



June  
2020

# Family Promise News

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**When everything around her is  
changing,**

**Mom takes her hand to  
assure her everything will  
be alright.**

**When moms are afraid because they don't know how to make everything alright,**

**Family Promise takes her hand, so everything will be.**

Since our opening in 2017, we have restored 20 Ontario County families to safe, sustainable housing, by helping them secure employment, transportation, and meals.

COVID-19 forced families to shelter in place, but through coordinated work with the Department of Human Services, Catholic Family Services, Habitat for Humanity, the Victor Food Shelf and the financial support of our neighbors and congregations, our work continues!

Thank you!



**Take Action  
Be Part of  
the Solution**

# Family Promise Essential Services Continue

**Myth: Homelessness will always be with us.**

*Donate \* Organize \* Advocate \* Volunteer \* Request a Speaker*



Last week we delivered the wonderful shower gifts from Family Promise to one of our graduate's home. Zabrianna showed Lauren that she is learning to read at home, even though she is not attending Kindergarten classes at her school.

Lauren, our Congregation and Community Liaison, worked with Zabrianna's mom in our program to establish home schooling schedules and techniques to use with her four school age children.

**Myth: Homelessness will always be with us.**

**Fact:** No. Although throughout our history, homelessness has ebbed and flowed with economic crises, wars, and depression, we are in the fourth decade of the longest sustained period of mass homelessness in our history.

In many communities, homelessness has reached crisis proportions...This is not inevitable.

***We know how to end homelessness for individuals, families and youth-***

***- by providing affordable housing, removing barriers to housing, and providing the health, mental health, employment, and other supportive services people need to successfully keep their housing.***

We need to prepare to respond to the increased homelessness that will occur in Ontario County when the eviction moratorium ends and families are impacted by large scale unemployment. The National Coalition for the Homeless is encouraging our communities to hold discussions around how to re-invigorate a grassroots organizing effort to end homelessness.

This will require that we include new people at the planning table. This will mean **elevating the voices of people most affected by homelessness** and inviting into dialogue **partners from the public and private sectors**, as well as the **faith community, union organizers, and other advocates** working on related issues.

***This is how Family Promise in Ontario County was established.***



# What is Family Promise?

## Homelessness Prevention & Stabilization

### Message from Family Promise National CEO Claas Ehlers

One of the core elements of Family Promise has always been building community.

Well, with social distancing, that takes a very different cast. It has led to Affiliates asking the question: "What is Family Promise" if we aren't sheltering families?

Eight months ago—or what feels like a decade or more now—Family Promise staff gathered to discuss our vision, our mission, our future. We pondered a question: Can an Affiliate be a Family Promise if it does not include a shelter component?

This question was spurred by the important growth in [prevention and diversion initiatives](#), and the [focus on long-term stabilization programming](#). These have been national priorities, along with the adoption of technology in our solutions, and the engagement of volunteers beyond the faith community.

***We agreed that the answer is Unequivocally yes.***



***Family Promise has two essential purposes:***

- We empower families to be sustainable, working from their strengths and employing respect and empathy.
- We mobilize communities, engaging volunteers in meaningful, relational partnerships to end homelessness for families.

What Family Promise got out of this are many other principles and actions, but these two define us. Those who work in homelessness tend to talk about wanting to "go out of business." Sure, we are striving to make homelessness end, but Family Promise shouldn't stop existing when every family has a home. What we do is so powerful, so transformative. Our business isn't just shelter—It is empowerment and mobilization. It is a holistic approach to family poverty. It creates community.

## *Yes, Brenda, I want to help families receive Essential Services!*



Bill my credit card:    VISA    MASTERCARD (circle)  
 \$50.00                      Card # \_\_\_\_\_  
 \$100.00                      Exp. Date \_\_\_\_\_ CIV/SEC# \_\_\_\_\_  
 \$200.00                      Phone # \_\_\_\_\_  
 \$\_\_\_\_\_                      Give your gift online at [familypromiseontariocounty.org](http://familypromiseontariocounty.org)

I would like to make this gift in memory/honoring : \_\_\_\_\_  
 Please make this a recurring monthly gift.  
**Name** \_\_\_\_\_  
**Address** \_\_\_\_\_

**Family Promise of Ontario County-185 N Main St., Canandaigua, NY 14424**

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I did not foresee a pandemic accelerating the consideration of the question of "What is Family Promise" or of our models of service. **I do know we all have – and are – the answer.**

**Shelter will continue to be crucial for the foreseeable future and Family Promise will not stop providing that essential service.** But it does not define us.

We will continue to identify the best ways to serve vulnerable families in the near term while we explore, plan, and envision what those ways are in the long term. Please help us in this process by sharing with me your thoughts, concerns, and aspirations. Call or email any time.

Sincerely,

CEO Claas Ehlers

## A Simple Table

Peter Galvani, graciously donated a table and chairs to Family Promise of Ontario



County. Because of his donation a family of five will now be able to

- + sit together and have dinner,
- + the kindergartner will be able to sit and do her homework –
- + as will the mom who is pursuing a degree in chemistry remotely –
- + and the kids will be able to do a craft together!

More than just a simple table...Thank you Barbara and Rich for picking it up and delivering it to them!

### The Reality for Working Parents

The average annual cost of childcare in the United States is \$9,589 for one child.

Two parents working full-time at federal minimum wage make \$30,160. Childcare for one child is 32% of their income.	
The poverty level for a family of 3 is \$20,420. Childcare for one child accounts for 47% of that income.	

	Childcare in 33 states costs more than the national average of in-state college tuition.	
\$9,589		\$9,410

Family Promise  
Building strong families. Inspiring lives.

Can you be on our "on-call" list?  
We need trucks/vans & drivers.

Contact: Lauren  
FPOCLiaison@fpocny.org  
585-943-0205

**Jim has a new job**, the only problem is that buses run infrequently and he had to go to work 2 hours before his shift to get there.

Thanks to a very generous community donor, Jim and Sarah now have a car to get him to work.

