



HOME OF HOPE

at Gwinnett Children's Shelter



A DECADE OF HOPE

2024 ANNUAL REPORT



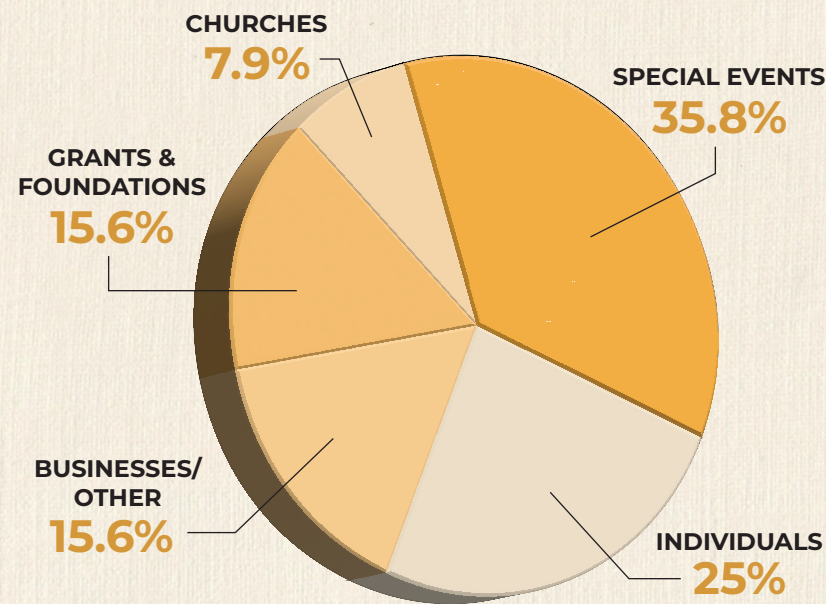
LETTER FROM MAUREEN

As I look back on my last 10 years here at Home of Hope and the journey we have been on, I give thanks for all of it. The trials, the fears and uncertainty, the faith, the support from each of you and the mission that GOD has given each of us while we are here on earth. When we began this transitional living program in 2014, we served just 17 wonderful families and 39 children. As we learned and grew, renovated, remodeled, remarketed and rebranded ourselves to Home of Hope, we have been able to serve more than 375 families and over 1,300 children. And we have only been able to do this because you all made the choice to give. A heartfelt "thank you" to each of you. We couldn't do it without your support, and we are so very grateful.

M. Kornowa

— Maureen Kornowa, CEO & Executive Director

WHERE THE MONEY COMES FROM



HOME
OF
HOPE

Our first year we served **17 families** and **39 children**.

As we finish our 10th year as Home of Hope, we've helped over **375 families** and **1,300 children**! We are incredibly grateful for the opportunity to expand this level of care.

EXECUTIVE BOARD

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HOME
OF
HOPE

10 Years

of Transforming Moms' and Kids' Lives
Through Home of Hope!

Average savings upon leaving Home of Hope
Between **\$4,000-\$7,000**



Number of Kids Served
Over **1,300**



Number of Families Served
Over **375**



“I've seen Home of Hope give these moms a new sense of confidence.

These moms come here wanting a fresh start and wanting to be better for their child or children, and all the team and I do is give them affirmations. To others, this may be small, but to us, it is truly amazing – and to them, it means the world.”

– Ashley, HOH Case Manager and RA

From Homeless to Hopeful:

Christina's Story

"When I pulled up [to Home of Hope], I didn't know what to expect. I was scared. I was thinking of just a big building where we'd just be sharing cots on the floor with everybody. I was prepared for the worst."

But what single mom Christina found was far from what she imagined. "When I got there, I was confused; I honestly thought I was in the wrong place! It didn't seem like a shelter; it seemed more like a safe haven. I knew we'd found a diamond in the rough," she said.

Christina's journey to Home of Hope was marked by challenges. She had left a toxic relationship and struggled to provide for her young son while facing a significant financial hurdle.

"My last relationship wasn't my only issue; I also had a huge spending problem," she admitted.

Despite working multiple jobs, her financial struggles mounted, leading to eviction. The constant instability left her and her son bouncing from place to place until she landed at Home of Hope.

Here, Christina was not only provided with shelter but also the tools and support she needed to turn her life around.

"Sometimes you need someone to call you out, but in a caring and supportive way and to give you the

resources to fix the problem. They held me accountable for a lot of the issues that I'd known for a while but was kind of in denial of — things I never really took seriously," she said.

One of the most transformative aspects of her stay was the support system she was given, especially with Ashley Turner, a counselor at Home of Hope.

"I didn't really see her as a case manager — Ms. Ashley became like a big sister to me. Her tough love was never to bring me down, but there were tough

truths that had to be said. When people love you, they will tell you what you're doing wrong to see you succeed, and that's what her goal was. She always told me that," Christina recalled.

Christina was also introduced to new methods of managing her finances and setting life goals.

"I saw how I'd gotten myself into a hole, and they helped me set goals to get out of it. Home of Hope's program presented so many different methods that I'd never considered using. The things they taught me have changed my life completely," she said.

For Christina, the biggest turning point was learning to set and achieve clear goals. "Home of Hope really helped me establish goals, clear goals that I could put on paper, and work toward them versus saying I'd do something but never getting it done," Christina said. "At 33 years old, after entering Home of Hope's program was the first time I'd set a goal and actually completed it."

Once she began achieving her goals, her mindset shifted. "I was so excited because once I saw myself knocking down these goals, I just wanted to set more," she said. "I could see the program working, and I wanted it to work for me and my son so we could be in a better spot — that's eventually what happened."

Now, Christina feels a sense of stability she hadn't experienced in years. "Before, I was just living day by day, going from house to house. Now I feel more structured; I feel more stable. I feel like I can stand on my own two feet without relying on anybody, and that's a big deal for me," she said.

Most importantly, Home of Hope gave Christina the ability to provide a sense of normalcy for her son. "What touched me, encouraged me and kept me going the most is that my son never felt any of [the struggle]. Home of Hope really lived up to its name," she reflected.

Today, Christina's life looks much different. She is pursuing higher education, reaching new milestones, and dreaming of a future she once thought impossible. **"It wasn't a shelter to me," she said, "it was a home that gave me hope for a brighter future."**



20 years is a long time to dedicate to anything — but 20 years with a job is almost unheard of. Home of Hope Director of Development, Renita Pollard, has a different story.

After working for a similar agency in Chattanooga, Renita was looking for a job that gave her the same sense of purpose in her new home Georgia — and she found it at Home of Hope.

"I came across Home of Hope and really connected with its mission. I filled out an application, and I got the job! I've been here ever since, and I absolutely love it," said Renita.

"I started when we were Gwinnett Children's Shelter. We had a different model and only served children who were in DFCS. We'd take care of the kids while their parents were working toward reunification, or they were waiting to be adopted."

While Renita adored her role, things at Gwinnett Children's Shelter were forced to shift.

"The government regulations started to change, and we realized that our structure wasn't working anymore. We needed to change, and that's when Home of Hope came to be," said Renita.

Change can be unnerving, but for Renita it meant doing more of what she loved. She now not only supported kids but their moms, too, who were struggling with homelessness.

"Our services were changing from only caring for kids to supporting adults, too. We were expanding in a lot of ways, but the heart of what we did stayed the same," said Renita.

"We needed a name that covered all of what we did and who we were becoming. Maureen and the board landed on Home of Hope at Gwinnett Children's Shelter, and that was perfect. That's what we are — a home filled with hope."

By caring for the whole family, Home of Hope promotes long-term solutions to homelessness for two generations at one time.

From Shelter to Solution:

Renita's Impact

"I think what sets Home of Hope apart is that we are not a bandaid. We don't just fix the problem; we focus on what's causing the problem.

"Other shelters offer an immediate fix — and that is needed at times. But we provide long-term solutions. Our program has the resources — like our life skills classes — to make a lasting difference for these moms and their kids," said Renita.

Home of Hope's program is rooted in accountability. The moms need to want to change their lives, and Home of Hope gives them the tools they need to believe they actually can.

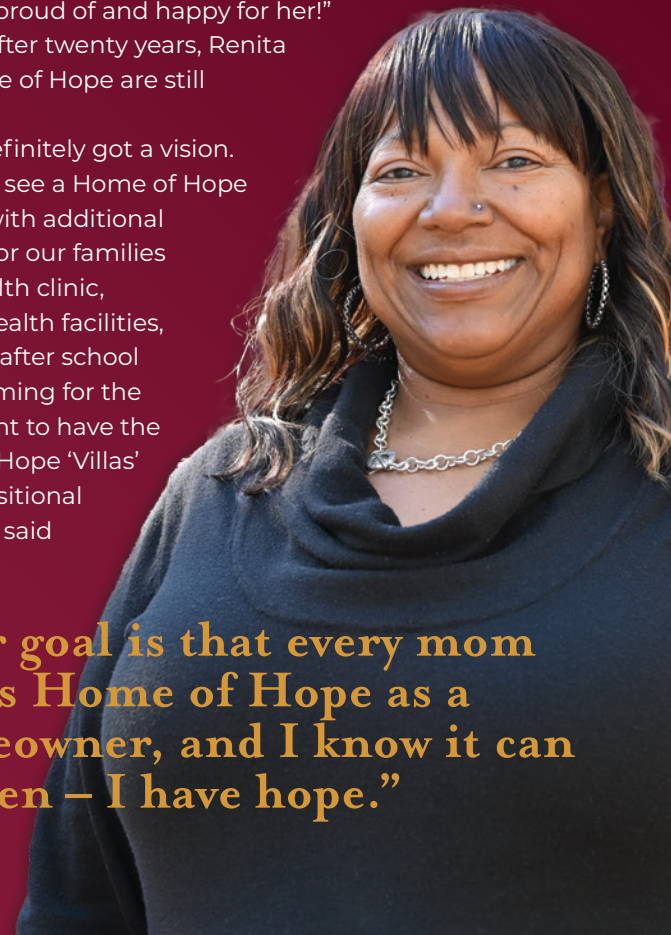
"If you commit to the program, it will work for you," Renita said, "It's hard, but it is so worth it."

"One of our grads recently stopped by just for a visit, and she was doing so good. She's kept up with her budgeting and is meeting her financial and life goals. We're so proud of and happy for her!"

Even after twenty years, Renita and Home of Hope are still evolving.

"I've definitely got a vision. I'd love to see a Home of Hope 'Village' with additional services for our families like a health clinic, mental health facilities, gym and after school programming for the kids. I want to have the Home of Hope 'Villas' offer transitional housing," said Renita.

"Our goal is that every mom leaves Home of Hope as a homeowner, and I know it can happen — I have hope."



2024 Sip & Swine

Thank you for being part of one of our largest fundraisers of the year! Beyond the amazing BBQ, live music and vendors, we **raised over \$70,000** for Home of Hope!



Charity Golf Tournament

123 golfers, 40 volunteers

Huge thank you to our golfers, volunteers and of course, sponsors. We **raised nearly \$130,000** this past September!



2023 Gala

280 guests

Last year's gala was one for the books. Thanks to your generosity, we **raised almost \$170,000!**



Through these three events alone,

we **raised over \$370,000!** That's enough to fund **1,480 transportation trips, 740 days of meals** for our residents, or an **entire year of housing** for 12 moms and their children.

Thank you for making a difference in the lives of our moms and kids!

Building a Better Future: Checking In With Amaris



Amaris has come a long way since her graduation from Home of Hope. A year after graduating, she overcame challenges, discovered new passions and secured permanent housing. This didn't happen by a twist of fate; it took her grit, determination and the nurturing environment of Home of Hope to get here.

Before Home of Hope, Amaris moved constantly between living with family members and other temporary arrangements. Overwhelmed, she turned to a friend for help, who suggested Home of Hope.

"The thought of going to a shelter was just new to me because I never really thought that that's where my life would go or where I would end up," said Amaris.

The following week, she enrolled in the program –

changing the trajectory of her and her daughter's lives.

"Home of Hope means a great deal to me," said Amaris. "With all the traumatic life challenges and changes I was going through at that time, I wasn't really able to process any of it right away because everything was happening so fast. But for me to be able to have a roof over my head and not have to worry about where I was going to lay my head down was enough."

Through the help of Home of Hope life skills coaches, Amaris learned valuable financial tips while paying off bills to boost her credit score.

Completing the program was a testament to Amaris's diligence and endurance, and her growth hasn't stopped there.

"I really have grown a lot as a person and as a mother," she said. I am proud that I completed the program. "I told myself, 'You don't really have any other options right now. You have to do this. You have to make some changes,' and that's what I did. I'm really proud of myself for sticking through."

Now Amaris is living in a home of her own and planning to make a career change to something that brings her joy – she's working hard to earn her paraprofessional certification and become a middle school science teacher.

As she reflects on her life so far, Amaris wants to thank the donors who made all of this possible and for the impact Home of Hope had on her and her daughter.

"It was definitely a huge blessing to keep a smile on my daughter's face during that time," Amaris said. "She'll definitely look back and be like, 'Wow, I don't have a bad memory during that time,' and that's all I can really ask for. Thank you so much to the donors. I can't thank you enough."

3 Simple Ways to Make a Lasting Difference

Give Online

Whether it's a monthly donation or even a one time gift, your generosity will make a tangible impact on moms and kids struggling with homelessness.

Donate

Encourage your neighborhood, church or community groups to host a drive for our families. From gift cards and passes to nonperishable food items, there are many ways to support our mission.

Volunteer

Give back and have fun! We have many volunteer needs throughout the year. Find the best fit for you on our website. (Note: background checks are required for all volunteers.)



GIVE NOW!

Thank you!

"It makes a difference having a stable place and not having to worry about where I am going to live and how I am going to pay the bills. Home of Hope gives moms like me another chance, and we know we are guarded and protected here."

"We have a chance to refocus and think about some changes that we need to make in our lives before we go back out into the world. It's really like a safe haven."

"Thank you for being the hands of God, the hands of hope that you are. God said he would use the hands of man to bless us, and Home of Hope is His hands."

— Home of Hope Mom



HOME OF HOPE

at Gwinnett Children's Shelter

HOME OF HOPE AT GWINNETT CHILDREN'S SHELTER

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HomeofHopeGCS.org