

01/10/2018

Dear Friends of Safe Harbor,

As I begin to settle into the New Year and reflect back on the holiday season, I want to thank you for your kindness and generosity, and share a few thoughts with you...

It's the Friday before Christmas and I am filled with the spirit of Christmas all week. We started the morning with our office overflowing with bikes, blocks and footballs—gifts for kids who have seen too much anger and have felt too much fear. We ended the day with hugs, exclamations of joy and sighs of relief from moms who wondered if Christmas was going to show up this year.

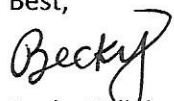
Last week, "Frances" husband went to jail for hitting her in front of their 4 year old daughter. She had not been allowed to work or shop for her 3 children. Ironically, she had been storing a bicycle in the back of her car for a friend who was hiding it for her child as a Santa gift. Frances saw it every time she got in her car—knowing that she had nothing to give her own children for Christmas. When she arrived at our office and saw brand new bikes and scooters for her children, she crumpled to the floor in tears. For the first time in years, Frances would be able to experience her children's joy at Christmas.

"Christina" arrived with her 4 year old son, "Terrence". She didn't have daycare for him, having lost her job recently with a serious health issue. Once she left our shelter 4 months ago, she was finding it difficult to make it on her own, but counseling from Safe Harbor was helping her get stronger each day. Nonetheless, Christmas looked bleak until she saw the gifts that "Terrence" had wanted so desperately in a giant bag with his name on it. She hugged me, dragged the gifts to her car and distracted "Terrence"—an inquisitive and adorable boy who had dressed himself today, complete with his shoes on the wrong feet. She stood at the back of her car with me and took a deep breath.

These are just two of the families who showed up at our office feeling anxious and uncertain and left feeling relieved. Each woman thanked me, hugged me and cried. In turn, I thank you. Because of you, each one of these and many other families were able to spend Christmas with a little more comfort and joy. Thank you for donating money, gift cards and special gifts for these families. Because of you, they have experienced community. They see that they are not alone. And because of you, they have received the best gift of all: Hope.

I hope that you had a joyous Christmas and holiday season and I wish for you a new year of peace.

Best,



Becky Callahan