



Women's Center & Shelter of Greater Pittsburgh

Focus on the Good – An Update from Women's Center & Shelter

"I have been so appreciative of the support I have received from the Center in the past, and I hope everyone is staying safe and healthy in these difficult times. Sincerest thanks for the work that you do to keep women safe, myself included."

While the world around us is so uncertain and we try to find our footing in this temporary new normal, I find myself trying to focus on the good as much as possible. The words in the above quote are from a client who got in touch with us to offer her help to other survivors. It's this kind of generosity and compassion that helps us all to get through each day, ready to face the challenges of the next.

And, as I've mentioned in previous updates, we are able to move forward because of all of you. Your displays of kindness have been nothing short of amazing and so needed, considering that domestic violence increases during a pandemic. **Since the beginning of this crisis in mid-March:**

- Many incredible groups and individuals have delivered **prepared meals** for adults and children staying in our Emergency Shelter **nearly every day**, providing not just food but encouragement and support.



Volunteers donating prepared food and supplies to WC&S.

- **Care packages** filled with essentials such as toiletries, cleaning products, diapers and other items have been delivered to or picked up by **non-resident clients** in need. These are clients not currently staying in the Emergency Shelter but utilizing one of our other programs;
- We have created a [COVID-19 Response & Resources page](#) on the WC&S website to ensure survivors and the greater community have access to vital information;
- While continuing all of our existing programs and services, adapting service delivery as needed, we have been able to **launch new initiatives** to respond to emergent needs. One example is a temporary expansion of our MENS (Men Embracing Nonviolence and Safety) Battering Intervention Program. Typically, the MENS Program facilitates group sessions for men who are court-ordered or attend voluntarily. We are now able to take calls from anyone who uses abuse or has controlling behaviors, to offer phone services including counseling, education, and tools to help to understand and begin to change and gain control of feelings. This program is focused on preventing future abuse; it is not intended as an intervention during an abusive episode. **If you or someone you know wants help, call (412) 687-8017 ext. 340** for guidance and more information.

Knowing that the isolation that victims often experience is exacerbated by the stay-at-home order, we have been finding ways to reach people in their homes. We have partnered with the [local media](#) so that those experiencing domestic violence are aware that **help is always available** through any of the DV programs, including WC&S, and we are working on large outreach efforts to make sure those experiencing abuse know we are here and available to help.

There is so much good to reflect upon and so much more work to be done. You can still help by making a [financial contribution](#) to support the increased demand for supplies and expanded services; donating items from our [essential needs list](#); or providing a restaurant-prepared meal for Shelter residents and their children by contacting [Jake at phillipsj@wcspittsburgh.org](mailto:jake@phillipsj@wcspittsburgh.org). I hope you all know just how fortunate we feel to have a robust network of supporters who are helping to make life a little easier for survivors of domestic violence and their children. Thank you for giving us so many reasons to focus on the good.

Sincerely,

Nicole

Nicole

President/CEO