



FIRST LIGHT

A Center for Homeless Women and Children

2013-2014 ANNUAL REPORT

The mission of First Light is to work with homeless women and their children to create hospitality in a safe and nurturing community, to encourage them to maintain dignity, to find hope, to seek opportunity, and to grow spiritually, thereby achieving their full potential.

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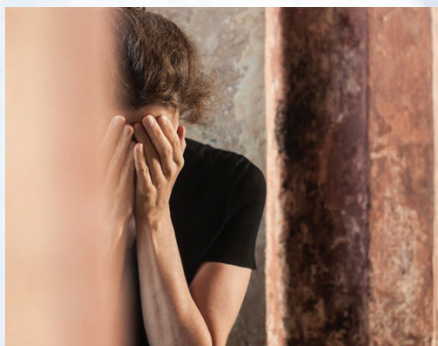
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EMERGENCY SHELTER

The First Light emergency shelter has 36 beds and one family room which remained full throughout the 2013-2014 fiscal year. To keep women and children off the streets, First Light continued to allow up to twenty additional guests to stay in the day room on pallets each night in the “overflow shelter.” All guests, including overflow guests, got individual attention and guidance from a professional with a degree in social work from an accredited college.



K.S. has a bi-polar disorder. When she came to First Light she was not taking her medication and she was making bad decisions. She lost her apartment because she owed two months back rent and hundreds of dollars to the power company.

Her First Light social worker helped her get the mental health care and medication that allowed her to focus on a financial plan that would enable her to find and keep an apartment.

When her mental health was stable, she was able to save enough money to pay her back rent. A First Light church partner helped pay her outstanding power bill.

When her social worker was sure she was able to sustain housing, she sent a letter to a real estate agent to help K.S. get an apartment she could afford.

In 2013-2014, First Light, the only emergency shelter in our community accessible to homeless women and their children 24 hours a day:

- Provided safety, opportunity and hope to 966 homeless women and their children.
- Evaluated each adult guest to determine whether she needed mental health care. The diagnosis and treatment of a mental health disorder is often the first, essential step to stability and self-sufficiency.
- Matched every guest with a professional with a degree in social work from an accredited college who became her
 - **Champion**, encouraging her as she developed a written plan of action to identify and overcome the problems that caused her to become homeless;
 - **Advocate**, ensuring she and her children got the healthcare, mental health services, legal assistance, medication, and practical necessities to get back on their feet; and
 - **Guide**, helping her take the difficult steps toward independence and self-sufficiency.



212 CHILDREN
WERE SHELTERED
AT FIRST LIGHT
IN 2013-2014,
A TROUBLING
INCREASE OF **81%**
SINCE 2008-2009.

SUPPORTIVE HOUSING

TRANSITIONAL HOUSING FOR VICTIMS OF DOMESTIC ABUSE

This program is the only transitional housing program in our community for victims of domestic violence who have no income. In the 2013-2014 fiscal year, First Light rented five apartments from the YWCA to house five women and five children. First Light also provided social services to help them rebuild their lives in safety. This was to be the final year of a three-year program funded by the U. S. Department of Justice. Fortunately, this valuable program has been approved for funding for another three years.



FOREVER HOME

First Light attained pilot funding this year from the Community Foundation of Greater Birmingham for its newest program, *Forever Home*—the only rapid rehousing project in our community being done without Federal funding.

Forever Home places women with children into housing quickly to save children from the devastating consequences of homelessness.

The program is growing and currently serves four families who receive financial support that diminishes over six months, and wrap-around social services that continue for a full year.

NOAH'S ARK

The U. S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) continued to provide substantial funding for the *Noah's Ark* program which provided permanent supportive housing for fifteen women with disabling conditions.

HUD EAST AND HUD BESSEMER

Throughout 2013-2014, First Light provided permanent supportive housing to twenty-two chronically homeless, disabled women through its HUD East program and HUD Bessemer programs. HUD provides substantial financial support for these programs through which First Light provides professional social services to women who have demonstrated that they would otherwise be unable to sustain housing.

HOUSING FOR WOMEN WITH SEVERE MENTAL ILLNESS

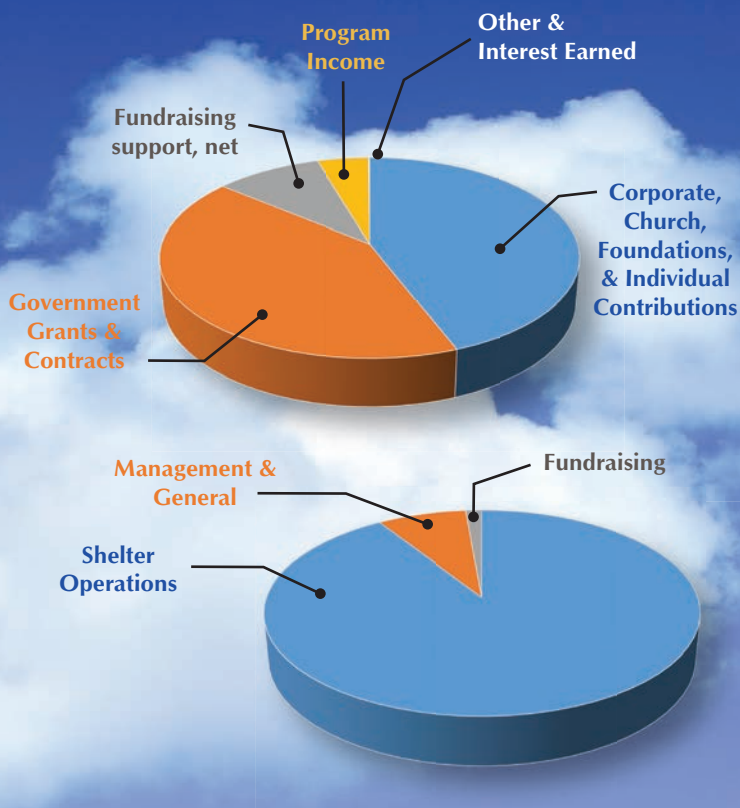
Eleven women disabled by permanent mental health issues found a home for themselves and their little dog, Bruno, in the 2013-2014 fiscal year on the fourth floor of the First Light shelter. This program receives substantial funding from the U. S. Department of Housing and Urban Development.



R.T. is disabled by a serious mental illness. She knows she's "slow." Her family wants nothing to do with her. Her First Light social worker helps her stay in her own home through the *Noah's Ark* program and ensures that she makes responsible decisions and takes good care of herself.

When she was diagnosed with cancer, her social worker accompanied her to her doctors' visits, helped her understand what was happening to her, took her to radiation and chemotherapy, ensured she followed all the complicated medical instructions, and held her hand when she was afraid.

FINANCIAL STATEMENT



SUPPORT AND REVENUE

Corporate, church, foundations, and individual contributions	\$673,274
Government grants and contracts.....	639,112
Fundraising support, net	143,379
Program Income.....	69,227
Other	852
Interest earned	728

Total support and revenue\$1,526,572

EXPENSES

Shelter Operations.....	\$1,238,387
Management and general	105,106
Fundraising	18,636

Total expenses.....\$1,362,129

Change in unrestricted net assets..... \$164,443

2013-2014 SPONSORS

FULL POTENTIAL SOCIETY

Cathedral Church of the Advent
Church of the Highlands
Estelle S. Campbell Charitable Trust
First Presbyterian Church of Birmingham
Independent Presbyterian Church Foundation
Protective Life Corporation
Protective Life Foundation
Robert R. Meyer Foundation
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The Community Foundation of Greater Birmingham
The Daniel Foundation of Alabama
UAB Benevolent Fund

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COMMUNITY OF HOPE

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Hoover Service Club, Inc.
Huffman United Methodist Church
Jemison Investment Co., Inc.

Johnson Development
Marx Brothers, Inc.
Montevallo Presbyterian Church
Presbytery of Sheppards and Lapsley
Realty South
Rojo
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Slice Stone Pizza & Brew
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RJ Mechanical, Inc.
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