



Looking Back With Gratitude

As I sit down to write this, I keep thinking about how much has happened at Family Promise of Cowlitz County this year. It has been a busy year, a challenging year, and honestly, a year that has made me incredibly proud of what our little organization and our community have been able to accomplish together.

At the heart of everything we do are the families. These are parents who are working, raising their children, and doing everything they can to provide for their families. Sometimes one unexpected setback—a lost job, a car repair, a medical bill, or a rent increase—can put a family in a situation they never expected to be in.

That is where Family Promise comes in.

This year, we served more families than in any year since we opened, through our shelter, prevention, and other programs. We helped families stay in their homes when possible, and when that wasn't possible, we were here to provide a safe place to stay while they worked toward getting back into permanent housing.

And this year, we were able to make even more room.

We opened our 5th family room, which means we can now welcome another family of up to 6–8 people into our shelter. I am especially excited about this because Windermere Northwest Living – Cowlitz Area sponsored this room and became our first and only corporate sponsor. Their support isn't just a name on a sponsorship list. It directly created a safe space for a family who may need us someday. It

This year, we served more families than in any year since we opened, through our shelter, prevention, and other programs..... This year has also reminded me just how generous Cowlitz County is.

means another family can walk through our doors and know that they have somewhere safe to sleep while they figure out their next step.

That is what community support looks like.

One of the things I love most about this work is that we get to see what happens when people come together for a family.

I think about Hilary, one of our first Family Promise graduates. Hilary went from experiencing homelessness to becoming a homeowner. Our community was there for her along the way, and I will never forget seeing everyone come together to help with her home. During our Weyerhaeuser Day of Caring in 2025, volunteers spent the day working on her house through our partnership with United Way. I think of the Howards who lost it all in a fire, or Jackie and Randy—after years of ongoing life-threatening health issues still pressed on and are living back at home!

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Remembering Richard Shuren: A Life of Service and Dedication

Family Promise of Cowlitz County is deeply saddened by the loss of Richard Shuren, a longtime volunteer, supporter, and friend of our organization.

Richard was much more than a volunteer. He was someone who truly believed in the mission of Family Promise and consistently gave his time, talents, and heart to helping local families.

For years, Richard worked tirelessly behind the scenes and alongside our team. He edited and helped create our newsletter, *The Journey*, helping us share the stories, successes, and needs of Family Promise with our community. He was a familiar face at our events, would attend different community events to take pictures for our website and newsletter. He truly enjoyed seeing all the children having fun.

He would often come into the shelter to help with mailing, and he always had a smile on his face no matter what was going on, personally.

Richard would go from sponsor to sponsor, building relationships and helping us gather the support needed to make our events successful. He never hesitated to pitch in, lend a hand, or find another way to help.

What stood out most about Richard was his heart for service. He cared deeply about people, and his commitment to Family Promise was a true reflection of that compassion. He understood that ending family homelessness takes a community, and he did his part to help bring that community together. He has this comforting and calming peace over him that made you want to be like him.

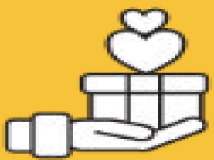
His contributions may have often happened quietly, but their impact was anything but small. Richard never wanted the spotlight on him, never needed recognition, for his service, he did it because that's who he was.

Richard leaves behind a legacy of kindness, generosity, hard work, and service. The Family Promise family is better because he was part of it, and we are incredibly grateful for every hour he gave, every connection he made, and every family he helped us serve.

Richard, you will be deeply missed. Your dedication to Family Promise and your heart for service will not be forgotten.

With heartfelt gratitude and sympathy,

Family Promise of Cowlitz County 
Thank you for helping us continue the journey.



In Kind Donation Ideas

For The Children

Diapers, wipes, kids toothpaste, no tears shampoo, baby shampoo and wash.

Diaper Genie refills

For the Kitchen

Dawn dish soap-blue, paper plates, paper cups, paper towels, sandwich size Ziplock baggies

GENERAL NEEDS

- Laundry supplies: detergent, bleach
- Paper products: paper plates, paper towels, plastic eating utensils
- Toiletries: deodorant, feminine hygiene products
- Baby products: disposable diapers, wipes
- Over-the-counter medicine: Tylenol, Band Aids, Cough Drops, Alcohol Swabs
- Cleaning products: Trash Bags, Lysol spray, Lysol Wipes
- Gift cards for essentials: Gas cards, Walmart, Target, WinCo, etc.
- Postage Stamps
- Slippers

A Mother's Determination to Start Over

At Family Promise of Cowlitz County, we are honored to celebrate the incredible journeys of the families we serve. Every family who walks through our doors has a different story, but some stories remind us just how powerful determination, opportunity, and the right support can be.

Recently, we had the privilege of watching a single mother turn a difficult season into a new beginning.

When she entered our program, she was in her 2nd trimester of pregnancy with her third child. She was facing the uncertainty of homelessness while preparing to welcome another baby into her family. Like so many parents we serve, she wanted more than temporary assistance—she wanted the opportunity to build a stable future for her children.

She worked hard, took advantage of the resources and support available through Family Promise, and remained focused on her goals.

Within less than 90 days, she secured a full-time job and moved into independent housing.

That is what Family Promise is all about.

Our goal isn't simply to provide a family with a place to stay. We want to help families identify the barriers standing in their way, connect them with resources, build stability, and give them the tools and encouragement they need to move forward independently.

Today, this mother has a job, a home, and a safe place to welcome her new baby. Her children have something every child deserves—a stable place to call home.

Her story is a beautiful reminder that homelessness does not define a family. With opportunity, support, and determination, families can move forward and build a brighter future.

We are incredibly proud of her accomplishments and grateful to everyone in our community who makes stories like this possible.

Because when we help a family find stability, we aren't just changing where they sleep—we're helping change the future of an entire family. ❤️

Family Promise of Cowlitz County — Keeping Families Housed. Building Stronger Futures



100 for 100: 100 Neighbors. \$100 a Month.

Family Promise of Cowlitz County invites our community to be part of something powerful: 100 for 100, a giving campaign built on the belief that when we come together, small acts of generosity can create lasting stability for families.

The goal is simple: 100 individuals committing to give at least \$100 a month to help Family Promise provide the resources, support, and stability local families need to move forward. These monthly gifts create dependable community support, helping ensure families facing housing instability have a place to turn and the tools they need to build a more stable future.

Every monthly giver becomes part of the 100 for 100 community. To celebrate those who step up, participating givers will be highlighted in yellow as a visible reminder of the neighbors, friends, businesses, and community members who are helping make this work possible.

\$100 a month may seem like one simple commitment, but 100 people giving \$100 a month creates \$10,000 in dependable monthly support — \$120,000 a year for local families.

Family Promise of Cowlitz County believes stability grows through community. Will you be one of the 100?

Join the 100 for 100 campaign and help make stability possible — one family, one month, and one community at a time.

More Room. More Hope. More Home.



Ribbon Cutting Ceremony



Sarah Boelke and Sue Lantz



We are excited to share some wonderful news with our Family Promise of Cowlitz County community! **Windermere Northwest Living – Cowlitz Area** has become our **first and only corporate sponsor**, and their generosity is making a direct impact on local families. We are grateful and blessed to have them as a partner!

Through their sponsorship, **Windermere Northwest Living – Cowlitz Area** has sponsored our new fifth family room! This additional room allows us to shelter another family of up to 8 people when they are experiencing a housing crisis.

For a family facing homelessness, a safe place to sleep can be the first step toward getting back on their feet. This new room means more children can have a safe bed, more parents can focus on finding stability, and another family can have the opportunity to work toward permanent housing.

We are incredibly grateful to Windermere Northwest Living – Cowlitz Area for investing in families in our community and helping Family Promise expand our capacity to serve. We are also thankful for all of our donors, volunteers, churches, and community partners who make this work possible every day. We are proud of the families we serve, of our new relationship with Windermere, and to serve the Cowlitz County Area.

Our families deserve a comfortable place to land, to grow, and to heal.

Because of community support, we are making more room—not just in our shelter, but for hope, stability, and a brighter future for local families.

Thank you, Windermere Northwest Living – Cowlitz Area, for helping us open another door to a safe and stable home.



Community Corner: Day of Caring 2026

A New Partnership Making a Big Difference

Family Promise of Cowlitz County was thrilled to participate in United Way's 2026 Day of Caring and be paired with Walstead Mertsching for a very special project.

Our team was fortunate to have their volunteers spend the day helping us organize and clean our off-site storage space, where we keep donated furniture, household items, and essential supplies for families moving into permanent housing.

Keeping this storage area organized can be a challenge for our small staff, especially with the incredible amount of community support we receive. The work completed by the Walstead Mertsching team made a tremendous difference and will help us better serve families when they are ready to move into their new homes.

Even more meaningful, this project helped create a new partnership between Family Promise and Walstead Mertsching. We are grateful for the time, energy, and care they brought to our organization and for their willingness to roll up their sleeves and help where it was needed most.

Community partnerships like this remind us that we don't have to do this work alone. When local businesses, volunteers, and organizations come together, the impact reaches far beyond one day. A heartfelt thank you to

United Way for making Day of Caring possible and to the entire Walstead Mertsching team for an amazing day of service!

Together, we are helping families move from homelessness to stability and turn houses into homes. ❤️



(Brian Brault, Stephen Sanders, Joy Van, Wendy Buck, and Jessica Myers (L to R))



Joy Van, Wendy Buck, and Jessica Myers (L to R)



Friends and Supporters — We Need Your Help! ❤️

We have some really exciting news, and we are so excited to share it with you!

Family Promise of Cowlitz County has been given the opportunity to help feed students at Coweeman Middle School through the Backpack Buddies program, in partnership with the Kelso School District.

Each week, students participating in the program will receive a gallon-sized Ziplock bag filled with food to take home for the weekend. Our goal is to provide each bag with enough food for 2 breakfasts, 2 lunches, 2 dinners, and 2 snacks.

And we want to make these bags about more than just food. We would love to include little extras that bring some

cont. on p6

KSD BACK PACK BUDDIES—WEEKEND FOOD PROGRAM

Each week FPCC will provide a Ziplock bag of food for those families registered within the Kelso SD, Coweeman middle school— that are in need of extra food for the weekend. We will pack the bags and deliver them each week to the families who need it most!

We are asking for your help in making this possible. Donations are welcome, I will have a list of commonly used items, that can easily fit in the bags and they can be dropped off anytime at the Shelter. We will have a drop bin in the foyer. We are thrilled to be part of this service to those in need.

Family Promise of Cowlitz County

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Phone: 503-325-4444 and 503-325-4445
Email: info@familypromise.org
Website: www.familypromise.org

cont. from p 5 encouragement and joy — things like juice boxes, treats, fun stickers, a small toy, a kid-friendly recipe, or another small surprise. We just ask that items be non-religious and appropriate for school-age children.

We would also love to have fresh fruit available outside of the bags — bananas, apples, oranges, or whatever is on sale! Every little bit can help lighten the load for a family over the weekend.

When we were offered this opportunity, we immediately said, “Yes! We would love to help!”

We would love to start collecting now so we can build up a supply and have bags ready to go each week. Our families in shelter will also be helping us pack the bags and give back to another part of our community. I love the idea of our families who have received help now having the opportunity to help someone else.

How can You Help?

You can donate any small-sized food items that fit into a gallon-sized bag. When shopping, keep this simple list in mind:

2 Breakfasts • 2 Lunches • 2 Dinners • 2 Snacks

Look for sales, clearance items, end-of-season specials, or whatever you find a great deal on. We will need LOTS and LOTS of gallon-sized Ziplock bags!

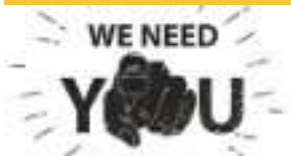
And please feel free to get creative. If you see something you think a child would enjoy, grab it!

If you would rather make a monetary donation, that works too! 100% of donations designated for this program will go toward feeding local students and will stay right here in our community.

Thank you for helping us say YES to this opportunity. We are so excited to be able to partner with the Kelso School District and help make sure local kids have something to eat when they head home for the weekend.

Let's fill those bags! ❤️

Gallon Ziplock bags	Granola bars	Cereal bars breakfast bars
Fruit snacks	Canned soup	Heat ready serve soup
Easy mac in the pouch not the bowl	Canned chili	Instant breakfast
Beef sticks	Cup of noodle	Top ramen
Oat meal	Apple sauce	Trail mix
Chef boyar dee canned products	Cheese and crackers	Dry cereal pouches not bowl (too big for the Ziplock)
Go-Go squeeze shelf stable yogurts	Sketty-o	Mini muffins in the pouches
Pop tarts	Individual pretzel packs	Individual peanut butter pouches
Cookie pouches	School snacks	Individual chicken salad and crackers



Join Our Volunteer Committee

Family Promise of Cowlitz County is growing, and with that growth comes more opportunities to bring our community together. We are looking for volunteers who would like to be more involved by joining a new

****Volunteer Committee**!**

Our goal is to bring together a group of people who can help us plan, organize, and support our events and fundraisers throughout the year. From ****Burgers & Bingo and Christmas activities to community events, fundraisers, and volunteer projects****, there is always something happening at Family Promise.

You don't have to be able to attend every event or have a lot of extra time. We are looking for people who can help in whatever way works for them — coming up with ideas, helping with planning, reaching out to businesses for donations, setting up or cleaning up at events, selling tickets, or simply lending a hand when we need it.

****You don't have to do it all — we just need people willing to help.****

Our events are not only important fundraisers for Family Promise; they are also a great way to bring our community together and help people learn more about the families we serve.

If you enjoy planning events, meeting people, getting creative, or just want to find a way to give back, we would love to have you join us!

****Interested in being part of the Volunteer Committee?****

Please reach out to Sara if you have any question. We would love to have you be part of the team!



Be the Reason for a Brighter Christmas

Family Promise of Cowlitz County Needs Churches & Individuals, Civic groups and any generous heart to Adopt Families

The holiday season is a time for family, celebration, and giving—but for families experiencing homelessness or housing instability, Christmas can also bring added stress and uncertainty.

This year, Family Promise of Cowlitz County is asking local churches, organizations, businesses, and individuals to help make Christmas brighter by adopting a family.

When you adopt a Family Promise family, you can help provide Christmas gifts, gift cards, essential items, or other needs identified by the family. More importantly, you are reminding a family who may be going through a difficult season that their community cares about them and they are not alone.

♥ Give More Than a Gift

For a child, receiving a Christmas gift can create a special memory. For a parent, knowing their children will have something to open on Christmas morning can bring comfort and peace of mind during an otherwise challenging time.

You can make that difference.

Churches can organize a family adoption through their congregation, small groups, or ministry teams. Individuals, families, businesses, and community groups can also come together to sponsor a family.

♥ Ways You Can Help:

- 🎁 Adopt a family for Christmas
- 🛍️ Purchase gifts from a family's wish list
- 💳 Provide gift cards for groceries or other necessities
- 👥 Gather friends, coworkers, or your church community to sponsor a family together
- 🗣️ Help us spread the word and connect Family Promise with others who want to give time.

At Family Promise of Cowlitz County, we believe that every family deserves the opportunity to experience the joy and dignity of the holiday season.

This Christmas, you can help make that possible.

If you or your church would like to adopt a family, please contact Family Promise of Cowlitz County to learn how you can participate.

Together, we can make the season brighter for local families. ♥

Keeping Families Housed. Building Stronger Futures.



At Family Promise of Cowlitz County, we know that the holidays can be a challenging time for families experiencing homelessness. With your help, we can make this season one of hope, joy and belonging.

We are looking for churches and individuals to adopt families for Christmas!

By sponsoring a family, you can provide gifts, gift cards, and essential items that will bring joy to children and parents who are working hard to build a stable future. Your generosity helps create lasting memories and reminds these families that they are not alone.

Ways to Get Involved:

- Adopt a family through your church, small group, workplace, or as an individual.
- Provide gifts, gift cards, or essential items (see our wish list for ideas).



Together, we can make the season brighter for

Community Resource Fair

The Community Resource Fair will bring local organizations together in one accessible location, so residents can learn about available services, ask questions, receive referrals, and connect with immediate support.

This year we are proud to include as partners in presenting this Resource Fair, Cowlitz Indian Tribe and PeaceHealth. As always, we are thankful for Cowlitz PUD for the support and contribution that they give us each year. The Resource fairs commonly include areas such as housing, employment, health, food assistance, youth and family services, transportation, education, mental health, and community safety.

Community Resource Fair	
Event Name	
Date	October 8, 2026
Time	10:00-11:00 Vendor Networking 11:00-2:00 Public admitted
Location	Cowlitz County Event Center 1900 7th Ave., Longview, WA 98632
Audience	Community members, families, seniors, veterans, people seeking services, and anyone interested in local resources.
Cost	Open to the public free of charge
Contact	Marsha Treadway, Community Mediation Center

Donors to the General Fund, Grants & Sustainability Campaign (June-July-August)

Donors highlighted in **yellow** are helping to ensure our long time sustainability through the 100 for 100 campaign. Please consider joining them by becoming a sustaining supporter. Simply select "Give to the 2026 One Hundred Campaign" on our website's Donate page or contact our office for more information.

In Kind Donations

Boyd and Deborah Burns
Summer Bailey
Sam Barbee
Kathleen Cain
Molly Ciancibelli
Marilyn Erwin
Jessie McCloud

Karla & Greg Bean	Grace Bible Fellowship	Thomas & Carol Kirwan	New Song Worship Center
Linda Beattie Inlow	Ryann Graye	Harlan & Shirley Kittelson	Dennis Perry
Daryl & Gail Berg	John & Trudi Gross	Dave Knoyle	Eugene Pistorese
Boyd & Deborah Burns	Brian & Amy Hamilton	Kroger	Marilyn Pursley
Kathleen Cain	David & Greta Hamilton	Sharon & Steve Larsen	Renewal City Church
Harold Cockrell	Connie & Howard Hammond	Richard & Ardyth Loewen	Leon Rennells
Frances & Pete Crosby	Chuck & CreeAnn Henderson	Clifton Lollar	Karl & Derene Salzsieder
Donovan Doerr	Kizzie Higgins	Longview Presbyterian Church	J. Chris & Heidi Shaw
East Hills Alliance Church	Sarah Hines	Longview presbyterian Deacon	Autumn Sheridan
Ecological restoration Stormwater Management Ilc	Don Iverson	Donna & Joe MacKenzie	Steven & Patty Sheridan
Emmanuel Lutheran Church	Gary & Susan Jackson	Jim & Judy MacLeod	Richard & Deb Shuren
Bob & Kathy Erickson	Glenda Johnson	Roy & Lisa Maier	Don & Lois Sturdivant
Exodus Christian Fellowship	Mike & Teri Karnofski	Louise McAuliffe	Darrel & Annie Tietze
Cindy & Pete Foley	Kelso First Baptist-Blessings C	Melissa Wilkie Living Trust	Mary Wingate
Dan Frei	Ronald & Ruth Kimmel	Gavin Jeanne Mills	JoAnn & Leonard Workman
John & Joanne Gotshall	Kirchner Foundation*	Ron & Kay Naff	

*In loving memory of Bob Kirchner from the Kirchner foundation.

Financial Update

Year To Date

2026 Annual Budget.....\$183,231

2026 Contributions to date.....\$102,359

2026 Avg. Monthly Contribution.....\$12,795

2026 Volunteer hours.....893

Our Local Impact



GIVE MORE 24!

UPDATE!

Our final Give More 24 total is \$20,380



To everyone who donated, shared our posts, encouraged a friend, or supported us throughout the day—**THANK YOU!**

I am so proud of our families, our team, and this community that continues to believe in what we do.

\$16,975 represents so many people saying, "We care."

Thank you for believing in Family Promise and the families we serve. We truly could not do this without you!



Those are the moments that stay with me.

Because sometimes we don't get to see the whole story. We meet families when they are in crisis, help them get through that difficult season, and eventually they move on. But when we get to see where they end up—when a former Family Promise family buys a home, gets settled, and creates a stable life for their children—it reminds us why this work matters so much.

This year has also reminded me just how generous Cowlitz County is.

Our volunteers have shown up. Our churches have opened their doors. Businesses and organizations have donated their time and resources. Community partners have helped us connect families to the things they need. Donors have continued to believe in our mission and trust us to use their support to help local families.

We could not do this without you.

I am incredibly grateful for every person who has helped Family Promise this year. Whether you donated \$10, sponsored a room, volunteered for a day, brought food, helped a family move, attended one of our fundraisers, or simply shared our story with someone else—you have made a difference.

As we move forward, we know there is still so much work to do. Families are still struggling to afford housing, and one unexpected setback can change everything.

But I also know this: ***Our County has a community that cares.***

We have seen it again and again this year.

We have seen families come through our doors unsure of what comes next and leave with keys to a home. We have seen parents regain their confidence. We have seen children settle into a safe place. We have seen people who were once struggling become homeowners.

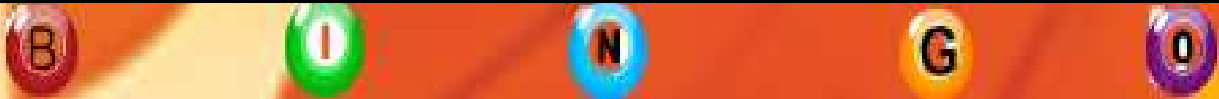
And we have seen our community step up.

That is what I am most proud of.

Thank you for believing in Family Promise. Thank you for believing in the families we serve. And thank you for being part of a community that believes everyone deserves a safe place to call home.

With gratitude,

Sara Wallace
Executive Director
Family Promise of Cowlitz County



🎉 BINGO EVENT OF THE YEAR! 🎉

Mark your calendars! **Family Promise of Cowlitz County's annual Bingo Night** is coming up on **October 24, 2026**, at **Youth & Family Link**!

🍔 **Burgers & Bingo** is going to be a night you won't want to miss! Bring your friends, enjoy some great food, play bingo, and most importantly—**support local families in our community.** ❤️

🎟️ **GET YOUR TICKETS NOW!**

Seats are limited, so don't wait!

📅 **October 24, 2026**

📍 **Youth & Family Link**

Every ticket helps Family Promise of Cowlitz County continue providing shelter, homelessness prevention, and support to local families working toward stable housing.

Come for the bingo. Stay for the fun. Give hope to a family. ❤️ See Insert



At Your Service

Board of Directors

Dan Frei	President
Marsha Treadway	Vice-President
Trudi Gross	Secretary
Summer Bailey	Treasurer
OPEN POSITION	At-Large
Lauri Harris	At-Large
Jim Johnston	At-Large
Ron Naff	At-Large
Steve Pond, Sr.	At-Large
Lavonne Rodgers	At-Large
Karl Salzsieder	At-Large

Family Center Staff

<u>Sara Wallace</u>	Executive Director
<u>Jamie Craig</u>	Office Manager
<u>Jovan Tyler</u>	Case Manager

Newsletter Editor Emeritus Richard Shuren

Newsletter Editor Steve Sheridan

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Visit our website at:

www.fpcowlitz.org (Cowlitz County)
www.familypromise.org (National Organization)

Find us on Facebook at:
www.Facebook.com/FamilyPromiseCowlitzCounty

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*Family Promise of
Cowlitz County
proudly supports:*

