

Shepherd's WATCH

FALL 2024

GOOD SHEPHERD CHILDREN & FAMILY SERVICES



Dear friends,

As our annual Safe4ANight fundraising campaign approaches on October 23, I wanted to share a heartwarming story that reflects the impact of your generosity. Mia's journey, from uncertainty to stability, is a testament to what we can achieve together.

Thanks to your support, young mothers like Mia—and their children—find a safe haven at Good Shepherd. Giving levels for Safe4ANight start at \$52, providing food, shelter, and a secure place for a mom and her baby to rest for one night. Imagine the difference that just one safe night can make when you and your baby have nowhere to go.

Your support is not just appreciated; it is vital.

Thank you for helping us connect children with families and keep families connected.

With Gratitude,

Kathy Fowler, CEO



GOOD SHEPHERD
children & family services

A MINISTRY OF CATHOLIC CHARITIES

Safe4ANight

A Young Mother Finds Safety and Security at Good Shepherd's Maternity Shelter

At just 15 years old, Mia* found out she was pregnant and had nowhere to go. Her mom passed away when she was three, and she was uncomfortable living with her dad and stepmom after they learned of her situation. Too young to secure an apartment of her own, Mia ended up bouncing between relatives and friends throughout her pregnancy and even after she delivered her son. She never knew where she and her baby, Khai, would sleep next — until a social worker brought her to Good Shepherd's maternity shelter.

A New Beginning

Khai was just one month old when they landed at Good Shepherd. At first, Mia felt down about being there, thinking it was just another place with more rules. But Good Shepherd turned out to be different. While she thought she was going to lose control over her life, she actually gained the stability and support she needed to make good decisions. She and Khai finally had their own beds, privacy, and people who genuinely cared about them.



We know that we're going to have this safe place to stay tonight and tomorrow night."

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Safe4ANight (continued from page 1)

Embracing Education

Mia's life has changed dramatically since arriving at Good Shepherd in 2023. She completes her chores, participates in life skills, and participates in a work program where she gets paid to attend classes. She missed almost a whole year of school after she had Khai, but education is now a priority. She gets up at 5 a.m. to get herself ready for school and Khai dressed for daycare. Mia says it was tough adjusting to a new school, but the structure at Good Shepherd has helped, and her grades reflect that.



“I got a 98% on my science test and a 92% on my social studies test.”

Rebuilding Family Connections

Mia's family connections have also improved. Her dad visits monthly, and she stays in touch with her sisters. She's also developed a healthy relationship with Khai's father and his mom, with Khai's grandmother now being a key part of her support system. They're even planning Khai's first birthday party together.

Looking to the Future

Seeing Khai grow, using his baby walker, starting to talk, and smiling at everyone makes Mia happy. Thanks to Good Shepherd and her own hard work, the quiet and withdrawn girl who arrived nearly one year ago has blossomed into a confident young woman and mother who is committed to raising her son, focusing on her education, and embracing a successful future.

“With the help I have here, I'm making good choices. I feel proud and can see what I need to do for myself and for Khai.”

Good Shepherd's Annual Safe4ANight campaign is coming up on October 23. Your gifts will directly support young mothers and their babies like Mia and Khai. Visit our website to participate.

**Note: Name has been changed to honor confidentiality*



Foster Care

Foster mother honors late husband's legacy by caring for more than 100 children

Robyne Wilson-Cima says both she and her late husband John Cima should have been in foster care when they were children, but the service didn't formally exist then. So as Robyne and John began planning their lives together, they were both interested in serving their community as foster parents.

John was diagnosed with kidney cancer and passed away in 1995 before that plan could come to fruition. To honor his wishes and his legacy, Robyne got to work and earned her license to become a foster parent.

Decades later, Robyne has opened up her heart and her home to more than 100 foster children.

“We consider Robyne as one of our foster care heroes,” said Kathy Fowler, Executive Director of Good Shepherd. “So many men and women are thriving as adults today, in large part thanks to Robyne's motherly spirit and dedication to anyone who crossed her threshold.”

Robyne formally adopted three of her long-time foster children – Jesus, Mateo and Erma – last November. She had also cared for their two older siblings, Elias and Marisa, before they aged out of foster care.

When asked what's next in her family dynamic, Robyne said, “I think respite could be next if I can get it to work with my kids. It comes down to their feelings and their needs first. And later on, I'm going to sit back and wait for grandbabies.”

“It's the hardest thing you'll ever do, and the most joy you'll ever have.”

– ROBYNE WILSON-CIMA

Breaking Records at the 2024 Good Shepherd Golf Tournament

The 17th Annual Good Shepherd Golf Tournament took place at Norwood Hills Country Club on Tuesday, June 25th. The event was a huge success thanks to the incredible generosity and unwavering support of our sponsors, donors, attendees, and volunteers. This year, Good Shepherd was able to raise a record-breaking \$173,305 for the moms, babies, youth, and families living in our community who turn to Good Shepherd throughout the year.

Golf Tournament Sponsors

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We want to extend our deepest thanks to the Golf Committee for their dedication and hard work in making the 2024 tournament a resounding success. Your commitment and teamwork ensured a fantastic event for everyone involved. **We are truly grateful for your efforts!**

Adoption

Embracing the Chaos: Good Shepherd's Season of Miraculous Adoptions



The Good Shepherd Adoption Team has experienced a whirlwind of beautiful chaos over the past few months! Since early March, we have facilitated six adoption placements, each a testament to the incredible work of our team and the unwavering faith that guides us.

Three recent adoptions have been especially unique. In one, we placed premature identical twin boys with a family ready to provide the care and love they need. Another involved a 7-month-old baby with cardiac issues and a feeding tube who has been a patient at St. Louis Children's Hospital since January. We found the perfect family to handle his medical needs.

And we recently had the privilege of facilitating the adoption of a two-year-old boy diagnosed with autism. Once an only child, he now has five big sisters, a big brother, and is thriving in his new family.

In every adoption we facilitate, God's presence is evident, guiding us through the most challenging and joyous moments. We are deeply blessed and grateful to witness His best work as we serve our clients, helping to create families filled with love and hope.



Maximize Your Impact with a Missouri Tax Credit

Did you know that financial gifts of \$1,000 or more to Good Shepherd qualify for a 70% Missouri tax credit? This means a dollar-for-dollar reduction of your state income tax liability.

For example, if you owe \$700 in Missouri taxes, a \$1,000 donation to Good Shepherd will grant a \$700 tax credit that can reduce your net liability to \$0.

You can make an immediate gift to Good Shepherd by scanning the QR code below. For more details about tax credits, please contact **Walker Hill** at **314-854-5705** or email **whill@gsstl.org**.



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

Mark Your Calendars: Our 24-Hour Safe4ANight Fundraiser is Coming Soon!



Get ready! On October 23rd and 24th, we're kicking off our annual 24-hour fundraiser for our maternity care shelter. This is your chance to make a big impact—donate early, and your gift could be matched and multiplied thanks to the generosity of our incredible supporters. Stay tuned for more details on how you can double your impact and help us provide essential care to those who need it most!

2024 Christmas Campaign

Get ready to spread holiday cheer this season by supporting our Christmas campaign, where we'll help 300+ families with much-needed items and gift cards. Your donation will empower parents to buy extra groceries or find the perfect gift for their children.

Check our website or call Caroline Livingstone (314) 854-5706 for additional details.



- Safe4ANight: A Young Mother Finds Safety and Security
- Foster Care: Robyne's Story
- Breaking Records at 2024 Good Shepherd Golf Tournament
- Maximize Your Impact with a Missouri Tax Credit
- Adoption: Good Shepherd's Season of Miraculous Adoptions

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