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SUMMER 2021

NEWSLETTER

We have been dedicated to serving with compassion
and dignity the immediate and long-term needs
of those facing unplanned pregnancies for 21 years!



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knowledge • confidentiality • support

Save the Date

You are invited!
Summer BBQ
Sunday August 22nd

Next Step Pregnancy Services is teaming up with St. Pius X Church in Mountlake Terrace for a BBQ! The BBQ will be held on Sunday August 22nd at Noon at the church. Food, Fellowship, bouncy houses and more! Next Step will have our own pop-up tent – come say hi! We miss you!!



Board Member Highlight

My name is Molly Nielsen. I was approached and invited to become a member of the Next Step Pregnancy family last Fall and became a Next Step Board Member last November. I have had a periphery relationship with NSP for many years as a supporter and as a friend of many of the employees as well as a Pro-Life volunteer as an Angel with the Gabriel Angel Project for many years. My work as a Gabriel Angel was both exhausting and rewarding so when it was discontinued a few years ago I became available and interested in continuing my work with women who find themselves in an unplanned pregnancy. My personal goal and hope is to let women know that they are not alone. That having a baby- especially one that is unplanned- is still a blessing. When not volunteering my time at NSP, my time is spent volunteering at St. Mark School in several capacities including Parent Club, coaching multiple activities, as a Substitute teacher or wherever I am needed. I am also the Vice Coordinator for an American Heritage Girls Troop at St. Pius X and of course wife of Brian and mother to three beautiful girls.

- Jamea, Hannah and Mary-Kate.



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Nurse

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Dear Friend of Next Step,

“Being a great father is like shaving. No matter how good you shaved today, you have to do it again tomorrow.”
~ Reed Markham

When I think back on my childhood I recall very vividly my father in our garage, in a grease-stained undershirt, under one of our cars, playing Led Zeppelin. I recall my father working late shifts and waiting up for him while reading Peanuts comics by flashlight. I recall him driving all the way back to the Arby's when it was discovered I had left my green jacket with the lion on it in the restaurant. I remember him playing guitar in the church choir. I recall being on a sailboat and him giving me a taste of the beer I'd insisted on trying and laughing when I spat it out in disgust. I remember him calling me Hedwig.

I remember when I found out I was pregnant and unmarried he was the one person I was terrified to tell. But I did of course. And he loved me still.

Fathers are essential. They may not be the backbone of the family, but they are the shield, the fortress, the shelter the family relies on.

“There is a father absence crisis in America. According to the U.S. Census Bureau, 18.3 million children, 1 in 4, live without a biological, step, or adoptive father in the home. Consequently, there is a father factor in nearly all social ills facing America today.”

:Source: U.S. Census Bureau. (2020). Living arrangements of children under 18 years old: 1960 to present. Washington, D.C.: U.S. Census Bureau.



Heather M Vasquez
Executive Director



(Continued inside)

Gala and Auction News/Follow up

Thank you to everyone who participated in the 2021 Auction and Gala! It was a wonderful success. Thank you to all the speakers who shared during the Gala and those who donated items to the Auction. And thank you to Motio Media for the wonderful production. To date – we have raised almost \$62,000! The wonderful production is still available to view on our support site nssupport.org under the Gala tab. And we of course are still accepting donations!



Next Step has a new updated Client Website and Support Website

The support site – nssupport.org – is where you will find all the news, events, baby bottle campaigns, blogs, wish lists, and volunteer opportunities. The new client website – www.nextstepnw.com – is our client site to reach women and families in need. To explain our services, what we can provide and what we cannot provide, and how to make appointments and get in touch. These are two different websites each made with a specific audience in mind. If you have any questions on either, please- shoot us an email or give us a call!

nssupport.org
nextstepnw.com

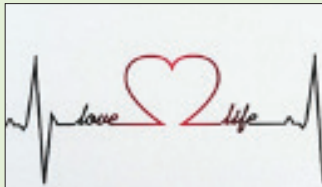
Sponsor Highlight!

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Can you write a prescription? Then we need you!!

Next Step is still on the lookout for a 2nd Medical Director! Medical Doctor, Nurse Practitioner or Physician's Assistant. No OB experience needed – we can train!



A Woman's Heart

When I first began as a nurse at Next Step, I was very uncomfortable counseling an abortion minded client. As I would do her pregnancy test, I could feel my heart pounding, and I would pray to God that the test would be negative. I felt if it were positive, then I held this baby's life in my hands, and I had about 45 minutes to try and save it. And I honestly didn't know what to say to the woman. The pressure was terrible.

In June of last year, my coworker Barb Millett and I traveled to Las Vegas for ultrasound training. The pregnancy center where we trained is the busiest center in the US, and almost all of their clients are abortion vulnerable or abortion minded. I saw woman after woman in terrible situations. They were rejected, abused, battered, in hiding, in shelters, many desperately trying to protect their other children. They were trying to survive. As I scanned one woman she began to cry when she saw her baby moving on the screen, asking if the baby's spine was intact. She had been kicked so many times by her husband she was sure her baby was paralyzed.

We scanned for three days. At the end of our time there, as the staff gathered together to pray, I began to weep. Through all I had seen at the center my heart was breaking for these women. I thought about my life, the safety of my home, my husband, and his wonderful love for me. Growing up in the 60's and 70's, the product of a very dysfunctional home, angry and rebellious, this could have so easily been my story. But my grandmother saw my attraction to a culture turned upside down by Vietnam, war protests, LSD, and sex with no boundaries, and took me out of the country for a year. She saved my life. In my twenties I became a believer, and the transformation began.

I came home from Vegas changed. Before my focus had been mainly about saving the baby.

But I believe God wanted me to see the other person in the room, the mother, with His compassion,

His tenderness, His love and healing. I began to see a pattern of short relationships, many relationships, and abusive homes. And this culture promotes this lifestyle. The woman is desperate to be loved, but is looking in all the wrong places. And she comes to us with a ravaged heart, pregnant, panicked, about to make another decision that will only cause her further ruin. I ask her how she thinks an abortion will affect her emotionally, what it will do to her heart. I try to find her strengths and point them out to her. She needs to know that she is valuable, worthy of being loved, worthy of a committed relationship by a man who loves her, and will stay with her. I tell her that God has a plan for her life, unique only to her, and it is absolutely perfect. She can have a full, beautiful life. There is the perfect man for her, but she may have to wait. Christian author Stasi Eldredge writes that every woman has a beauty. Every woman. But when a heart has been wounded by rejection and abuse, it is hidden. And when a woman knows that she is valuable, and worthy and isn't powerless, then I believe that her heart will begin to connect with her baby's, and she will want to protect it. That is the mother's heart, created by God. And that is God's heart. He wants to save the mother as much as He wants to save the baby.

Now, the abortion minded women are actually some of my favorite clients. I always pray before I meet with them, that God will take over, and the Lord continues to build my confidence as He teaches me.

Lord, may our clients feel your love and compassion when they walk inside our door. Holy Spirit, move through us. This work cannot happen without You. Amen.

~ Kim Berry, RN, Nurse Manager



Dear Friend of Next Step...

Despite the growing narrative that fathers and men in general are not the courageous trailblazers and innovators of the history books and are in fact toxic and callous we here at Next Step believe that in fact fathers (and father figures) are fundamentally and emphatically essential to the health and happiness of a child. They are in essence our earthly fathers.

"My father didn't tell me how to live. He lived and let me watch him do it." ~ Clarence Buddington Kelland

(Executive Director message continued from cover)

At Next Step we serve women and families. We work to empower women facing unplanned pregnancies to choose life for themselves and their babies. But we must not forget that for every child born and unborn there is a father who is part of them. Who may or may not be ready to be a father but a father he is. He needs our encouragement. He needs to feel needed and essential to his child's health and happiness. That is where you and I come in. Go beyond the cute once a year Father's Day card. Seek out the fathers and father figures in your community. Encourage them, listen to them, offer yourself as a friend and mentor, and above all pray for them.