Stephen is thirteen and started coming to Ryves Youth Center four years ago. When he first started coming to the youth center, he would tell us he had nothing to do. However that soon changed.

Stephen found that he loved to play basketball and practiced on a regular basis. He spent even more time on the computers. He also discovered that the adults were very kind and he had found a second home at Ryves.

Unfortunately Stephen moved and we lost track of him. But his family ended up at the Bethany House, Catholic Charities’ homeless shelter. When he returned, he joined a basketball team and was anxious to join the Ryves Boy Scout Troop. When he needed help with his homework he found helpful tutors.

Today Stephen spends almost every day at Ryves. He is active in scouting and is attending summer camp in July. Stephen spends quite a bit of time working in the concession stand, operated by Ryves Troop #22.

We are all proud of the young man Stephen has become. He definitely wants to go to college and Ryves Youth Center is helping to make his dream possible.

Many of the children that attend Ryves do not experience the joys of childhood: opportunities for play, guidance with education and homework, unconditional love of their parents. However once they reach the doors of Ryves, they do experience each of these things. Jim Edwards, program director, ends each conversation with a child with, “I love you.”

The young people at Ryves can play virtually any sport they wish, participate in crafts and scouts, play on the computer and experience the unconditional love that helps them to see their true potential.

The doors are open Monday through Friday 1 p.m. to 9 p.m. all year round. Your donations and volunteer times make this program available to all children completely free of charge.

Mission Statement

Catholic Charities Terre Haute exists to serve the poor, the hungry, the homeless, the elderly, the neglected children and the needy. Our goal is to relieve suffering and hardship for people in the community regardless of nationality, race, creed, or religion.
Bethany House and Ryves Youth Center teamed up with several other local homeless providers to host this year’s 2009 Homeward Bound Walk in April. This event raised nearly $3,000 for local agencies and educates the community on the true face of poverty and the need to support those organizations that reach out to the poor every day.

The need to combat this epidemic has never been greater as the economy continues to be in a recession. The average age of a homeless person is nine years old. Wages are down; the costs of basic necessities are rising. For families already having a difficult time making ends meet, the recession hits them even harder. Local social service agencies are seeing an increase in the number of people needing services. The good news in all of this is that right now, these same social service agencies are coming together to help assure that we will be able to continue to meet the needs of our neighbors who are struggling.

The Wabash Valley walk is one of 11 walks that takes place annually as part of Homeward Bound Indiana, a project of the Indiana Association of Community and Economic Development (IACED). The other local partners include:
- Children’s Bureau
- Hamilton Center
- Mental Health of America
- CoDependents Anonymous (CODA)
- MDWise
- Families by Choice
- Human Relations Commission, City of Terre Haute
- Crossroad Connections
- Terre Haute Housing Authority

The partner agencies set up tables to educate participants on their services and the truth about poverty and homelessness.

Children created their own t-shirts while they waited for the program to begin.

David English and Mary English are leading this section of the walk.
David participates in many programs at Ryves and Mary, his mother, is a volunteer.
Finding Success in Everyday Actions

Bethany House serves as a backup for the pantry network and creates emergency food baskets when pantries are not open. Seventy-four baskets were distributed in 2008, which is double the number distributed in 2007.

With the rise in unemployment and the changes made to the food stamp application process, more people are getting caught in a system where they are going hungry. “We are waiting on our food stamps to be processed”, says Alice. “They told us we would have them by now, but our application is still pending.”

Bethany House and the clients it serves are joining forces with our state representatives to improve the process for application and process of food stamps in Indiana. Until a better system is implemented, clients will continue to suffer.

We asked Alice what success would like for herself and her family.

What is success for you?

“To have food in my kids tummies, a dry place to stay and clothes on our backs. I don’t care much if I have enough food, as long as my kids don’t go hungry.”

How do you help yourself achieve success?

“I do the best I can. I only have a part time job. I ask for more hours, but I can’t get more than 20 – 25 hours a week and at minimum wage, that doesn’t go too far. I’m saving aluminum cans that I find and use, but the price of aluminum is down now too. I’m looking for a better job”.

How does Catholic Charities help you achieve success?

“I count on the soup kitchen and the after school program to fill the gaps in my grocery bill. I also get clothes for me and the kids from the Clothes Closet and the stuff donated at Ryves”.

For those we serve, the most basic of necessities opens up the doors of hope for the future. And the barriers to those needs can often seem insurmountable.

A Beacon of Hope during a Time of Confusion

Lorraine came to the Bethany House because a Spectrum Industries employee saw her walking on the street with old shopping bags and a backpack. She told us she had spent most of her nights in parks. She thought she had eaten about two days ago.

When our case manager interviewed Lorraine, she seemed confused and disoriented. She didn’t want to shower or change her clothes. She just wanted a bed for the night and help purchasing a bus ticket for New York City.

We called the local police station and found there had been a missing persons report filed on Lorraine in October 2008. We phoned the contact number and from the other end of the line we heard squeals of joy, relief, and gratitude. “We thought something horrible had surely happened to her. We think she had a breakdown of some kind because she left without reason, explanation or destination. She has no family or connections in New York City,” the family member said.

Later that morning three of Lorraine’s family members were on their way to get her. They came from Missouri, South Carolina and Maryland with balloons and flowers. It was a special reunion at the Bethany House. They are taking Lorraine to get the help she needs and to hopefully be the person she once was. As she left, Lorraine looked at us and said, “I will never forget you for the rest of my life”.

Did you know?

Bethany House Homeless Shelter….

- has served more than 125 people as residents since reopening in January 2008.
- served an average of 79 lunches per day in 2007 and an average of 102 in 2008 in the soup kitchen. This daily average continues to rise in 2009.
- distributed more than 100 blankets during the January 2009 homeless count.
- networks with more than 20 other social service agencies to help people get needed services to be self sufficient.
Dear Friends,

The economic crisis in our country seems to be in the forefront of most people’s minds these days. We worry about our future and the futures that face the youngest in our families. For some of us, these worries are about what is happening to our retirement plans and resources; for some it is about the stability of our jobs; and others worry that they will lose their homes.

As we face these difficult and stressful circumstances and go about our daily lives, how much thought do we give to those in our community who are facing immediate crises? All across the Wabash Valley many of our neighbors are facing questions like these:

- We can’t pay our utility bills and we’ve called everyone, who can help?
- How are we going to get our child’s medication?
- Where can I find a job that will meet our family’s expenses?
- Can I get to the food pantry and get some groceries for dinner?

Difficult economic times hit the poorest of the poor even harder than the rest of society. Investors may lose millions, but these dollars don’t affect their everyday survival. Especially when we compare the situation to those Catholic Charities serves. The families we see can’t even afford to take their children to see a movie or pay for their school books. They can’t buy food or clothing and rely on the generosity of strangers to nourish their children.

How we respond to those in need is vital to our mission. We remember and serve our most vulnerable brothers and sisters. We keep hope alive in our own lives and the lives of their children. I invite you to help Catholic Charities when and where you can. We are certainly all in this together.

John C. Etling
Agency Director
Parish Social Ministry Regional Training
Leadership training for parishioners to serve those in need in their parish neighborhood through social ministry.

CatholicCharitiesIndy.org

November 6-7, 2009
Benedict Inn Retreat & Conference Center
1402 Southern Ave., Beech Grove, IN 46107
www.benedictinn.org • Registration fee: $90

For More Information, Contact:
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Tina Baldera, Catholic Charities USA
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Catholic Charities Secretariat
Board and Staff

Each agency has an advisory council to help determine local priorities and staff to deliver daily programming. In addition, the secretariat (department) has a Board of Directors to advise Archbishop Daniel on the long-term goals of Catholic Charities and three staff members to support the local work of the agencies.

David J. Siler,
executive director

David J. Bethuram,
associate executive director

Stefanie Anderson,
communications and marketing coordinator

William Spangler,
president of the Catholic Charities Board

Members
Deacon Mike East
Tom Hirschauer
Deacon Bill Jones
Toby McClamroch
Steve Smith

Visit
SpreadingHopeEverywhere.com
to learn more!
Donation Needs:

- Nutritious, non-perishable food (no glass containers).
- Large (>39 gal) trash bags
- Bleach and Comet Cleanser
- Personal care items: hair brushes, shampoo and conditioner, razors and shave cream, deodorant.

You may drop these items off at the Food Bank or Bethany House at the corner of 14th and Locust.

Volunteers Needed:

- Provide transportation for shelter clients for early or late work hours.
- Teach a child to read, ride a bike, do a craft, play an instrument.
- Help with scouts or referee a game.
- Teach teens how to be job ready or how to use the computer.
- Help sort and distribute food at the food bank.

Save The Date:

- Wednesday, September 16, 6 p.m.: Join us at Idle Creek’s Conference Center for an inspiring evening. Learn more about Catholic Charities’ programs and support the 70,000 they serve each year through four programs. The ticket price is $50 per person and tables of ten are $500. Check CatholicCharitiesTerreHaute.org for more details!