



my sister's place too

a transitional housing project

PO BOX 420, BONNE TERRE, MO 63628

July 2010

Re: Transitional Housing Program
A 501(c)(3) Not-For-Profit Corporation

- **WHAT IS MY SISTER'S PLACE TOO – BONNE TERRE, MO?** My Sister's Place Too – Bonne Terre, MO is the full name of the not-for-profit corporation set up to provide transitional housing to women who have received services through the SEMO Family Violence Council.
- **WHAT IS A 501(c)(3) NOT-FOR-PROFIT CORPORATION ?** This is an IRS term which denotes that our organization is qualified to accept donations and the donor can take a tax deduction for a charitable contribution.
- **WHAT IS TRANSITIONAL HOUSING?** The term is common in the domestic violence/abuse community. When a woman seeks assistance from a group such as the SEMO Family Violence Council, she is generally in a crisis situation. The shelter can provide safe housing for only a short period of time, usually no longer than 60 days. Transitional housing is designed to provide longer term housing for a woman who has made the decision to go elsewhere, rather than return to her abusive household.
- **WHAT IS THE SEMO FAMILY VIOLENCE COUNCIL?** The SEMOFVC is an organization that provides services and short term safe shelter to women and children who are victims of domestic violence and abuse from the counties of St. Francois, Madison, Ste. Genevieve, Iron and Washington, MO. The shelter and administrative offices are located in Bonne Terre, MO.
- **WHY IS TRANSITIONAL HOUSING NEEDED?** Our area, and in particular, St. Francois County has a shortage of affordable, livable rental property. The women who are served by the SEMOFVC usually don't have money to make deposits, etc. and the HUD rental assistance program has over a 2 year waiting list to even be considered. The SEMOFVC can provide safe housing for only a short-term period, usually no more than 60 days.
- **WHO CAN LIVE AT THE TRANSITIONAL HOUSE?** Our goal is to serve women who are referred to us by the SEMO Family Violence Council. These referrals have either actually stayed at the shelter or have received services through their various programs. They will refer women who have made the choice to start their own lives and not return to their abusive situations.
- **HOW MANY CAN LIVE AT THE TRANSITIONAL HOUSE?** The house which is located in Bonne Terre, MO is being reconstructed into three living units. There will be two – two bedroom units and one-one bedroom unit, each with its own locked entrance and private bathroom. Therefore, a total of 3 women and 6 children could live there. The units will share a common living, kitchen, laundry and patio area.

- **HOW WILL THE WOMEN BE CHOSEN?** Referrals will be made by the SEMOFVC. Working closely with their staff, an interview will take place advising the woman of the rules and expectations of this project. A decision will be rendered within 24 hours of this interview process.
- **WILL THEY HAVE TO PAY?** Yes. One of the requirements will be that they have to be employed or employable to be considered. The amount of monthly rent will be \$300 for each two bedroom unit and \$200 for the one bedroom unit. The rental amount includes utilities. There will be funds available for interim rental offsets until they can find employment. Exceptions will be considered for women who are retired or disabled.
- **WHAT ARE THE RULES FOR LIVING AT THE TRANSITIONAL HOUSE?** They are strict and many. This is a serious attempt to assist these women in getting their lives settled down so they can be financially stable, independent and start a new life free of abuse. Some of the rules are that they must have or actively seek a stable source of income such as a job, no drug or alcohol use, respectfulness of others housed there, no over-night visitors and they are never allowed to have an abuser on the property. They must also remain involved with the SEMOFVC and the programs they offer such as support groups, counseling, etc. Each rule will be carefully explained during the interview process and only women who understand the need for adherence to these rules will be considered.
- **IS THIS A SAFE HOUSE?** The term safe house is common in the domestic violence community. The SEMOFVC provides a short term safe house, which means special precautions are taken to make the environment as safe as possible. This transitional house will not be a safe house as the term is used relating to domestic violence. However, it will be as secure as possible and will be no different than if the woman was living in an apartment complex or other rental property on her own. Each woman will be responsible for her own safety.
- **HOW CAN YOU HELP?** There are many ways to become involved in this project. You can become a community supporter of this organization by making a \$50 annual donation. This will include an annual membership in Sister's, a paperback copy of "THE "C" WORD, MY CANCER JOURNEY, written by Flora Denton and special recognition that you are a donor to this project. There will be numerous volunteer opportunities. We will accept donations of any building materials, furnishings, appliances, and household items at the SEMOFVC donation site located in Bonne Terre, MO. The fund raising campaign offering various levels of support and sponsorship will be kicked off in the fall of 2010.
- **WHAT IS SISTER'S?** Sister's are a group presently around a 160 strong that support the shelter and services provided by the SEMOFVC. The group was formed in October, 2008 and they pledge to raise a minimum of \$10,000 annually for the SEMOFVC to be used for assisting women who have decided to start their own lives free of abuse. They do this through volunteer and community involvement with My Sister's Place which is a retail gift shop, a donation site and a studio, all of which are located at the Sister's compound in Bonne Terre, MO. There is a \$25 annual membership fee, \$20 of which is donated directly to the SEMOFVC.
- **WHAT IF I AM ALREADY A SISTER'S MEMBER?** If a present Sister's member decides to support this program with a \$50 annual donation, their current membership will be extended by one year. As always, \$20 of the Sister's membership fee will be donated directly to the SEMOFVC. In other words, your annual commitment would be \$50 which would include a one-year membership in Sister's which is \$25 annually.
- **HOW WILL THIS PROGRAM BE FUNDED?** A commitment by Royce Vessell and Flora Denton has been made to fund this project up front. In other words, the house and reconstruction are already funded and underway. A fund raising campaign will be kicked off in the fall of 2010.

Donation and sponsorship opportunities will range from a \$50 annual donation commitment to a \$25,000 house naming right opportunity, with numerous levels in between. This fund raising campaign will be devoted to providing resources to furnish, maintain and perhaps expand this project. Community support is vital to the success of this project.

- **WHAT IS COMMUNITY SUPPORT?** A vital part of this project will be the support of our community, not only locally but across our nation, and perhaps the world. Each donor to this project will be visibly recognized from a signer wall within the living area of the house, to naming rights from anything to a piece of furniture to the house itself. This visible recognition is important to the donor and important to the women who are housed there. It holds these women accountable. This opportunity is a community effort and they need to be reminded each and every day that they have a responsibility to this project. This is an effort to help them get their lives back on track, free from abuse.
- **HOW DO I BECOME INVOLVED?** Print and complete the response form below and return it to My Sister's Place Too, P.O. Box 420, Bonne Terre, MO 63628. We will keep you informed of opportunities as the project moves forward. You can visit our general website at www.mysistersplace.net and click on transitional housing. You can send us an e-mail at vmpc@starband.net or sandysilvey@yahoo.com.



NAME _____

ADDRESS _____

PHONE NUMBER _____

EMAIL ADDRESS _____

COMMENTS _____
