



THE POWER OF GOD | 2023 ANNUAL REPORT

**“Peace I leave with you; my peace I give you. I do not give to you as the world gives. Do not let your hearts be troubled and do not be afraid.”
—Jesus, John 14:27**



GREETING FROM OUR EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
PEACE IS A POWERFUL TESTIMONY

At the start of 2023, our team prayed for a year full of power. Not power related to empires and rulers or the kind that leads to more and larger and greater. We asked for power that is not of us but given to us by the Holy Spirit. God answered, showing time and time again His power and healing.

God showed up for one woman who had been homeless since 13 and exploited for over a decade. “When I first got [to Naomi’s House],” she explains, “I wanted to leave. [But] I am proud of myself for sticking and staying. I have been trying to reach things that feel impossible but have been able to get there with everyone’s help. You didn’t give up on me, and so I couldn’t give up on me.” Do you hear the power in her voice? She didn’t believe she could heal, but she didn’t give up. She now knows the gospel’s saving power and believes in her future.

God showed up for a woman who discovered that His plan for her wasn’t full of abuse and pain. She was freed to forgive those who hurt her, exclaiming: “Forgive others not because they deserve forgiveness but because you deserve peace.” Do you hear the power in her voice? Try to imagine forgiving someone who abused you or trusting in God when you weren’t certain He cared to rescue you. She now lives in peace.

This report is full of God’s power: the power of life-change, of community, of “firsts.” You are a part of each one, empowering survivors of exploitation to overcome their trauma and rebuild their lives. The issue of sex trafficking in the Chicagoland area is daunting, but we do not lose heart... because every woman is worthy of a new start.

Thank you for the power of your partnership this year, so more women could be helped than ever before: 194 women were served at Naomi’s House in 2023. That’s nearly double from last year.. What a powerful testimony of God’s faithfulness and love!

ΣΙΜΟΝΗ ΠΑΡΙΣΗ
Co-Founder and Executive Director

hope lives here

THE POWER OF YOUR SUPPORT

150 WOMEN
2016–2022

194 WOMEN
2023

344 WOMEN SERVED AT NAOMI'S HOUSE SINCE DECEMBER 2016



Our signature solution, supporting women on their healing journey through holistic, comprehensive, 24-hour residential care.

Reside by-the-numbers

- 9 participants + 2 graduates
- 6 completed job + employment training
- 3 enrolled in job coaching
- 4 enrolled in college
- 2 got baptized + 6 renewed their relationship with God



Our day programming, supporting survivors as they continue growing and learning through holistic services and group electives.

Rise by-the-numbers

- 80 participants
- 324 hours of group therapy in the DuPage County Jail
- 216 hours of individual therapy provided
- 4 families in therapy
- 25 found employment
- 9 graduates
- 1 graduate from our Independent Living Apartments



Our outreach initiative, inviting survivors who are stuck in exploitation to “come as they are” —to be known, loved, and find respite at our conveniently located drop-in centers.

Reset Chicago by-the-numbers

- 52 participants
- 13 offered housing support
- 48 hours of group support
- 16 referred to partnering trauma-informed therapists for therapy

Reset Elgin by-the-numbers

- 19 participants
- 84 hours of group support
- 25 community events to raise awareness of Reset in Elgin area
- 34 outreach touches with women still stuck in exploitation

PARTNERSHIP INITIATIVES

It would not be possible for our graduates to have all the resources they need without dozens of partnerships we’ve forged throughout the Chicagoland area. Partnership is a powerful example of the Church working together for the common good and flourishing of those who have survived the unthinkable evil of exploitation.

When women graduate from our program, it’s an exciting step! But it’s also a vulnerable one. So we ask trusted partners to welcome them into the community and celebrate their success. Survivors succeed when many caring people wrap around them for support.

Growing Education + Awareness

- 23 community presentations + HT 101 trainings
- 9 church presentations + ministry fairs
- 1,500 attendees to educational + awareness events
- 10 new partnerships with community service providers

Volunteer Support

- 91 new volunteers onboarded
- 162 active volunteers
- 16 yard groups at Reside
- 19 volunteer trainings
- 11 interns

“The problem of sex trafficking in our city is overwhelming and evil. But we are thankful for the work and hope that Naomi’s House provides and how they invite the people at Park Community Church to get involved to use their gifts and make a difference in the lives of survivors.”

JOE RICCARDI

Campus Pastor, Park Community Church

“The excellent training we have received has been extremely helpful and instrumental in our progress toward founding a residential program for survivors in southwest Florida. Their example, support, and encouragement have inspired us to keep moving forward to create a safe place where more women can find hope, healing, and a fresh start.”

CHRISTINE ANTHONY

Founder of Eden Glory in Naples, Florida, & mentee in Naomi’s House Planting Roots Mentorship



“As Christ followers, we’re called to steward God’s grace and utilize the gifts He’s given us to serve one another. This is why we as a church are grateful for Naomi’s House and our partnership. Naomi’s House gracefully and skillfully addresses the brokenness that has resulted in human trafficking with truth and love by providing hope and healing.”

BEN CHAMBERS

Community Impact Pastor, Christ Community Church



THE COMPLEXITY OF HEALING TRAUMA 101

In our seven years of serving survivors and training the community on the impact of sexual exploitation, we have learned that you cannot have a conversation about healing without explaining trauma. Trauma is complicated and layered; understanding how it affects the women we serve helps them find hope and healing.

How we define trauma

Trauma is the result of an adverse experience that the person is not equipped to adequately process. It impacts the way the person interacts with the world from there forward. Trauma from sexual exploitation often permeates every aspect of one's body and mind, oftentimes impacting their spiritual journey. It reshapes the way a person views themselves and others—rupturing their perception of personal value and worth.

What trauma does to the brain

When trauma occurs, the brain automatically creates safety barriers that reshape the frontal lobe. As a result, victims can no longer organize or regulate emotions, and they have trouble discerning the difference between safety and threats. Therefore, everything feels like danger, and the brain assumes survival is uncertain, prompting a variety of fight, flight, freeze, and fawn behaviors. This can result in post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), and this way of life is not sustainable.

The lie trauma tells its victim

People who have suffered from complex trauma (which is common with sexual exploitation) have difficulty living safely in the present. Regular, everyday moments trigger memories of danger. Their brain is tricked into believing the traumatic experience is happening again, in real time. The emotions and physical sensations that were imprinted on the brain during the trauma are experienced not as memories but as disruptive physical reactions in the present.

What it takes to heal

We tell survivors that trauma is not what happened to them, but how their brain is responding to the experience. And that response can be changed.

For change to take place, the body needs to learn (1) the danger has passed and (2) how to live in the reality of the present. Our clinical team works with each participant to help her figure out what she needs to accomplish such an overwhelming task. Many survivors express that healing from trauma can be harder than the actual traumatic experience. Essential pieces to healing and learning to feel safe include meaningful community, a strengths-based concentration, trauma-informed therapy, and a spiritual connection to God. These are offered to each woman who seeks services at Naomi's House.

What is the frontal lobe?

The frontal lobe is your brain's control center, responsible for the way you think, move, and remember things. It's also a key part in your social skills and helps you understand and control how you talk, behave, and interact with others.

Source: www.clevelandclinic.org

What is complex trauma?

Complex trauma can arise in any situation where a person can feel an ongoing sense of fear, horror, helplessness, or powerlessness over an extended period of time, with the perceived or actual inability to escape.

Source: www.psychcentral.com

What's the connection between trauma and addiction?

"There is a robust correlation in the scientific literature between trauma and addiction. Trauma can lead to a dysregulated stress system, which may increase vulnerability to addictive behaviors. Trauma can also lead to depersonalization and numbness, which may similarly increase vulnerability."

Source: www.psychologytoday.com

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You can't change the event, but you can change the response.

AMANDA BAGNALL, LMFT
Naomi's House Clinical Director

NOT JUST A MOMENT IN TIME

HOW DOES EXPLOITATION HAPPEN?

Everyone wants to know how to prevent sex trafficking and commercial sex exploitation. There is no simple solution. It's most often the result of complex factors that began years ago.

It's a childhood filled with family upheaval and devoid of sufficient care. It's sharp memories of rejection, harsh and cruel words, and violence or abuse. It's unspeakable inner turmoil. This is life for a young girl swallowed up by pain, loneliness, fear... with no one she can turn to for help.

85% of women served at Naomi's House have experienced some form of childhood abuse.

She enters adulthood with all manner of scars and wounds—emotional, mental, and physical. She longs for love and security, which is why she can be so easily coerced into a life of commercial sex and exploitation.

The majority of women served at Naomi's House say traffickers made promises that offset their childhood losses, fulfilled their romantic ideals, and supplied their material needs.

While there is no typical survivor or exploitive experience, there are common factors that make a woman vulnerable to it.

MORE THAN MEETS THE EYE

VULNERABILITIES PLACING WOMEN AT RISK

We must grasp the complex factors that make women vulnerable to abusers if we want to combat sex trafficking and commercial sex exploitation and help women break the cycle of trauma.

At Naomi's House, women with a lifetime of complex trauma and exploitation find healing and hope for a fresh start.



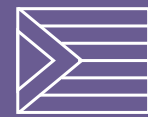
Housing Insecurity



Mental Health Diagnosis



Family Instability



LGBTQIA+ Status



Economic Disparity



Substance Abuse



History of Childhood Sexual Abuse



Lack of Basic Needs



EMBRACING GOD & A NEW FUTURE

MEET CAMI

It took Cami* several tries to make it to Reside. Her addiction was her coping mechanism to escape pain from a lifetime of abuse. Many factors played into Cami's exploitation: childhood abuse, homelessness, early introduction to drugs. The cycle of these specific vulnerabilities spins so fast that it is hard to identify what factor led to which obstacle.

But it all led to people exploiting these vulnerabilities to take advantage of Cami and then convincing her that she deserved the abuse. Cami would simply not allow herself to believe that she was actually a victim. A major lesson she had to learn was that it was not normal to allow someone to purchase her body for sex just to survive.

"This is not my first rodeo through a program," Cami explains. "I've been through more detours and rehabs than I can count, but this is the only faith-based program I've done. I have never given my counselor or case manager my whole self, but this time I did."

With God's powerful love working through our Reside programming, Cami found healing and hope from the cycle of pain. Equine therapy played a significant part: Cami says that discovering a passion for horses was foundational to her healing as well as her ability to embrace a new future.

As Cami looks back on her journey, she says sobriety (almost two years now!) is her biggest accomplishment, which also inspires other survivors at Naomi's House. She has reconnected with her kids and has been intentional about healing those relationships after years of loss. She is working full time, is plugged into a local church, and continues to work with horses. Others describe Cami as driven, thoughtful, smart, and protective of those she loves.

But Cami's words say it best: "Coming to Naomi's House was the first time I embraced God and that is what is keeping me sober. God was the piece that has been missing."



No one's story of exploitation and the shattered life it gives a survivor is "easy." Or they wouldn't need us.

BREANNA MANN, LMFT
Clinical Program Manager of Reside

*Names and identifying details have been changed to protect the privacy of the women we serve.



PHOTOGRAPHIC EVIDENCE OF GOD'S POWER
MEET VAL

Exploitation often leads women into a myriad of troubles—even crime. That's why Val* was completing a program through the DuPage County Court system. She was required to abstain from substance use to fulfill the legal responsibilities of her past offenses. Val explains: "I was lost without a cause, no place to call home. I was presented with two choices: evolve or repeat. My heart had felt more violence and pain than I had ever felt love."

So Val chose to evolve. She turned to Naomi's House for a new start, to complete the court program, and to escape the hands of a trafficker. Val had been exploited for decades; buyers of sex took advantage of vulnerabilities and purchased her in 30-minute increments. She had broken free of exploitation but was very much still in bondage to her trauma. Her body had been abused and neglected, and she needed medical and dental care. She hadn't seen or spoken to her family in years.

But 15 months later, much had changed. Val stood for court graduation, arm-in-arm with the Naomi's House staff, and they showed her before-and-after photos. The difference was astounding!

The before picture was a mugshot of a gaunt face with sunken eyes. This woman had suffered incredible abuse and believed the lie that she was only worth what people paid for her body.

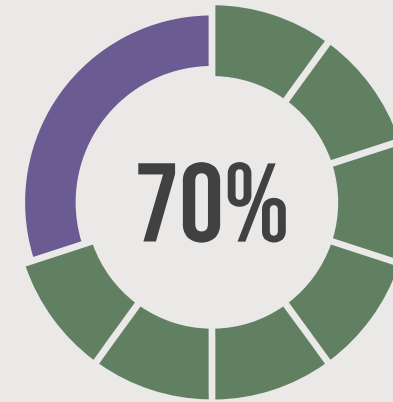
The after picture looked like a completely different person. This woman had battled every day at Reside to stay sober and find courage to address her traumatic past with help from Naomi's House. This woman had received God's healing power!

Shortly after the court program, Val became the 15th graduate of Naomi's House. Her brother attended, sitting in the front row for her speech. Their reunion gave hope to everyone in that room.

Today, Val is working full time, finishing her associate's degree, and walking in the newness of her faith after getting baptized. This woman has full cheeks, a brilliant smile, and self-worth beaming from her eyes. Because of God's power, Val is flourishing in her new life.

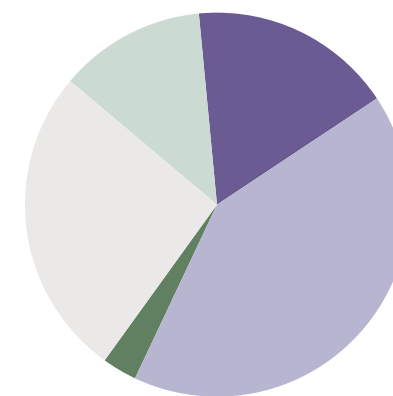
*Names and identifying details have been changed to protect the privacy of the women we serve.

IT'S CLOSER THAN YOU THINK
WHERE DOES EXPLOITATION HAPPEN?



of female trafficking survivors are lured into trafficking or exploitation through legal industries such as stripping, porn, and brothels.*

OUR CURRENT REFERRAL NETWORK



- Direct Survivor Reach-Outs
- Healthcare Networks
- Local Nonprofits
- Regional/Out-of-State Nonprofits
- Courts/Law Enforcement

24,300
 people are trafficked in Illinois each year.*

Naomi's House receives referrals and serves women from all over the country.

The majority of our clients have been trafficked here in Illinois, from DuPage, Cook, and Kane counties.



Of the 24,300, **only 1%** of trafficking victims are identified.*

*Data taken from the Safe House Project 2023 Annual Report and Polaris Project.

POWER FOR THE EXPLOITED IN OUR MIDST
MEET SONJA

When Sonja* came to Rise, she affirmed what we've known: exploitation has happened—and is happening—right here, in our community. She represents countless other women in our midst dealing with past exploitation. Their suffering continues well after the trafficking stops, even when they've tried to build a different life.

Sonja grew up in Downers Grove. Her children are enrolled in a local DuPage County school. She was doing life in and around all of us, yet was secretly suffering from the trauma of a former life. It wasn't until she heard about Naomi's House through her church that she even considered asking for help.

Since coming to Rise, Sonja has engaged in her trauma work and has shown incredible resilience. Shame and guilt from her past are heavy, and it has spilled into the lives of her kids. From the start, our Rise team noticed that Sonja is a good mom. Love for her kids gives her courage to address the pain, so they can be free of vicarious trauma. Her children are also receiving therapy and learning to address their own wounds caused by trafficking.

Plus, Sonja's smart, with potential far beyond what she recognizes in herself. Working full time in a career that she loves, with her kids showing signs of growth, Sonja would not be where she is today if it weren't for her courage to come to Rise and trust our program.

What's most beautiful about Sonja's story is her faith in God and all the glory she attributes to Him and His love for her. She has always known that God cares for and loves her, and Rise has been the tangible demonstration of God's power to change her life.



*Names and identifying details have been changed to protect the privacy of the women we serve.

FINDING FREEDOM IN INCARCERATION
RISE + DUPAGE COUNTY JAIL

Many women are incarcerated because of the trafficking they've endured and their exploitative experiences. We partner with DuPage County Jail to offer these therapeutic groups to them while incarcerated:

- Coping Skills for PTSD and Addiction
- Self-Exploration
- Life After Incarceration and Recovery

By attending groups, survivors are better equipped to transition back into the community without being re-exploited. Some of the women we meet while in jail come to the Rise day program for continued care once they are released.

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I never imagined feeling so welcomed, accepted, and cared for while being incarcerated. Coming to your groups feels like a soothing, relieving, warm-fuzzy hug. Thank you for bringing... more confidence, hope, and comfort than I thought possible.

RISE PARTICIPANT AT DUPAGE COUNTY JAIL

Naomi's House has done more for me in three months than spending over a year in a shelter did.

RESET PARTICIPANT

I'm working to be a better me. It all started when I came to your group.

RESET PARTICIPANT

Rise Independent Living

Women who are ready to step into a more independent life still need support to prevent relapse. Rise Independent Living equips participants with independence, while also providing resources like rental assistance, therapeutic services, case management, education, spiritual discipleship, and survivor leadership that are at the core of our program.

Sara* moved into Rise Independent Living after graduating from Reside. She worked hard, trusted our program, and surrendered her life fully to the plans God has for her. Even so, taking the next step wasn't easy. Sara says, "The anxiety I was feeling when graduating Reside was almost crippling. You have to trust that what you've learned has prepared you to live on your own again. I would not be where I am today without the help of all parts of Naomi's House, but especially the Rise Independent Living."

God's Power for Sara's Complete Transformation

Here are just a few of the miracles God worked in Sara's life at Naomi's House.

Sara's Past	Sara's Present
Unemployed	Full-time job
Broken community	Solid community
Shattered Faith	Baptized
Living off government subsidies	Financial independence
Dependent on substances	Sober for almost four years
Emotionally fragile and clinically dysregulated	Growing emotional resilience to cope with life's anxieties

FY 22-23 FINANCIAL OVERVIEW

CAMI, VAL, SONJA, SARA + 190 OTHER SURVIVORS

194 survivors have a changed life because of your support. Your investment directly impacted the lives of each woman Naomi's House served this year.

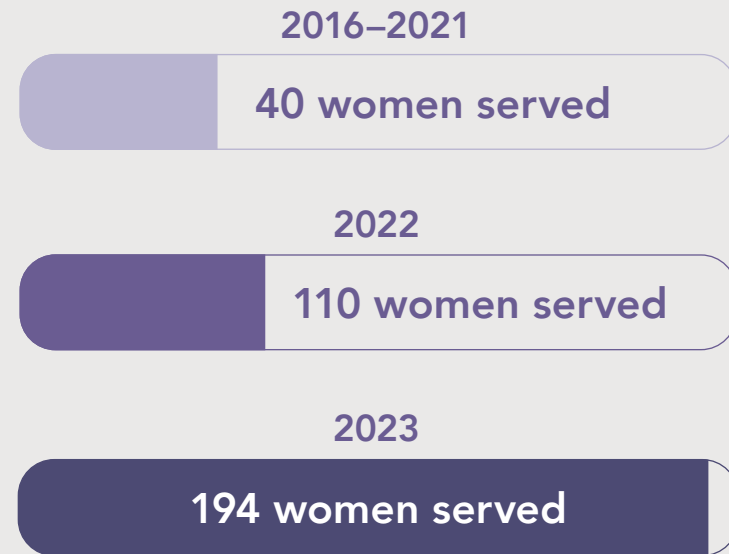
A Growing Reach

Since 2016, generous partners of Naomi's House have made significant growth possible to provide hope and healing to women who experienced sexual exploitation.

TOTAL 2022-2023 Revenue*
\$1,724,094

TOTAL 2022-2023 Expenses*
\$1,600,166

*Includes restricted revenue and expenses



YOUR SUPPORT OPENS THE DOOR FOR MORE WOMEN

GROWING BY GOD'S POWER

January 2024 marks the start of our 8th year helping women find hope and healing after sexual exploitation. The growth of Naomi's House is astounding and a testimony of God's faithfulness and how He is using you to support survivors.

344 women have been served since our doors opened in December 2016.

God is bringing more and more women through our doors every year. Growing a bigger organization isn't our aim, however. We want to grow our reach and impact by serving more women. We've prayerfully considered next steps and one thing is clear:

Choosing to not grow isn't an option.

There are still too many women who need access to the services provided at Naomi's House. It doesn't sit well with any of us that we have to turn survivors away because our programs are at capacity.

Therefore, our goal is to double our capacity over the next four years to reach any woman who has suffered from commercial sexual exploitation in the Chicagoland area.

Our Growth Plan

2024: \$1.8M // 250 survivors
2028: \$3.2M // 500 survivors

All of these growth plans hinge on two things: God's loving, healing power for women and your continued powerful support. We can only serve as many women as donor investments allow. Growing your partnership and support each year will open the door for more women to find the hope and healing of a new life.

Will you grow with us?

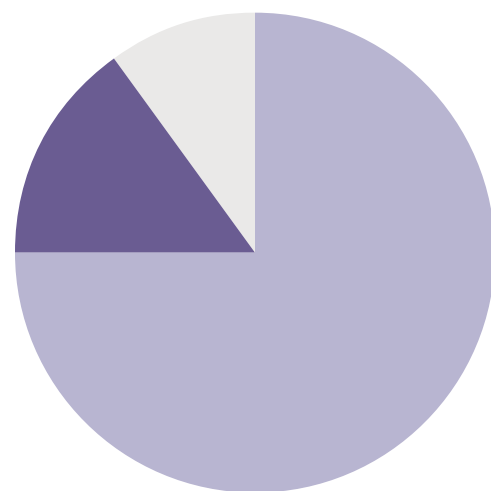
Sustainable, Efficient Growth

The great news is that we have a proven model that allows us to increase capacity while also increasing efficiency. Our goal in 2024 is to increase the number of women we serve by 25% while increasing our operating budget by just 6%. By 2028, we can double the number of women served to reach 500 survivors while decreasing the programming cost per participant.

FY 21-22: \$1.73M
110 women / \$16,600 per participant
FY 22-23: \$1.72M
200 women / \$8,600 per participant
FY 23-24: \$1.8M
250 women // \$7,200 per participant
FY 28-29: \$3.2M
500 women // \$6,400 per participant

The Power of Community

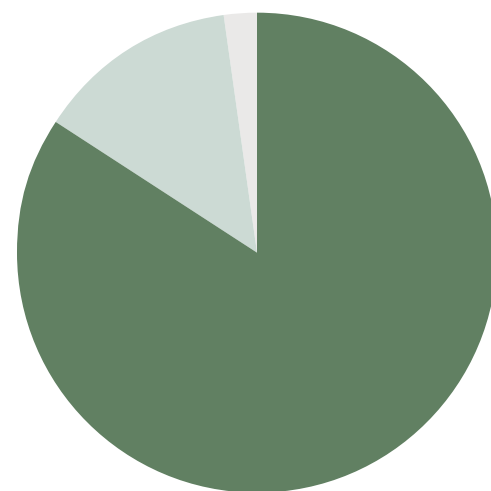
Here's how the community has come together for survivors at Naomi's House in FY 22-23.



- Individuals | \$1,297,258
- Foundations | \$263,024
- Churches | \$163,812

Your Direct Missional Impact

More than ever before, women in need of hope and healing from sexual exploitation have been directly supported by YOU through Naomi's House.



- Programs | \$1,298,602
- Administration | \$200,947
- Fundraising | \$100,617

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Jesus said to her, “Daughter,
your faith has healed you.
Go in peace and be freed
from your suffering.”

Mark 5:34



A ministry of The Moody Church.
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