



Family Services

Helping to restore, sustain & enhance lives

NEWS RELEASE

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DEFY Domestic Abuse Beloit and County Leadership Development Academy Raising Funds for Children's Play Area

Beloit, WI - DEFY Domestic Abuse Beloit, along with Rock County's 2021-22 Leadership Development Academy (LDA), is seeking support to remodel DEFY's domestic violence shelter space. The remodel will create a room for early childhood development and another for an adult-only sitting room with office space to help shelter residents meet their self-sufficiency goals. DEFY has already received \$1,800 for the project through a grant from Stateline Community Foundation and a private donor. An additional \$8,000 is needed to complete the project.

DEFY and LDA have created Team Smashing Barriers, which consists of six volunteer team members from the public and private sectors. The team members have experience in construction, electrical, plumbing, design, project management, fundraising, and grant writing. Team Smashing Barriers will do all the demo and construction work, including painting, building, laying new flooring, electrical, and plumbing.

Team members are: Marcia Galvan, SWWDB; Jessica Schroeder, City of Janesville IT; Danny Silverthorn, ANGI Energy Systems; David Froeber, Rock County Facilities Superintendent; Matthew Huettl, Clinton School District; and Crystal Fox, Kandu Industries.

"We are grateful for the help our community members are providing for this project, which will have a positive impact on all homeless survivors of domestic violence residing at DEFY's emergency shelter," said Kelsey Hood Christenson, Director of Survivor Empowerment Services for DEFY. "We could not accomplish this renovation without the generous donations of time, expertise and financial assistance from our community. The project will provide a safe communal space for both child and adult residents of the shelter to gather and support one another."

Both financial and in-kind donations of specific items are needed, with many ways for people to give.

A GoFundMe account has been set up for financial donations. Please visit <https://gofund.me/2f72d825> to make a donation in any amount. Donations are tax deductible.

To purchase specific items, which will be shipped directly to DEFY Domestic Abuse, please visit https://www.amazon.com/hz/wishlist/ls/1L3TF3HWNPSZA?ref=wl_share.

Large furniture items are also needed for the space. To donate these items, or for more information, please contact Kelsey Hood-Christenson at 608-364-1083 or khood@familyservices1.org.

The groups anticipate raising at least \$4,000 by February or early March, allowing them to begin the demolition and construction phase. For updated information, please follow DEFY Domestic Abuse on Facebook.

Defy Domestic Abuse Beloit's mission is to champion the inherent dignity of each individual while interrupting and dismantling the systemic cycle of domestic abuse. All services are empowerment-based, meaning goals and progress made are directed by the survivor.

LDA was founded in 2003 by a group of public- and private-sector leaders and organizations who saw a need for leadership training and community engagement in order to make Rock County a better place to live, work, and play. LDA's mission is to inspire leaders to build and strengthen their community.

As part of Family Services of Southern Wisconsin and Northern Illinois, Inc., DEFY Domestic Abuse Beloit extends to survivors of domestic abuse all the support offered by Family Services. This includes financial planning; parenting support; therapy and counseling; legal advocacy; and community outreach.

Family Services is a funded partner of United Way Blackhawk Region, United Way of Green County, and the Community Foundation of Southern Wisconsin.

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The mission of Family Services of Southern Wisconsin and Northern Illinois, Inc. is to restore, sustain, and enhance the lives of members of the community by providing an array of empowering services that focus on prevention, advocacy, case management, education, counseling and therapy.



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