

WISH Inc. (Women in Second Stage Housing) Celebrates 25 Years of Helping Women and Their Children Build Better Tomorrows



by Lori Rudniski, Executive Director, WISH Inc.

SAFETY, COURAGE, STRENGTH



At WISH Inc., *Safety, Courage, and Strength* are more than just words—these are the actions that have guided our work for over 25 years, and continue to be our solid foundation as we move towards the future. From the very beginning, when a group of inspiring people in the community and government saw a need, we have seen this courage in action. Building on the success of short term emergency shelters, these pioneers set out to provide safe housing and longer-term support for the women and their children who attempt to make concrete changes in their lives. These women and children needed support and a place to live so as to not to return to a home filled with violence and harm. In 1986, WISH Inc. opened its doors as the first second-stage program in Manitoba.

Since then, we see this strength everyday in the women we serve, from their initial decision to come to the WISH Program through to their graduation day that celebrates their year of success and growth, and beyond.

These are the courageous women who have made the difficult choice to leave their home and seek safety and help for themselves and their children. They are in their 20's 30's 40's and beyond. Their

children may be babies, toddlers, school age and teenagers. These are the women who know there is a life free from violence for themselves and their children but need help to turn their hope into reality. They know that even though they may leave with little, except what they can carry with them, they are determined to build a better life free from abuse. They want their children to be safe, happy, and free from fear. For many, they are breaking the cycle of violence that they, too, had to experience when they were children.

Throughout the years, we have had the honour of seeing these families standing taller and walking prouder as they feel safer and more confident in their new life free from violence. Although many of the challenges of building a new life may continue, these women and their children can meet these hurdles with a stronger belief in themselves, and the strength of skills and knowledge.

Looking forward to the next 25 years, we know

that our agency will continue to grow and expand to meet the needs of the women and children we serve. The work continues, but the safety, courage, and strength of all perseveres in building great tomorrows!

To find out more about WISH Inc. (Women in Second Stage Housing), please check out our website at wishinc.ca, e-mail us at wishinc@mymts.net, or call our office at 204-275-2600. ☘



On September 27, 2012, over 240 friends of WISH Inc. heard the amazing talents of Manitoba's own Sierra Noble, the clever wit of emcee Jon Ljunberg, and celebrated over 25 years of helping women and their children break free from violence.