

Homelessness in Western Kenosha County

In September, the Sharing Center and Emergency Services Network Legislative Committee hosted an educational session for western Kenosha County legislators to bring awareness to the affordable housing crisis in our area and to the additional funds included with bipartisan support in the state budget to help alleviate it.

We often focus steadfastly, and arguably so, on helping those who are unsheltered and living in their car, on the street, etc.

However, HUD understands the broad circumstances that create unstable households in our nation, and their definition of homelessness includes four broad categories, abbreviated below:

1. People who are living in a place not meant for human habitation, in emergency shelter, in transitional housing, or are exiting an institution where they temporarily resided.
2. People who are losing their primary nighttime residence within 14 days and lack resources or support networks to remain in housing.
3. Families with children or unaccompanied youth who have not had a lease or ownership interest in a housing unit in the last 60 or more days, and who are likely to continue to be unstably housed.
4. People who are fleeing or attempting to flee domestic violence.

In Kenosha County there are currently 167 unsheltered and/or in shelter programs (categories 1 & 4 above). The majority of homeless in our county lie in categories 2 & 3. For Sharing Center participants, 96% are in categories 2 & 3.

Gratefully, there are multiple housing voucher programs currently available to unsheltered western Kenosha County residents. They are here because of collaborative efforts of many Kenosha County and Racine County agencies.

However, individual voucher amounts are often capped at fair market value. If you haven't been in the market for an apartment lately, available 2 bedrooms can range from \$1000 and up, far outside any voucher program. Family income for many of our participants is \$800-\$900 monthly.

The majority who are unstably housed (2 & 3), don't qualify for vouchers and are another tier of homeless significantly impacted by the lack of affordable housing.

We fully understand this is a national problem. Locally though, what can be done? At the CDBG public sessions earlier this year, attendees identified affordable housing as a high need and asked if it could be addressed in conventional and inventive, progressive ways. These suggestions often become part of the City's Consolidated Plan.

Our local housing situation presents significant opportunities for commercial, municipal, county, and state government investment and the opportunity to make impact investments (meaning doing well financially by doing good socially and environmentally).

Having sufficient safe, decent, affordable homes would improve our overall economy and positively impact generations to come.

The Center commits itself to improving affordable housing in our county, and we look forward to all discussion and collaboration sharing that goal.

Annual Service Statistics

Underserved who access Center programs regularly.....	3,500+
Individual pantry users monthly.....	772
Senior boxes.....	823
Diapers	9,480
School Backpacks w/Supplies.....	221
Child Nutrition Program (servings).....	65,530
Pet food (pounds).....	3,467
Percentage of Kenosha Co. students in poverty.....	51%



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What Brings You Comfort and Joy During the Holiday Season?

The holidays are a time when most people look forward to enjoying the festivities in a warm, happy and safe environment. Family gatherings, decorations, parties, presents and community activities bring joy to many. If you are looking for a way to maximize your "warm glow" this season and help others, donating to The Sharing Center provides a way to support something you care about....your neighbors.

Many Western Kenosha County residents are struggling to meet daily expenses. Unemployment, homelessness, long-term illness, senior budgets, life's unexpected events, and working but still struggling to meet expenses can bring a sense of hopelessness. Affordable housing and rising costs present additional challenges. With the holiday season approaching, there is the anxiety and stress of how to make it special when there is no surplus. You can make a difference in the lives of others by helping to fill that gap.

There are many of us who have either experienced these challenges ourselves or know someone who has. When I was a young girl, my father passed away leaving my widowed mother with four young children to provide for. We were blessed to have a caring community of friends and family who stepped in to help support us. The Sharing Center is the caring community for many of your neighbors.

Participating in a caring community while making a positive contribution is something we all can feel good about year-round. Your contributions will help bring joy, peace and a "warm glow" to your neighbors.

On behalf of The Sharing Center Board, Director, Staff and Volunteers....

Best wishes for a joyous holiday season and our sincere thanks for your loyalty and goodwill throughout the year.

"For it is in giving that we receive." --Francis of Assisi



The Sharing Center is able to give a hand up to those in our community with your aid. Community members can donate time, food, goods, and financially to assist those in need. Call 262.298.5535 or visit thesharingcenter.net for more information.

Gretchen Runyan "I volunteer because I can"



I've been volunteering at the Sharing Center just-about 2 1/2 years. I work in "collections" or donations, of all things, not in the Food Pantry. I sort the donations of clothing, shoes, housewares, bedding, toys, games, and books. Depending on the time of year; School Supplies, Christmas Wish Lists, warm coats and boots, Easter baskets and all that fills 'em.

I volunteer because I can: retired, so time is abundant; healthy and able to lift, stack and climb; opportunity, to help, contribute, share with other volunteers; educate and be educated, and make a kid HAPPY over a new pair of shoes.

We so much better appreciate our community, our neighbors, the needs of those around us, life/stories/circumstances when we step outside our comfort zone and open our minds and to others.

Volunteering has, very often, been a part of my life. I was a teen candy striper at our local hospital and did various fundraisers and sponsored drives for people and causes throughout college. Donated my time and gifts at several of the Army bases where we were stationed, including the Army Wives' Clubs Fundraisers/Donations Collection for Families and Deployed Soldiers.

I am a retired accountant, and wrote and administered State and Federal Grants for Students with Special Needs.

- 32 yrs Army active duty for my husband
- Married 46 years
- 9 duty stations
- 7 grandkids
- 4 daughters
- 3 sons-in-law
- 3 step grandkids
- 2 cats
- 1 dog

And continually Blessed!

THERE ARE MANY WAYS TO DONATE

Every day, hundreds of children, families and seniors in Western Kenosha County wake to uncertainty. They wonder if they will have enough to eat, be able to pay the rent, keep the heat on, obtain much needed prescriptions and meet other living expenses. Your generous contributions help to ease that uncertainty and provide comfort and a helping hand.

We encourage you to make a difference this holiday season and throughout the year to provide inspiration and support for families to thrive and in turn become self-sufficient. Your donations keep families warm and housed, learning new job skills, and springboard them to a new life of financial independence.

WAYS TO DONATE

Corporate Employee Matching Gift Programs: DOUBLE YOUR IMPACT Contact your HR Department for specific details (SC Johnson, Johnson & Johnson, Bank of America, Home Depot, Abbvie, Abbott Labs, PepsiCo, Thrivent, Alliant Energy, Subaru, Sephora, Pfizer, Exelon, ATT and many more)

PayPal: set up a recurring monthly or quarterly donation. *The gift that keeps giving!*

Gifts of stock or mutual funds: To donate directly to The Sharing Center contact us for a one-page form.

Text To Donate: TEXT "Sharing Center" at 44321 to give in any amount. No gift is too small.

Check: mail to P.O. Box 172, Trevor, WI 53179

Thank you for your continued support.



Child Nutrition Programs = Success!

Back to school season is an exciting and busy time at the Sharing Center. For many families the challenge of purchasing school supplies, clothing and shoes is real. These financial demands put many families in a tough situation when they are already struggling to meet basic daily expenses. The Sharing Center supports these families both now and throughout the year.

Good nutrition is vital for a child's mental, physical, and emotional growth and development. Nutritious food really is "brain food". Studies show that good nutrition is linked to school readiness and success. The Sharing Center assists students through the Healthy Snacks Program. During the year 2018, 8 area schools were provided with healthy snacks to distribute to students in need throughout the school year and during their summer school programs. 75,119 snack servings were distributed reaching 1,751 children. What an amazing outreach. When student's dietary needs are met they can focus on school.

Thank you again to our community, donors and grantors. Your gifts have made a positive difference in the life of a child and their family. Keep making the world a better place!



Lakewood Grade School students enjoying their morning snacks. Twin Lakes, Wisconsin 2019



Helping this Holiday Season

NOW – CHRISTMAS ADOPT-A-CHILD REGISTRATION BEGINS

For an application visit the Center, access it online at

<http://www.thesharingcenter.net/how-to-help/holidaydonations>

or email director@thesharingcenter.net

OCTOBER 1 – HOLIDAY FOOD DONATIONS BEGIN

Holiday food donations are accepted during normal hours

Our most needed holiday foods are:

- Turkey
- Ham
- Roasted Chicken
- Potatoes (fresh or boxed)
- Stuffing
- Gravy
- Pie or Dessert (fresh or frozen)

DECEMBER 6 – ADOPT-A-CHILD GIFT DELIVERY DEADLINE

By December 6th, please bring unwrapped gifts in a concealed bag or box, with child's name and number attached. You can include wrapping paper and tape. Call the Center if you need more time to shop or an after-hour delivery appointment.

DECEMBER 16 – GENERAL EDUCATIONAL GIFT DELIVERY DEADLINE

An alternative to adopting a specific child is to donate new, unwrapped educational gifts, which we will combine with other donations to help brighten the season for a child who may not have been adopted. A list of most desired gifts is available online. Registration is not required for this program.

Hours:

Monday 9am - 3pm
Wednesday 9am - 4pm
Friday 9am - 12pm

Contact Information

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Call or email for after hour deliveries
director@thesharingcenter.net

www.thesharingcenter.net



Donate by mail or online

