



FRIENDS of the FAMILY

Take Back Tomorrow. Today.

WINTER NEWSLETTER

THE ROARING 20s HAVE BEGUN

A Note from Ben Brustkern, Executive Director

It is hard to believe that we have come to the end of a decade and are ready to start the roaring 20's. (I have a minor in history, in case you were wondering) Instead of looking back at 2019, I would like to share with you what I consider to be unique about Friends of the Family, and what I believe separates us from other organizations.

1. We provide safety - For us this means that 100% of all clients who are in a lethal situation receive an emergency intervention that provides safety options. This could include a night in a local hotel, coming to shelter, or having a conversation that diverts them to a family or friend for the evening. We believe that all people deserve safety and we can meet immediate needs quickly.

2. We permanently house families and individuals - The only thing that ends homelessness is permanent housing options. Allowing a family/individual to choose where they want to live and moving them into private market housing that they can maintain after assistance is key. We permanently house over 200 families/individuals a year.

3. We can end homelessness - This is at the core of everything we do. Every decision around programming, resources, and staffing are dedicated to this vision. The game plan has been set and we believe in assessment, prioritization, stabilization through case management, and permanent housing for all. We know the path and we are going to follow it until we hit zero.

When you support Friends of the Family, know that your volunteer time or donation go towards strengthening our mission. We appreciate all that you do and wish you an awesome 2020!!

Ben Brustkern, Executive Director



FEBRUARY IS TEEN DATING VIOLENCE AWARENESS MONTH

It is estimated that 1 in 10 teens will experience dating violence between the ages of 12-19. Warning signs include:

- Your partner demands you run things by them before doing them
- Your partner threatens you
- Your partner checks your phone or email, or demands to know your password to such things
- Your partner makes you feel guilty to get their way
- Your partner has been physically aggressive or violent with you

Source: domesticshelters.org & cdc.org

Talk to the teens in your life about how to safely end unhealthy relationships. It is important to talk about relationships having ups and downs, and disagreements being normal, but understanding that disrespectful or abusive behavior is not normal or healthy in any relationship.



NATIONAL SLAVERY & HUMAN TRAFFICKING PREVENTION MONTH

National Human Trafficking Awareness Day is January 11. According to the National Trafficking Hotline, #WearBlueDay is the largest initiative to raise awareness of Human Trafficking. They ask people to wear the color blue and take photos and share them to Social Media with the hashtag #WearBlueDay.

This day has been recognized since President Barak Obama read the presidential proclamation of National Slavery and Human trafficking prevention declaring January to be National Slavery and Human Trafficking Prevention month.

For Friends of the Family this day is a day for people to publicly proclaim their solidarity with human trafficking victims and survivors. Wearing a blue shirt is one step in acknowledging the issues of modern-day slavery that people in our community are suffering from. Trafficking is a community issue that we must acknowledge, this day is a day you can take your first step to join Friends of Family and our efforts to support survivors seeking a life of safety and freedom.

DONATION POLICY

Thank you for all of your support over the past year and through the holiday season. We appreciate your generosity and flexibility as we manage in the influx of donations during this time. We have now resumed our regular donation hours. Please visit our website for our UPDATED donation policies, fofia.org.

LOCAL PARTNER FUNDING

THANKS TO THIS QUARTER'S FUNDING PARTNERS

Friends of the Family relies on funding from local partners to meet the needs of people affected by violence and homelessness. Thanks to this quarter's funding partners for supporting our mission!

Alliant Energy Foundation

Max & Helen Guernsey
Charitable Foundation

Otto Schoitz Foundation

Program Fund and Linn
County Fund of the Greater
Cedar Rapids Community
Foundation

Black Hawk County
Community Foundation

CUNA Mutual Foundation

Leighty Fund "Advised"
(Quasi)

BLACK HISTORY IS AMERICAN HISTORY – THE IMPORTANCE OF BLACK HISTORY MONTH

As we start the new year, and move toward Black History Month in February, we want to take a look at the continuing importance of honoring Black History as American History. BHM is a beacon of change and hope that is still needed in this world. While the chains of slavery are gone, all are not free. And there are many reasons that Black History is important, to highlight a few:

- The Challenge of Forgetting – You can tell a great deal about a country and its people by what they deem important enough to remember, to create moments for – what they put in their museums and what they celebrate. Slavery should be viewed as a success story because of the survival, and preservation of culture. The history of slavery is full of heroes who ran away or rebelled, and also those forgotten, who raised families and kept a people alive. All of these, full of strength and humanity.
- The Power of Inspiration – People draw inspiration and guidance from the past. And through that inspiration, people find tools and paths that will help them live their lives. Our history, our entire history, continues to be an important piece of our current existence.

THAT'S A WRAP

FOF Adopt a Family Sees Another Successful Year

Each holiday season, FOF coordinates an Adopt a Family program for its clients in need. Many clients are experiencing their first holiday season in a new home and new community. While they are encouraged to celebrate by doing things other than gifts, such as doing crafts, baking, or attending free community activities, they are so grateful when they do have a few gifts to place under the tree.

This year, FOF donors provided gifts to 61 families, including 63 adults and 91 children who would have otherwise had nothing under the tree. Thank you to all who gave!

"I WOULD LIKE TO THANK FRIENDS OF THE FAMILY AND THOSE WHO DONATED. WE FEEL BLESSED AND THANKFUL FOR THOSE WHO GAVE." – FOF CLIENT



- Preserving a Culture – Museums, archives, and libraries not only preserve culture they legitimize it. There is important work to be done in preserving family photographs, documents, and objects. So much history, pertaining to historical sites, has been paved over, gone through urban renewal, gentrified, or unidentified – BHM can focus attention on the importance of preserving African American culture.

Black History Month helps us to remember that our history is powerful, and should be honored.

National Museum of African American History & Culture - nmaahc.si.edu/



SAVE THE DATE



OUR 6TH ANNUAL CHEFS TAKE
A STAND FUNDRAISER WILL BE
HELD THURSDAY, APRIL 2,
FROM 6-9PM AT THE ISLE
CASINO HOTEL IN WATERLOO.

This unique event brings local chefs and beverage vendors to provide samples of their favorite food and drink. We invite guests to vote for their favorite dish and help us celebrate the winning chef with the Best Dish Award. The evening's activities will also include both silent and live auctions. All proceeds directly support our services. After February 1, please visit fofia.org for tickets. We hope you can join us!



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of the **FAMILY**

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