

# Partnerships...



When I think about United Way...I think of a huge family of agencies, **PARTNERS**, working together to bridge gaps within our community. These partner agencies work each and every day addressing emerging needs...helping people...helping build a stronger community for all of us.

**River City Domestic Violence Center** is one of many United Way & Volunteer Services of Greater Yankton Partner Agencies. Their mission is to provide a safe haven to victims of domestic violence and sexual assault. River City exists to break the cycle of domestic violence and sexual assault in our community through survivor empowerment, advocacy, education, awareness and social change.

The story below comes from the River City Domestic Violence Center about a family sheltered there. This is a story of **overcoming defeat**...a story of **partnership**...a story of **hope**.

“The struggles individuals and families face, when they enter the Center, are never limited to just domestic violence.



I think of a family we had in our facility recently, a single mom and her children. She came to us initially due to violence in the home. The day we met with her she was consumed with defeat and fear. She knew all the challenges that lie ahead...and had been told by friends and family what she needed to do next to save her family and recover her life...But what do you do next to save your family and recover your life when you have almost nothing?

The mother knew she needed to develop coping skills as well as her shattered self-esteem, a result of the years of abuse, to better the life of her family...but had no idea where to start.

She was nervous because when leaving the abusive relationship she was left without a vehicle. She was overwhelmed with how she would get her kids to and from school, to their activities, to her appointments. The last thing she wanted was to fail her children.

She was also overcome with the financial burdens of being a single parent and the debt that existed from her past. She was worried that she may not be able to provide for her children. She expressed concerns of exchanging the children with their father and that she no longer wanted the children to be exposed to the animosity that existed between the two parents. She also had concerns of where her children would go before and after school so she could maintain a job to provide for her family.

To this woman everything seemed defeating, as if there were no light at the end of the tunnel, not enough time in a day ... nothing that could ever remedy this tremendous amount of weight she now carried.

She was scared.

At this moment... several United Way Partner Agencies weaved together to create a safety net of embrace to catch her before she fell any further.

One concern and fear at a time we went down the list.

We got her in touch with the **FAMILY EDUCATION & COUNSELING CENTER** who helped address her broken spirit and develop coping skills to deal with the triggers she will face in the future due to the years of abuse.

We connected her to **YANKTON TRANSIT** to obtain affordable transportation for her and children to school, activities and appointments.

Next we helped her to make an appointment with **LSS, Center for Financial Resources** who can assist her with financial budgeting and help her face the debt that lingered.

We educated her on the **SACK PACK** program to make sure her kids had a good meal over the weekends.

We gave her a tour of the **FAMILY VISITATION CENTER** where she could exchange her children in a safe peaceful environment with their dad.

And lastly we helped her get her children enrolled in **BOYS & GIRLS CLUB** where they would be surrounded by strong role models and have a safe and affordable place to go before and after school.

This client and her children are now building their futures, one step at a time. They are no longer looking back at the defeat they faced for so many years. Now they are looking forward...looking forward to a new life, thanks to United Way partnerships...**THANKS TO YOU.**"



**LIVE UNITED**