



Housing and Hope

Helping homeless families in crisis find housing and stability

SUMMER 2021

Would you like to get involved with our program? We would love to have you!

There are lots of areas where we can use your help. Does one of these speak to you?

- * Cleaning and preparing houses before new families move in
- * Landscaping and yard maintenance
- * Organizing household donations
- * Soliciting donations for our Hope for Housing fundraiser
- * Serving on our Board of Directors
- * Furniture donation pick up and disposal
- * Assisting with social media and outreach

Just give us a call at 253-638-9798 or drop us a line at office@ststephenhousing.org to learn more!

GETTING BACK INTO THE GROOVE

Life during the past year and a half has been anything but easy for families at St.

Stephen Housing. Even the idea of going back into the world after such a strange time has left many feeling anxious. Some were looking forward to things going back to “normal” only to find that life still isn’t quite the same as they remembered. Families have shared stories of loss— loss of income and jobs, loss of routines and support systems, and most difficult of all, the loss of loved ones. COVID-19 cut off weekend visits to grandparents. Extended family Sunday dinners and even some holiday celebrations were put on hold. Many of the children lost their daily routines of daycare, after school activities, and play dates. They missed in-person

sporting events, school dances, vacations, and graduations. Parents juggled



helping kids adjust to online school, often while at the same time learning to work from home themselves. Amid all the fear, stress and exhaustion, many of our families still found things worth celebrating. Families reported they found comfort in the slower pace of life. Socially distanced activities at the park, newfound time for dinners together, reconnecting with young adult children, and even

nightly neighborhood walks filled in the gaps of prior routines. Adults have shared

how they’ve come to appreciate the freedom and flexibility of work from home jobs or on-line college classes. Having proven they can work from home, some of our parents hope to strike a balance between future on-site work and work from home, with less time spent commuting and more time for family life.

Kids discovered new hobbies and built new skills that pre-pandemic life sometimes rushed them away from. All of us have faced the challenges of COVID-19. Our families met these challenges on top of their already challenging circumstances. Our families continue to demonstrate resilience, positive attitudes, and a firm determination to keep working on their goals.

**Find us online at ststephenhousing.org
Like or follow us on Facebook at facebook.com/ststephenhousing
Follow us on Instagram @[@ststephenhousing](https://instagram.com/ststephenhousing)
Reach us at office@ststephenhousing.org or 253-638-9798
EIN #: 94-3125444**



Chae and her children
Tyrone and Tahlia

THANK YOU!

Thank you to everyone who supports families served by St. Stephen Housing Association through financial and in-kind donations, payroll deductions, and volunteering.

- This year's GiveBig event was our most successful yet, raising over \$13,500.

- Thank you to the Adobe Employee Community Fund for their grant of \$20,000.

- Thanks to the Seattle Foundation for an award of \$25,000 from their COVID-19 Response fund.

- Thank you to the Seattle/King County Coalition on Homelessness for their support of the children in our program with a \$3,000 grant from their Solidarity Fund.

We are so grateful for the continued support of all our donors who make our work possible. Thank you!

Finding My Worth Again

By Chae Gleason

The last time I tried to leave the father of my kids, he tried to kill me in front of my children. He beat me up because I didn't make him something to eat fast enough. That's when I knew I had to get away for good. I woke up the next morning trying to figure out if I was still alive or not, still numb from the shock and hurting from the bruises. I was a mom for the second time, still breastfeeding a young baby and basically doing it all on my own, with no help from my boyfriend. I realized I didn't want to live this way for the rest of my life. I was scared to tell anybody what was really going on because I worried my kids would be taken away and that's the only thing I was holding on to, as selfish as that sounds. It took three years after the first time their dad hurt me to finally decide I couldn't do this anymore. I kept feeling guilty that the kids would hate me later on for leaving their dad, but I knew they deserved better than watching him hurt me. I had told myself for so long, "I'll leave tomorrow." I finally realized I might not be alive tomorrow. Finally, I told my mom and my family what was going on; I stayed in a hotel for a bit and then was referred to SSHA. Moving to my apartment gave me a chance to stop having to always be figuring out how to come back from a loss and find a life where I didn't have to keep taking them. It wasn't the first time I had left their dad and I doubted I would be strong enough to make it my last- but I did it. With the help of my case managers, I kept the no contact order in place and finally broke the cycle. The kids stopped having to check on me to make sure I was ok and they got back to being kids again. I don't want my kids to ever have to grow up and think its ok for anyone to hurt them. My case managers helped me write a resume, get a job, and even encouraged me to start my own hair and eyelash business. My kids loved playing outside and with the neighbor kids. Everyone at SSHA understood us; nobody judged me because of what I went through. It's like I felt pretty and worthy of being normal again you know? Y'all helped me see that it's doable and having a stable safe place for the kids to call home means a lot and I saw so many things falling into place. I couldn't have made it without you.



If you or a loved one is experiencing domestic violence, contact the National Domestic Violence Hotline at:
1-800-799-7233.

ST. STEPHEN HOUSING IS HELPING PEOPLE STAY HOUSED

St. Stephen Housing Association increased its program services in 2020 as a partner in King County's Eviction Prevention and Rental Assistance Program. Many households around the country and in our community are behind on rent due to the pandemic. This program received funding from the federal government to help people experiencing financial hardship due to COVID-19 and who are at risk of homelessness. In the first phase of the program, we worked with households in King County to apply for rental assistance. We are participating in this program again in 2021, doing outreach through our website and Facebook page as well as taking phone calls and enrolling applicants in the program. This year we are also working directly with tenants and landlords to get both back and future rent paid. We are honored to do this critical work and help prevent families from falling into homelessness. If you would like more information on this program, please call us today at the number to the right.



If you or anyone you know living in King County is behind on rent, please reach out to us and we can help you sign up for King County's Eviction Prevention and Rental Assistance Program.

Call us directly at 253-677-4159 from 8am to 8pm, 7days a week or email us at renthelpinfo@gmail.com.



King County

GUY TOWN BIKES



A shout out of appreciation for Guy Town Bikes in Auburn! Our Maintenance Coordinator, Gabby, happened upon Guy Town Bikes on her regular "pandemic walks" in downtown Auburn and a partnership was born! Steve, owner of Guy Town Bikes, runs a professional bicycle shop out of his home garage near our City Park complex. He says, "It is difficult for me to remember a time when I didn't have a bike." After working on bikes for over 30 years, Steve earned his Professional Bicycle Mechanic certification in 2015 from United Bicycle Institute. Guy Town Bikes became a neighborhood name in 2016. Steve is eager and committed

to getting kids and adults riding bikes whether it's their first balance bike or an adult getting back on a bike again. He generously supports our Bicycle Lending Program (begun last summer as a result of generous individual donors and readers of our newsletter!) by donating his time fixing up and keeping our bikes in great shape. The kids in our program sure appreciate it—THANK YOU STEVE!!

Guy Town Bikes offers services from simple repairs to full vintage restorations at very competitive prices. Check him out at guytownbikes.com or on Facebook and Instagram.





13055 SE 192nd St
Renton, WA 98058

Board of Directors

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BY THE NUMBERS:

July 1, 2020 to June 30, 2021

Families housed: 32

123 individuals

44 Adults

79 children

Adults enrolled in school/trade program: 12

Adults who started work in their trade: 8

Exits: Out of 11 families exiting during this period, all 11 (51 individuals) moved into permanent housing!

HOW YOUR GIFT HELPS:

- \$25 buys a welcome bag of cleaning supplies and toiletries for a new family.
- \$50 pays for the gas for a family to get to school, work and job interviews.
- \$75 helps a family stock the kitchen with fresh food.
- \$100 helps a family pay for a rental truck when they move into permanent housing.
- \$150 pays the security deposit for permanent affordable housing for a family.

You can help today by sending your donation in the enclosed envelope or by donating online at:

StStephenHousing.org