

SOS, More than a Shelter

A Message from the Executive Director of SOS

The plight of homeless and battered women and children is a clear indication of violence in our society. Homelessness is a form of economic violence, while battering is a form of what must be perceived as unacceptable control and oppression of women and children.

SOS was started because of a desperate need to address the problems of homeless and battered women and children in the Upper Passaic County and surrounding communities. Prior to the opening of our shelter, there were virtually no services available to help the plight of homeless, battered women or their children in the area.

Because the undertaking of this project is so all encompassing, our needs are sometimes overwhelming. We have looked toward the community and volunteers for support, and the response has been heartwarming and encouraging.

In addition to providing the basic needs of food, shelter, and supportive services, we also provide programs which help build sustaining self-esteem and training which empower the women to achieve economic independence.

We are very excited about the results of our weekly Assertiveness Training Group, Sunday Shiatsu Sessions, our Parenting Workshops, and our "Pass it on" Program which is our way of sharing and reinforcing positive energy with each other. Our circle of support offers our residents an interim transitional support system allowing them to look toward the actualization of their potential and goals when they leave.

Soon, we will be introducing our Self-Sufficiency Program where the women will be trained in the basic skills of plumbing, carpentry and electricity. Each will leave the shelter with their own toolbox. We will also be introducing a program for both the women and children involving music, creative writing, drama, and art, and a program in stress management, habit change, goal setting, and communication skills. All of these are instrumental in what we feel are the most essential aspects of our services, to break the chains and patterns of violence, repression, dependence, and poverty.

We all recognize that it is the children of today who will help create the kind of world we will have tomorrow, and we anticipate that our innovative cooperative child care/training programs will establish a model for shelters throughout the country.

It has been many years since I began the first shelter for battered and homeless women in my home with my 3 children. I have learned much. The most important aspect of any program addressing these problems involves public education as well as the development of programs that work to sustain the victims and free them of the patterns that prevent them from becoming all they can be.

Sandra Ramos
Executive Director of SOS

SOS WISH LIST

If you, or anyone you know, can help out with any of the following needs, please contact us at
201-8310898 or 728-0287

OUR NEEDS:

Small Refrigerators	Bicycles and tricycles in good condition
Toy Chests	Fencing
Carpeting	Shrubs/Flowers
Copy Machine in good working order	Sandbox
Apple or McIntosh Computers	Tools
Compatible Printers	Large Bowls
Dressers	Garden Tools
Drinking Glasses	Garden Hose
Trash Cans with Lids	Fax Machine
Outdoor Furniture	Fans
Toys in Good Condition	Wheel Chair Ramps
Food	Vacuum Cleaners in good working condition
Art Supplies	Bedding
VCRs	Office Supplies
Bike Racks	Nintendo