

## Thank you for empowering her to safety



Women's Center & Shelter  
of Greater Pittsburgh

### You helped Dianne and her teens see a brighter future *free from violence*

Surly looks, silent stares and “whatever” uttered by teens is no shock to any parent. You might be nodding now as you remember your moments there!

You can only imagine how the pain of being a witness to domestic violence complicated the terrain of the mother-teen connection.

Dianne was one of those moms, wondering not only how to reach her kids again, but deep down she feared, could they forgive her? Did they even love her anymore?

#### **You paved the way to success for this family.**

They landed, as many do when they come to our Emergency Shelter, with just the clothes on their backs. To Dianne, that didn't matter. She had what was most precious to her, her kids and a chance for safety. But of course, they needed more, much more.

Because of you, they received everything they needed to give them a fresh start in the best light. Beyond the required essentials, like clothes and bedding, they also were showered with warmth, advocacy, and support. You also made it possible for Dianne to get on-site medical exams for her children, 15-year-old Ebony, and 14-year-old Malcolm.

After enduring violent abuse from her husband, Dianne tried to leave several times. Often frozen and terrified after the punching and kicking, she just didn't know how to get out. Then the violence escalated. He started hitting her in front of the kids, and Dianne knew, no matter what, she had to get them all to safety. One night when her husband's vodka kicked in, she knew it was time.

Like you, Dianne knew that having support to navigate and heal those wounds was the key to healthy relationships now, and for the children later as they forge their intimate partnerships. She worried, had she waited too long? And she knew she couldn't do it alone.

As they got settled in, and the tension from living in abuse began to soften, something else happened. Ebony and Malcolm started to find their voices. These creative kids got to be kids again. As they explored and played using the questions and exercises of Our Community Mixtape Project, thoughts, feelings, dreams all began to rush to the surface. And the feelings of “we love mom” began to re-emerge.



**Dianne sees her kids laughing a lot now. But more importantly, she sees a future without violence for each of them. Nothing makes her happier than that!**

I can't thank you enough for making this possible for Dianne and her children, and the many families like them that need help escaping domestic violence. ●

*Client names and images may have been changed to protect their safety. Thank you for understanding.*

## Just for You...

Each day I walk the halls here I have a fantastic opportunity, one I want to share with you.

It is so amazing I just can't keep it to myself.

As you can imagine the women who arrive at the Shelter have endured unthinkable abuse and horrors that honestly ONLY the strong could survive. Many have shielded their children from the very violence that breaks their own spirits, in hopes it will NOT damage theirs.

Deep amongst the bruises and emotional scars lives something else. It is there in EVERY woman I have the honor to see...a glimmer of light, of hope.

Despite all odds, there is still hope for a better tomorrow for herself, and her children.

Strength and hope is a powerful combination. In the right environment, with the right tools and support, that courage and hope flourish to success.

You make that possible, and for that, I am forever grateful.

Thank you for nourishing that hope.

In gratitude,



Shirl Regan, CEO/ President

## Your PowHERful Impact Last Year

### Your Life-Changing Support...



**6,000+** Women & Children had critical services to **Escape Domestic Violence** and live better lives



You Provided  
**13,737**  
Nights of  
**Emergency Shelter**

You Answered  
**3,716**  
Crisis Calls ~  
Often the First Step to  
**Safety**



You gave IPV victims **Hope**  
Providing Legal  
Advocates  
every step of the way

**3,797**



You Helped File  
**1,327**  
Protection From  
Abuse Orders



You **Empowered**  
Moms so that  
**396**  
people had  
**joy** this  
holiday season



You Helped  
**300+**  
Children heal  
from trauma



### Because of You, Women had Support Leaving Abuse

Thank You for making a difference for women at their most vulnerable time. Life-Threatening Abuse requires Life-Changing Services. Your Support is invaluable. Thank YOU for Everything You do to End Violence Against Women.

~Shirl Regan, President/CEO

**Our mission is to advance the safety and wellbeing of victims of intimate partner violence and prevent and respond to intimate partner violence through social change.**



### See your support in action!

Videos, stories of hope & inspiration, and timely advocacy needs to help women & children.



Join our community



Sign up for our short email newsletter on [WCSCanHelp.org](http://WCSCanHelp.org)



# Could you ask for life-saving help in a foreign country?

## *Thank you for being there for Alejandra*

Beaten and alone, could she bring her children to safety with her? HOW could she ask for help while still learning English and studying to pass the citizenship test?!?

Alejandra wondered this and so much more, and didn't even have one friend to ask. Like many abused women, she was cut off from all support and family.

*Will someone do the unimaginable... even worse than the life-threatening abuse you have endured...take your children away?*

**But thanks to your generous support,** she found the Shelter and the critical services she needed for her entire growing family.

Imagine trying to escape horrific abuse while still learning the customs of your new country, the language and who to trust. Are the police kind in this country? Do women's rights matter? If you need help for abuse will you

be believed, even though there are bruises? And worse yet...will someone do the unimaginable... even worse than the life-threatening abuse you have endured...take your children away?

To help Alejandra, who was nine months pregnant, our specialized advocates jumped into action! Our Child Advocates arranged for in-hospital care and delivery and a quick return to the Shelter to be reunited with her children. Meanwhile, our Housing Advocate found safe, temporary housing so that Mommy plus three could begin a new life free from violence and abuse. All the while, her teenager and three-year-old learned to decompress and began to heal from the trauma of living in abuse in a foreign country.

None of this was possible without you. And no matter what language is used, thank you is just not big enough! ●



**A new beginning  
for a family of four!  
Just priceless.**



## **Thank you for your support!**

Amy was a child resident when her mom sought help for Domestic Violence. When her own relationship became abusive, Amy knew where to turn! She relied on WC&S' support for a PFA and advocacy. Now happy, healthy, and in a wonderful supportive relationship, Amy wants to give back by joining us in Walk for Women on May 12th. She wants to pave the way for others to have the same success! Thank you, Amy! **What's your reason for supporting WC&S? I would love to hear from you, so drop me a note at [info@wcspittsburgh.org](mailto:info@wcspittsburgh.org), or use the enclosed envelope.**

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Shirley'.

## **Because of you...**

*Fun time replaced survival strategies*

*Giggles replaced silence and fear*

*Life without violence is possible.*



United Way Contributor Choice #110



## Words no teenager expects to hear...

*"Give me your phone, Dad killed mine, and we need to get out NOW!"*

*Your ongoing support made help possible*



Jessica's unique safety plan was key to escaping violence. Thank You for making that possible.

Jessica frantically pushed buttons and tried to get her sister's number...the ONE person she could rely on for help. As the gnawing pit in her belly grew, sweat began to bead on her brow, and she knew the unthinkable had just happened.

Her husband, Daryl, had removed her SIM card in her phone, making it worthless in reaching out for help. No numbers, no contacts, nothing was left.

**Even for him, this was controlling, and she feared what would come next.**

Panicked, she borrowed her teenage son's phone and moved as far to the other side of the house from her husband as possible. Thank goodness she knew the number of the Shelter by heart...she had seen it over and over again on their Facebook page.

Your kind gift helped Jessica in her hour of need. Because of you, the Hotline Advocate on the other end was there, and Jessica heard the words she desperately needed to hear, "Hello, are you safe? Do you need help?"

Over two calls, Jessica worked with the WC&S Hotline Advocate on a unique safety plan. She was then able to gather all four children, lie to her husband about where they were going, and take a taxi to WC&S.

*Your kind gift helped Jessica in her hour of need. Because of you, Jessica heard the words she desperately needed to hear, "Hello, are you safe? Do you need help?"*

**Thanks to you this family had even more help.** While staying in Shelter, Jessica attended WC&S support groups, and her children got the attention they needed to begin to heal from trauma. Shelter Advocates helped Jessica make plans to achieve her goal of obtaining her G.E.D. Our Child Advocates arranged a developmental screening for her youngest son. Using WC&S resources, Jessica ultimately secured transitional housing for her and her children. ●

*Join us to Help End Domestic Violence*

## WALK4WOMEN

Highmark Walk for a Healthy Community

**Saturday, May 12, 2018**

**Stage AE**

*All proceeds support WC&S*



Sign up, Support a team [bit.ly/WCSWalk4Women](https://bit.ly/WCSWalk4Women)

HIGHMARK®

