



WE ARE LUTHERAN
SOCIAL SERVICES
OF WISCONSIN AND
UPPER MICHIGAN

A LETTER FROM OUR PRESIDENT AND CEO

Dear friends,

Many people in Wisconsin and Upper Michigan are faced with challenges, including struggles with behavioral health issues, living with disabilities, alcohol consumption rates that are higher than the national average and a significant increase in the proportion of deaths related to the use of opioids. But these individuals and their families are not alone. Lutheran Social Services of Wisconsin and Upper Michigan (LSS) is here to help.

Whether it is a child in crisis, a family in turmoil, a young woman who is struggling with addiction or a refugee family seeking to make a new life in a new home, LSS has been a welcoming and trusted place to turn to for assistance. Individuals in our community rely on our organization to help remove barriers and improve their quality of life. If not for organizations like ours, they would be left unserved and their needs unmet. Our services impact 37,000 individuals each year throughout Wisconsin and Upper Michigan, and the vast majority of those people have indicated we have improved their quality of life and are satisfied with our services.

Since 1882, we have empowered communities to better their health and well-being. As we continue to advance our mission, we look forward to working with our partners to create healthy communities filled with people using their God-given gifts to serve. Together we believe we can strengthen and broaden our impact in the next 100 years.

Thank you for your continued support.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Hector Colon', written in a cursive style.

Héctor Colón
President & CEO



WHO WE ARE, WHO WE HELP & HOW WE DO IT

Everyone deserves a chance to live a safe and healthy life no matter what challenges they face. The dedicated team of LSS employees and our trusted partners are committed to helping individuals and families do just that.

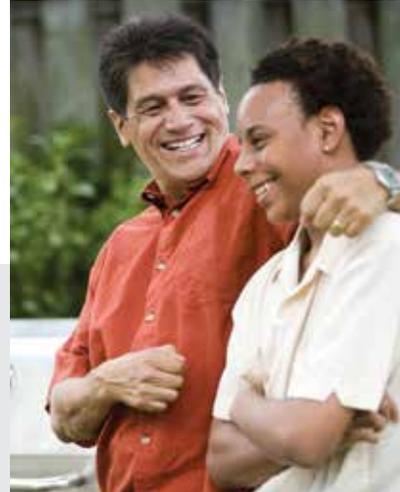
Our specially trained staff comes from diverse backgrounds, and together we are driven by a singular goal of helping people receive the support they need to thrive.

Individuals and families who come to LSS for help often benefit from:

- Screening and assessments/care plans
- Case management/care coordination
- Counseling/therapy
- Skills development
- Housing/respice
- And much more

Working side by side with those we serve, our staff takes a holistic approach to each unique situation. Identifying needs for today and looking at what future needs may arise is important in every case because we believe in being a resource to people across their lifespans.

Through the services we provide directly and through the referrals that we make, our staff are experts at removing barriers so the individuals and families who turn to us for help can achieve their health and well-being goals.



Learn more about how we serve through community-based services, residential services and housing programs when you turn the page.

Our Mission

Act compassionately.
Serve humbly.
Lead courageously.

Our Vision

Healthy communities filled with people using their God-given gifts to serve.

Our Guiding Philosophy

Servant Leadership

Our Core Belief

We believe in the infinite worth of every person.

Our Core Values



Compassion: We believe each individual's situation is unique and personal. By accompanying them on their journey, we're better able to show love, dignity and respect.



Co-Creation: We believe we are stronger working together. We combine our unique gifts with those of others to serve a greater good, strengthening the whole community as a result.



Courage: We believe leadership takes courage. We explore options that challenge the status quo and better enable us to assist others in reaching their objectives.



Change: We believe curiosity helps us to find better ways to make an impact. We make change possible by reading what's on the horizon and embracing bold new ideas.



COMMUNITY-BASED SERVICES

Home is where the heart is. LSS also believes home is where individuals and families should be able to access the services they need to live their healthiest, safest, and most independent and fulfilling lives. We help connect people of all ages and who have a variety of different needs with life-changing services, resources and expertise to address the challenges they face. This includes, but is not limited to:

Behavioral Health and Recovery

For individuals and families facing mental health and/or substance use problems, LSS can assist them on their journeys to recovery. All of our programs are offered in a welcoming and confidential setting. They encourage creating healthy relationships and keeping families together, while also empowering those who turn to us for help with tools and resources for recovery. Programs available include:

- Comprehensive Community Services
- Family Preservation
- School-Centered Mental Health
- Family Partnerships Initiative/Youth Enterprise for Success



Developmental Health and Supportive Services

LSS is committed to helping people of all ages thrive in their homes or residences. From working with infants, toddlers and children who are living with developmental delays and disabilities to assisting older adults overcome obstacles and enjoy life to the fullest, our array of programs can provide support across a person's lifespan.

Individuals and families often benefit from programs such as:

- Birth to 3
- Children's Long-Term Support
- Community Supported Living
- Day Services

Restorative Justice

Supporting individuals, especially those with mental illness and/or substance use, as they transition back into their communities after involvement with the criminal justice system is extremely important. Not only does this create positive life experiences but also empowers them to become successful contributing members of their communities. LSS is recognized as a leader in restorative justice as a result of our high rates of success through programs such as:

- Conditional Release
- Opening Avenues to Re-Entry Success (OARS)
- Outpatient Competency Restoration Program

Refugee Resettlement

LSS is proud to provide comprehensive resettlement services to refugees fleeing from war and persecution around the globe. Since 1974, we have started more than 10,000 refugees on a new life in the U.S. Our diverse team partners with refugees and empowers them in becoming independent, vibrant members of our communities.

Foster Care and Adoption

In cases where, for their own well-being, a child cannot remain with their family, foster care is a critical resource for providing much-needed love, structure and safety. Our specially selected and trained foster parents understand the importance of patience, acceptance and the gift of love. LSS is one of the largest non-profit licensed adoption agencies in Wisconsin, providing forever families for children.



“It was a rewarding experience to be there and support this little one, even if it was for only a short time.”

Spring, LSS Foster Parent

The Rewards of Foster Care Keep on Giving

Just weeks after her mother’s passing, Spring turned to her partner, Nick, and said, “I want to be a foster parent.” Not words you would typically expect to hear from a 25 year old. But having been a foster child who was later adopted by her late mother and father, who passed just four years earlier, Spring knew this was something she wanted to do.

“All I knew is that I was able to be adopted by my parents through Lutheran Social Services, so I contacted them,” she recalls.

After meeting all the necessary requirements and training to become licensed foster parents, Spring and Nick received their first foster placement. The little boy with a love for “big words” was in need of short-term respite care and stayed with Spring and Nick for just a week. During his time in their home, Spring and Nick provided the love, encouragement and guidance he needed, and she gave him a new word to add to his vocabulary: resilient. “You are resilient,” Spring told the child.

“It was a rewarding experience to be there and support this little one, even if it was for only a short time,” she explains. Both Spring and Nick look forward to helping other foster children learn not only “big words” but also skills and tools to take a positive approach to life.



IRIS Connections

The lack or loss of personal independence resulting from a disability or the effects of aging can be frustrating and devastating. LSS supports older adults and individuals living with disabilities in making meaningful choices to live the life they choose and achieve their goals through our IRIS (Include, Respect, I Self-Direct) Connections program. To learn about IRIS Connections eligibility, contact the Aging and Disability Resource Center:

www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/adrc

DHSwebmaster@dhs.wisconsin.gov

608-266-1865 | TTY: 711 or 800-947-3529

Find more information about IRIS Connections at www.connectionswis.org.



“Jodi always told me, ‘Everything is going to be OK,’ and now it really was!”

Rosetta, Connections Participant

Helping Rosetta Move Forward

With a sigh, Rosetta wheeled her oxygen tank alongside her as she attempted to leave her apartment with her daughter and grandson. When she lit her first cigarette at age 16, she never thought of COPD or how it would change her life later. Walking around had become a daily struggle. But this particular outing would prove to be a step toward a happier life.

A sign for the Department of Aging caught her grandson's eye. “Granny, you should contact them to see if they can help,” he said. Since she was now over age 60, Rosetta called.

After speaking with the staff, they determined Rosetta was eligible for assistance and could benefit from the IRIS Connections program. Soon she was connected with Jodi, a consultant from LSS's IRIS team who conducted an assessment and worked with Rosetta to set up a plan. “Everything is going to be OK,” Jodi said.

Rosetta desperately wanted a mobility chair to help her not only move around her apartment with ease but to also get back out into the community she loved. Four times her requests for a chair were denied. But Jodi reassured Rosetta that “everything is going to be OK.”

With encouragement from Jodi and help from the Accessibility team and her primary care doctor, Rosetta made one more request for a chair. When the phone rang, she was certain it was the same bad news she heard before. When the man on the phone asked if he could drop off Rosetta's new chair on Friday, she thought she was dreaming. Rosetta's request was approved!

“The first person I called when I found out I was getting my chair was Jodi,” Rosetta recalls. “She always told me, ‘Everything is going to OK,’ and now it really was!” With the help of LSS, Rosetta is now able to move forward with her life.



RESIDENTIAL SERVICES & HOUSING PROGRAMS

Having a place to call home is something most people take for granted. But there are many children, adolescents and adults of all ages who turn to LSS for help finding a safe and healthy place to live and/or accessing recovery services as they work toward making positive changes in their lives.

Residential Services

LSS provides a variety of residential services designed to help and support youth and adults affected by mental health issues, as well as drug and alcohol use or other challenges. For some, a residential program is where people start their recovery journey, and for others, it is a place people may return to from time to time, depending on their needs. Our goal is to create a safe environment where we can give each person who comes to us for help the knowledge and tools to live a healthy life and thrive. Programs available include:

- Community-Based Residential Treatment Facilities (adult—mental health and substance abuse)
- Group Homes
- Youth Residential and Shelter Care
- Homme Youth & Family Programs

Housing Services

LSS offers a variety of housing assistance options to individuals and families in need, including people with disabilities, older adults and those experiencing homelessness. We look at the unique circumstances in each case and help connect people with the most appropriate solutions through programs such as:

- Subsidized housing in cooperation with the US Department of Housing and Urban Development
- Service coordination offered within multi-family developments
- Affordable housing through the Low Income Housing Tax Credit (LIHTC) program
- Homelessness transition services

Dave Found His Home As a Teacher At Homme

When Dave accepted the Homme Youth & Family Programs' shop teacher position, he informed the principal he would be leaving after three years. Little did Dave know those three years would turn into a rewarding career lasting more than three decades!

Dave admits he came from "kind of a rough background," so he can relate to the youth who enter his shop class. "I really enjoy what I do. That's a big part of working at a facility like this with these types of kids," he explains.

His wife, who is also a teacher with Homme, would agree. Like all of the Homme teachers, Dave is special education certified and trained in trauma-informed care to safely assist youth when intervention is needed.

As a father with five children, Dave would like parents to know the Homme staff treats youth in their care as if the kids were their own. "The people here who are responsible for these children show them a lot of love," Dave describes.



"The people here who are responsible for these children show them a lot of love."

Dave, LSS Teacher



About Us

Lutheran Social Services is one of the largest and most experienced health and human services organizations in the Midwest. Our services extend across Wisconsin and Upper Michigan and along the lifespan of over 37,000 individuals.

We are building healthy communities with services as essential as housing and life-changing as foster care. Individuals in our communities rely on organizations like Lutheran Social Services to help remove barriers and improve the quality of their lives. If not for organizations like ours, they would be left unserved and their needs unmet.

Stay in Touch

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