

Uniting

FOR A BETTER FUTURE

DEAR NEIGHBOR,

On May 4, 2011, my first-born laughed out loud for the first time. I know this because her dad and I managed to capture the first belly-laugh of her 9-week-old self on a smart phone. We are giddy in the video, young parents marveling at the magic of a baby's first laugh, our hearts spilling over with pure joy. That was almost 12 years ago. There are three of them now, and there's nothing better than hearing them all laughing together.

Last year, in the throes of my pandemic-induced-survival-podcast-obsession, I heard a statistic on an episode of Hidden Brain that I will never forget. It went like this: "The average child laughs 400 times a day." I remember thinking (defeatedly), not the kids on our housing waitlists. I thought about the ingredients a child needs to laugh 400 times a day, and all the children in our neighborhoods who don't have those things: comfort, safety, stability. I thought about the heartbreaking stories I've heard from parents through the years, recounting the traumas of their experiences with homelessness. But I also thought about the stories of joy—the happy, relief-filled tears as parents tell us what it means to them that they can finally tuck their child into bed and read them a bedtime story. I thought about the transformation that can happen, as if overnight, and the healing that comes when our most basic human needs are met. I made myself focus on the opportunities to enable the surprising life-support of laughter.

Reflecting on the work of Lydia Place, through these last few years of COVID turmoil, thinking about our family housing waitlist, the longest in my 11 years, about the hurdles we face as a community grappling with growth and history, I'm reminded that it's often our children that bring out our best selves. They remind us what it is to see the world clearly, if in simple ways: right and wrong, fair and unfair, hungry or full. They stand before us assuming, even demanding, that we fix what's wrong with their world. All this time, that laughter statistic has pushed at me, reminding me to kneel down (literally or not) to the vantage point of my four-year-old, to see through her eyes, with that clarity and simplicity that is truer than all our complicated reasoning—our excuses, it seems to them—and then get up and find opportunities to 'fix it', to make things better, no matter how small each effort may seem. But like a little thing can sometimes change a child's tears to smiles, every small act of ours is important, and we try again, try some more, try harder, take a different tack, keep going.

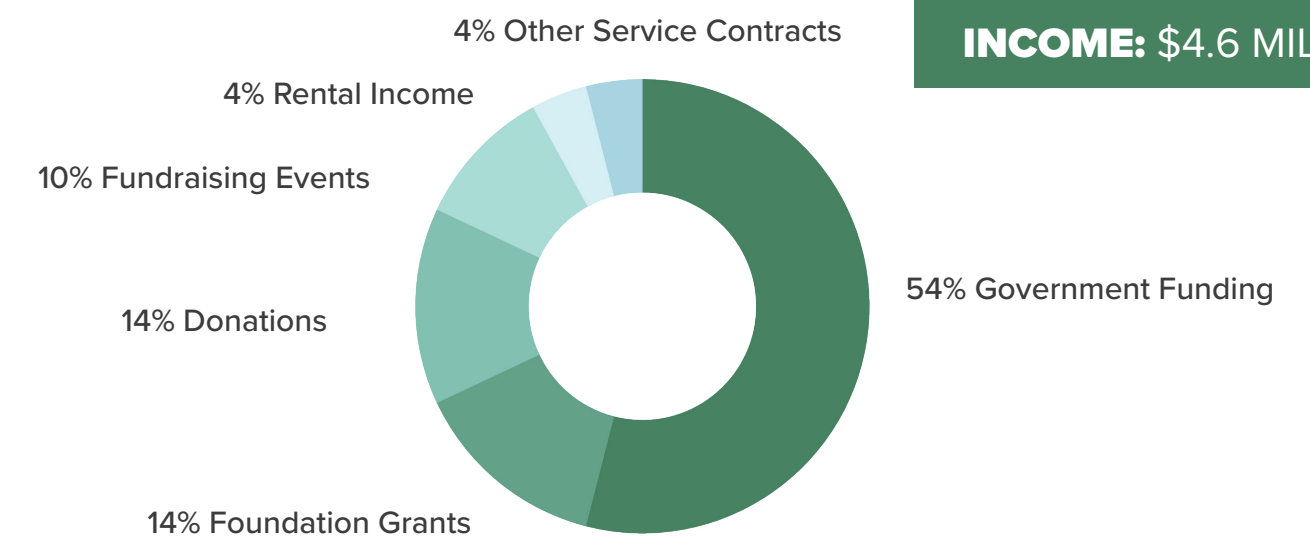


In 2022 we opened Heart House, and the first 11 families settled into their new homes. If you stop by the office at the right time, you might catch a group of tiny humans running around outside, playing and laughing and riding bikes. We've heard from their parents what it means to them to finally feel safe, a feeling that can be hard to fully appreciate if you've always had it, never suddenly lost it. The sight and sound of kids just being kids fills my heart with hope and optimism about the future we can create together, when we stay determinedly, fiercely rooted in what really matters.

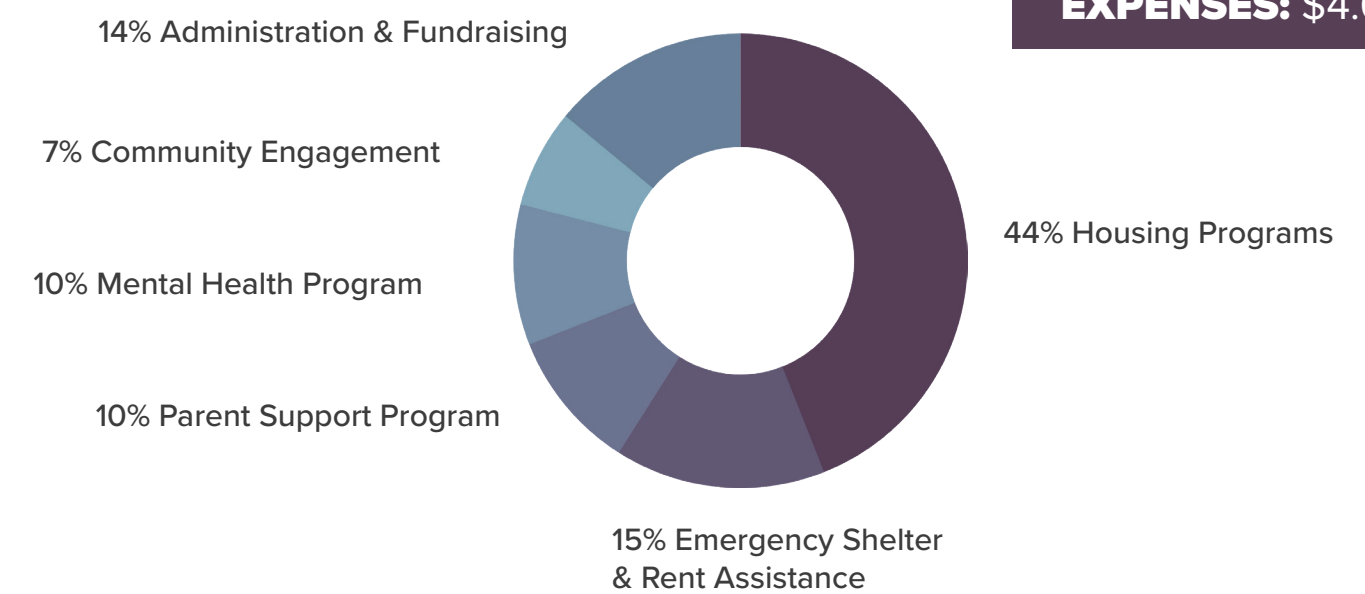
Now, collaborating with the amazing Board and staff at Lydia Place working to support a new executive director, I'm filled, as always, with gratitude for this team and for the community that shows up for our families. Despite all the challenges in front of us, Lydia Place keeps marching forward: expanding housing, providing flexible and innovative access to behavioral health supports, tailoring parent support to meet the needs of our diverse community, asking hard questions about the systems we build or strive to change, and how we can advocate for a more equitable world. It's a just cause, a necessary one, and always will be.

As I look to the future, for Lydia Place and for our beautiful community, I know we will continue to lead with love as we struggle towards a future that celebrates and cultivates opportunities for laughter and joy. Thank you—every one of you who keep showing up for this work, helping us build that community, so all our children have a safe home and the opportunity to laugh, grow, and thrive.

WITH GRATITUDE,



INCOME: \$4.6 MILLION



EXPENSES: \$4.6 MILLION

OUR MISSION

To disrupt the cycle of homelessness and promote sustained independence for current and future generations.

OUR VISION

A compassionate community where everyone has a home and the opportunity to thrive.

OUR VALUES

COMMUNITY

We believe strong healthy communities are the foundation to a better world.

EQUITY

We believe it is our responsibility to actively challenge systems of oppression. We recognize a majority of those experiencing homelessness have been marginalized.

UPSTREAM IMPACT

We believe that the best way to eliminate homelessness is to look beyond short-term solutions and focus on breaking the generational cycle of poverty.

EMPLOYEE WELLNESS

We value each other as humans first. We know that the best outcomes for our clients and our community are achieved when our team is healthy and thriving.

Housing Program



“ **LYDIA PLACE** and their staff not only rescued my family from a tragic case of homelessness, but they also held me up and empowered me through the whole process. Lydia Place provided us with wrap around services including mental health services and case management. They helped us get a vacuum cleaner, pots and pans, rugs, a couch, side tables, bedding, winter clothing, and the list goes on—all thanks to their community partnerships. **The thing I love about Lydia Place is they saw my family as a whole picture.** It wasn’t just about getting us into shelter. It was about helping us build a life where we could be happy together again after accruing such horrible trauma. I slowly walked from despair into hope. It took some time for our family to rebuild and repair but all along the process we were showered with love and support. **We are now in long-term stable housing and as a single mother I finally feel that the ability to thrive is no longer out of reach. It is tangible. We are connected.** ”

Taylor
Lydia Place Rapid Rehousing Program Client

A DREAM eight years in the making—in June of 2022, Heart House welcomed its first family home. All 11 families have since moved in, filling the halls with laughter and the sound of little feet running around. A sense of safety and community has taken shape between family art nights, outdoor picnics, and neighbors getting to know one another.

With the YMCA opening two early-learning classrooms on the lower level of Heart House the end of October, we’re excited to have the final piece of this dream—increasing access to safe, affordable childcare to our families and the broader community—come to fruition.

The Whatcom Housing Alliance Luminary Awards honor individuals, nonprofits, and businesses whose work on housing has made a significant impact benefiting the local community, with demonstrated excellence in leadership, collaboration, ingenuity, and strength. In recognition of Heart House’s innovative design to target two critical needs in our community—housing and childcare access—the Whatcom Housing Alliance honored Heart House with a Housing Luminary Award for Powerful Project during its Housing Week celebrations in October 2022!

34 EARLY LEARNING
CHILDCARE SPOTS
11 NEW CAMPUS
UNITS

WATCH THE VIDEO!



222 & **357**
HOUSEHOLDS CHILDREN
SERVED BY LYDIA PLACE’S HOUSING PROGRAMS
BETWEEN JULY 2021 AND JUNE 2022.

FAMILY HOMELESSNESS continues to grow at a rapid rate in this post-pandemic world. Ending homelessness requires community solutions, and there’s never been a more critical time to wrap our arms around our neighbors in need and provide hope for a future where everyone has a home and the opportunity to thrive.

SINCE MARCH 2020, THE NUMBER OF HOMELESS FAMILIES SEEKING HOUSING SERVICES IN WHATCOM COUNTY HAS

**INCREASED
MORE THAN
3.5 TIMES**

Flex Funds eliminate costly barriers to housing access such as application fees, and also help us shoulder the burdens of unpredictable expenses that could strain a family’s budget. Your donation and financial support can directly promote sustained independence for our families.

LEARN MORE ABOUT
YOUR IMPACT!



\$43,000+
IN FLEXIBLE FUNDS
DISTRIBUTED LAST YEAR

“ Having this home has meant a lot to me and my family. I feel so happy and secure since I moved here. ”

Laila
Heart House Resident



Mental Health Program



1255

1255 THERAPY SESSIONS

PROVIDED BY LYDIA PLACE'S MENTAL HEALTH PROGRAM BETWEEN JULY 2021 AND JUNE 2022



Engaging in mental health therapy can actually physically change and rewire the brain. Brain scans show changes to areas that control fear, emotions, and executive functioning.

OUR MENTAL HEALTH TEAM consists of four staff clinicians as well as graduate level interns who bring unique perspectives and diverse experience to their work with families at Lydia Place. Our mental health program is the only one of its kind in our community. **We strive to be a model of flexibility, accessibility, and cutting-edge mental health care delivery.** We have re-imagined and then put into practice a system of mental health care that is high quality and accessible to those who need it most.

OUR MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES INCLUDE:

- » Mobile, in-home therapy for individuals, families, adults, and children
- » Accessible telehealth
- » Expertise in trauma, homelessness, perinatal mental health, children's mental health, art therapy, and substance abuse
- » Ongoing therapeutic family art groups
- » Crisis intervention
- » Staff training and consultation
- » Community partner education, training, and support

DESTIGMATIZE ASKING FOR HELP:

Connecting your loved ones with a licensed mental health counselor when they need support creates a positive culture surrounding mental health services.



Suicide and Crisis Lifeline now available to anyone throughout the USA and can be reached via phone call or text.

Parent Support Program

DID YOU KNOW our Parent Support Program provides a new book to every child each time we visit? The first years of exploring and playing with books, singing nursery rhymes, listening to stories, recognizing letters and words, and looking at pictures are truly the building blocks for language and literacy development. Having access to books in the home encourages imagination and curiosity, grows vocabulary, and sets kids up for success in school.

We are committed to building the libraries of the families we work with, ensuring that everyone has access to high quality and age-appropriate books. **You can help through your donation of new books for ages 0-5.** Indestructibles and board books are the most in demand. Please help us to uphold our value of equity by donating books that will help all children to feel loved, seen and valued in their community.



VIEW WISHLIST

619 VISITS PROVIDED IN THE PAST YEAR

“The parents I get to work with have been through some rough things and while they are rebuilding and stepping forward into an intentional future they are prioritizing being a stronger family. They want to give their children a better start than they may have had. Seeing parents work so hard to break this cycle is encouraging and I am fortunate to be able to walk alongside them in that process.”

Sarah Kidd
Family Support Specialist

“Working with the Parent Support Team at Lydia Place has given me a better understanding of myself and how I relate to my children. I'm learning that it's okay not to be perfect as long as we're working to be better!”

Judy
Parent Support Program Participant

“I've really enjoyed taking the time to learn about my kid's development, set goals and see the progress that we've all made since we connected with the vparenting team. The support has helped single parenting become more manageable and enjoyable.”

Whitney
Parent Support Program Participant

A special thanks for the continued support Lydia Place receives from:



Community Engagement Program


JOIN US AS A...

-  Financial Contributor
-  Business Partner
-  Volunteer
-  Event Guest



Research shows when we help out on a regular basis, the physical activity and connection with community and fellow volunteers can help protect against depression. This is especially true for folks over 65, according to Mayo Clinic.


MARK YOUR CALENDAR

-  **JANUARY 20TH:** Bowling for Beds
lydiaplace.org/bowlingforbeds
-  **FEBRUARY 11TH:** Hearts for Housing
lydiaplace.org/heartsforhousing
-  **MAY 20TH:** Beer Prom
lydiaplace.org/beerprom

SHOP OUR MERCH

lydiaplace.org/merch



 **BECOME A VOLUNTEER**
MAKE A DIFFERENCE!

“ I choose to volunteer my time and dollars at Lydia Place because housing is a basic human right, and Lydia Place programs and services are making significant strides to ensure this is possible for families and individuals, regardless of who they are, what they believe, or who they love. As a member of the board I am proud to see initiatives and objectives that we oversee successfully implemented by their dedicated team—a team working to end the cycle of homelessness here in Whatcom County. ”

Ryan Thramer
Lydia Place Volunteer



VOLUNTEERS EXPERIENCE A MOOD BOOST.



Yoga on the Green | August 2022

BECOME A BUSINESS PARTNER

Business partnerships play a vital role in sustaining and expanding our programs and services to meet the needs of our community.

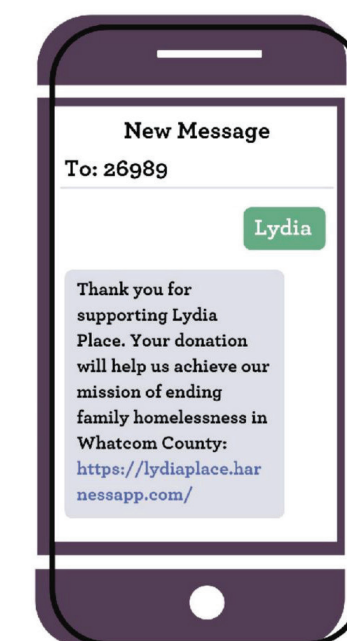


FOR MORE DETAILS VISIT: lydiaplace.org/businesspartnershipopportunities



MORE WAYS TO GIVE BACK

Introducing our new text-to-give mobile feature!



TEXT LYDIA TO 26989

SIGN UP TO ROUND-UP

MAKE A ONE-TIME GIFT

MAKE A MONTHLY GIFT

 Donors who give a monthly minimum gift of \$5.00 or more are automatically enrolled

Standard text messages rates may apply.

A SPECIAL THANK YOU!

Thank you to those that participated in last year's End of Year Campaign and returned your envelope or made an online donation in December or January! You raised over \$125,000!

Thank you to all of our Housing Heroes for your monthly commitment and dedication to ending family homelessness in our community!

Abigail Salinger	Christine A Lewis	Harriet Ludjin	Kathryn Beck	Richard Gwozdz	Abby Lollar	Erin DiDomenico	Kayla C. Litton	Samantha Beardslee
Alex Gorman	Christine Joy Larsen	Holly Lee	Kelly Harrison	Richard Taylor	Adam & Kathryn Resnick	Erin Lynch	Kelly Spencer	Samantha Murry
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Anonymous	Daniel C. Maehren	Jayne and David Curley	Kristin McCullough	Roger Read	Ana Luisa Dias	Hanna Loeffler	Lisa Heezen	Shenandoah Myrick
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VIEW A FULL LIST OF OUR SUPPORTERS



