Committed to supporting women experiencing homelessness into a new place to call home.
There is a Crisis in the Community

2018 King County Point-in-Time Count Results

- 12,112 people were experiencing homelessness in King County on January 24, 2018.
- 52% of people were unsheltered.
- 48% were sheltered.

- 6,320 were unsheltered:
  - 28% were in vehicles
  - 13% were in buildings, on the street or outside
  - 11% were in tents
- 5,792 were sheltered:
  - 18% were in transitional housing and safe havens
  - 30% were in emergency shelters
  - 11% were in families with children
  - 921 individuals were veterans
  - 2,624 individuals were unaccompanied youth and young adults
  - 1,518 individuals were unaccompanied youth and young adults
  - 171 of unaccompanied youth were minors (under the age of 18)

For more information on Count Us In, visit AllHomeKC.org | Produced in partnership with Seattle University’s Project on Family Homelessness | All data from Count Us In 2018
Why Do People Become Homeless

According to the National Alliance to End Homelessness:

“the main reason people become homeless is because they cannot find housing they can afford.”

Other reasons include:

• Chronic Health Condition
• Mental Health Conditions
• Substance Abuse Disorders
• Domestic Violence
• Systemic Inequality
Myths and Facts about Homelessness

Myth 1
People are homeless because it’s their own fault.
  • The primary reason for homelessness is that 95% lack access to affordable housing
  • $850/month average income of our clients
  • $1,566/month average rent of a one-bedroom apartment on the Eastside

Myth 2
Homeless people have been homeless too long to re-enter society.
  • 50% of our clients were first-time homeless with the average length of homelessness being five months

Myth 3
Homeless people are too lazy to work or go to school.
  • 48% of women were employed while staying at our shelter
  • 30% of women have a college degree degree
  • 58% of women had a disability prohibiting them from working

Myth 4
Homeless people have addiction issues.
  • 93% of women did not have an addiction issue

Myth 5
Homeless people do not give back to society.
The Sophia Way clients contributed the following:
  • They volunteered at our Day Center or their Church
  • They donated money and items to the shelter
  • They served meals
  • The shared resources and helped others network

Source: Data compiled from client intake forms stored in the King County Housing Management Information System. It is based on a 25-month period (April 2015-May 2017) of The Sophia Way clients in our Night Shelter Program. The average age of the clients we serve is 55 years.
The Sophia Way

The organization began in 2008 in response to a critical need – no shelter existed then for adult women on the Eastside and many women needed a place of safety until they could find a home of their own.

Since we opened our doors, more than 3,000 women have sought shelter, comfort, and support, and we have been able to help many of them move into their own home.

We are now working with a best practice model called “Housing First” – an evidence-based approach that is helping us successfully house significantly more women each year.
Why Housing First?

We believe

… housing gives people a strong foundation for success. They have greater potential to do well when housed as opposed to while being homeless.

… everyone experiencing homeless is “Housing Ready”.

… there should be no prerequisites to get into housing.

… women experiencing homelessness should not have to graduate through a series of programs before they can access housing.

The Housing First approach views housing as the foundation for life improvement and enables access to permanent housing without prerequisites or conditions beyond those of a typical renter.
We believe every woman must be housed.
Our Programs

- Day Center
- Night Shelter Program
- Transitional Home
- Housing Program
- Emergency Shelter
- Outreach Program
Our Programs

Day Center

- FOR ADULT WOMEN AND CHILDREN BELOW 13 YEARS
- OPEN EVERY DAY, 8 A.M. TO 3 P.M.
- ACCESS TO SHOWER, LAUNDRY, COMPUTER, INTERNET, PHONE
- SUPPORTIVE CASE MANAGEMENT SERVICES
- BREAKFAST AND LUNCH SERVED
- TWO BUS TICKETS GIVEN ON EACH VISIT AS WELL AS NEED-BASED RESOURCES

Night Shelter Program

- FOR 21 SINGLE ADULT WOMEN (OVER 18 YEARS) FOR A 6-MONTH STAY
- OPEN EVERY NIGHT FROM 6:45 P.M. TO 7:45 A.M.
- INTAKE PROCESS FOR ENTERING THE PROGRAM
- SUPPORTIVE CASE MANAGEMENT SERVICES
- ACCESS TO HOUSING SERVICES AND PROGRAMS
Our Programs

Transitional Housing

- HOLLY HOUSE, LOCATED IN FACTORIA AREA OF BELLEVUE
- FOR SINGLE ADULT WOMEN (18+ YEARS)
- HOUSING AT SUBSIDIZED RENTS PROVIDED TO SIX WOMEN FOR NINE MONTHS
- SUPPORTIVE CASE MANAGEMENT SERVICES
- ACCESS TO HOUSING SERVICES AND PROGRAMS

Housing Program

- FOR SINGLE ADULT WOMEN (18+ YEARS)
- SECTION 8 PROJECT-BASED VOUCHERS
- RAP
Our Programs

Emergency Shelter

- FOR SINGLE ADULT WOMEN (18+ YEARS)
- OPEN FROM OCTOBER TO MAY, 8:30 P.M. TO 7:30 A.M.
- NO RESERVATIONS; FIRST COME FIRST SERVE BASIS
- SLEEPING MATS AND BLANKETS PROVIDED
- HOT DINNER AND COLD BREAKFAST SERVED
- REFERRALS FOR HOUSING AND RESOURCES

Outreach Program

- MEETING WOMEN WHERE THEY WERE – AT LIBRARIES, ENCAMPMENTS, PARKS, SAFE PARKING, GROCERY STORES, MALLS, ETC.
- BUILDING RELATIONSHIPS
- CONNECTING TO SERVICES
- MEETING NEEDS AT THE POINT OF NEED
Facts

• The age range of our clients is 18 to 81 years.
• The average age of women is 55 years old.
• Almost 40% of them have a disability.
• 15% are chronically homeless (disabled and have been homeless for a year or more or more than four separate times)
• 87% have an income of $20K/year or less.
• 29% have zero income.
• We served six transgender clients at our Emergency Shelter this season
Numbers: 2018 (to date)

Women housed 29
Women served 500+
Bed nights provided 8,000
(Sophia's Place and Emergency Shelter)
Day Center visitors 4742
Meals served 12,741
Our Impact in 2017

125 women received housing

490 women served at our Day Center

77 women served at our Night Shelter Program

232 women served at our Emergency Shelter

50+ women reached through our new Outreach Program (started in 2017)
Sophia Voices

"I CAME TO THE SOPHIA WAY FROM A HOSPITAL ROOM. A FAILED SUICIDE ATTEMPT AFTER AN EVICTION, RELAPSE, AND LOSS OF MY FAMILIAL SUPPORT LEFT ME HOMELESS AND HOPELESS. THE STABILITY IN SOPHIA'S PLACE HAS ALLOWED ME TO RECOVER FROM ABUSE, ALCOHOLISM, AND MAJOR DEPRESSION. DURING MY STAY I FOUND A JOB, BECAME ACTIVE IN RECOVERY, LEARNED OF RESOURCES, AND FINALLY MOVED INTO AN APARTMENT I CAN AFFORD BY MYSELF."

"LIVING AT SOPHIA'S PLACE HAS GIVEN ME SIX MONTHS OF REFUGE; LONG ENOUGH TO FOCUS ON OTHER MATTERS, TO MAKE THINGS HAPPEN AND NOT WORRY ABOUT WHERE TO STORE MY BELONGINGS. KNOWING THAT I CAN HAVE THE SAME SAFE PLACE AND SAME SAFE BED EACH NIGHT IS HUGE!"

"THE IMPACT [OF LIVING AT SOPHIA'S PLACE] HAS BEEN A SIGNIFICANT ONE. IT MADE ME HUMBLE AND ENABLED ME TO UNDERSTAND FULLY ABOUT THE FLIGHT AND FIGHT OF BEING HOMELESS. IT MADE ME REALIZED THERE IS MORE NEEDED TO BE DONE TO HELP INDIVIDUALS/FAMILIES TO GET BACK ON THEIR FEET. I WANT TO GIVE BACK TO MY COMMUNITY SOMEDAY SOON."

"I FORGET TO SWITCH OFF MY ROOM LIGHTS THINKING I LIVE IN THE SHELTER, I SHOULD GET USED TO MY HOME."

THERE WERE TEARS OF JOY AND A FEELING OF ACCOMPLISHMENT IN THE OFFICE (A HAPPY DANCE TOO!) WHEN MARY WAS APPROVED FOR AN APARTMENT IN AUGUST.
A Day at the Shelter

Zulaika, age 40 years, came to the U.S. as a sponsored immigrant. Unfortunately she was repeatedly assaulted and beaten by the person sponsoring her, a family friend, which forced her to leave the only home she had. She applied for a change in her residency status, but the process is slow and backlogged, and due to the circumstances of how she arrived in the U.S., there are no expedited processes like there are for other visas. Her work visa is expected to come in the next six months, but until then she cannot legally work.

Zulaika found her way to Sophia’s Place and entered the Night Shelter Program

A typical day at our shelter

• Zulaika wakes up, eats breakfast at the shelter and then goes to Goodwill where she takes English classes and works with tutors in their computer lab.

• She attends church and volunteers there until the shelter opens at night, then she comes back, eats dinner and goes to bed.
A Day at the Shelter (contd.)

What The Sophia Way offers

• Without the support of The Sophia Way, Zulaika would have to spend most days navigating shelters that don’t have a long-term residency.

• We have helped her complete 26 housing applications, secured a copy of her immigration forms, and made arrangements with her church to employ her after her work visa was approved.

• Since her church can only pay her $200/month, she is limited to transitional housing for low-income residents. She has applied to long-term housing and is on a two year-long waitlist.

• The hope and intent is that when she comes to the top of the list, she will be eligible (many programs require proof of citizenship for eligibility).

What next

• Zulaika will continue to work at the Church thrift store.

• She will be moving to Holly House, our transitional housing, after her 6-month stay at the shelter. She is not eligible for ANY other transitional housing in King County because of stringent requirements – she must be employed, or won't allow the church to pay for her housing.

• While she lives at Holly House, she can save up money to move into her own apartment.
How You Can Contribute

**Donate** a financial contribution at www.sophiaway.org

**Donate In-kind** material – through Amazon Wish list

**Volunteer** with one of our programs or with a team

**Provide Meals** to one of our three emergency programs

**Advocate** by helping us shatter the myths that perpetuate the homeless story