**Homeless Mother Struggles to Support Three Children**

Prior to last summer, 43-year-old single mom Trudy\* struggled but managed to support herself and her three children. Then the family suffered a devastating blow when the youngest child, 8-year-old Anna,\* was diagnosed with a life-threatening illness. This crisis proved too much for Trudy’s already-shaky circumstances. She often had to miss work in order to take Anna to medical appointments and hospitalizations. She soon lost her job, and then their apartment. At first they stayed with family members who Trudy had helped during their own hard times. Her past generosity was not reciprocated for long and, in desperation, Trudy turned to [**Holy Family Shelter**](http://www.archindy.org/cc/holyfamily/serve.html).

Holy Family Shelter not only provides temporary emergency housing, meals and other basic needs for up to 30 homeless families every day; it also offers a safe and supportive environment where families in crisis can begin to heal. Case managers provide comprehensive services to help these families in need set goals and priorities while they work on life skills such as budgeting, parenting, proper nutrition, communication and stress management. The Shelter collaborates with a network of other agencies to provide the resources families need to achieve and maintain self-sufficiency.

Soon after arriving at the shelter, Trudy met with a case manager who helped her create a resume and provided several job leads. Anna continued her medical treatments and although chemotherapy often made her sick, she attended school most days. The individualized tutoring she and her older siblings received at the Shelter helped them all keep their grades up during this difficult time.

Within ten days, Trudy found a job with hours that accommodated Anna’s treatments. With employment secured, her case manager then helped Trudy begin the intense application process required to move from the Shelter into Holy Family’s Transitional Housing Program. One month after they entered the Shelter, Trudy and her family were moving into their own apartment in Fountain Square where they can live for up to two years. United Way funding helps to significantly subsidize Trudy’s rent so they can save more for their future.

Transitional Housing has provided a fresh start for Trudy and her family. During weekly meetings with her case manager, she continues to work on budgeting and debt management strategies. More importantly, she has somewhere to turn when the challenges of being a single mother begin to weigh her down. She is regaining confidence in her ability to successfully support her family. Her despair has turned to hope for their future.