



Powerful Alternatives

A Newsletter for Supporters of Alternatives For Girls

SPECIAL FEATURE -

At the Crisis Resource Center, Hope Shines Because of You

Alternatives For Girls' Crisis Resource Center offers support and resources to girls and women with nowhere else to turn.



A safe place. A helping hand. A fresh start. From the more than 1,000 crisis calls answered last year, to a hot shower and a fresh change of clothes. Your support of Alterna-

tives For Girls makes the critical work of the Crisis Resource Center possible.

Finding Shelter, Providing Clothing, and Much More

The Crisis Resource Center connects girls, young women, and families with needed services, such as shelter, health care, counseling and much more. The center not only offers a 24/7 resource line, but also a walk-in center located at Alternatives For Girls. Those who walk-in to AFG's Crisis Resource Center can receive mate-

rial resources including clothing, hygiene items, and small meals, as well as services like case planning, help getting an ID or birth certificate, an available shower, and more.

Anyone in need can use the Crisis Resource Center as long as they are eligible for one of Alternatives For Girls' programs, even if they are not currently enrolled.

A Judgement Free Zone

One woman in Alternatives For Girls' Safe Choices Project, Kelli, shares how the Resource Center has helped her. "[The Crisis Resource Center] means the world to me," she reflects. "I've received clothing,

See [The Crisis Resource Center](#), continued on page 2

A brand new start, because of you:

Monica's Incredible Journey: from Homeless to Home

When Monica and her children faced living on the streets, your support meant they had somewhere safe to stay.

When Monica* first came to Alternatives For Girls, over two years ago, she had run out of options.

Finding Her Way

Growing up, she dealt with the death of her mother, a tough relationship with her father, being in the foster care system and getting

separated from her siblings.

After living in the care of her aunt

for years, she was kicked out at the age of 18. "One day, my aunt made me walk miles home from work, in the cold, while I was pregnant with my son," Monica recalls. "That's when she told me to leave. She stopped receiving child support for me [through the foster care system], and she didn't want me to stay there anymore."

Her sister told her about Alternatives For Girls, but at the time, she was scared to go to a shelter. She bounced around from house to house for the next year.

Monica then began living with her daughter's father. Things were going well for awhile and he was helping her pay the bills. Then, he was shot and killed. Monica and her two children didn't have anywhere to go. Alternatives For Girls was Monica's last option before living on the streets.

See [Monica's Incredible Journey](#), continued on page 3

The Crisis Resource Center, continued from page 1



“They make me feel like I’m somebody. They make me feel like I’m equal.” Kelli shares. Your support of AFG means that thousands of those in crisis get the help they need!

bus tickets, foods, hygiene products, blankets, scarves, hats, everything!” The Safe Choices Project focuses on providing trauma-informed harm reduction services to girls and women who are in the sex industry, including those who are exploited, trafficked, or otherwise forced.

More importantly, the Crisis Resource Center offers a safe, supportive, non-judgmental space to get help. “It’s a place that they know they are not being judged. They know we are just here for support and we are a place of nonjudgement. We just care about how we can help them,” Shannon Brant, Crisis Resource Center Manager shares. Kelli agrees, “They make me feel like I’m somebody. They make me feel like I’m equal.”

Volunteers Needed

Ultimately, the goal is for the Crisis Resource Center, including walk-in services, to be open 24/7. Right now, due to staffing limitations, the walk-in center is open from 9am-5pm during the week. When the Crisis Resource Center is closed, the 24/7 resource line is maintained by staff in the AFG Shelter.

“Our main goal right now is to be able to have the Crisis Resource Center open on the weekends. But we need more volunteers,” Shannon shares. Volunteers receive training before volunteering in the Crisis Resource Center and supervision from AFG staff. You can help support girls, women, and families in crisis! Contact Jenny Clement, Volunteer Services Manager, at 313-361-4000 to learn more about becoming a volunteer in the Crisis Resource Center.

Life Changing Support

In addition to volunteers, Shannon says the Crisis Resource Center is also in need of donations to help those who need support. “We are in need of gift cards to grocery stores or pharmacies, so people can get food or fill a prescription. The Crisis Resource Center is also in need of new bras, socks, and underwear, winter coats, and nonperishable food like microwaveable meals, protein bars, and bottles of water.” In addition, feel good items like body spray or perfume, nail polish, or makeup, are needed to help provide comfort to those in crisis.

“You have the potential of changing someone’s life every time you answer the phone,” Shannon explains. “You are that person who they don’t have to worry about judging them. They are able to hear the information you are giving them. And that could change their life for the better.” Kelli agrees, “I wouldn’t change anything about the Resource Center. I just love everyone at AFG!”

You Make This All Possible!

Because of your support, Kelli, and hundreds of others, have a place to turn when they need it most. Thank you for making it all possible. 

What’s Going On at AFG?

Read All About It:

Mackinac Island Field Trip: In September, a group of girls from the Prevention Program went on a two day, one night trip to Mackinac Island! The girls visited The Little Barn, a non-profit horseback riding organization, to tour their facility and ride their horses. During the trip, the group also took a carriage tour, biked around the island and much more.

“Your Vote Matters”: On September 27th, AFG held “Your Vote Matters”, a nonpartisan event to encourage registered and unregistered voters to get out and vote this election season. Over 25 youth attended and had the opportunity to register to vote, learn about their voting rights, and talk about why voting is important to them.

Volunteers needed: to become mentors, help out in the Crisis Resource Center, provide street outreach, and more! Call Jenny Clement at 313-361-4000 x248 and learn how YOU can help girls and young women!



The young women take a bike tour of Mackinac Island during their recent trip. Thank you to The Little Barn and Detroit Horse Power for making this trip possible!

Monica's Incredible Journey, continued from page 1

A Home to Call Her Own

"I did not want to be at AFG, I was crying and crying when I came here. But I had no choice, I had to keep my kids," Monica remembers. After she and her children got settled in, Monica said things started to look up. "I got it in my head that this is what I had to do and things got better."

During her time at Alternatives For Girls, Monica says she learned parenting skills and life skills she needed to live on her own.

Monica and her children stayed at Alternatives For Girls for 9 months, and since they left, things are going great! She is living in her own apartment with her children, has a stable, good paying job, and she just started taking classes at a local community

college and wants to become a psychiatrist.

"I don't know where I would be if I hadn't come to AFG. I know my kids wouldn't be with me, but I don't know where I would be," Monica reflects.

You Help Girls & Young Women - Every Day

Monica is in school, has a great job that helps her support her children, and finally has a safe and stable home to call her own. By supporting Alternatives For Girls, you're providing a safe place for young women for whom AFG may be the only option. Thank you! ✨

**Name has been changed to protect her confidentiality.*

2017 Role Model Dinner Save The Date: *March 23, 2017*

Next Spring, Alternatives For Girls, and event co-chairs Don Manvel and Barbara Whittaker, will host the Annual Role Model Dinner. The 2017 dinner will not only celebrate the role model awardees, but also *Alternatives For Girls' 30th Anniversary* of serving homeless and high-risk girls and young women.

The dinner will honor the 2017 Role Models:

- *Cindy Estrada - Vice President, UAW*
- *Carol Goss - Former President & CEO, The Skillman Foundation*
- *Dr. Rosemary Sarri - Professor Emerita of Social Work, University of Michigan*

2017 Role Model Dinner

Thursday, March 23, 2017

Cobo Center
1 Washington Blvd
Detroit, MI 48226

Presenting Sponsor:
DTE Energy Foundation

Sponsorship opportunities are available and offer many benefits. Contact Alexandria Armstrong at 313-361-4000 x 223 for more information.

Tickets are \$200 each. To purchase tickets or for more information, visit www.AlternativesForGirls.org

Mission:

Alternatives For Girls' mission is to help homeless and high-risk girls and young women avoid violence, teen pregnancy and exploitation, and help them to explore and access the support, resources and opportunities necessary to be safe, to grow strong and to make positive choices in their lives.

Board of Directors:

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Amanda (Amy) Good

Departments:

Shelter and Transition to Independent Living:

AFG's Shelter Program provides a stable home, counseling, and life skills training to homeless young women age 15-21 and their children. The goal is to empower them to lead productive and fulfilling lives.

Outreach and Education Services:

AFG's Outreach Program helps teens and women engaged in high-risk activities, such as street-based prostitution, drug use, and gang involvement, to understand the risks of such activities and transition to safe choices and healthy lives.

Community Based Prevention:

AFG's Prevention Program serves girls ages 4-18 who are at risk of pregnancy, gang involvement, abusing drugs or alcohol and school truancy. We engage them through after-school programs, a teen leadership program, and a summer camp.

Powerful Alternatives is a publication of Alternatives For Girls

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For all you do, thank you.

Support AFG While You Shop!

The end of the year is one of the busiest times for online shopping. If you shop online, here are two easy ways to support Alternatives For Girls while you shop!

If you are an Amazon customer, by shopping at Smile.Amazon.com and designating AFG as your nonprofit of choice, Amazon will donate 0.5% of the purchase price to AFG! Here's how:

Visit Smile.Amazon.com and sign in using your Amazon account email and password. Next, under "Your Account" select "Change Your Charity". Search for "Alternatives For Girls" and select AFG as your charity of choice.

Giving Assistant is an online shopping rewards program that lets you earn money as you shop at your favorite online stores. You earn cash back from each eligible purchase and then you can easily donate your earnings to a participating nonprofit. Here's how to sign up:

Visit GivingAssistant.org and create an account. Then under "My Account", click "Settings" and then the "Change Charity" button. Search for "Alternatives For Girls" and then select AFG as your charity of choice.



Alternatives For Girls

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and YouTube:

Search "Alternatives For Girls"

www.AlternativesForGirls.org

At AFG we respect everyone who comes to us for help – and many are working toward a brighter future. So, while their stories are true, names and images may have been changed to protect their privacy. Thank you for understanding.

BRIEFING ROOM

Annual Positive Choices, Powerful Lives Event

On September 22nd, Alternatives For Girls held the Annual Positive Choices, Powerful Lives event at the Charles H. Wright Museum of African American History. The event raised more than **\$32,000** for AFG, and had over 160 attendees! The guests heard inspirational stories from three young women, one from each of AFG's programs.

"Being a part of AFG gave me a chance to find myself, try to stress less and remain focused," shared Juanita, a resident in AFG's Shelter, during the event. "It really wasn't a shelter to me, it was a home I always wanted."

AFG would like to thank the table hosts for inviting their friends and families to the event, Michelle Crockett, Chair of AFG's Board of Directors, for being our emcee, Karl Hannum, for making a moving case to support AFG, Shani, Itzel, Juanita, and Courtney for sharing their inspiring stories, and finally all of our event attendees for spending the evening with us!

AFG Receives Generous Support from Verizon

As part of the HopeLine program, Verizon provides grants to organizations that assist with violence prevention, intervention, and awareness across the nation. Recently, Verizon awarded Alternatives For Girls with a \$26,450 grant to help provide violence prevention to the girls and young women in AFG's Prevention Department! This support will help girls and young women learn about peer pressure, dating violence, personal safety, and much more.

Verizon also collects, refurbishes and then donates used phones to victims of domestic violence. Last year, more than 1,400 phones were also provided to domestic violence victims. **Alternatives For Girls would like to thank Verizon for its generous support of the girls and young women in our programs and for taking a stand against violence in our communities!**

