



FRIENDS of the FAMILY

Take Back Tomorrow. Today.


MAKING REAL CHANGE

A Note from Ben Brustkern, Executive Director

As an organization, Friends of the Family continues to grow and serve more people daily. We have increased our capacity to provide more rental assistance, which means less people are experiencing homelessness in our community. We track data points that tell us about the progress we are making and since the beginning of January we have decreased the number of households who are experiencing homelessness from 267 to 190. **This is real impact.**

We cannot have this impact without every person that I am blessed to call a teammate. The staff at Friends of the Family is as dedicated of a group as you will find. They believe in the vision "Everybody Has a Home" and exemplify the core values of the agency every single day. When people talk about the great resignation, we believe that it is an opportunity to invest in staff. When you invest in FOF, we invest in the people that make real change.

"There is immense power when a group of people with similar interests gets together to work toward the same goals." -Idowu Koyenikan



**MARCH
HOUSING
STATS**

**176 HOUSEHOLDS SUPPORTED
WITH RENTAL ASSISTANCE
&
70 UTILITY BILLS PAID**

SPRING NEWSLETTER

PIT COUNT

The Point-in-Time (PIT) Count is a snapshot of sheltered and unsheltered people experiencing homelessness on one night in January and July. As an agency, we are trained through the Institute for Community Alliances on proper data collection, best practices for safety, and effectively reaching the most people.



Everyone counts

On January 26, 2022, Friends of the Family staff set out with volunteers to reach individuals in the counties we serve, that were experiencing homelessness. We spoke with individuals that needed housing assistance, assessing them right there on the streets. By reaching people where they were at, we were able to get them on to the prioritization list and housed within a short time.

The PIT count is a crucial piece to understanding the homelessness picture. With this data, populations such as youth, veterans, chronically homeless, families, and survivors of domestic violence are identified. When we better understand the people experiencing homelessness, we can gear our efforts and funding toward those populations. The PIT count helps us plan for the needs at our community levels, and demonstrates the needs for funding to other agencies such as HUD, the United Way, and private agencies that want to partner to end homelessness. The PIT count also helps bring awareness to our communities, making a typically invisible population more visible to everyone.

Follow our FOF Facebook or Instagram accounts for updates on how you can get involved in upcoming PIT counts in your area. Or contact Amber, volunteer coordinator, at amber@fofia.org.



CHEFS WRAP-UP

Shouting THANK YOU to a sold out crowd at Chefs Take a Stand, which was finally back in person this year at the Hilton Garden Inn in Cedar Falls. We had 5 chefs, a baker, and 5 beverage vendors that pleased the crowd of 250+. The guests voted and Blue Barn BBQ with Chef Aaron Broshar was the winner this year with his Smoked Duck Ravioli with a bourbon demi-glace, crisp prosciutto, and fire-roasted tomato, finished with a Porcini mushroom powder. Yum!



We were also able to recognize our Outstanding Community Partner Award - the Isle Hotel & Casino, and our Outstanding Community Supporter Award - the Cedar Falls Lions Club. Thanks for all you do to help make impact right here in our community.

Thanks to a sold out crowd, amazing vendors, sponsors, volunteers, auction donors, and auction bidders, we were able to raise almost \$4,000 over our goal of \$20,000 this year. We are so appreciative of everyone who helps support our events which in turn helps support our vision of everyone has a home. We couldn't make the impact we do every day without YOU!





Top Needs

- Pots & pans
- Silverware
- Towels & washcloths
- Twin XL sheets
- New bras, underwear and socks - all sizes
- Paper products - toilet paper, paper towels
- Cleaning products, laundry detergent
- Hygiene products
- Diapers - sizes 4 & 5, baby wipes, baby formula, baby food

Please connect with office manager, Monique, with donation questions or to schedule drop off at 319-576-2200 or Monique@fofia.org

VOLUNTEER APPRECIATION WEEK, APRIL 17-23

National Volunteer Week is an opportunity to recognize and thank volunteers who lend their time, talent, voice and support to causes they care about. Their stories serve to inspire others to take action, to realize their power to make a difference, and be a force that transforms the world.

In honor of this week, we would like to highlight the Cedar Falls Lions Club. The Lions Club is a worldwide charitable society devoted to social and international service. And the Cedar Falls chapter has been supporting FOF for several years through the donation of packages of hygiene supplies for our clients. These packages includes items such as tooth paste, tooth brush, soap, shampoo, conditioner, lotion, etc. All of the items that most of us take for granted each and every day, but for individuals who are in crisis due to violence or homelessness, these items can seem like luxuries.

With the Lions Club donation of 50-75 packages each quarter, we are able to ensure that our guests in shelter each get one upon arrival. And that our clients transitioning from being homeless to living in their very own home, have the supplies they need.

Thank you Cedar Falls Lions Club for you continued support of our clients and their needs! If you are interested in how you can also volunteer to support our work and clients, visit fofia.org or contact Amber at Amber@fofia.org or 319-576-2232.

LOCAL PARTNER FUNDING

Friends of the Family relies on funding from local partners to meet the needs of people affected by violence and homelessness. **Thank you!**

- Linn County Fund
- Bremer County Board of Supervisors

PRIORITIZATION LIST & HOMELESS HOUSING SOLUTIONS

What is a prioritization list and why do we care how many people are on it? The prioritization list is a system that providers use to determine individuals who are eligible for services and who gets to access services. Most homeless providers are required to pull people into their programming from the prioritization list using dynamic prioritization. Dynamic prioritization gives preference to individuals who have the highest barriers, are experiencing the most risk, and are the least likely to resolve their situation on their own without the help of a third parties assistance. When someone begins to experience homelessness and they seek out services, they complete an assessment, and they get put on the prioritization list. When someone resolves into a permanent housing solution, they are removed from the prioritization list.

In the past, for our service areas, the inflow into the prioritization list has exceeded the outflow of people exiting from the list. This means the list gets longer. As the list gets longer, the need begins to outweigh the services available and people on the list wait longer and longer without a home, waiting to access services.

How have we combatted this? Friends of the Family has put a premium on two things. First, we are constantly working to get better at case management. This helps us move people through programming more quickly to permanent housing solutions. As people move through more quickly, this opens up program spots faster and increases outflow from the list. Also, good case management not only helps someone find permanent housing solutions, it also helps individuals not re-enter homelessness, therefore ensuring there is less inflow into the prioritization list. Second, homeless services have began to expand, creating more available program spots in general. Between these two things, the number of people exiting off of the prioritization list begins to be more than the number of people entering onto the list. As this happens, the list shrinks and people wait less time for services.

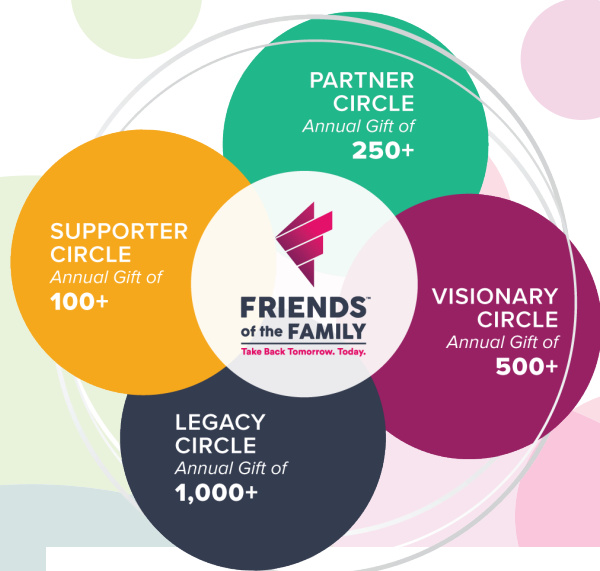
If we are able to do this for a long enough period of time, then we get to functional zero. Functional zero is when every person that enters homelessness has a housing program spot available for them. This is why the prioritization list is vital to the success of our agency and the many other housing service agencies around us.



NATIONAL CRIME VICTIMS RIGHT WEEK

Today FOF is recognized in many communities as a non-profit that works to end homelessness, but **did you know the agency was actually established to help women experiencing domestic violence and assault?** FOF continues to provide services and programming to survivors of violence in 14 counties in Northeast Iowa and understands the importance of safe shelter and housing options for victims of crime. This is why we celebrate National Crime Victim Rights Week (NCVRW), a week in April that is dedicated to the promotion of the rights and services of victims of violence. This year's NCVRW will be celebrated from April 24th-30th across the U.S. Each year a theme is selected for the event, with the 2022 theme being, "Rights, access, equity, for all victims". FOF knows firsthand of the struggles that victims face when seeking services, supports and interventions around their victimization and works to create better paths of access and response. Programs, advocates and allies often wear many hats in regards to supporting victims of violence; providing crisis counseling, shelter and safe housing, support groups, legal and medical advocacy and lobbying for better laws and policies that protect this population. For more information on programs that provide direct support to victims of violence, visit IOWA SERVICES's website.

icadv.org/iowa-victim-service-programs



CIRCLE OF FRIENDS

THANK YOU to our first quarter donors!!
It is with your support that we are able to do all that we do!

LEGACY CIRCLE (\$1,000+)

*Michael & Marie Prachar
St Mary Church
United Methodist Church of Parkersburg
Benevity
Network for Good
Rebekah Heit
Steven & Michelle Phillips
Warren & Barbara Zemke*

VISIONARY CIRCLE (\$500+)

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Save the Date • August 9, 2022 • Beaver Hills Country Club

Presented by:  **GreenState**
CREDIT UNION

Put an End to Homelessness

FRIENDS
of the **FAMILY**
Take Back Tomorrow. Today.



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of the **FAMILY**

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