

What does it mean to be out of the woods?

When you are out of the woods, you are off the streets. The danger is behind you.

When you are in the woods, there is danger all around you. It is easy to get lost, hurt, and hopeless.

For homeless families, the woods are dangerous and debilitating to self-worth and health. There are predators in the woods. There is malnutrition and abuse lurking there. It is a very dark place.

The path out of the woods is not easy and it is different for everyone, but practice has taught us that there is a way out.

The Out of the Woods Family Shelter is a place where families can feel safe and supported as they connect with the resources they need to once again find stability.

Our model of support is successful, because of the nurturing home-like environment, intensive case management, life-skills training, mentoring, and full time care and attention.



A family is out of the woods when they have the basic support, skills, and rental assistance to maintain a permanent home. The circumstances that surround them are no longer overwhelming and they can see a path forward.

A good indicator that the families we serve are truly out of the woods, is the fact that 6 months after leaving our shelter, 90% remain in permanent housing.

But numbers don't tell the whole story, and though we can't share every family's journey, we'd like to share just one.

Ronna's Story

Ronna and her family found themselves drifting from stability when she lost her corporate job due to downsizing.

Five years passed – no job replacement, auto repossessed, credit cards 'maxed out', apartment in jeopardy.

Ronna and her three teenagers migrated here to Thurston County, seeking temporary housing with relatives.

When the last of Ronna's savings was used paying for the one room she and the teens shared, the school homeless liaison intervened, referring the family to Olympia's Family Support Center, who in turn referred them to Out of the Woods.

In the safety of Out of the Woods' sanctuary, Ronna felt able to work on personal issues such as her loss of self esteem, as reflected in her history of unhealthy abusive relationships. The teens gradually began talking about their insecurity and fears with staff.

With help Ronna was able to extricate herself from the last abusive relationship, begin taking action, and gradually find 'day work'.

Now, through their own resilience and the support of Out of the Woods, Ronna has secured a full-time position and her family has stable housing. The teens excelled in school, which had always been their anchor. Throughout all, the family remained intact.

Out of the Woods staff, in tandem with myriad community resources, allowed this family to sustain itself in spite of overwhelming circumstances.

An outpost in the community

As one of only two 24/7 housing resources in the Olympia area, we are an outpost for struggling families. *Olympia needs us.*

Out of the Woods has exceeded its mission in Thurston County's 10-Year Homelessness Plan. This year it was recognized and partially funded by the Thurston County Home Consortium. Over the past five years, we have made continual improvements, including the move to become a 24 hour resource and providing the assistance to families to move into their own homes.

Over the next five years, more changes are coming.

The Board's adoption of a hearty 5-year strategic plan gives us a sound roadmap for sustainable growth and development. In particular, the plan outlines a new expansion of shelter operations with a part-time position leading community housing development and landlord/tenant relations.

The new position will be filled by the experienced and beloved "Shelter Saint," Selena Kilmoyer. She will leverage her time as Shelter Coordinator to build relationships with local landlords to ensure post-shelter housing opportunities for our guests.

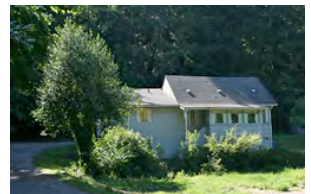
Not out of the woods yet

We wouldn't live up to our name if our guest families didn't find a next place to go. Our experience has taught us that for families seeking permanent housing safe, affordable opportunities often do not exist. We need more landlords willing to partner with us and open up apartments to "at-risk" families.

By giving, you are not only helping departing families find permanent homes, you are maintaining one of our community's outposts against homelessness. It costs \$5,000 a month to keep our doors open. In addition to the numerous foundations we apply to for support, we depend on direct appeals such as this one.

Help us to raise our goal of \$30,000 – six months of keeping the light on for families like Ronna's.

We know it is possible.



Shine some light

Last year, at a time of great need and uncertainty, we reached out to our community and asked for support. YOU responded with heart and generosity.

There are more families who need our help, so please consider the options:

- Become a FIRST TIME donor and double your contribution. Help us meet our matching grant from the Unitarian Universalist Association. If you've already donated, why not get a newbie on-board.
- Renew your commitment and increase it by 25%.
- Make a one time donation.
- Become a monthly sponsor.
- Give a special gift in recognition of a loved one.

See reverse side for more details on how to give...

www.OutOfTheWoods.org/donate

Bring another family
out of the woods for good.
Please Help Us



Out of the Woods
2300 East End Street
Olympia, WA 98502



PLEDGE OR GIFT

Please complete the pledge/gift form below and return to
Out of the Woods, 2300 East End St., Olympia, WA 98502.

Please make your tax deductible donation by December 31.

- **Become a FIRST TIME donor and double your contribution.** Help us meet our matching grant from the UUA. If you've already donated, help us get a newbie to contribute.
- **Renew** your commitment and increase it by 25%
- Make a **one time donation**
- Become a monthly sponsor
- Give a **special gift** in recognition of a loved one

Your name _____ Phone _____

Address _____ Email _____

Monthly/annual pledge _____ Total pledge for 2012 _____ One-time gift _____

Name to be recognized with the gift _____

You can also donate or make your pledge online at: www.OutOfTheWoods.org/donate