trauma. I became homeless and had an active addiction. When the state took my son away, I received the spark I needed to turn my life around. My children and I came to Sheffield Place in 2007. Sheffield Place helped me work through all the trauma and abuse I had gone through. The staff showed me how to be outspoken and assertive in a positive way and how to set and accomplish goals. I have been married for two years and have two children, Kalie, 15 years of age, and Michael, 5 years.

One of my goals is to learn more about behind the scenes of Sheffield Place what it takes to keep the doors open. I want to be part of what makes Sheffield Place a success and want everyone to know how much Sheffield Place is needed to save lives and give homeless mothers the power to move forward to take care of her family. I have learned the importance of forgiveness, moving forward, and validating my children's feelings. My motto? "Never give up!"

- Debralee C., former resident

A message from Kelly Welch, Executive Director

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After 20 years of service to more than 2,100 women and children, Sheffield Place's promise to the community is to enhance and expand services to serve more families.

In the past year—

- The number of required program service hours has expanded substantially. This expansion is made possible through the addition of groups, including Dialectical Behavior Therapy, HIV risk reduction, parenting, music therapy, mentoring, pet therapy and financial literacy.
- Sheffield Place began offering health care services onsite to mothers and children.
- Sheffield Place recently inaugurated a structured case management pilot program to serve former residents who have completed the program (aftercare), as well as to families before they enter the program (outreach).
- We have developed a new community garden onsite to teach residents about the nutritional and therapeutic value of gardening.

So far in 2011, we have served 40 families through inpatient services and ten families in after-care services. In total, Sheffield Place has served more than double the number of families served the previous year.

It is only with the support of volunteers, community agencies, corporations, foundations, churches, temples, schools, youth groups, government agencies, civic groups, and YOU that Sheffield Place can fulfill our promise to homeless families and their children. Thank you for all that you do to assure a promising future to homeless mothers and their children.

The History of Sheffield Place

The creation of Sheffield Place was the direct result frustration from the growing homeless problem of the 1980's. Community leaders were discouraged with the fact that as the homeless population in Kansas City grew, the resources available to meet the fastest growing segment of this population – homeless mothers and their children – were limited. The only resources available to them were short-term emergency shelters.

A group of Kansas City organizations recognized the local need and decided to seek funding from this act to create a long-term program for the homeless families. Metropolitan Lutheran Ministry and The YMCA of Greater KC formed a partnership and applied. Sheffield Place was granted \$962,350 from the US Department of Housing and Urban Development. The acceptance of this grant committed Sheffield Place and the YMCA to a 20 year requirement to provide services for the homeless population in the facility. The building once housed the Norvel YMCA and was built in the 1920's. Renovations were completed in February 1991.

Since then, Sheffield Place has undergone significant growth and has served more than 600 families. Sheffield Place has documented a 90% success rate with its graduates, who have acquired and retained permanent housing, increased education and employment skills, and reduced their dependency on welfare.

- February 4, 1991- Sheffield Place opened its doors to its first two families.
- Summer, 1992- 1st group of residents graduated from the Survival Skills for Women workshop.
- Fall 1992- Sheffield Place acquired major funding from several foundations to create children's program.
- Summer, 1993– The basement was renovated to house the Children's Clinical Services program.
- March 1994- Sheffield Place received the Hope Award by the Hope Foundation in recognition of its excellence in shelter management and services.
- November 1998- Board of Directors approved plan to make the facility handicapped accessible.
- June 1999- YMCA sold the building to Sheffield Place for \$1.00.
- October 2000- Capital Improvement Campaign completed ADA renovations finished.
- November 2003-Project Hope Program space renovated.
- November 2006-Awarded major Health Care Foundation grant to address client health and fitness needs.
- December 2006- Awarded major REACH Healthcare Foundation grant to enhance project Hope.
- July 2007- Named the 1st homeless shelter in the nation to provide top three evidence-based therapies for children.
- November 2007- Joint collaborative relationship with National Center on Family Homelessness.
- May 2008- Organizational wide trauma-informed care training provided and organizational assessment completed.
- August 2008- Sheffield Place selected as one of 20 national organizations to participate in a two-year learning cooperative through National Child Trauma Stress Network and SAMSHA.
- March 2009- Recognized as best practice by The National Center on Family Homelessness for Trauma-informed work with families in America's Youngest Outcasts: A State Report Card on Child Homelessness.
- October 2010- Sheffield Place opens the onsite 'Pathways to Care' health care clinic
- April 2011- Sheffield Place receives the Best Practice Award in Homeless Services from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development Region VII.
- June 2011- Sheffield Place receives approval to participate in the State of Missouri's Access to Recovery program.
- September 2011 - Sheffield Place receives provisional certification from the Missouri Department of Mental Health.

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Kelly Welch

How you can help:

- Support Sheffield Place with financial gift
- Donate items from the immediate needs list on our website
- Friend us on Facebook to stay up-to-date on activities
- Volunteer as an individual or as part of a group
- Attend a facility tour in 2012 and invite your friends
- Attend Off the Wall, a gallery event and art auction
- Learn more about homelessness by visiting www.sheffieldplace.org

