

Family Promise of Lawrence
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Discover Helping Hands in Lawrence, Kansas

LAWRENCE, Kan - In the heart of a popular college town home to the Jayhawks, with enrollment hitting its peak, and the impressive athletics, more students are coming to the University. As enrollment increases, the population of unhoused individuals does as well. This issue often gets overlooked due to the University of Kansas campus being in Lawrence and dominating most of the area. But the local community has gained more attention and support through many local organizations throughout the Lawrence area to ensure that unhoused individuals do not go unnoticed.

One organization who has made a huge impact is Family Promise of Lawrence. They are more than just a shelter. They strive for long-term stability and help gain community connections for families to take a step into a positive lifestyle to help limit temporary resolutions.

[Family Promise](#) isn't the only organization in the Lawrence area. In 2024, the organization helped 280 families, 984 individuals and 584 children. Real families, children, and individuals who have successfully overcome hardships. Without the help of Family Promise these groups of people wouldn't have had the chance to rebuild their lives.

They look for long term solutions as they have case managers, financial support, schooling services, [temporary housing](#), [shelter](#) and much more. They live up to their mission and vision statement as their contributions have helped create change.

One of the most inspiring stories from this organization is one family member who once received help, now works for them, giving back to others the same way they were supported. This full-circle moment goes to show how impactful this organization is.

Brena Wahl, [Executive Director](#) has felt the success of this project when helping families get back on their feet.

“That’s why our mission says that through community connections because it’s really important for families to have those resources available to them outside of Family Promise,” said Wahl, “We’ll be here for them if they need us again.”

Community connections are important to have families be on their own independent steps to stability. Family Promise will always welcome any one with open arms, but they inspire those in need to flourish as independently as possible.

Vanecia Hazel, [Director of Family Services](#) shares how she has seen success through providing families with encouragement to make positive decisions when finding ways to stability.

“Families enrolled in programming work with a case manager weekly at times daily to goal set, build skills, employment and housing navigation, as well as connect to community resources for full wrap around support,” said Hazel.

Not every family, child, or individual is facing the same hardships. With case managers, all future outlooks can look different depending on the circumstance.

“I define success in this organization when families are able to identify their next steps towards their stability. Families being able to have an autonomous experience towards their own successes is a great win to having their needs being heard and understood,” said Hazel

Everyone has their own story and no one person or family is the same which is why case managers are important to helping guide people in the right direction. Some can be close to losing houses or staying with friends and family or financially struggling.

One of the biggest takeaways from the ideals of Family Promise comes from Brenda Wahl as she highlights the importance of how homelessness doesn't always mean being on the street.

“Family homelessness is not as visible as homelessness of individuals on the street with children,” she says. “They are doubled up with people, so they don't get counted in the homelessness counts.”

It looks different for everyone and sometimes we don't notice when people are struggling.

Lawrence is filled with an increasing college student population, impressive athletics and a busy campus, Family Promise focuses on families, children and individuals in the area that need a little extra help. It's important to understand that our college town may not be as glamorous to some than we think. There are many in Lawrence that are struggling to find a warm place to stay during the cooler months, where their next meal is coming from, and how they are going to

stay healthy. With the help of Family Promise and other organizations, Lawrence can help improve the lives of unhoused community members.

Family Promise of Lawrence helps families in a housing crisis through a large support system to help guide them to a better future.

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