

# Shepherd's WATCH

GOOD SHEPHERD CHILDREN & FAMILY SERVICES

SPRING 2024



Dear friends,

We're proud to share this new version of Shepherd's Watch with you! Good Shepherd has so many positive and impactful stories that we needed to add a few more pages to share the good news.

In that same spirit, I want to express my heartfelt thanks to our donors, partners, and volunteers. Your ongoing support, in all its forms, is not just appreciated; it is vital. As you read these stories, know that your generosity is what allows us to continue providing critical services to those in need. Your partnership is not just valuable; it is invaluable to us.

With Gratitude,

Kathy Fowler, CEO



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## Jefferson County:

### Alissa and her children are safe and secure with help from Good Shepherd's Pregnancy & Parenting Support team

Alissa made choices in her younger years that, looking back, she says were not in her own best interest. She's fiercely independent and decided to leave school before graduation, start a family when she was very young, and gave her heart to those who wouldn't be there for her. Within a decade, she would find herself in an abusive relationship that resulted in her fourth pregnancy and few options.

It was her obstetrician who told her about Good Shepherd. "My doctor is like everyone's grandpa. He saw me crying because I had nowhere to go and told me Good Shepherd could help," she said.

Almost immediately, Good Shepherd's Pregnancy & Parenting Support team in the Hillsboro office stepped in to make sure Alissa had everything she needed to have a healthy birth and resources to create a positive future for herself and her four children.



She's really awesome and I'm blessed to have been part of her journey. Her fortitude is unheard of."

-TIFFANY AIELLO, ALISSA'S SUPPORT WORKER

(continued on page 2)



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## Alissa's Q & A (continued from page 1)



### What was your situation like one year ago?

You can't imagine how badly your body hurts when you're pregnant and sleeping in a car. But women who are trying to restart their lives after abusive relationships can have a hard time finding a place to stay. I had placed my three older children with my mom so they could be safe while I looked for help.

### What happened when you called Good Shepherd?

I want people to know that Good Shepherd gives you every resource they have. I wasn't a candidate for the maternity shelter because it's for mothers who are younger than me, so they found a hotel where I could stay. They gave me care packages with food and gift cards – things to keep me afloat while I looked for an apartment. I moved into the place we found and two weeks later I had my son.

### How did you prepare for your new baby?

Good Shepherd connected me with a resource to help pay for housing, but getting assistance can be tough because if you start to get your feet on the ground with a job, the help can go away. My Good Shepherd case worker was there to explain why I needed a little more time.

I got a job and kept my pregnancy secret for as long as I could because I didn't think they'd want me to be there. I was

so scared when I went into labor early because I knew I needed a few more weeks of salary to save up for my rent. Good Shepherd made sure we were covered, and gave me the time I needed to let my body heal after a c-section.

“

I want people to know about the hard work I've done, and I want them to know Good Shepherd has blessed me so much. Every person there has gone above and beyond to give me everything they can.

–Alissa

### What has been your biggest blessing?

I'm thankful to have a shower and a bed every day. Good Shepherd has made sure we have diapers, clothing, food – the case worker even put furniture in my house from her own home. They helped me give my kids one of the best Christmases they've ever had.

My two youngest are living with me now, and I'm working to get my older two. I've moved closer to my mom's house because I don't want them to have to transition again. I'm taking my older son's voice into consideration because he likes his school and he's participating in activities.

### What is important to you?

I need my kids to see me continue to elevate because I want them to be the best humans they can be. I've always wanted to do better, be better, see better, feel better. There is always room for improvement in anyone's life, and I want them to see me be serious about our future.



## Your Dollars Make a Difference at Good Shepherd

Good Shepherd thanks our faithful donors who continually provide us with the support we need to serve women, children, and families. Your hands have been part of each Mission Moment in our newsletter, as well as the work we do throughout our community.

And our work is not done. An example is the additional \$62,000 we're working to raise to provide a more comfortable and inviting maternity shelter through upgraded private living spaces and a renovated dining room space. Your gift can make an incredible difference!

### Utilize the enclosed envelope, or please scan this QR code to make a donation

on our website or contact Good Shepherd Chief Development Officer Walker Hill, III at 314-854-5705 or [whill@gstl.org](mailto:whill@gstl.org).



**70% tax credits are available for donations over \$1,000.**



*#KeeleyCares helped raise funds for Good Shepherd at their annual dodgeball tournament on March 1.*



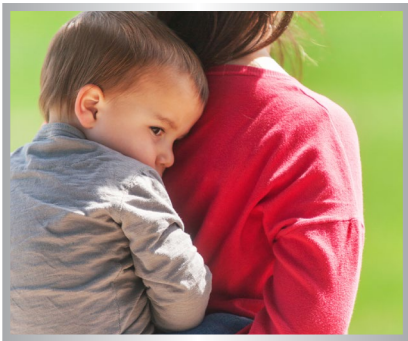
# Mission Moments from Good Shepherd Programs



## Good Shepherd Board Spotlight

**Board Member Greg Schafer** of Guardant Health says his favorite inspirational quote is: "I alone cannot change the world, but I can cast a stone to create many ripples."

Good Shepherd is thankful to have a board full of members willing to make the ripples needed to create great changes in the world. Visit the blog on our website to read Greg's full profile.



## Maternity Shelter

After a full year of maternity shelter services and support, Claire and her son are beginning their exciting journey with a bright new future. Claire has started a career as a celebrated lead teacher in a special needs class at the same daycare that her son attends. She saved up to purchase her own car, and they are moving into their own apartment that has been partially furnished through the generosity of our donors. Good Shepherd applauds this major milestone and thanks all who helped make it happen!

## Adoption

The adoption team's longest-waiting family recently finalized the adoption of their beautiful baby girl. The courageous birth mother contacted Good Shepherd immediately after the birth of her baby, and, due to financial struggles, made the selfless choice to place her child in the loving home of a waiting family.

The Good Shepherd Adoption team (pictured right) has supported all sides of the adoption triad since that day by visiting the adoptive family monthly through finalization, sharing photos, prayers, and well wishes with the birth mother, and continues to connect her with grief counseling and any other community resources she needs. This ONE brave yet incredibly difficult decision has been an answered prayer and impacted countless lives in the process.



## Pregnancy & Parenting Support

The Pregnancy & Parenting Support (PPS) team recently connected with a family in need who was only eligible for four months of program support before their child aged out. We worked on a condensed timeline, connecting the child with services to support an autism diagnosis and helping the mother learn parenting techniques specifically for her son. Since their time with Good Shepherd, the PPS team helped the mother look for employment and the family is on their way to securing their own housing.

## Foster Care

Good Shepherd's Foster Care program recently changed a family's life forever when they matched them with an eight-year-old boy at the end of 2023 through our Specialized Adoption service. Specialized Adoption helps families provide permanency to a child in the foster care system. This child has elevated needs, which are being met through the help of a collaboration between the pre-adoptive parents and our Treatment Foster Care (TFC) staff. Word is getting out about our innovative Specialized Adoption service as professionals from other agencies are reaching out to team up, and parents are recommending Good Shepherd's services to their friends. Good Shepherd currently has five Specialized Adoption placements and expects another four before the end of May. Every child deserves a loving family to call their own, and Good Shepherd is helping make that happen for children in foster care.



*Members of Good Shepherd's Foster Care team*



### CCSTL Mission

To bring the healing, help, and hope of Jesus Christ to those in need with a compassionate, caring presence.

### CCSTL Vision

Catholic Charities of the Archdiocese of St. Louis will be a premier leader in community renewal and a visible catalyst for social outreach by connecting with people, parishes, and ministries committed to a meaningful communion of care to those in need across every square mile of the Archdiocese of St. Louis.

### Good Shepherd Purpose Statement:

Connecting children with families and keeping families connected by providing pregnancy and parenting support, foster care programs, and adoption services.

## Events

For a detailed list of events,  
visit [goodshepherdstl.org](http://goodshepherdstl.org)

### Golf Tournament

17th Annual Good Shepherd  
Golf Tournament - **June 25th**



### Baby Shower

Online event throughout  
the spring



## A Look at Our Campus

This statue of Jesus greets visitors to our main Good Shepherd campus and features a beautiful rendering of the Sacred Heart. This statue is a reminder of Jesus' deep love and affection for us all.

*May His love be a blessing to all those touched by our work.*



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1340 Partridge Avenue • St. Louis, MO 63130