



March 2021

Shanaya's Path: Homelessness, to Guiding Star, to Her Own Apartment.

"It took me a few weeks to realize I was safe." Extricating herself from an abusive relationship wasn't easy. Pregnant Shanaya and her toddler needed help and was referred to Guiding Star by a case manager and went through the assessment quickly and had a room. Eventually Shanaya realized she was in a safe place and a community where she could move forward with her life with people helping. Fast forward through birth of her baby girl and a job referral from a Guiding Star supporter and Shanaya is now working as a homecare assistant, is in her own apartment (receiving assistance for first month through from Catholic Social Services and security deposit through Guiding Star). "Mr. Patrick (Stanton) had his moving company move my stuff into the apartment!"



Zooming In On Programs

Whether it's goal setting, parenting, or a resident meeting, there have been times it's turned out better during Covid to have a Zoom meeting, rather have a group all in the dining room with masks on. Seeing faces without masks feel makes for better communication, even if on a screen. And when moms need to have babies or toddlers with them ... the mute button is a great tool!

A Little History

In 1992, when several concerned citizens of N. Philadelphia had seen a growing number of homeless or 'tough situation' pregnant women seeking alternatives to abortion, Guiding Star Ministries was founded as a safe haven for these women and their children, offering immediate, practical help. GSM became unique in accepting pregnant women with children under age 5. The plan was to establish a long-term program that would not only provide living arrangements to the women and their children, but would also be directed and encouraging their educational or vocational development. GSM opened its doors on August 31, 1992, under the leadership of Patricia Dowling and Sister Maryann Regensburger, S.Sp.S.. GSM became unique in accepting pregnant women and with pregnant moms with existing children under age 5. The plan was to establish a program that would not only provide living arrangements 'a safe place' to the women and their children, but would also be directed and encouraging their educational or vocational development. It has done so for many hundreds of women, children, and seen _____ babies born since those humble beginnings.

Would You Like a Tour?

Come visit Guiding Star Ministries to learn more about our service to moms, babies in the womb, and children. To schedule a tour (please note that visitors are somewhat limited during Covid) .

Call us at 215-924-2876 or email ybranch@chs-adphila.org



Guiding Star from the street in a February evening. Life skills, community meals, faith sharing and moms parenting happening hidden from the outside...

"I Aged Out of Foster Care"



"I had nothing and nowhere to go," when I found Guiding Star. Alexa was 20, pregnant, and mostly homeless when she came to Guiding Star. "I thought about abortion, but didn't believe it was right. It seemed my only choice, so I made an appointment at the abortion clinic. But, I didn't go."

"My dad was incarcerated when I was 12. My mom couldn't handle the kids, work, and manage to stay sober. Eventually I ended up in foster care. I bounced around from home to home until I aged out at eighteen."

Nationally, 75% of women who age out of foster care at 18 become pregnant by the age of 21. Alexa was one of these. "Guiding Star is a place I have support, am learning things I missed along the way, and am able to keep my baby and hold a job. I have a lot more going for me than when I came a few months ago."

A Mom's Testimony

Nineteen year-old Michaela was absolutely petrified to tell her mother she was pregnant, but didn't quite expect the "get an abortion asap" response she received. Michaela talked to a pregnancy helpline where she was referred to Guiding Star Ministries, set up a zoom assessment interview, and within a few days (after getting medical/Covid test forms in) she been accepted into the program. Shortly after she received her first tour of Guiding Star and was shown her bedroom.

"Having a place to go was amazing and being able to say yes to my baby meant everything. Even when everyone, including my mom and the baby's father were telling me to have an abortion."

In January, Michaela gave birth to a healthy baby boy (a little earlier than her due date!). "One of the dearest sights was seeing Michaela this week, as a new mother so in love with her baby, Zechariah," remarked Yvonne Branch, GSM Program Director. "She cares for her baby with a real tenderness and. It's been a great gift to be able to provide a home for Michaela and her child."



Open Position at Guiding Star Ministries

Join Guiding Star Ministries Maternity Home for a season of service!

Our in residence interns live in the home, providing coverage for the home and service to moms and babies. Intern position is open immediately. The intern is responsible for on call overnight and weekend coverage of the home for a certain number of hours per week. Our interns live in community with pregnant and parenting moms and their children, share chores and household upkeep, and support community events. Interns are compensated with room and board as well as a monthly stipend. Private room and full-bathroom with a sitting room. No cost wifi, utilities, and laundry. Interns can go to school and/or work during the day. Applicants must be at least 21 years of age at the time of service. This is an ideal position for a college student or recent graduate.

Must adhere to our mission and belief statements. Please include a cover letter in your email.

Our Mission

The mission of Guiding Star Ministries is to provide shelter to pregnant women and their children and to educate pregnant women so that they may have a successful, healthy, pregnancy while creating a home that provides structure, nurturing and support.

How Can You Support Guiding Star Ministries?

Pray

Pray for Guiding Star Ministries, the residents and their children. PRay for the staff and our board of directors.

Volunteer

We have many opportunities at Guiding Star Ministries for individuals and groups. Recently a group volunteered to host a Mother's Day brunch for the residents. We always have a need for Mother's Helpers through the week and on weekends.

Donate

Guiding Star Ministries is a tax exempt 501 (c3) non-profit organization. Make a tax deductible donation to Guiding Star Ministries, checks made out to "Guiding Star Ministries" can be mailed to our business office at 88 E Pennsylvania Ave., Orelana PA. 19075 or you can pay by credit card on our website at guidingstar.org/donate



Past GSM resident receiving supplies from our Program Director.



Volunteers from _____ spending their Saturday doing maintenance.



Thank you for your donations!

