



When It Rains It Pours, and Then There's a Rainbow!

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We are so grateful for this amazing and supportive community, and so are the families whom we serve. They want you to know that they are grateful for the love and support they have received over the last several months. You have helped families like Taylor and Asia. Taylor, her husband, and her daughter Asia were living in a Grand Rapids apartment. All too fast, and so painfully, Taylor and Asia had to leave as the living situation had become unsafe. It's almost unthinkable. Taylor didn't have a lot of support in town. She was heartbroken, scared and unsure of her next move. Her and her daughter slept in their car for almost a week before making their way to Family Promise. When Taylor arrived we made sure she knew that we had her back, "Asia and you are safe, and we are here for you, Taylor. You got this," her case manager told her. Taylor started to build a relationship with her case manager, and started to trust herself again. Taylor worked third shift and worked hard every single day. Oftentimes, she would meet with her case manager in the morning; right after her shift ended. Taylor looked, felt and was absolutely exhausted, but she knew she had to keep going for her daughter. Taylor's case manager would often ask, "Are you going to be able to rest soon?" Taylor would shake her head no and say, "Maybe an hour or two before I pick-up Asia from school." We've all heard the saying, "when it rains it pours." It was definitely true for Taylor. While staying in shelter, she received a heartbreaking phone call that her father passed away. She cried and cried; feelings of grief and loneliness filled her mind, body and spirit. Amazingly, Taylor walked through her grief, went to work, took great care of her daughter and continued to push forward. The resolve that Taylor and Asia showed during some of the most traumatic times of life is what makes Taylor and Asia so special.

Taylor's hard work and perseverance finally paid off when she learned that her Partners In Housing application was approved for a forever home. Everyone celebrated. Especially Asia, who giggled when she learned she was going home to pick out her bedroom. It rained, then poured and Taylor and Asia marched their way to their rainbow.

Taylor will be a homeowner in the next few months. She will never have to go through this experience of homelessness again, but she will tell you if not for Family Promise she doesn't know where her and Asia would be. We cannot imagine doing this work without partners like you. Thanks for all the ways, seen and unseen, that you have helped to end homelessness, one family at a time. *(names and photo has been changed due to privacy.)*



Dear Family Promise friends and family,

I hope this letter finds you and your loved ones healthy and safe. At our core, Family Promise is about community and thanks to this amazing community, FPGR has served almost 400 individuals, over 100 families, with emergency shelter and basic needs since the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic. As it became clear that the pandemic had reached our community, FPGR and local partners began to focus on what needs to happen Now, Near, and Long Term for our community to safely come together once again.

For Family Promise our "Now" was to quickly redesign family shelter. Our approach to providing resources to families is a community based one, and has been from the start. However, the pandemic put this model on hold and we needed to quickly move families into hotels to ensure they were no longer congregated together. Family Promise is the leader in providing family emergency shelter across the country, and we will continue to safely do this work

during these challenging times. We have been working with Family Promise national offices and national agencies like the CDC, HUD, USICH, and The Institute for Children, Poverty and Homelessness to ensure that we are learning from other states and entities, and utilizing evidence based practices so families, kids, volunteers, and staff are safe. Thanks to the immediate action taken, we have had zero cases of COVID-19 among staff, families and volunteers! We are very proud of these results, and we are determined to continue keeping families and children who are experiencing homelessness safe during this pandemic. We are so thankful to the local businesses, foundations, United Way, and individuals that made this quick and strategic work possible.

Our next steps, or the "Near", is to continue to work with local foundations and congregations, as well as our local city and county offices, to ensure we are following the best practices and safety guidelines for our families. We know that family emergency shelter will continue to look different through the summer, and we will pivot our work as needed to accomplish this. Thanks to incredible community support, we have not only increased our capacity to serve families, but we continue to provide families with basic needs, connecting them to mainstream resources, and are still helping them move home! Financial and in-kind contributions from foundations, businesses, and individuals like you are what has allowed us to continue our work. Volunteers are still helping families when it is safe to do so, delivering meals to families, new furniture, and even bikes! Over the next few months, we will continue to adapt our services based on what we learn from the health care community, and stand with our resilient families and children.

We are confident that, while the "Long Term" solution seems far away, we will see a time when we are back in community with each other. We look forward to the day when we will be able to go back to the foundation of FPGR, where we can utilize community resources and provide safe shelter and housing for children and their families with the hospitality you have come to expect from Family Promise, our congregations, and partners. Until then, family homelessness is still a community issue and will require a community response, and your support is our secret sauce in this important work. We are looking forward to continuing to work with our congregations and non-profit partners in this new capacity, until we can safely re-engage. We are confident as a community, we will once again be able to break bread, share time together, and lift each other up.

We are grateful to have you all as partners in this work. We'll keep you and your loved ones in our thoughts and prayers and ask that you continue to pray for the families that enter our doors.

Peace,

Cheryl Schuch
Executive Director

VOLUNTEER HIGHLIGHTS

★ Thank you ★ Thank you



Typically, we highlight the important work that community members are doing throughout Kent County. Although COVID-19 has paused volunteer opportunities, there's still much being accomplished for families and children. We have had bikes delivered to kids, hand sanitizer and masks were delivered from local breweries and businesses, and Ready-To-Go Food bags were dropped off at our Day Center. Thank you for keeping families and children experiencing homelessness on your radar. We are in this together!

If you are interested in supporting families during COVID-19, check out our website for our current wishlist. We are taking limited high priority needs by appointment only.

COMMUNITY PARTNER HIGHLIGHT



When COVID-19 hit in early March, FPGR was thrilled to receive an extremely generous gift from Bank of America to support Family Promise families in emergency hotel shelter. This was just one aspect of the bank's broader \$100 million philanthropic response to the unprecedented challenges from the coronavirus. The swift action from Bank of America allowed Family Promise to pivot quickly and move families into hotels in order to keep families safe, and we did! FPGR is proud to report that we have had zero COVID-19 cases. Since COVID-19, we have served over 100 families with emergency hotel shelter and have helped over 30 families move home!

We have been overwhelmed by this community showing up to support families and children experiencing homelessness! Thank you to the many businesses, foundations, congregations, and community organizations that have contributed to the work of ending homelessness during the COVID-19 pandemic. We are in this together!

SPECIAL EVENTS



Changing the Course For Children

Join us for the 18th Annual Changing the Course for Children Golf Outing Wednesday, September 16th! With over 80 families in emergency family hotel shelter we are raising funds to assist children in Kent County experiencing homelessness. We can truly change the course for children, and have fun while we do this! Although the event will look and feel a little bit different this year in light of COVID-19, we will still be able to Change the Course for Children. FPGR is looking for 25 foursomes to join us; are you one of the foursomes!?!

For more info call or email Kate O'Keefe:
Kate@familypromisegr.org
616-608-8905

Thank you for making sure children in our community have a safe place to sleep, a warm meal in their belly and help finding a place to call home.

Family Promise

of Grand Rapids

ENDING HOMELESSNESS... ONE FAMILY AT A TIME

Your Gift Matters

Your gift impacts so many families and children who are experiencing homelessness right here in our community! Our families need safe shelter, basic needs and help finding a new home! Your gift makes a difference.

All gifts are tax deductible and are greatly appreciated.

How to Give

We have online giving! Please visit familypromisegr.org and click 'Donate' to enter your info!

We love mail! Using the envelope enclosed, please make checks payable to Family Promise of Grand Rapids.

Wish List Items



Infants

Diapers & wipes
Bibs
Blankets
Strollers
Pack and Plays



Children

Socks & underwear
Baby clothes



Transportation

Bus tickets
Gas cards (Meijer)



Gift cards for basic necessities

Meijer, Walmart,
Family Dollar



Small Appliances

Microwave
Coffee pots
Toaster
Cooking utensils
Cleaning supplies



Kitchenware

Pots & pans
Silverware
Dinnerware
Glasses



Adult

Socks & underwear
(all sizes, men & women)



Cleaning

Buckets with
cleaning supplies
Mops and brooms
Laundry & dish
soap



Hygiene

Women hygiene
products
Men hygiene
products



Bedroom

Air mattresses &
pumps
Blankets and sheet
sets (twin, full and
queen)
Pillows



Bath

Towels
Shower curtains
& hooks