



The Family LIFE Center

— *of West Michigan* —

Volunteer Handbook

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Ministry Background

Jeremiah 29:11 "For I know the plans which I have for you, declares the Lord, plans for well being, and not for harm, to give you a future and a hope."

History: The Family LIFE Center began with a vision to provide housing and support to young women experiencing unplanned pregnancies and as an alternative to abortion. God honored this vision and answered many prayers. With a generous donation from Pat and Cella Sietsema, support from many area churches, LOVE INC of Allendale, and many volunteers, the ministry opened its doors in March of 1993. With God's leading, the ministry decided to expand. In October of 1997, Our ministry moved into a new home on Fillmore Street in Allendale. Construction had begun in late May and many volunteers helped to build a beautiful new tri-level home. We now have room for four residents and their babies.

Vision Statement: To be a healthy, Christ-centered ministry that positively impacts the kingdom of God.

Mission Statement: To demonstrate the love of Christ to young women experiencing unplanned pregnancies by equipping them for the challenges of LIFE.

Guiding Principles:

1. The Family LIFE Center operates with Christ as the head, under the power of the Holy Spirit, and on the foundation of the Word of God.
2. We believe every human being is precious and sacred to God and deserves to be loved and protected.
3. We support, model and teach Biblical family truths.
4. Through the Holy Spirit, we model and teach the fruit of the Spirit.
5. We desire each person served to come to saving faith in Jesus Christ and to be discipled.
6. We are accountable to God for all He has entrusted to us, and we desire to be good stewards of His gifts.
7. We maintain a posture of thankfulness to God, knowing that He makes all we do or have possible.

HOW CAN I GET INVOLVED IN THE FAMILY LIFE CENTER?

1. BECOME A VOLUNTEER

Volunteers minister to the residents and staff in the following areas:

TEACHERS	ENCOURAGERS	SERVANTS
Childbirth	Mentor	Provide a special meal
Prenatal Care/Nutrition	Aftercare Family	Plumbing
Sexual Integrity	Provide child care for	Painting
Parenting	Residents or	Landscaping/yard work
Adoption	Houseparents	Electrical work
Financial Planning	Baking/Cooking	General house maintenance
Bible Study	Knitting	Desktop publishing
Exercise/Aerobics	Crafts	Computer maintenance
Tutoring	Decorating	Bulk mail assistance
Etiquette		Transportation
		Child Care

2. BECOME AN AMBASSADOR

Ambassadors let others know about the Family LIFE Center. Some of the ways an ambassador ministers to the FLC are:

- A. Host a living room presentation for your friends
- B. Host a coffee or tea for the women in your church
- C. Invite us to your church, Sunday School or small group to do a FLC presentation

3. BECOME A FINANCIAL SUPPORTER

Your gift of \$10, \$50 or \$100 a month makes it possible for these young women to be ministered to while in the FLC and gives them hope for the future.

The FLC Volunteer

The Role of a Volunteer: To encourage, role model, teach (not to counsel or rescue). See attached Philosophy and Policy on Adoption and Parenting.

The Character of a Volunteer:

1. A personal and vital relationship with Jesus Christ:
 - a. Lifestyle of purity and integrity
 - b. Mature and growing spiritually

- c. Heart to minister using talents and giftedness
- 2. An attitude to minister:
 - a. Compassionate
 - b. Genuine
 - c. Able to show unconditional love and acceptance
 - d. Humble
 - e. Able to maintain confidentiality

The Process of Becoming a Volunteer:

- 1. Application
 - a. Read and sign Statement of Faith
 - b. Sign Confidentiality Statement
 - c. Read and sign background check
- 2. Interview with Volunteer Coordinator
- 3. Reference checks (Pastor, Employee, Friend)
- 4. Submit copy of driver's license and insurance card

Guidelines for volunteers:

1. Money

We ask that you do not buy the residents gifts or fast food, or give them money while you are with a resident unless it is something that is pre-approved.

2. Conflict

If a resident is upset about a staff member, we ask that you encourage the resident to confront the person that they may have a conflict with.

(Matthew 18:15-17)

Be sure to control the conversation so that the resident is having healthy conversation and isn't gossiping.

PHILOSOPHY AND POLICY ON ADOPTION AND PARENTING

Philosophy of Adoption and Parenting:

It is important that the Board of Directors and volunteers not give any advice to the young women at the FLC about whether they should parent or place their child for adoption. Each week the resident meets with a trained staff person who presents both alternatives to help her develop a plan that is unique to her situation. The young woman, her parents, sometimes the birth father and his parents, and the staff all work together in this process.

Because the young women are going through a confusing time in their lives, they may change their minds often during the weeks and months before their due date. Therefore, it is essential that we neither affirm nor discourage any decision a young woman may voluntarily verbalize. We ask that volunteers not question the residents nor initiate conversation on this topic.

In the event a resident should volunteer any information on this topic, lovingly tell her that you will pray for her and know that God will direct her in her decision.

Adoption Policy for Board Members, Staff and Volunteers:

The staff, volunteers and Board members of the FLC will not be allowed to adopt or assume custody of any baby from any past or current residents. Due to the sensitive nature of decisions regarding adoption, it would be a conflict of interest for employees to pursue adoption while employed by the FLC. Furthermore, the staff and Board members are not allowed to provide names of couples seeking adoption to residents who are making adoption plans. The staff of the Home will do all they can to assist each young woman to determine the available options for her and her baby.

Family LIFE Center

Volunteer Job Description

Teachers

A volunteer who has experience, spiritual maturity and good interpersonal skills makes an excellent teacher for the classes we offer at the Family LIFE Center. These classes offer essential teaching and encouragement to the young girls.

Childbirth (4 weeks) - The teacher for this class should be a certified childbirth instructor or labor/delivery nurse.

Prenatal Care/Nutrition (1 week) - Nurses and dieticians make excellent teachers of this class. The girls are taught personal hygiene and healthy eating habits during their pregnancy. Curriculum provided.

Sexual Integrity (10 weeks) - This class teaches an overall healthy understanding of God's plan for sex within marriage. The girls are required to do weekly homework assignments. Curriculum provided.

Parenting (5 weeks) - This class offers a curriculum which educates the girls on the emotional, spiritual and physical aspects of parenting. The curriculum focuses on the first few years of a baby's life.

Adoption (3 weeks) - This class educates the girls on the process of adoption as well as the emotional and spiritual aspects of placing a baby for adoption. Couples who have adopted babies, individuals who have been adopted and birth mothers who have placed their babies for adoption share their testimonies and experiences with the girls.

Financial Planning (6 weeks) - This class teaches the girls the reality of the financial aspect of being a self-supporting adult. The girls are made aware of the expenses of housing, transportation, food and clothing in our society. They are taught how to budget and save, and they are challenged to be good stewards of their money.

Exercise/Aerobics - This volunteer enjoys exercise/aerobics. The instructor may use videos or audios to lead the class.

Volunteer Opportunities

Transportation - This volunteer offers transportation to and from work, school, volunteering, doctor's appointments, etc. Conversations may include why being a Christian is so important in your life.

Child Care - This volunteer provides care for the babies of the FLC in their home or in the FLC

while residents are working, going to school, or volunteering. Baby items will be provided if needed.

Committee Member - This volunteer would serve on a committee working with the staff and the board to develop and grow the ministry. The Family LIFE Center has 7 committees.

Fund Raising- This volunteer would help with a fundraising event during the year. The Fund Raiser would attend meetings and work on planning and organizing the event.

Programs-The program committee helps with developing the program for the residents to follow.

Building and Grounds- maintaining and improving the structure of the Family LIFE Center.

Prayer- The Prayer Committee prays together and individually for the Family LIFE Center and the needs of our ministry and other maternity home ministries.

Public Relations-Public relations is a committee for people who are interested in being active in the community or people who are already connected in the community, who can connect the Family LIFE Center with activities or organizations in the area.

Volunteer Job Description

Mentor

A Mentor befriends a resident. Many girls do not have the loving and nurturing support of a family nor do they have relatives and friends to visit them while they are living here. The Mentor can fill that void in a young woman's life. If a girl does have family but their visits are infrequent, the visits of a Mentor can fill the gap.

It takes time and patience to develop a relationship with a young pregnant mom. It is important that a Mentor be realistic in her expectations of the relationship. The more consistent and persistent the Mentor is in her commitment to the girl, the better the relationship will develop. We suggest that the Mentor plan simple and fun activities to do together on a weekly or bi-weekly basis. A telephone call once or twice a week, a note in the mail, and a card on special occasions will mean so much to the girls.

It makes a girl feel special when the Mentor is prompt for their visit and is enthusiastic about planning an activity together. Be sure to give a 24-hour notice to the houseparent to obtain permission for a visit before making plans with the girl. Visits should be no longer than four hours unless requested for special occasions.

We encourage you to make simple and inexpensive plans so that it will not be a burden to your personal finances. Sometimes a girl who works or receives money from her family will be able to pay for a meal or a movie or have spending money for shopping (the girls love to go to Wal-Mart). When going to a movie, please check Plugged In, or a similar Christian movie guide, to see if the rating is within our guidelines for the home, or check with the houseparents if you have questions. Some fun activities that are inexpensive could be a picnic in the park, a visit to local museums, taking a walk, baking cookies or cooking a meal in your home, etc.

Please be familiar with the family guidelines for the girls. A girl should never request to use your telephone or a telephone while you are out in a public place. The only exception would be if she needed to call the houseparents to ask a question. A girl should never be unsupervised. If she is attending church with you, always attend Sunday school classes and worship together.

The most important thing you can do is to be a fun friend and role model to these girls. This is a wonderful opportunity to make a girl feel very special by giving your time to spend with her just having fun.

Family Encouragers

Christian families provide much-needed role models and are a huge encouragement to the girls. Inviting the girl(s) to your home for a cookout and some fun activities with your family is a blessing. Family encouragers may also invite the girls to join their family for putt-putt or a movie or maybe just out for ice-cream on a warm summer evening.

Domestic Leaders Volunteers who are very talented in the domestic duties of a home are encouraged to plan a one-time (or more) visit to the Home to teach the girls. The girls enjoy learning how to bake, sew, knit, cook, decorate and make crafts.

Servants Servants are volunteers who give of their services to maintain our homes. Plumbers, electricians, carpet cleaners, painters, and laborers are just a few of the services needed to maintain our homes.

Church Companion The residents of the Family LIFE Center are required to attend a Bible believing church service on Sunday. A Church Companion is a person who would be willing to pick up a resident for church, go to the service with them, and familiarize them with the building and activities that are going on. i.e. Women's Bible study, Church Picnic, etc.

Work Group The Family LIFE Center has plenty of opportunities for a small group to come and do a one-time project. This could be a baseball team, a youth group, Bible study, etc. Not only is this a volunteer opportunity, but it also serves as an outreach.

What can my church do as a project for the Family LIFE Center?

1. INVITE OUR STAFF TO DO A PRESENTATION

- A. Women's Groups
- B. Youth Groups
- C. Wednesday night supper, etc.

2. HAVE A FLC PROJECT

- A. Keep the needs of the FLC in the minds and hearts of the congregation
- B. Collect food and toiletries
- C. Collect financial donations (Baby Bottle Campaign)

3. PLAN AN ACTIVITY WITH THE GIRLS

- A. Visit a home and do an activity with the girls
Some suggestions are:
 - 1. Bring refreshments
 - 2. Share a devotion
 - 3. Teach a craft
 - 4. Bring a meal
- B. Take the girls and houseparents out to dinner

4. PLAN A SERVICE PROJECT FOR THE HOME

- A. Yard work
- B. Painting
- C. Routine maintenance

ITEMS USED FREQUENTLY BY THE Family LIFE Center
(Most needed items are in bold)

VEGETABLES

Cabbage
Carrots
Celery
Cucumbers
Lettuce
Onions
Peppers
Potatoes
Tomatoes

FRUITS

Apples
Bananas
Grapefruit
Grapes
Oranges
Raisins

CANNED FRUIT

Fruit cocktail
Peaches
Pears
Pineapple
Tropical fruit salad

CONDIMENTS

A-1
Catsup
Jelly
Mayonnaise
Mustard
Peanut Butter
Pickles
Relish
Salad dressing
Soy sauce
Vinegar
Worchestershire

CANNED VEGETABLES

Baked beans
Beans
Carrots
Corn
Peas
Small potatoes
Soup
Spaghetti sauce
Tomato sauce

COOKING SUPPLIES

Bisquick
Brown sugar
Chocolate chips

Flour

Honey
Olive oil
Powdered sugar
Spices
Sugar
Syrup (lite)
Vegetable oil

DESSERT MIXES/DRINKS

Cake mixes
Frosting
Pudding
Fruit juice
Fruit drinks
Nestles Quik
Evaporated milk
Coffee (ground)
Tea bags (decaf)

PERSONAL PRODUCTS

Bar soap
Conditioner
Deodorant
Hairspray
Maxi pads
Mouthwash
Shampoo
Stayfree Mini Pads
Toothpaste

BREAD/CEREAL/PASTA

Cereal
Macaroni
Oatmeal
Rice
Ritz crackers
Saltines
Spaghetti noodles
Wheat bread
White bread

CLEANING PRODUCTS

Bleach
Dishwasher detergent
Dryer sheets
Furniture polish
Laundry Detergent
Oven cleaner
SOS pads
Windex

PAPER PRODUCTS/MISC.

Aluminum foil
Kleenex

Light bulbs

Napkins
Paper plates
Paper towels
Plastic wrap
Toilet paper ①
Trash bags
Wax paper

FROZEN FOODS

Broccoli
Carrots
Cauliflower
Corn
French fries
Lima beans
Mixed vegetables
Orange juice
Peas
Spinach
String beans
Tater Tots
Zucchini

MEATS

Bacon
Chicken
Fish
Ham
Hamburger patties
Hamburger
Hot dogs
Pork chops
Roasts
Stew beef
Tuna
Turkey

DAIRY PRODUCTS

2% milk
Block cheese
Butter
Cottage cheese
Cream cheese
Ice cream
Margarine
Parmesan cheese
Sliced cheese