



# Our Case for Support

**MISSION** / The Dwelling Place is a Christ-centered ministry providing healing and hope to victims of domestic abuse through supportive services and a safe, transitional place to call home.

**VISION** / Transforming Lives through Christ's Love



*The Dwelling Place*

**TRANSFORMING LIVES THROUGH CHRIST'S LOVE**

*My people will live in peaceful dwelling places,  
in secure homes, in undisturbed places of rest.*

— ISAIAH 32:18

# The Dwelling Place

*Imagine coming to The Dwelling Place as a woman in need. You might be towing torn trash bags filled with what little clothing you own, or you might be clutching the small hands of your children, trying to reassure them that everything will be alright. Behind you lies a history of pain and abuse. Ahead of you is an unfamiliar and uncertain world. Inside, you might be struggling with questions that overwhelm you with anxiety and fear. How will you support yourself and your children with little or no education or training? How will you keep yourself and your children safe from your abuser and out of other abusive relationships? How can you heal from the often long history of physical, emotional, psychological, and spiritual wounds? The Dwelling Place is deeply committed to helping vulnerable families with safety, time, and supportive care to become healthy and strong.*



**PURPOSE /** The Dwelling Place exists to break the generational cycle of abuse by creating safety and empowering women through the love of Jesus Christ so they can experience lasting freedom.

**CORE VALUES /** The Dwelling Place Values identify our core values and guiding principles for all operations and relationships of the ministry:

- Christ-centered
- God-dependent
- Collaborative
- Nurturing & Motivating
- Trauma-informed
- Biblical Stewardship

**ORGANIZATIONAL GOALS /**

- Provide safe transitional housing and empowering case management to help women transition to lives free of abuse.
- Provide paths to emotional, spiritual and physical safety and health for women and their children.
- Educate, equip, and empower women to increase confidence and quality of life and to improve level of functioning and family stability.

The transitional housing program at The Dwelling Place fulfills the need for healing time and personal development. Without this, many victims are forced to return to their abusers or move between crisis and homeless shelters. Many residents come to The Dwelling Place after a brief stay in a crisis shelter (only 30-75 days). This short time is rarely sufficient to find housing, employment, and other supports necessary for living empowered, abuse-free lives.

Unlike traditional shelters, we differentiate our services by providing comprehensive programs to address a variety of needs. At The Dwelling Place, women and their children receive the precious gift of time (up to 24 months) in safe homes. This extended time is an important key to healing as women can focus on next steps rather than worrying about where to live and how to meet their basic needs. Our unique approach helps women and their children begin to heal through a personal relationship with Jesus Christ.

**POPULATION SERVED /** The Dwelling Place serves women and their children leaving an abusive situation. We are located in the Twin Cities and primarily serve families from throughout Minnesota. The women and children served by our programs have survived unimaginable abuse, degradation, humiliation and isolation. Nearly 100% survive at or below the poverty line and would be out on the streets without intervention. The majority of these women flee with just the clothes on their backs and a small number of personal items, and few have reliable transportation.

# The Need for Safe Housing

## THE SITUATION /

Domestic abuse—or domestic violence—is a pattern of behavior used to cause fear and gain control over another person. It may involve verbal, emotional, physical, sexual, financial and spiritual forms of abuse.

**Domestic violence is the immediate cause of homelessness for many women.** Survivors of domestic violence are often isolated from support networks and financial resources by their abusers, which puts them at risk of becoming homeless. Domestic violence can both undermine financial stability and increase barriers to safety for women. Often, perpetrators use abuse to keep victims economically dependent and vulnerable. As a result, they may lack steady income, employment history, credit history, and landlord references. They also often suffer from anxiety, post-traumatic stress disorder, major depression, and substance abuse. According to multiple studies examining the causes of homelessness, among mothers with children experiencing homelessness, more than 80% had previously experienced domestic violence.

**The need for safe housing and the economic resources to maintain safe housing are two of the most pressing concerns among abused women who are planning to or have recently left their abuser.**

We know that most women leaving domestic violence will attempt to leave 7 times before they are able to leave permanently. We recognize that time is a critical factor and quickly engage women by connecting them with healing resources in their initial days with us. We maximize this early time to equip and empower women and increase their capacity to live free of abuse. Without the services of The Dwelling Place, more women and children will be trapped in abusive situations at home.

**Even with our recent expansion, our greatest challenge continues to be keeping up with demand for safe housing and our programs. The need is great and we remain at or close to capacity.**



## Homelessness is traumatic.

- Homelessness leads to a host of compounded and cumulative losses: Women and children experience dislocation from home and community, and loss of important social roles leading to isolation and feelings of helplessness.



## Violence is a critical ingredient in the recipe for homelessness.

- Multiple studies suggest that violence is normative in the lives of homeless women and children with at least half (50% to 60%) experiencing homelessness after fleeing from a violent relationship.
- The majority (92%) of homeless mothers have experienced severe physical and/or sexual assault at some point in their lives.
- Sixty-six percent (66%) experienced severe physical abuse and 43% were sexually molested as children.
- Sixty-three percent (63%) have been subjected to violence by intimate partners.

*Excerpts from: "A Long Journey Home A Guide for Creating Trauma-Informed Services for Mothers and Children Experiencing Homelessness" by Laura Prescott, Sister Witness International Inc.; and Phoebe Soares, Kristina Konnath, and Ellen Bassuk, The National Center on Family Homelessness.*

# The Dwelling Place: Part of the Solution

## INTENSIVE CASE MANAGEMENT AND SUPPORTIVE SERVICES /

Our trauma-informed care consists of two primary healing principles: **safety and empowerment**. Women and children recovering from the trauma of domestic violence need to be and feel safe and become empowered to change their own future. We have 23 years of experience in providing safe dwelling space and services to victims of domestic abuse. We combine best practices with a strong Christian environment. We were founded on the understanding that in order to help victims of domestic abuse heal from their emotional wounds our programs must be Christ-centered and comprehensively designed to address the whole person. We work to help residents become empowered through intensive case management with individualized care plans that recognize and build upon their strengths, as well as provide detailed solution-focused strategies to address their areas for growth and future goals.

## WOMEN'S PROGRAM OVERVIEW /

- *Case Management/Advocacy*
- *Support Group*
- *Domestic Violence Education Courses*
- *Parenting Education*
- *Individualized Therapy*
- *Life Skills Education*
- *Financial Education & Counseling*
- *Education, Jobs and Housing*
- *Bible Studies & Prayer Ministry*

**Alumni Program:** The Dwelling Place provides a continuity of care and support for women ready to live independently and move from our homes through the Alumni Program (est. 2019). As residents become alumni this program provides connection with a mentor and on-going contact with our Staff. Through monthly opportunities for check-in and support, alumni are encouraged as they transition to living independently with continued case management, support groups, events, and mentoring. The Alumni Program helps participants navigate life successfully and free of abuse. This is critical to ensuring no woman feels tempted to return to an unhealthy or abusive relationship due to a lack of support and resources. The Alumni program provides a continued network of care and support for women. Because it is important to evaluate and measure the effectiveness of our program, the Alumni Program tracks indicators and gauges long-term outcomes to ensure we are truly breaking the cycle of abuse.





*“God showed me His love through this temporary home and gave me comfort and offered me a time to heal and learn about His Word. I thank The Dwelling Place for being a light through my darkest moments and for giving me a purpose through Christ our Lord.”*

—RESIDENT

### CHILDREN’S PROGRAM OVERVIEW /

Through our Children’s Program, we envision eliminating the generational cycle of abuse through education and by showing children they are loved and have value.

**GOAL:** To educate, empower, and introduce opportunities that will increase children’s confidence, social skills, cognitive abilities, and learning achievement in school.

Our Children’s Program includes:

- Support groups for emotional healing
- After school tutoring
- Bible studies
- Age appropriate activities for toddlers through teens
- Assisting mothers to promote and model healthy relationships and improve parenting skills with their children

The children in our program:

- Experience safety and freedom from fear
- Strengthen their relationship with their mom
- Express and identify emotions in healthy ways
- Learn dynamics of healthy relationships (Bekah Backman preference)

### Short-Term Outcomes /

- Safe transitional housing, trauma-informed educational programs, and individualized case management are available to all clients admitted into the program.
- Families have healthy social support and the cycle of generational abuse in their family is interrupted.
- Children begin to heal from trauma and are provided opportunities for growth and support in social, emotional, and cognitive development.

### Long-Term Outcomes /

- Women (and their children) can transition to live abuse-free lives.
- Collaborative community-based and faith-based organizations are engaged and active in the support and rehabilitation of families in crisis.
- Women and children experience the hope and power of restoration that comes through a relationship with Jesus.



*“I know my life is forever changed because of TDP. I am able to care for and love my daughter and help her in her journey of healing. TDP staff are extremely supportive and helpful in the journey we are both on. The programming is also helpful in my journey. I am thankful my daughter and I can experience this changed life.”*

—RESIDENT



## FACILITIES DESCRIPTION /

Our housing consists of four duplexes—the equivalent of eight single family homes. These homes are located in the Minneapolis/St. Paul metropolitan area and can house up to 57 individuals at one time. Women each have their own room or unit (for families). **We maintain a low profile and blend in well, which enables women and their children to feel safe living in a neighborhood as opposed to an institutional type setting.**

Our locations are kept confidential for the safety of the women and children we serve, making it very difficult for abusers to find their victims.

Houses are multifunctional, providing:

- Safe transitional housing for the women and children we serve
- Common rooms for women’s and children’s programs
- Program offices

## STAFF AND BOARD /

The Dwelling Place services are delivered by 10 full-time and 4 part-time staff and typically 175 volunteers (in 2020, 80 volunteers due to the pandemic). Our Board of Directors provides strategic direction and financial oversight. Our board, staff, partners and other stakeholders work together to ensure the program provides critical care and services for women and children.

# The Dwelling Place 2020 Service Highlights



Successfully housed and served **30** women and **37** children (**20** of the women are mothers).

We received calls for help from **211** women with children— all victims of domestic abuse. *(Note: Due to Covid 19, calls increased in spring 2020 and decreased as Covid 19 Relief funds were distributed in the summer and fall.)*

All women left domestic violence successfully and detached from their abusers. The women and children found safety and remained safe within our program.

All women attended at least **9** hours of classes each week and learned about the dynamics and effects of domestic abuse.

All women attended at least **1** hour per week of life skills training in budgeting, cooking, nutrition, health and wellness, and other related topics.

All women and children participated in daily Christian spiritual discipleship and Bible studies with the intent to grow in their faith.

**67** women and children received **174** nights of safety; with the average stay of **10.5** months. (Average length of stay of those graduating in 2020 was 11.5 months).

**90%** of mothers improved their parenting skills to break the generational cycle of abuse through parenting consultation, classes and daily parenting guidance from staff.

**87%** of women received advocacy and support for overcoming barriers through transportation, job skills, legal, educational and housing assistance.

**87%** of women established new life goals and skills to better manage emotional health.

All mothers of school-age children learned to advocate for their children within the schools for improved behavior plans as needed.

All school-age children were provided with **1.5** hours per week of support group programming to help them process their trauma.

All school-age children were provided with **1.5** hours of tutoring per week to bridge their learning gap.

All children birth to Pre-K participated in **6-7** hours of children's programming that focuses on socio emotional and spiritual development critical for healing from trauma

1:1 coaching time **1-2** times per week with pre-K children working on large motor skills and socio emotional skills work based on their individual needs addressing any developmental delay. School-aged children participated during the summer.

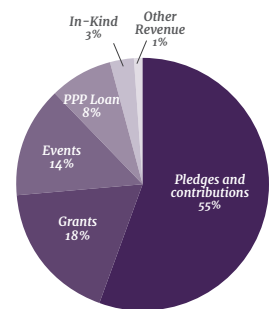


# 2021 Financials & Metrics

Our 2021 budget of \$1,092,326 covers our homes, direct service staff, programming for women and children, and administrative staff functions. The annual cost per bed for one resident for a year of services is \$19,164.

Average Family Size	2021 Expense Table for The Dwelling Place (based on 57 beds available)			
	Day	Week	Month	Annual
Single Woman	\$52.50	\$358.63	\$1,597	\$19,164
Mother and Two Children	\$157.50	\$1,105.59	\$4,791	\$57,492

REVENUE SOURCES /



**FINANCIAL INFORMATION** / The Dwelling Place has a twenty three-year history of providing services to victims of domestic violence and is dedicated to continuing this mission, especially now, when the need is the greatest for victims. Our 2021 strategic plan has been carefully structured and vetted by our Board of Directors to ensure the stability of our programs with a sustainable and diversified fundraising plan. The Dwelling Place is attentive to fair wages and paid positions for essential staff while maximizing volunteer involvement while maximizing volunteer involvement.



## How You Can Help

Battered women are faced with the horrific choice of staying with an abuser or becoming homeless with their children in tow. **Your help is needed now.** The Dwelling Place requires and seeks operating funding sources to house and support the women and children we serve. When additional funding is available, our plans include adding capacity with more housing and enhanced services to serve more women and children in need.

- **Pray** for The Dwelling Place, our residents, and our leadership.
- **Give** a financial donation securely online, by check, or through donor advised fund, or gifts of stock.
- **Leave a Legacy** Consider identifying The Dwelling Place as a beneficiary in your final estate.
- **Sponsor** and attend/participate with our friend & fund raising events.
- **Volunteer** with us! See our website for details.
- **Donate** household items for our homes. Find a list of suggested items on our website.
- **Invite** us to speak at your church or group.
- **Share** our mission and website with others through word of mouth or social media.
- **Contact** us with opportunities for employment and affordable housing for our women and their families.

*You can open doors to resources that create safe homes and break the generational cycle of abuse.*

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[www.thedwellingplacemn.org](http://www.thedwellingplacemn.org) | [thedwellingplacemn](https://www.instagram.com/thedwellingplacemn) [dwellingplaceshelter](https://www.facebook.com/dwellingplaceshelter)